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**Sport Canada**

# **Athlete Assistance Program**

**Policies and Procedures**

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## **Introduction**

The purpose of this document is to present the policies and procedures of Sport Canada's Athlete Assistance Program (AAP). The target audience for this document are the athletes, coaches and sport administrators who currently access or wish to access the program.

Sport Canada reserves the right to review and revise these policies and procedures.

Sport Canada hopes that provincial/territorial government agencies and provincial/territorial sport organizations will develop similar programs to assist athletes ranked just below those receiving AAP funding. Such support would provide an integrated pathway for the development of Canadian high performance athletes.

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## Section 1 Program Overview

### 1.1 Program Description

The Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) is a federal government grant program that provides direct financial assistance to Canadian high-performance athletes and is one of three Sport Canada programs designed to assist in the development of high-performance sport. In particular, the AAP complements Sport Canada's Sport Support Program that provides support to National Sport Organizations (NSOs) and Canadian Sport Centres for activities such as National Team training and competition, coach salaries and the provision of sport science and sport medicine services.

The AAP contributes toward improved Canadian performances at major international sporting events such as the Olympic/Paralympic Games and World Championships. To this end, the AAP identifies and provides funding directly to athletes who have already placed, or demonstrate the potential to place in the top 16 in the world.

The AAP recognizes the commitment that athletes make to the National Team training and competitive programs provided by their NSO and seeks to relieve some of the financial pressures associated with preparing for, and participating in international sport. The AAP financial assistance provides support to athletes in the form of a Living and Training Allowance, plus Tuition and Special Needs Assistance. The Living and Training Allowance is intended to offset some, but not all, of the living and training expenses athletes incur as a result of their involvement in high performance sport, while tuition support is intended to help athletes obtain a post-secondary level education. The AAP is the only Sport Canada program that provides direct financial support to athletes.

Eligible athletes who are approved for funding and are financially supported through the AAP are referred to as *carded athletes*. AAP support is also known as *carding*.

Over 1,800 athletes in more than 80 sport disciplines are approved for AAP support each year. See [Athletes Receiving AAP Support](#) for a list of currently carded athletes.

AAP funding may be reduced or terminated at the Minister's discretion in response to the government's annual budget, a parliamentary, governmental or departmental spending decision, or a restructuring or re-ordering of the federal mandate and responsibilities that impact on the AAP.

## 1.2 The AAP Carding Process

NSOs, athletes and Sport Canada are all involved in the AAP carding process. Their respective responsibilities are described in Section 3 ([NSO, Athlete and Sport Canada Responsibilities](#)). The table below summarizes the steps involved in the AAP carding process and refers you to the sections describing each part of the process in more detail.

Sport Canada approves eligible NSOs for funding	<a href="#">Minimum Eligibility Requirements for NSOs</a>
Sport Canada allocates cards to eligible NSOs	<a href="#">Allocating Cards to Eligible NSOs</a>
NSOs develop AAP compliant sport-specific carding criteria that athletes must meet to be nominated for AAP support	<a href="#">Carding Criteria</a>
NSOs nominate or re-nominate eligible athletes for AAP support at a given level	<a href="#">Minimum Eligibility Requirements for Athletes</a> <a href="#">Application for and Approval of Cards</a>
Sport Canada reviews and approves nominations based on the NSO's published, AAP compliant sport-specific carding criteria and AAP policies	<a href="#">Application for and Approval of Cards</a>
Athletes complete the AAP Application Form provided by their NSO and sign an Athlete/NSO Agreement	<a href="#">Application for and Approval of Cards</a> <a href="#">Athlete/NSO Agreement</a>
Eligible athletes approved for carding receive benefits during the period of time for which they are approved	<a href="#">Financial Benefits</a> <a href="#">Illness, Injury or Pregnancy</a>
AAP funding may be withdrawn as a result of 1) voluntary withdrawal from the AAP or 2) withdrawal of carded status	<a href="#">Voluntary Withdrawal from the AAP</a> <a href="#">Withdrawal of Carded Status</a> <a href="#">Policy on Anti-doping and AAP Support</a>
Athletes may appeal a Sport Canada carding decision as defined under <a href="#">Section 13</a> of this document.	<a href="#">Appeals Policy</a>

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## Section 2 Eligibility for AAP Support

### 2.1 Principles of Eligibility for AAP Support

The Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) financial support is limited to athletes in sports whose high-performance (HP) programs are financially supported by Sport Canada following successful completion of the Sport Funding and Accountability Framework (SFAF) process.

In Olympic/Paralympic sports supported by Sport Canada, only events that are on the program of the upcoming Olympic/Paralympic Games are eligible for AAP support.

### 2.2 Eligibility Requirements for NSOs

- AAP eligibility is restricted to those Olympic/Paralympic/non-Olympic sports disciplines whose National Sport Organization (NSO) HP program has successfully completed and receives funding via the SFAF;
- The amount of AAP support provided to an Olympic/Paralympic/non-Olympic sport discipline whose NSO HP program is below an established minimum point threshold in the SFAF Excellence assessment, will be based on a portion of the financial support provided via the SFAF Excellence Assessment;
- The sport discipline must have a World Championship or equivalent championship sanctioned by the sport's international federation that is held at least every other year;
- The NSO must have a clearly articulated national team program based on year-round training principles that include appropriate training and competitive opportunities both domestic and international for each of the proposed carded athletes;
- The NSO must develop and publish AAP compliant sport specific carding criteria for the purpose of AAP nominations;
- The NSO must ensure that each athlete who is eligible for and has been nominated for AAP support has an individualized annual training program based on year-round training principles that include significant daily training activities and appropriate competition opportunities. See Annex A for training expectations for carded athletes;
- The NSO must have a plan in place that will allow for the formal monitoring of each carded athlete's training and competitive program and progress made. At a minimum this would require monthly contact with each carded athlete. The NSO must designate a national coach or a person with appropriate qualifications and leadership status (e.g., High Performance Director) to perform this monitoring task;
- The NSO must conduct a formal process for selecting athletes for national teams. Selection rules and procedures must be published and made known to all concerned, along with procedures for appealing decisions. These appeal procedures must include access to independent dispute resolution through the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC);
- The NSO must have in place an Athlete/NSO Agreement that is consistent with the information found in [Section 7](#) of this document. Each carded athlete must sign this agreement;
- No new sport disciplines will be added to AAP eligibility in the middle of a "quota" cycle, except in the following circumstances;
- New Olympic and Paralympic sports that have their national team program targeted by "Own The Podium" (OTP) (not for individual athlete(s)) will be eligible for AAP card quotas as determined by Sport Canada. The maximum card quota will be based on the number of athletes required to compete in their Olympic/Paralympic events.

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## 2.3 Athlete Eligibility Requirements

- The athlete's NSO must meet the minimum requirements listed in Sub-[Section 2.2](#);
- The athlete must be a **Canadian citizen** or **permanent resident of Canada** at the beginning of the carding cycle for which the athlete is being nominated. Permanent residents must live in Canada for the full year preceding the carding cycle for which the athlete is being considered for AAP support. All athletes are expected to have participated in NSO-sanctioned programs during that time period; The athlete must be available to represent Canada in major international competitions, including World Championships, Olympic Games and Paralympic Games. Further, under the eligibility requirements of the sport's International Federation (IF) as it pertains to citizenship or residency status, the athlete must be eligible to represent Canada at major international competitions, including World Championships, at the beginning of the carding cycle for which the athlete is being nominated;
- For athletes in Olympic or Paralympic sport who have been permanent residents of Canada for three years or more, continued eligibility to receive AAP support is contingent on the athlete becoming eligible to represent Canada at the Olympic or Paralympic Games;
- The athlete must meet the published NSO approved, AAP compliant sport specific carding criteria;
- The athlete must participate in national team preparatory and annual training programs.

**Note:** It is recommended that the above information be included in the NSO carding criteria.

## 2.4 Ineligible Athletes

Athletes ineligible to be nominated for AAP support include:

- Athletes who do not meet the published NSO approved and AAP compliant carding criteria;
- Athletes who have made a false application and have been declared ineligible for AAP benefits by Sport Canada;
- Athletes who do not meet the eligibility requirements set out in [Sub-Section 2.3](#) above;
- Athletes who have been ruled ineligible to participate in sport for two years or more as a result of an anti-doping rule violation and who have not, in the case of pre-2004 violations, subsequently been reinstated;
- Athletes who are serving an anti-doping rule violation sanction of less than two years of sport ineligibility at the start of the carding cycle; and
- Athletes who meet the carding criteria as members of the national team of another nation.

Athletes in Olympic/Paralympic sports competing in World Championship events that are not on the Olympic/Paralympic program are not eligible for carding based on performances in those events.

## 2.5 Other Eligibility Considerations

### 2.5.1 Athletes Living Outside Canada

Athletes living outside Canada are not normally eligible for AAP support. Any exceptions to this requirement must be approved by Sport Canada. An athlete leaving Canada should be fully aware that an exception will be made only through special submissions by the NSO concerned to Sport Canada. Athletes living outside Canada for athletic or academic purposes must demonstrate, to the satisfaction of Sport Canada that appropriate training programs are in place and are being monitored by their NSO. Athletes who have been living full-time outside Canada for more than two successive years will not normally be considered eligible for AAP benefits. However, if these athletes are competing within the Canadian sport system and representing Canada at international competitions as a member of the NSO National Team, carding may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

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### **2.5.2 Athletes receiving athletic Scholarships from Foreign Post-Secondary Educational Institutions**

Athletes who are attending any foreign post-secondary educational institution (including National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) institutions) and are receiving an athletic scholarship in any sport are *not eligible* to receive AAP support in the months in which they are attending the foreign post-secondary educational institution. These athletes may be nominated by the NSO for AAP support during the months they are involved in National Team training and competition activities and not attending the foreign post-secondary institution. Athletes may not defer tuition during the carding cycle they are receiving an athletic scholarship from a foreign post-secondary institution.

### **2.5.3 Non-carded Athletes Named to an Olympic or Paralympic Team**

Athletes who are not carded but who are selected as a member of the Canadian Olympic or Paralympic team by the Canadian Olympic Committee (COC) or Canadian Paralympic Committee (CPC) will be carded by Sport Canada for a period of four months prior to the beginning of the Olympic/Paralympic Games.

Such athlete funding may be approved before the COC/CPC names its Olympic/Paralympic Team if the following requirements are met:

- The NSO demonstrates that the athlete has met all the requirements for participation in the upcoming Olympic/Paralympic Games including the:
  - International Federation (IF) eligibility criteria,
  - COC/CPC eligibility criteria, and
  - NSO team selection criteria.
- The NSO confirms in writing that the athlete will be nominated for Olympic/Paralympic Team selection; and
- The COC/CPC confirms in writing that, if nominated, the athlete meets all criteria for team selection and would, barring unforeseen circumstances, be named to the Olympic/Paralympic Team.

### **2.5.4 Athletes in Olympic and Paralympic Sports that Do Not Meet NSO Eligibility Requirements.**

Athletes who compete in an event on the program of the upcoming Olympic or Paralympic Games and whose sport does not meet the AAP eligibility requirements for NSOs are eligible to be nominated for carding for two consecutive years at the senior level if they place in the Top16 and Top half of the field (absolute) at the World Championships or Olympic/Paralympic Games. The athlete may be carded under this provision for a maximum of four years.

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## Section 3 NSO, Athlete and Sport Canada Responsibilities

When National Sport Organizations (NSOs) nominate Eligible Athletes who then apply for Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) support, they agree to carry out certain responsibilities. Similarly, when Sport Canada approves nominations for AAP support, it agrees to undertake specific responsibilities. This section provides a detailed description of these responsibilities.

### 3.1 NSO Responsibilities

NSOs are responsible for nominating Eligible Athletes for AAP support. In making these annual nominations, the NSO agrees to the following:

- Maintain compliance with AAP eligibility requirements as outlined in [Sub-Section 2.2](#);
- Develops and submit carding criteria to Sport Canada for an AAP compliance review;
- Publish and use for purposes of AAP nominations the NSO approved, AAP compliant carding criteria;
- Prepare the annual AAP Application Package and schedule the meeting for the review of the package with their Sport Canada Program Officer;
- Communicate to national team athletes and NSO members in a timely manner, the published NSO approved AAP compliant carding criteria that will be used to determine which athletes are eligible to be nominated for AAP support;
- Nominate Eligible Athletes for AAP support based on the published NSO approved AAP compliant carding criteria;
- Communicate with athletes both orally and in writing in the official language of their choice (English or French);
- Produce and give each athlete a copy of the NSO's *National Team Handbook* or comparable document in the official language of the athlete's choice. The document provided must cover **at least** the following:
  - NSO approved AAP compliant carding criteria to be used for nominating Eligible Athletes for the AAP,
  - Procedures to be used when developing carding nominations,
  - Criteria and procedures for selection to National Team competitive opportunities and training camps,
  - Discipline and appeals procedures, and
  - Recognition of the Government of Canada for the funding provided to athletes and NSOs through Sport Canada.
- Submit nominations for carding to Sport Canada at least three weeks before the beginning of the NSO's carding cycle. (see [Sub-Section 6.1](#));
- Provide each athlete with the forms required for the AAP, including tuition vouchers and application forms;
- Develop and provide each carded athlete with an Athlete/NSO Agreement that complies with AAP policies. See [Section 7](#) for details;
- Develop discipline and appeal procedures based on due process that include access to independent dispute resolution services offered through the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC);
- Review requests for special-needs assistance and deferred tuition;

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- Ensure that each carded athlete adheres to the NSO-approved competition and training plan throughout the carding cycle. At a minimum, this requires monthly contact with each athlete by the NSO;
  - Inform Sport Canada's AAP Manager immediately if a carded athlete fails to honour his or her AAP commitments, retires or withdraws from the AAP;
  - Inform Sport Canada's AAP Manager of all assertions of anti-doping rule violations resulting from international testing upon notification from the testing body;
  - Provide Sport Canada with written confirmation that all carded athletes have signed their Athlete/NSO Agreement within two (2) months of the start of the NSO's carding cycle;
  - Comply with AAP policies and procedures, including those dealing with Sport Canada AAP Decisions as described in [Section 13](#) of this document;
  - Provide a voice for athletes and ensure that athletes are informed and to provide input into matters affecting them, particularly in the areas of national team programming. This input may be achieved through a variety of means, but opportunities must be planned and announced, not determined on an ad hoc basis;
  - Actively participate in all AAP program evaluation activities. NSOs will cooperate fully in any evaluation that may be conducted by the Minister or anyone authorized to act on the Minister's behalf. The NSO will also provide such data considered necessary for the proper conduct of the evaluation.

It is the responsibility of the NSO to facilitate the return to Sport Canada of any overpayment made to an athlete due to late notification of the athlete's retirement or withdrawal from the AAP. The NSO is also responsible for facilitating the return of any funding that was provided to an athlete as the result of a false application or fraudulent misrepresentation on the part of the athlete or the NSO.

### **3.2 Athlete Responsibilities**

Athletes applying for AAP support commit to the following responsibilities:

- Adherence to the competitive and training program and administrative requirements specified by their NSO throughout the cycle for which they are carded;
- Refund any financial assistance provided if their carding status changes or is withdrawn. Such refunds are payable to the "Receiver General for Canada". See Sections [10](#) and [11](#) for more details;
- Respect and abide by the Canadian Policy Against Doping in Sport-2011, as amended from time to time, the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport's Canadian Anti-Doping Program and any related anti-doping policy of their NSO;
- Complete the CCES on line anti-doping education module within six months of the beginning of their initial year of carding and at times thereafter as required by Sport Canada. Failure to do so will result in AAP payments being suspended until requirements are completed;
- Respect and abide by any other policy of the Government of Canada that may be developed from time to time related to sporting contacts with other countries;
- Participate in sport-related promotional activities on behalf of the Government of Canada. Sport Canada usually makes the request for participation, and the athlete's NSO generally makes the detailed arrangements. Unless supplementary compensation is arranged, these activities do not normally involve more than two working days per athlete per year;
- Communicate regularly with their NSO using the reporting mechanism specified in the NSO's athlete-monitoring plan. Communication may occur directly or through the athlete's personal coach;

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- Notify the NSO of any injury that may prevent them from participating in the National Team program;
  - Immediately notify Sport Canada, through their NSO, of any change of address. This is required to ensure timely receipt of AAP cheques and program information;
  - Initiate any nomination appeals directly with their NSO;
  - Comply with AAP policies and procedures, including those dealing with Sport Canada AAP Decisions as described in [Section 13](#) of this document;
  - Actively participate in all Sport Canada program evaluation activities including the Status of the Athlete Study. Athletes will cooperate fully in any evaluation that may be conducted by the Minister or anyone authorized to act on the Minister's behalf. Athletes will also provide such data as considered necessary for the proper conduct of the evaluation;
  - Provide true statements in their application and supporting documentation and validate these statements if requested to do so by Sport Canada;
  - Indicate whether they are current or former federal government employees. If so, athletes must confirm that they are in compliance with the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Service or the Conflict of Interest and Post-Employment Code for Public Office Holders.

### **3.3 Sport Canada Responsibilities**

In delivering the AAP Sport Canada agrees to do the following:

- Communicate with NSOs and athletes both orally and in writing in the official language of their choice (English or French);
- Determine the card quotas for eligible NSOs and sport disciplines;
- Review each NSO approved carding criteria for compliance with the AAP policies and procedures;
- Review all nominations of Eligible Athletes for AAP support made by the NSO;
- Approve nominations in accordance with AAP policies and the published NSO approved, AAP compliant carding criteria;
- Arrange payments in accordance with AAP policies and procedures;
- Provide each NSO with all necessary AAP materials (application forms, tuition vouchers, etc.);
- Provide a review procedure to both athletes and NSOs on any Sport Canada AAP operational decisions identified in and in accordance with [Section 13](#) of this document;
- Upon request, provide information to NSOs and athletes regarding the development of carding criteria, athlete agreements, appeal procedures, due process, athlete monitoring, and other areas concerning athlete assistance and related services.

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## Section 4 Allocation of Cards to Eligible NSOs

This section describes the policy and procedures Sport Canada follows to allocate cards to [eligible National Sport Organizations](#) (NSOs).

### 4.1 Policy

The Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) cards are allocated to the following types of sports:

- Olympic sports
- Paralympic sports
- Non-Olympic sports

The AAP has three kinds of cards:

- Senior International Cards (SR1 and SR2 Cards)
- Senior National Cards (SR and C1 Cards)
- Development Cards (D Cards)

Card quotas are allocated to NSOs or their respective sport disciplines on the basis of a number of Senior Cards (International or national).

NSOs may nominate Eligible Athletes for senior or development cards according to their published NSO approved AAP compliant carding criteria up to the maximum of the monetary value of the senior card quota.

### 4.2 Determination of Carding Quotas

The allocation of AAP cards is determined by an objective process and a sport-review process.

#### 4.2.1 Objective Process

The objective process used to allocate AAP cards to eligible NSOs takes the following into account:

- The team size of each sport, or sport discipline as determined by Sport Canada to determine base points;
- The results of the Olympics/Paralympics and World Championships in the 4 year period before the carding quota exercise to determine past performance points;
- A maximum of three results per event are considered and results must be in the Top 16 or better and top half of the field;
- The best result of each athlete will be used in the quota calculation each year. If an athlete has a 1<sup>st</sup> place at the 2011 World Championships in one event and an 8<sup>th</sup> place result in another event only the first place result will be used for the purpose of determining the sport quota.

Given Sport Canada's priority for sports that demonstrate podium potential at the Olympic and Paralympic Games, as well as the differences between team and individual sports, different approaches and mathematical factors are used to determine the base and past performance points within the objective quota process.

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#### **4.2.2 Subjective Process**

The subjective process takes into consideration factors that the objective process cannot adequately capture. The subjective process will allocate cards set aside by Sport Canada for this purpose. This will allow Sport Canada to review and assess sport performances sporadically and re-allocate AAP resources to deserving sports as required.

Each eligible NSO is reviewed to determine whether it should receive more or fewer AAP cards than the objective process alone would suggest. In team sports, the men's and women's programs are considered separately. The review consists of an assessment that may include but is not limited to the following:

- Targeting AAP resources to those sports or sport disciplines that have been identified by Own the Podium (OTP) as having podium potential at the upcoming Olympic/Paralympic Games;
- The quality of national team programming based on an assessment of the training and competition programs, as well as the athlete monitoring process;
- Demonstrated adherence by the NSO to its responsibilities under the AAP; and
- The degree to which the NSO's governance structure commits to high performance sport excellence.

The subjective allocation of cards to an NSO's quota is based on the recommendations of OTP and Sport Canada staff.

The final decision on the allocation of cards via the subjective process rests with Sport Canada.

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## Section 5 Carding Criteria

This section describes the criteria that athletes must meet in order to be eligible for nomination for Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) support at a given level.

### 5.1 General Policy

The AAP cards are awarded on the basis of published National Sport Organization (NSO) approved AAP compliant carding criteria.

Senior Cards are awarded on the basis of either international criteria or national criteria.

Development Cards are awarded on the basis of sport-specific criteria. There are special considerations for team sports. See [Sub-Section 5.4](#) for details.

Carding cycles are usually twelve months long. Factors such as the timing of major events sometimes require that the carding cycle be shorter or longer than 12 months. In such cases, NSOs may negotiate a shorter or longer carding cycle with Sport Canada.

**Note:** When a NSO chooses to change its carding cycle, athletes may be carded for a period of more or less than 12 months, depending on the circumstances.

### 5.2 Policies for Senior Cards

#### 5.2.1 International Criteria

International criteria recognize and reward Canadian athletes for outstanding performance at World Championships or the Olympic/Paralympic Games. In Olympic and Paralympic sports, only results from events that are on the program of the upcoming Olympic/Paralympic Games will be considered for carding under the International Criteria.

Athletes who meet the international criteria are eligible to be nominated by their NSO for two consecutive years; the card for the first year is referred to as an SR1 card, while the second year card is known as an SR2 card. The second year of carding is contingent on the athlete maintaining a training and competitive program approved by the NSO and being re-nominated by the NSO. The athlete must also sign an Athlete/NSO Agreement and complete an AAP Application Form for the year in question.

Sport Canada establishes the performance standards for international criteria used to award Senior Cards. The following are the current standards for international criteria.

- Finish in the top 8 counting a maximum of 3 entries per country; and
- Finish in the top half of the field.

In Olympic/Paralympic years, new Senior Cards based on the international criteria will be awarded in Olympic/Paralympic sports only on the basis of results achieved in the Olympic/Paralympic Games. Results achieved at World Championships will not be used for awarding new SR1 cards.

A NSO may adjust a criterion or include sport specific requirements to the senior international criteria specific to their sport in order to strengthen the criteria. Any additional requirements imposed by the NSO must be consistent with Sport Canada policies and be approved by Sport Canada.

**Note:** In cases where the Olympic/Paralympic or World Championship field is restricted by the sport's International Federation (IF), the International Olympic Committee (IOC), or the International

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Paralympic Committee (IPC) as a result of qualification processes or other types of entry restrictions, the requirement regarding the top half of the field may be waived by Sport Canada.

In team, crew, pair events, or relay type events, the performance must be achieved by Canadian athletes only. A performance that is the result of teaming up or pairing with athletes from other nations will not be considered for carding purposes.

### **Can Senior Carding Based on International Criteria Be Retroactive?**

An athlete may be carded at the Senior Card level for a two-year period retroactive to the beginning of the carding cycle in which the athlete is being nominated provided that:

- He or she achieves a Senior Card performance in a World Championship or Olympic/Paralympic Games within six months of the beginning of the carding cycle; and
- Both the NSO and Sport Canada agree at the annual AAP Review Meeting that athletes may be carded retroactively at the SR1/SR2 level and/or may be upgraded to SR1/SR2 based on the upcoming Worlds/Olympics/Paralympics.

### **What if Athletes Compete in Relay Events or Team Type Events?**

In individual sports with team type or relay events, athletes who compete in the event will be awarded a Senior International Card (SR1/SR2) based on the result of the team/relay in the final. The maximum number of cards awarded to the team will be based on the International Federation's (IF) restrictions of the number of medals awarded per team in the event, e.g. in the short track relay event, medals are awarded to 4 or 5 athletes depending on how many Canadian athletes actually skate in the relay event during the competition.

## **5.2.2 National Criteria**

National criteria identify athletes who have the potential to achieve [international criteria](#). Senior Cards based on national criteria are normally awarded for one year and are called SR or C1 Cards. Athletes who meet the national criteria for Senior Cards for the first time are awarded C1 Cards and are funded at the Development Card level.

National criteria for Senior Cards are established by each NSO and are reviewed every year by Sport Canada to ensure that they meet AAP policy requirements. The criteria should, wherever possible, be based on objective results achieved in designated competitions. The competitions that may be used are domestic competitions (preferably National Championships), international competitions, or a combination of both. The competitions used for the national criteria should be accessible to the majority of the best athletes in Canada and be consistent with the sport's national team training and competitive program.

An athlete is normally expected to improve each year to maintain a Senior Card based on the national criteria. Therefore, the NSO's senior card national criteria must include either incremental performance criteria and/or stipulate a maximum number of years an athlete will be supported at this card level. The maximum number of years an athlete should be supported as a Senior Card based on national criteria will vary from sport to sport and is negotiated between Sport Canada and each NSO.

### **What is the Funding Level for a C1 Card?**

C1 carded athletes are funded at the Development Card level in the first year they meet the national criteria for a Senior Card even if they have previously been carded at the Development (D) level. If, however, the athlete has been carded at the SR1 or SR2 level before meeting the national criteria for the Senior Card, the athlete will be funded at the Senior Card (SR) level rather than at the Development Card level.

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### **What if an Athlete does not Reach Senior Card Level Based on International Criteria within the Prescribed Number of Years?**

An athlete is expected to improve each year to maintain a Senior Card based on national criteria and eventually achieve the international criteria. Therefore, if an athlete, who has reached the maximum number of years for support based on national criteria, is nominated as a Senior Card based on national criteria, the athlete's year-to-year improvement, progression toward the international criteria and future potential will be reviewed. On the basis of this review, Sport Canada will, in discussion with the NSO, exercise its discretion in determining whether an additional year of support as a Senior Card based on national criteria is warranted.

### **Can an Athlete on a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Scholarship be awarded a Senior Card Based on National or International Criteria?**

An athlete training outside Canada on an athletic scholarship e.g., NCAA, may only be carded at the senior level based on national or international criteria for that part of the year when the athlete is training or competing under the direct supervision of the NSO and **not** attending the NCAA institution.

## **5.3 Policies for Development Cards**

Development Cards are intended to support the developmental needs of younger athletes who clearly demonstrate the potential to achieve the Senior Card international criteria but are not yet able to meet the Senior Card criteria.

The financial support provided through Development Cards helps enhance conditions for younger athletes who have not had the same training, coaching, and competitive experience as older athletes and are not yet able to meet the Senior Card criteria. The allocation of Development Cards is intended to ensure that financial support is provided to the athletes with the greatest potential.

As program monies may not always be available to cover the cost of athletes holding Development Cards, athletes should understand that they may be asked to contribute to program costs from their Development Card funding.

Normally, a Development Card cannot be allocated to an athlete previously carded at the Senior Card level for more than two years. An exception may be made, at Sport Canada's sole discretion, for an athlete carded at the Senior Card level while still a junior athlete.

### **5.3.1 Development Card Criteria**

Criteria for Development Cards are established by the NSO and are reviewed each year by Sport Canada for compliance with the AAP.

The criteria must be objective and clearly demonstrate that the athlete has high-performance potential. Normally, the NSO must establish a maximum number of years for which athletes can be carded at the Development Card level before achieving Senior Card status.

NSOs should consider using some or all of the following criteria areas in the development of their Development Card criteria:

- International and/or domestic results;
- Physical and/or physiological parameters relevant to their sport;
- Sport specific measures of technical ability and skill levels;
- Full-time commitment to a NSO National Training Centre;

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- Age may be used as a criterion; however the age level must not be established arbitrarily. If an age criterion is included, the purpose of such a criterion should be clearly stated in the criterion. Further, the NSO must be able to demonstrate through statistical evidence and expert opinion that there is a clear link among the reference to age in the criteria, the performance criteria, and the potential to achieve the international criteria for Senior Cards. The NSO must also be able to demonstrate that it has no alternative to the use of age to identify developing athletes.

## 5.4 Special Considerations for Team Sports

Cards for team sports are available only to athletes required to be involved in competition and training programs under the auspices of the NSO for significant periods during the carding year. The level of support to each athlete will vary depending on their time involvement with the program.

### 5.4.1 General Requirements

For athletes to be eligible to receive full funding at any carding level (12 months of living and training allowance plus tuition where applicable) a team sport must operate a National Team program of a minimum duration of sixty days.

**Reduced support may be provided to athletes who participate in a National Team program for a minimum of thirty days and meet the requirements listed in [Sub-Section 2.2](#) regarding an individualized annual training program and formal monitoring and evaluation. The number of months provided to athletes in the above circumstances will be determined at the sole discretion of Sport Canada.**

### 5.4.2 Athletes Competing on Professional Teams

Athletes who are competing in the National Basketball Association (NBA), the National Hockey League (NHL), Major League Baseball (MLB) or 1<sup>st</sup> Division Soccer Leagues in Europe (men only), as determined by Sport Canada, are not eligible for AAP support. An athlete who has signed a contract in one of these leagues will be ineligible for AAP support effective the date the contract is signed through to the conclusion of the contract.

Athletes who are competing in professional leagues other than the NBA, the NHL, MLB or 1<sup>st</sup> Division Soccer Leagues (men only) in Europe may be considered for AAP support under the following circumstances:

- The NSO can demonstrate that each Eligible Athlete nominated for AAP support has an individualized annual training program that includes significant daily training activities and is based on year-round training principles; and
- The NSO formally monitors and evaluates each athlete's training and competitive programs while they are participating in the professional league. The NSO must designate a national coach or a person with equivalent qualifications and status (e.g. High Performance Director) to perform these tasks.

### 5.4.3 The Senior National Team

Both Senior and Development Cards can be assigned to athletes who are members of the Senior National Team. These cards are based on the team's performance and on the contribution of each athlete to that performance. Senior Cards based on international criteria are awarded to Eligible Athletes who were members of National Teams that achieved the international performance criteria.

The level and number of months of an athlete's card will depend on his or her position on the depth chart and time commitment to the National Team program.

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In order to be eligible for full support (12 months of living and training allowance, plus tuition where applicable) an athlete in a team sport must meet the following minimum standards:

- An annual National Team program of a minimum duration of 60 days must be in place and the athlete participates in that national team program for a least 60 days;
- The program should consist of a minimum of four hours of team practice daily;
- Should include a minimum of one tournament or four games of international competition during or following the 60 day training period.

Reduced support may be provided to athletes who participate in the National Team program for a minimum of thirty days and meets the requirements listed in [Sub-section 2.2](#) regarding an individualized annual training program and formal monitoring. This provision would normally be applied to athletes training and competing outside Canada. The level and duration of the support will be considered by Sport Canada on a case-by-case basis.

The NSO must explain in its Carding Criteria document how the depth chart is established and how it will be used in the selection of athletes to be nominated for carding. This explanation should include how “role players” who may not be amongst the top players in the team, but none-the-less fulfil a specific function on the team, will be included in the depth chart.

#### **5.4.4 Teams below the Senior National Team**

AAP support to athletes on teams below the Senior National Team level may be provided to eligible NSOs on the basis of their card quotas and the following:

- The demonstrated ability of the NSO to deliver comprehensive and quality programming;
- The scope and intensity of the programs offered at the various levels of the high-performance system;
- The scope and intensity of the individual athlete training and competitive demands; and
- The ability of the NSO to supervise and monitor the day-to-day training of its athletes on an annual basis.

An athlete at the Development Card level who makes the Senior National Team for a major event during the carding year will normally be carded and funded at the Senior Card level at the start of the next carding year and will be funded at the SR level rather than the C1 level.

In years when the programs for teams below the Senior National Team level are limited, carding support for athletes in these programs may not be available.

### **5.5 Establishing Carding Criteria**

It is the NSO’s responsibility to develop the carding criteria for national level Senior Cards and Development Cards, as well as the criteria that apply to injured athletes. (See [Section 9](#)). Wherever possible the carding criteria should be based on objective measures.

Opportunities to meet carding requirements should be consistent with a sport’s national training or competitive program and should be accessible to the majority of the best Canadian athletes. Carding criteria should normally be linked to National Team selection criteria and the National Team depth chart for team sports.

The NSO may choose its suite of criteria from the following areas:

- International and/or domestic results;
- Physical and/or physiological parameters relevant to their sport;

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- Sport specific measures of technical ability and skill levels; and
  - Full-time commitment to a NSO National Training Centre.

The development and approval of the NSO's carding criteria must include the following steps:

- The NSO Head Coach, High Performance Director, National Team Committee or appropriate body within the NSO develops the proposed carding criteria;
- The Athlete Representative and appropriate NSO decision-making body review the proposed criteria and make recommendations regarding the criteria;
- The Board of Directors or appropriate decision making body reviews and approves the criteria for submission to Sport Canada;
- Sport Canada reviews the criteria to ensure that they comply with the AAP polices; and
- Under normal circumstances, NSOs distribute these criteria 8 to 10 months before the beginning of the sport's carding cycle. NSO approved AAP compliant carding criteria should be published no later than the beginning of the competition cycle for the upcoming carding period.

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## Section 6 Application for and Approval of Cards

This section describes the overall procedure for obtaining Sport Canada approval of National Sport Organization (NSO) carding nominations of Eligible Athletes. It also describes in detail how to prepare an application package for Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) support.

“Eligible Athlete” means an athlete who has met all requirements of the AAP **and** the published NSO approved AAP compliant carding criteria.

“Irregular nominations” means a nomination of an athlete who has not met the requirements of the AAP **or** the published NSO approved AAP compliant carding criteria.

Only nominations of Eligible Athletes will be considered by Sport Canada for carding. Irregular Nominations will be returned to the NSO without consideration.

The policy of returning to the NSO Irregular Nominations is guided by Sport Canada’s commitment to ensuring transparency and accountability in its allocation of funding support. The administrative process of returning an irregular nomination is not an AAP Decision under [Section 6](#) and cannot be appealed under [Section 13](#) of the AAP.

### 6.1 General Procedures

- In applying it’s approved, AAP compliant, published carding criteria, the NSO determines who is eligible to be nominated or [re-nominated](#) for AAP support at a given carding level;
- From that pool of Eligible Athletes, the NSO determines which athletes it will nominate for AAP support based on the NSO approved published AAP compliant carding criteria;
- The NSO provides an AAP Application Form and a direct deposit form to each Eligible Athlete it has decided to nominate;
- The athlete fills in the AAP Application Form, which includes the Declaration to Accept/Decline AAP Financial Support, and the direct deposit form (if applicable) and submits them to the NSO;
- The NSO prepares an application package for review by Sport Canada. See [Sub-Section 6.2](#) for a description of the contents of the application package;
- Sport Canada reviews and may approve nominations of Eligible Athletes, based on the published NSO approved AAP compliant carding criteria and the policies and procedures of the AAP;
- With the exception of Irregular Nominations that are returned to the NSO, if Sport Canada does not approve a NSO carding nomination and there are valid reasons for an appeal pursuant to [Section 13](#) of this document, the athlete or the NSO may request a review of this decision by following the appeal procedures in [Section 13](#);
- In situations where Sport Canada has agreed to the delayed nominations of Eligible Athletes, the nomination must be provided to Sport Canada within the first six (6) months of the NSO’s carding cycle;
- Following the annual AAP Review Meeting, Sport Canada will inform, in writing, those Eligible Athletes approved for carding support.

- Notes:**
1. In order for funding to be granted and processed, Sport Canada must receive the completed AAP Application Form and confirmation that the athlete has signed the Athlete/NSO Agreement within the carding cycle for which the AAP is approved.
  2. An athlete under age, the AAP Application form must be signed by the athlete’s parent or Legal Guardian.

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## 6.2 Procedures for Athletes Not Being Re-nominated for Carding

Maintaining carded status depends on:

- The NSO re-nominating the athlete. re-nomination is based on the athlete meeting published NSO approved AAP compliant carding criteria and continuing to improve performance;
- Sport Canada approving the re-nomination during the NSO's annual AAP Review Meeting.

If the NSO does not re-nominate a carded athlete for carding support for the new carding cycle, the NSO must:

- Advise the athlete in writing that he or she has not been re-nominated. The reason(s) for the decision must be included in the notice;
- Advise the athlete who is not being re-nominated about opportunities that are available, such as National Team program activities (camps, competitions, etc.) or AAP retirement support;
- Ensure that all athletes who are not nominated or re-nominated have access to an appeal process culminating with the right for the athlete to refer the issue to the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC);
- Notify Sport Canada, following the completion of the NSO appeal procedure, of the outcome of the appeal and make its recommendation to Sport Canada.

Following the annual AAP Review Meeting, Sport Canada will inform, in writing, those athletes who have not been re-carded.

## 6.3 Replacement Carding

Athletes who retire or who are under review by their NSO may be replaced by a designated athlete if these situations are discussed with Sport Canada and the potential replacements is/are identified at the time of the annual AAP Review Meeting.

“Replacement” carding to fill vacant positions caused by retirement, departure from a national team program, or de-carding during the carding cycle may be provided during the course of the carding year should there be a minimum of four months of carding support remaining in the NSO card quota allocation and the “replacement” athlete must have met the carding criteria and be ranked by the NSO as the next athlete to receive AAP support in the annual AAP review process.

## 6.4 NSO Application Package and Review Meeting

It is the NSO's responsibility to prepare an application package and to submit this package to Sport Canada. To ensure that funding to carded athletes is not interrupted, the review meeting should be scheduled at least three weeks before the end of the NSO's carding cycle.

NSOs must send a copy of the entire application package to Sport Canada *no later than five working days* before the annual AAP review meeting. NSOs are encouraged to provide their application package to Sport Canada electronically.

### 6.4.1 Application Package for Individual Sports

The application package for individual sports must contain the following:

- Covering letter;
- List of Eligible Athletes being nominated for carding by carding level;
- Athlete Rationale form for each athlete recommended for carding (see [Appendix B](#));
- Names of athletes who were carded in the previous year and are not being re-nominated for carding by the NSO;
- Outline of the National Team's competition and training program;

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- Annual individual training and competition plan from at least one Senior and one Development carded athlete; these documents must contain the detailed training activities for one micro-cycle in the pre-competition phase;
  - Recommendations for changes to carding criteria;
  - Recommendations for changes in carding-cycle dates (if applicable);
  - Athlete/NSO Agreement;
  - Copy of the NSOs Appeal Policy; and
  - Copy of the NSO's National Team Handbook or comparable document.

#### **6.4.2 Application Package for Team Sports**

The application package for team sports must contain the following:

- Covering letter;
- List of Eligible Athletes being nominated for carding by carding level and the number of months for each athlete;
- Summary of the team's results;
- National Team depth chart, overall and by position, including the working documents or data used to develop the depth chart;
- Athlete Rationale form for each athlete recommended for carding (see [Appendix C](#));
- Names of athletes who were carded in the previous year and are not being re-nominated for carding by the NSO;
- Outline of the National Team's competition and training program, including the number of days for each activity in the program;
- Annual individual training and competition plan from at least one Senior and one Development carded athlete; these documents must contain the detailed training activities for one micro-cycle in the pre-competition phase;
- Recommendations for changes to carding criteria;
- Recommendations for changes in carding-cycle dates (if applicable);
- Athlete/NSO Agreement;
- Copy of the NSOs Appeal Policy; and
- Copy of the NSO's National Team Handbook or comparable document;

#### **6.4.3 Details of Application Package**

##### **Covering Letter**

- Prepared by the NSO contact responsible for managing the NSO's carding criteria and process.
- Indicates any changes from previous submissions (changes in carding criteria, requests for changes in carding-cycle dates, etc.).
- Outlines any AAP issues that could be contentious in the upcoming year.

##### **Summary of Athletes' Results – Team Sports**

- Includes results of all Canadian athletes at World Championships (Senior, Junior, or Espoir) and major games whether or not the athletes are members of the National Team or nominees for carding.
- May include results of other major international events.

##### **Rationale Form for Each Athlete Nominated**

- See samples in Appendices [B](#) and [C](#).

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### **National Team Depth Chart - Team Sports**

- Provides a depth chart of the National Team by position that includes all athletes selected to the National Team and nominated for carding.
- Includes the data used to select the athletes and a ranking summary.

### **List of Athletes Not Being Re-nominated for Carding**

- Lists *all* athletes who were carded in the previous year and are not being re-nominated for carding, as well as the reason(s) for these decisions (failure to meet the published NSO approved, AAP compliant carding criteria, retirement, etc.).

### **Outline of the National Team's Competitive and Training Program**

- Includes a detailed outline of the National Team's competition and training program for the next year for each group.

### **Individual Athlete Plans**

- Includes the annual individual training and competition plan from at least one Senior and one Development carded athlete; these documents must contain the detailed training activities for one micro-cycle in the pre-competition phase.
- Specifies how each athlete's training and competition program will be monitored.

### **Changes to Carding Criteria**

- Includes all changes to carding criteria for the next carding cycle, along with the rationale for these changes.

### **Recommendations for Changes in Carding-Cycle Dates – if applicable**

- Includes all recommendations for changes in the dates of the next carding cycle, along with the rationale for these changes.

### **Athlete/NSO Agreement**

- Includes the current Athlete/NSO Agreement, including any changes in the Agreement as approved by the appropriate NSO committee and endorsed by the athletes' designated representative.

### **NSO's Appeal Policy**

- Includes the NSO's current Appeals policy, and any changes to the policy as approved by the appropriate NSO Committee.

### **Copy of the NSO's National Team Handbook or Comparable Document**

- Includes the NSO's National Team Handbook or comparable document.

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## Section 7 Athlete/NSO Agreement

All athletes approved for Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) funding and their National Sport Organization (NSO) must sign an Athlete/NSO Agreement each carding cycle. This section describes the policies and procedures associated with this agreement.

### 7.1 Policy

The purpose of the Athlete/NSO Agreement is to set out in writing the rights, responsibilities and obligations of the athlete and the NSO.

The Agreement must clearly specify the following:

- Benefits available to the carded athlete through his or her NSO;
- The NSO's obligations;
- The athlete's obligations, including a commitment to follow an agreed-upon training and competitive program;
- Any other commitments to the NSO that the carded athlete is required to make (for instance, time, promotional activities or financial commitments);
- The Agreement's duration (not to exceed one carding cycle);
- Specific Sport Canada and NSO policies the carded athlete must abide by, including the following:
  - The Canadian Policy Against Doping in Sport in effect,
  - The Canadian Anti-Doping Program,
  - The NSO's anti-doping policy,
  - AAP policies and procedures (this document),
  - Federal government sport policy regarding competitions where participation is not permitted, and
  - Completion of the AAP anti-doping education module as requested and available on the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport web site.
- The hearing and appeal procedure that will be used in any dispute between the carded athlete and the NSO. This procedure must conform to natural justice and procedural fairness principles and include access to the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada;
- Details, if applicable, of the carded athlete's trust fund;
- The lead time for the publication of the NSO approved AAP compliant carding criteria (i.e., how far ahead of the next carding cycle the selection criteria will be published).

Where an athlete and the NSO cannot agree to the terms of their Athlete/NSO Agreement, an athlete's carding will not be withheld if the athlete agrees to all the terms required by Sport Canada. In this situation, the athlete and the NSO may avail themselves of the mediation services of the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada.

Under exceptional circumstances, the NSO may request that carding payments be withheld until the athlete has signed his or her Athlete/NSO Agreement. If carding payments are withheld it is the NSO's responsibility to inform Sport Canada that the Agreement has been signed.

The Athlete/NSO Agreement is not considered signed if any sections have been unilaterally deleted or altered in any way. Athletes for whom Sport Canada has not received confirmation of signing from the NSO may have their AAP payments suspended until the NSO confirms in writing that the Agreement has been signed. The decision to suspend AAP payments of athletes who have not signed their Athlete/NSO Agreement will be made in consultation with the NSO, and the NSO will inform Sport Canada of the reasons why the Agreement has not been signed..

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All clauses in the Athlete/NSO Agreement must clearly define the athlete's expected conduct.

The Agreement must be in plain, understandable language. Basic rights such as freedom of speech and confidentiality of medical records must be respected.

## **7.2 Procedures**

A model Athlete/NSO Agreement must be approved by the NSO and the athletes' representative who is designated by the athletes to do so.

The model Agreement may be modified as required to accommodate specific situations. For example, individual athletes may need to modify or negotiate specific clauses to fit their situation.

To facilitate the development of fair and comprehensive Athlete/NSO Agreements, Sport Canada has developed a sample agreement (see [Appendix D](#)). It should be noted that this sample agreement goes beyond the Sport Canada requirements for the specific purposes of carding. Some items in the model agreement are not applicable to all sports, and some items important to specific sports may be missing.

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## Section 8 Financial Benefits

This section sets out the policies and procedures associated with Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) financial benefits.

### 8.1 Policy

Under the AAP, Eligible Athletes have access to the following benefits:

- Living and training allowance
- Tuition and deferred tuition support
- Special needs support

Eligible Athletes approved for carding by Sport Canada may opt to have their AAP payments deposited directly into their Canadian bank account or have a cheque sent to their mailing address. Direct deposit forms are available from the NSO and the AAP.

### 8.2 Living and Training Allowance

Eligible Athletes approved for carding by Sport Canada will receive a monthly living and training allowance according to carding status. This allowance is usually paid in advance every two months.

Carding Status	Monthly Allowance
Senior Card (SR1, SR2, SR)	\$1,500
First Year Senior Card (C1)	\$900
Development Card (D)	\$900

### 8.3 Tuition Support

#### General Tuition Policies

Tuition support is intended to help carded athletes who meet high performance training and competitive requirements obtain a post-secondary level education.

The maximum amount payable is \$5,000 per carding cycle up to a lifetime maximum of \$25,000.

Tuition support comes in two forms:

1. **Tuition** for Eligible Athletes that are carded.
2. **Deferred tuition support** for athletes who are no longer carded.

Tuition support is available for courses at Canadian Universities or Colleges that are publicly supported. Other Canadian educational institutions may be considered for Tuition support on a case-by-case basis and **must be pre-approved by the AAP Manager.**

Full-time or part-time degree, diploma, or certificate programs at eligible schools qualify for tuition support. Degree programs may be undergraduate, graduate, post-graduate or professional.

National Coaching Certification Program courses taken at a National Coaching Institute or through another avenue qualify for tuition support. These courses may be taken on a full-time or part-time basis.

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Courses that are recognized for credits toward apprenticeships in trades or professions and correspondence/on-line courses leading to a degree, diploma, or certificate, as determined by the AAP, may also qualify for tuition support.

AAP will cover a carded athlete's tuition fees up to a maximum of \$5,000 **per carding cycle**.

Under the deferred tuition policies, the AAP will cover tuition fees up to a maximum of \$5,000 **per fiscal year** (April 1 to March 31) for athletes who are no longer carded.

The following ancillary fees are not supported by the AAP:

- Medical, health and dental plan
- Bus passes
- Parking
- Interest charges
- Late fees
- Taxes (GST, for example)
- Textbooks, materials, (e.g., computers)
- Donations
- Any other optional fees.

Athletes must claim tuition fees in the year they are attending school or within one year from the date of payment or completion of the course.

Athletes who are eligible for tuition support and receive an award of financial aid from a Canadian post-secondary institution remain eligible for tuition support if the award does not offset full tuition fees.

### **Schools outside of Canada**

Eligible Athletes who are attending a post-secondary institution outside of Canada **are not eligible** for tuition support or to defer tuition credits during that carding cycle.

### **Payment Procedures**

#### **Payment Procedures for Canadian Publicly Supported Educational Institutions**

Athletes who are attending a Canadian publicly supported educational institution may request a tuition voucher from the AAP. A tuition voucher will not be provided to an athlete attending private educational institutions.

The following procedures apply:

- Athletes request a tuition voucher from the AAP;
- The AAP may approve the Tuition Support based on AAP policies and procedures;
- The AAP completes the first part of the tuition voucher and then provides the tuition voucher to the eligible carded athlete;
- The athlete completes the second part of the tuition voucher and submits it to the eligible educational institution;
- The educational institution completes the tuition voucher and lists the courses being taken or attaches an official school registration form with a list of courses being taken;
- The educational institution sends an invoice along with a copy of the completed tuition voucher and a breakdown of incidental costs to the AAP.

If it is not possible for AAP to pay tuition support directly to the athlete's educational institution, the athlete will be reimbursed directly. To be reimbursed, the athlete must send an official receipt of payment to the AAP. This may be an invoice stamped by the institution indicating payments made or

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a written receipt of payment on official educational institution letterhead. The receipt must include a breakdown of the fees paid.

Upon completion of the course/program the athlete must provide a proof of course completion (e.g., official student transcript or official letter from the Canadian institution).

Upon receipt of proof of course completion the AAP reimburses the athlete directly for the approved tuition request up to the maximum of \$5,000 per carding cycle.

## **Deferred Tuition Eligibility and Payment Procedures**

### **Eligibility**

Deferred tuition is available to assist athletes who were unable to pursue full-time post-secondary education while carded because of their involvement in high performance sport.

Athletes must be eligible to attend a post-secondary educational institution during the year they are carded in order to accumulate deferred tuition.

Athletes who are attending post-secondary institutions outside of Canada are not eligible to accumulate deferred tuition during any carding cycle that they are attending school outside of Canada.

Athletes may defer a maximum of \$5,000 per carding cycle when carded, for a maximum of five carding cycles up to \$25,000. The maximum amount of tuition and deferred tuition combined can never exceed \$25,000.

Athletes have five years from their last date of carding to use any accumulated deferred tuition.

### **Payment Procedures**

The AAP does not make deferred tuition payments to the Canadian educational institution the athlete is attending. The AAP reimburses the athlete directly.

The following procedures apply:

- The athlete must contact the AAP in order to determine his/her eligibility;
- The AAP reviews the athlete's file and approves deferred tuition for which the athlete is eligible based on AAP policies and procedures;
- The AAP informs the athlete of the amount of deferred tuition available and the eligibility of the school;
- The athlete must submit a completed deferred tuition form (available from the AAP);
- The athlete must submit an official receipt of payment to the AAP. (This may take the form of an invoice stamped by the institution indicating payments made or a written receipt of payment on official institution letterhead. The receipt must include a breakdown of the fees paid);
- Upon completion of the course/program the athlete must provide proof of course completion (e.g.,: official student transcript or official letter from the Canadian institution)
- Upon receipt of proof of course completion the AAP reimburses the athlete directly for the approved deferred tuition request up to the maximum of \$5,000 per fiscal year (April 1 to March 31).

**Note:** Athletes must claim tuition fees in the year they are attending school or within a period of one year from the date of payment or completion of the course.

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## 8.4 Special Needs Assistance

### Policy

Special Needs Assistance is available to Eligible Athletes in the following situations:

- Excellence living and training allowance
- Excellence child dependent allowance
- Training and competition allowance for athletes with a disability
- Relocation assistance
- Child care assistance
- Retirement assistance

All special needs assistance requests must be reviewed by the NSO for accuracy and completeness.

Special needs assistance is limited to a maximum of \$13,000 per carding cycle.

Special needs assistance requests must be for the current carding year with the exception of special needs retirement, which must be requested within one year of the last day of the athlete's last carding cycle.

### Excellence Living and Training Allowance

Athletes achieving a top 3 placing (medal must be awarded) at the most recent Olympic/Paralympic Games, or most recent World Championships in events on the program of the upcoming Olympic/Paralympic Games may be eligible for additional living and training allowance.

The allowance is for two successive carding cycles; however, the carded athlete must apply and be approved for each carding cycle:

- The allowance will be paid only in the months during which the carded athlete is receiving a living and training allowance;
- Carded athletes requesting the Excellence Living and Training Allowance will undergo an assessment of their yearly income. Total income will be calculated using the gross income appearing on the Revenue Canada Notice of Assessment for the most recent taxation year and AAP support for the year in question;
- A maximum Excellence Living and Training Allowance of \$500 per month (\$6,000 per carding cycle) is available for carded athletes whose income from all sources is less than \$55,000 per year. A lesser amount is available to carded athletes with income from all sources of \$55,000 to \$60,000 per year

Total income	Eligible Allowance amount
➤ \$60,000+	\$0
➤ \$59,000 to \$59,999	\$1,000
➤ \$58,000 to \$58,999	\$2,000
➤ \$57,000 to \$57,999	\$3,000
➤ \$56,000 to \$56,999	\$4,000
➤ \$55,000 to \$55,999	\$5,000
➤ Lower than \$55,000	\$6,000

- Carded athletes applying for the Excellence Living and Training Allowance must provide:
  - A copy of Revenue Canada's Notice of Assessment for the most recent taxation year
  - The completed special needs assistance application form.

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## Excellence Child Dependent Allowance

Assistance is available to well performing carded athletes in Olympic/Paralympic sports in supporting their “child dependents”. To be eligible to apply for the Excellence Child Dependent Allowance, carded athletes must:

- Achieve a top 3 placing (medal must be awarded) at the most recent Olympic/Paralympic Games, or most recent World Championships in events on the program of the upcoming Olympic/Paralympic Games;
- Have a child or child dependent(s) who is under the age of 18 at the beginning of the carding cycle in which the carded athlete is receiving the benefits;
- A maximum Excellence Child Dependent Allowance of \$500 per month (\$6,000 per carding cycle) is available for carded athletes whose income from all sources is less than \$65,000 per year. A lesser amount is available for carded athletes with income from all sources of \$65,000 to \$70,000 per year

Total income:	Eligible subsidy amount
➤ \$70,000+	\$0
➤ \$69,000 to \$69,999	\$1,000
➤ \$68,000 to \$68,999	\$2,000
➤ \$67,000 to \$67,999	\$3,000
➤ \$66,000 to \$66,999	\$4,000
➤ \$65,000 to \$65,999	\$5,000
➤ Lower than \$65,000	\$6,000

- Carded athletes applying for the Excellence Child Dependent Allowance must provide;
  - A copy of Revenue Canada’s Notice of Assessment for the most recent taxation year,
  - A completed special needs assistance application form. (Available from Sport Canada’s AAP Unit.)

## Training and Competition Allowance for Athletes with a Disability

Carded Paralympic athletes with high support needs (as defined by the (International Paralympic Committee (IPC)) classification groups identified below) who meet the below criteria may apply for Special Needs Assistance:

- The carded athlete has an international “Review” (R) or “Confirmed” (C) sport class status in one of the following IPC classifications. In these classes, the carded athlete requires one-on-one support to train and compete:
  - Boccia: BC1, BC2, BC3 & BC4
  - Swimming: S11, SM11, SB11, S1,SB1, SM1, S2, SB2, SM2, S3, SB3 & SM3
  - Athletics: 51 or athletes competing in 51 events; F52
  - Goalball: B1
  - Judo: B1
  - Football 5-a-side: B1
  - Rowing: B1
  - Rugby Para: .5
- The carded athlete’s classification must be confirmed at the start of the carding cycle in order to qualify for full support. Athletes whose classification is confirmed during the carding cycle may apply for reduced support.
- Carded athletes with “guides” who are carded are not eligible for this special needs assistance.

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- A maximum Training and Competition Allowance for Athletes with a Disability of \$500 per month (\$6,000 per carding cycle) is available for carded athletes whose income from all sources is less than \$65,000 per year. A lesser amount is available for carded athletes with income from all sources of \$65,000 to \$70,000 per year

Total income:	Eligible Allowance amount
➤ \$70,000+	\$0
➤ \$69,000 to \$69,999	\$1,000
➤ \$68,000 to \$68,999	\$2,000
➤ \$67,000 to \$67,999	\$3,000
➤ \$66,000 to \$66,999	\$4,000
➤ \$65,000 to \$65,999	\$5,000
➤ Lower than \$65,000	\$6,000

- Carded Paralympic athletes applying for the Training and Competition Allowance for Athletes with a Disability must provide:
  - A copy of Revenue Canada's Notice of Assessment for the most recent taxation year,
  - Confirmation from the NSO of the athlete's permanent classification at the international level, and
  - A completed special needs assistance application form.

**Note: The NSO must advise the AAP of any change of athlete classification.**

### **Relocation Assistance**

When a carded athlete moves permanently to a NSO designated National Team Training Centre to pursue their high performance athletic career, the AAP may assist in offsetting some of the relocation costs. The AAP will support only two moves during a carded athlete's career, either from home to the training centre or from the training centre to the carded athlete's home, under the following conditions:

- The move must be approved in advance by the NSO and must not be covered by support recommended by Own the Podium;
- Relocation assistance is limited to one-half of actual transportation costs associated with relocation to a maximum of \$500 per move;
- The following expenses may be considered for reimbursement: Transportation (Flight, Train, Bus, Car/Truck rental, Ferry), Gas, Food (meal(s) during travel time) and Hotel Room;
- Carded athletes applying for relocation assistance must provide the original receipts for expenses associated with the relocation.

### **Child Care Assistance**

Carded athletes who require the services of a child care provider in order to attend approved training or competitions may apply for Child Care Assistance, up to a maximum of \$1,000 per carding cycle under the following conditions:

- The NSO certifies that the athlete must be absent from home to attend approved training or competition;
- No member of the family or other ongoing daycare service (including nannies) is available to provide child care;
- The carded athlete is not receiving an Excellence Child Dependent Allowance;
- Provide the original receipt for the child care services;
- A copy of Revenue Canada's Notice of Assessment for the most recent taxation year.

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## **Retirement Assistance**

Carded athletes who have been carded for a minimum of three years at a Senior Card level (C1, SR, SR1, SR2 and SRI) may apply for a one-time maximum Retirement Assistance of \$5,000 to assist in their transition to retirement within one year of the last day of their retirement.

Carded athletes applying for Retirement Assistance must provide:

- A statement of his or her current income and expenses. These expenses include rent, food and transportation expenses;
- The statement of income and expenses must be verified by the NSO as part of the request for special needs assistance;
- A copy of Revenue Canada's Notice of Assessment for the most recent taxation year;
- A statement of expected income and expenses for the following year.

## **Payment Procedures for Special Needs**

The following procedures apply:

- The carded athlete sends his or her special needs assistance request with required documentation to the NSO;
- The NSO reviews the request for completeness and accuracy and forwards it with the documentation to the AAP for approval;
- The AAP Manager reviews the request for assistance. All incomplete applications will be returned to the NSO;
- If approved, the AAP funds the athlete directly.

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## Section 9 Illness, Injury or Pregnancy

This section describes Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) policy and procedures for dealing with an athlete's illness, injury or pregnancy.

### 9.1 Policy

Each National Sport Organization (NSO) should have policy for handling illness, injury or pregnancy.

#### 9.1.1 Short-term Curtailment of Training and Competition for Health-related Reasons

Health-related circumstances that limit an athlete's training and competition for four months or less are a matter strictly between the NSO and the athlete and do not fall under AAP policy. Carded athletes so affected will continue to receive AAP financial support.

#### 9.1.2 Long-term Curtailment of Training and Competition for Health-related Reasons

Carded athletes who are unable to maintain full training and competition commitments for longer than four months because of injury, illness or pregnancy will continue to receive 100 percent of the AAP financial support to which they would otherwise be entitled, provided the following conditions are met:

- The carded athlete undertakes in writing to train or rehabilitate or both under the supervision of the NSO (or its designate) for the period of time for which the athlete is unable to fulfil the training and competition commitments that are part of the normal Athlete/NSO Agreement and at a level that minimizes risk to the athlete's personal health and ensures optimal return to full training and competition at the earliest possible date;
- The carded athlete signifies in writing his or her intention to return to full high performance training and competition at the earliest date possible following the illness, injury or pregnancy;
- Injured or ill carded athletes provide a positive prognosis from an NSO team physician or equivalent for their return to training and competition at the carded-athlete level in their sport within 8 to 12 months.

#### 9.1.3 Failure to Meet Renewal Criteria for Health-related Reasons

A carded athlete who at the end of the carding cycle has not achieved the standard required for the renewal of carding status because of strictly health related reasons may be considered for re-nomination for the upcoming year provided the following conditions are met:

- The NSO's carding criteria includes a method to rank and card injured, ill or pregnant athletes;
- The athlete has fulfilled all reasonable training and rehabilitation requirements aimed at a speedy return to full high performance training and competition during the period of his or her injury, illness or pregnancy or is continuing a rehabilitation program approved by the NSO;
- In the view of the NSO, the athlete's failure to attain the applicable carding standards is strictly related to the injury, illness or pregnancy;
- The NSO, based on its technical judgement and that of a NSO team physician or equivalent, indicates in writing the expectation that the athlete will achieve at least the minimum standards required for carding during the upcoming carding period;
- The athlete has demonstrated and continues to demonstrate his or her long-term commitment to high performance training and competition goals, as well as his or her intention to pursue full

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high performance training and competition throughout the carding period for which he or she wishes to be renewed despite not having met the carding criteria;

- The NSO must provide evidence that the above requirements are being met in order to nominate athletes for carding based on the above provisions.

#### **9.1.4 Voluntary Withdrawal from Carded-Athlete Training and Competition for Health-related Reason**

If an athlete wants, for reasons related to injury, illness or pregnancy, to voluntarily withdraw temporarily or permanently from normal carded-athlete training and competition requirements, the procedures for [voluntary withdrawal](#) from the AAP apply (see [Section 10](#)). The athlete will no longer be eligible for monthly living and training allowance but will be eligible, if qualified, for deferred tuition and/or special needs retirement.

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## Section 10 Voluntary Withdrawal from the AAP or Declining AAP Support

This section describes the policy and procedures associated with voluntary withdrawal from the Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) or declining AAP support.

### 10.1 Policy

#### 10.1.1 Voluntary Withdrawal from the AAP

Athletes may withdraw voluntarily from the AAP. This may involve retiring permanently, or temporarily relinquishing the commitments of carding.

Those wishing to withdraw voluntarily should express their wish to do so to their National Sport Organization (NSO).

Should a NSO fail to notify Sport Canada in a timely manner of an athlete's voluntary withdrawal and should this result in overpayment of AAP funds to that athlete, the NSO must facilitate the return of the overpaid funds to Sport Canada.

Athletes who retire permanently in mid-carding cycle will be allowed two months transitional AAP support past the date of their actual retirement to help them adjust to their post-athletic situation. This does not preclude the athlete applying for or receiving special-needs retirement, deferred tuition or relocation assistance. (see Sub-[Section 8.1](#)).

#### 10.1.2 Declining AAP Support

If approved for carding, Eligible Athletes, with an annual income of \$50,000 or more after sport expenses, may decline AAP support. If an athlete declines AAP financial support, the AAP support will go to the next athlete that meets the published NSO approved AAP compliant carding criteria.

Declining AAP support means that the athlete receives no living and training allowance, tuition or special needs support but continues to receive services from Canadian Sport Centres/Institutes.

Declining AAP support for one year does not preclude the athlete from future funding and the athlete retains the recognition as a "carded" athlete based on the level at which they qualify.

### 10.2 Procedures

#### 10.2.1 Voluntary Withdrawal from the AAP

When a NSO becomes aware or is informed that an athlete wishes to voluntarily withdraw from the AAP, it must advise the AAP Manager **in writing** of the effective date of withdrawal.

Before Sport Canada withdraws an athlete's AAP support because of that athlete's decision to voluntarily withdraw from the AAP:

- The NSO shall provide written confirmation to the AAP Manager that the athlete concerned has voluntarily withdrawn from the AAP;
- The AAP Manager will notify the athlete by registered mail that AAP support is being withdrawn following written notice from the NSO that the athlete has voluntarily withdrawn from the AAP. This letter includes any conditions that may apply, as well as information about future support available, such as deferred tuition;

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- The athlete has 30 days from receipt of the letter to make representations to the NSO regarding why his or her carded status should not be withdrawn.

After this 30 day period is over and due consideration has been given to any representations made by or on behalf of the athlete, Sport Canada may withdraw the athlete's carded status or continue AAP support if it is determined that the athlete has not voluntarily withdrawn from the AAP.

Any allowances previously paid to the athlete beyond the two month period of transitional support must be refunded by the athlete to the Receiver General for Canada. It is the responsibility of the NSO to facilitate the return of these funds to Sport Canada.

### **10.2.2 Declining AAP Support**

An athlete electing to decline AAP financial support must sign section B of the *Application for Financial Support*. The athlete must complete the remainder of the application form for statistical purposes.

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## Section 11 Withdrawal of Carded Status

This section describes the policy and procedures associated with withdrawal of carded status.

### 11.1 Policy

Athletes may have their carded status withdrawn under the following conditions:

- Failure to meet training or competition commitments;
- Violation of the Athlete/National Sport Organization(NSO) Agreement;
- Failure to meet athlete responsibilities outlined in the Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) Policies and Procedures;
- Gross breach of discipline;
- Investigation for cause; and
- Violations of anti-doping rules.

In most cases, the NSO makes the recommendation that carded status be withdrawn; however Sport Canada may also withdraw carded status without a recommendation from the NSO. These situations are noted in the following sections.

Policies on anti-doping and AAP funding are outlined in [Section 12](#).

### 11.2 Procedure

#### 11.2.1 Failure to Meet Training or Competition Commitments

Failure to meet agreed-to training or competition commitments may include:

- A decision by the athlete to live in an environment not conducive to high-performance achievement;
- Any deliberate action by the athlete that significantly risks or limits performance; or
- An inability to meet the training and competition obligations outlined in the athlete's annual training/competition plan or the Athlete/NSO Agreement for the particular carding cycle.

**Note:** Failure to achieve preset performance objectives does not in itself establish failure to meet agreed-to training or competition commitments.

**If a NSO wishes to recommend withdrawal of carded status** for an alleged failure to meet agreed-to training and competitive commitments, the NSO must first:

- Provide a verbal warning to the athlete, including the steps and timelines to remedy the situation and the consequences of a failure to heed the warning;
- Follow-up with a written warning to the athlete if the verbal warning is not heeded.

If the above steps are not successful in resolving the matter and the NSO still wishes to recommend withdrawal of carded status, the NSO must provide written notification to the AAP Manager and the NSO's Sport Canada Program Officer, with a copy to the athlete, recommending withdrawal of the athlete's carded status. This written notification must:

- Indicate the grounds on which the recommendation for withdrawal of carded status is being made;
- Indicate the steps already taken to address the issue (verbal warning followed by formal letter of warning);
- Notify the athlete of his or her right to contest the NSO's recommendation to withdraw carded status through the NSO's internal appeal process within the prescribed time.

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Following receipt of a written notification from a NSO recommending withdrawal of an athlete's carded status, the AAP Manager will:

- Advise the athlete by registered mail of receipt of the recommendation from the NSO;
- Enclose a copy of the recommendation in the letter to the athlete;
- Advise the athlete to contact the NSO if the athlete wishes to appeal the NSO's recommendation for the withdrawal of his or her carded status.

Once the period for initiating an appeal has expired and the athlete has not filed an appeal, the NSO must advise the NSO's Sport Canada Program Officer and the AAP Manager of the following in writing, with a copy to the athlete:

- The athlete has not appealed the recommendation to withdraw his or her carded status;
- Sport Canada may make a decision on the NSO's recommendation to withdraw the athlete's carded status.

**Pending the resolution of an appeal**, Sport Canada will continue to provide the athlete with AAP living and training allowances for two months after the NSO's initial notification recommending withdrawal of the athlete's carded status.

If an appeal process continues for more than two months, the athlete may request that Sport Canada continue AAP support on a monthly basis until the appeal is resolved. Sport Canada will consider representations from the athlete to continue AAP support pending resolution of the appeal, based on the fact that:

- Withdrawal of support could cause financial hardship that would prevent the athlete from training; or
- There have been significant delays in the appeal process that were not caused by the athlete; or
- Any other matter that Sport Canada deems relevant to its determination.

Sport Canada may approve continued AAP funding subject to conditions.

The NSO must notify the Sport Canada AAP Manager of the outcome of the appeal process and make a recommendation to Sport Canada that conforms to the final appeal decision. Sport Canada will then decide whether to accept or reject the NSO recommendation.

When Sport Canada considers the recommendation made by the NSO, it may:

- Accept its recommendation and withdraw carded status from the athlete for the remainder of the carding cycle. The effective date of withdrawal of carded status will be two months following the original letter from the NSO recommending withdrawal of the athlete's carded status;
- Reject its recommendation altogether;
- Dismiss the recommendation but impose some lesser penalty; or
- Make additional recommendations to either party if it believes some useful purpose might be served by doing so.

If Sport Canada decides to withdraw the athlete's carded status, the AAP Manager must notify the athlete of the decision and the reasons behind the decision by registered mail.

The athlete may request a review of a Sport Canada decision to withdraw carded status by following the appeal procedures in [Section 13](#).

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If Sport Canada wishes to withdraw an athlete's carded status for allegedly failing to meet training or competition requirements without the NSO's recommendation, the steps listed below under [Investigations for Cause](#) will apply.

### **11.2.2 Violation of the Athlete/NSO Agreement**

If an athlete allegedly violates any of the obligations specified in his or her Athlete/NSO Agreement, the NSO may recommend withdrawal of carded status. In such cases, the steps listed in [Failure to Meet Training or Competitive Commitments](#) will apply.

### **11.2.3 The Athlete's Failure to Meet Responsibilities Outlined in AAP Policies**

If Sport Canada wishes to withdraw an athlete's carded status because it has reason to believe the athlete has failed to meet responsibilities outlined in AAP policies, the steps listed in [Investigation for Cause](#) will apply.

### **11.2.4 Gross Breach of Discipline**

If the NSO wishes to recommend withdrawal of an athlete's carded status for an alleged gross breach of discipline, the steps listed in [Failure to Meet Training or Competitive Commitments](#) will apply.

If Sport Canada wishes to withdraw an athlete's carded status because it has reason to believe the athlete is guilty of a gross breach of discipline, without the NSO's recommendation, the steps listed in [Investigation for Cause](#) will apply.

### **11.2.5 Investigation for Cause**

Investigation for cause may include, but is not limited to, making a false application to obtain AAP benefits for which the athlete would not otherwise have been eligible (for example, the AAP living and training allowance, tuition support, or special-needs assistance).

The following occurs in situations where Sport Canada wishes to pursue an investigation for cause:

- The AAP Manager asks the NSO by registered mail to undertake an investigation with appropriate due process regarding the specific allegations against the athlete. A copy of this letter is also sent to the athlete by registered mail;
- Sport Canada will continue to provide the athlete with AAP allowances for two months after the AAP Manager's letter requesting an investigation is sent to the NSO. Following this two-month period, AAP financial benefits may be withheld pending resolution of the matter;
- Following this two month period, pending the result of the NSO's investigation, Sport Canada will consider representations from the athlete to continue AAP support on a monthly basis until the matter is resolved, including the following:
  - withdrawal of support could cause financial hardship that would prevent an athlete from training,
  - there have been significant delays in the investigation not caused by the athlete, or
  - any other matter that Sport Canada deems relevant to its determination.

Sport Canada may approve continued support subject to conditions.

Following receipt of the NSO's report of its investigation, Sport Canada may:

- Withdraw the athlete's carded status effective from the beginning of the carding cycle;
- Withdraw the athlete's carded status for the remainder of the carding cycle only; or

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- Reinstatement of AAP support if it is determined that the allegations against the athlete are groundless and if support was withheld pending the investigation or appeal.

If Sport Canada decides to consider withdrawing carded status, the AAP Manager will notify the athlete by registered mail of the allegations against him or her. The AAP Manager will also notify the athlete that he or she may make representations to Sport Canada stating the reasons why Sport Canada should not decide to withdraw carded status. The athlete will also be advised that where there are valid reasons, a Sport Canada decision to withdraw carded status may be appealed by following the appeal procedures in [Section 13](#).

Sport Canada reserves the right to impose penalties for a false application above and beyond the immediate withdrawal of carded status. For example, Sport Canada may declare the athlete ineligible for AAP benefits for one full year from the time of the finding of a false application.

If an athlete has his or her carded status withdrawn because of a false application, the athlete must refund any AAP benefits received. Furthermore, since NSOs endorse all AAP applications, NSOs are responsible for facilitating the refunding of AAP benefits by athletes in these circumstances.

### **11.2.6 Anti-Doping Rule Violations**

If an athlete is asserted to have committed an anti-doping rule violation by Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES), an International Federation, a Major Games Organization, the World Anti-Doping Agency or any other anti-doping organization, his or her carded status will be placed on hold pending resolution of the matter.

The AAP will advise the athlete of any such hold by registered mail.

If it is determined that an athlete has committed and is sanctioned for an anti-doping rule violation, Sport Canada will withdraw that athlete's carded status from the date of the sport ineligibility.

**Note:** For more information on the anti-doping policy related to AAP funding, refer to [Section 12](#).

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## Section 12 Policy on Anti-doping and AAP Support

This section describes the anti-doping policy related to Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) funding.

### 12.1 Policy

Athletes must respect and comply with the Canadian Policy Against Doping in Sport-2011, as amended from time to time, and the Canadian Anti-Doping Program (CADP) of the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES), as a condition of funding under the AAP.

Furthermore, athletes must complete the CCES on line anti-doping education module within six months of the beginning of their initial year of carding, and at times thereafter as required by Sport Canada. Failure to do so will result in AAP payments being suspended until requirements are completed.

It is the responsibility of CCES to inform Sport Canada of an adverse analytical finding under the CADP or any other assertions by CCES that an athlete has committed an anti-doping rule violation.

It is the responsibility of the NSO to inform Sport Canada of all adverse analytical findings resulting from international testing or any other assertions that an athlete has committed an anti-doping rule violation.

If an athlete is asserted to have committed an anti-doping rule violation by CCES, an International Federation, a Major Games Organization, the World Anti-Doping Agency or any other anti-doping organization, AAP benefits will be placed on hold pending the determination of an anti-doping rule violation or until such time as a final ruling is made on any subsequent appeal.

If it is determined that no anti-doping rule violation occurred and there is no subsequent appeal, the athlete's AAP benefits will be reinstated from the date of the suspension of AAP funding.

Any athlete who has been sanctioned for an anti-doping rule violation pursuant to or recognized under the CADP or its predecessors resulting in a period of sport ineligibility of **less than two years** is ineligible to receive any AAP support **while serving their sport ineligibility sanction, and is also** ineligible to be nominated for AAP support during this time.

Following the period of ineligibility for AAP support, the athlete must meet the published NSO approved AAP compliant carding criteria for the carding cycle for which he or she is applying for support including all other AAP eligibility requirements.

An athlete, who has been sanctioned for an anti-doping rule violation pursuant to or recognized under the CADP or its predecessors resulting in a **two year period of sport ineligibility or greater** and, where applicable, has not been reinstated, is **permanently ineligible** to receive any AAP support.

If an athlete's carding is withdrawn because of a finding that an anti-doping rule has been violated and the athlete is sanctioned with sport ineligibility, the athlete's carding cannot be allocated to another athlete during that carding cycle.

For more information on sanctions related to anti-doping, refer to [Sport Canada's Anti-Doping Sanctions](#).

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## Section 13 Appeals Policy

This section presents the appeals policy of the Athlete Assistance Program (AAP).

### Definitions

For the purposes of this section:

- *AAP Decision* means a Sport Canada decision made under Section 6 ([Application for and Approval of Cards](#)) or Section 11 ([Withdrawal of Carding Status](#));
- *Appeal* means a review of an AAP Decision requested by an athlete or a National Sport Organization (NSO). (If an athlete makes such a request, Sport Canada will so inform the NSO) *Appeal* does not include an appeal of a National Sport Organization's (NSO) AAP nomination/re-nomination decision or of a NSO's recommendation to withdraw carding. These NSO decisions may be appealed only through the NSO's review process, which includes an application to the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC).  
For greater certainty, *Appeal* does not include a review of a published NSO approved, AAP compliant carding criteria;
- *Panel* means the Sport Canada Executive Director of Sport Excellence, the Manager of High Performance (Sport Excellence Division), and the Manager of NSOs (Sport Development Division) who together review Appeals of AAP Decisions;
- *Days* shall mean total days, including weekends or holidays.

### 13.1 Policy Statement

Sport Canada is committed to a dispute-resolution system that is based on clear, consistent, and effective internal procedures for resolving disputes within Sport Canada.

#### Timing of Appeal

An athlete or a NSO who wishes to appeal an AAP Decision shall have fifteen days from the communication of the decision for which the Appeal is being requested to initiate an Appeal.

Any party wishing to initiate an Appeal beyond the 15 day period must provide a written request stating the reasons for requesting an exemption from the requirement of the above paragraph. The decision to allow or not allow an Appeal outside the 15 day period shall be at the sole discretion of the Sport Canada Executive Director of Sport Excellence and cannot be appealed.

#### Requests for Appeal

Requests for an Appeal of an AAP Decision, together with the reasons why the athlete or NSO is requesting an Appeal, must be directed to the Manager of the AAP, who will refer the matter to the Panel for a decision.

#### Procedure for Documentary Appeal

The Appeal shall be held by way of documentary submissions. The Panel shall govern the Appeal by such procedures as it deems appropriate, provided that the basic principles of fairness—the right to know the case to be met and the right to make a case in response—are respected:

- All parties are given a reasonable opportunity to provide written submissions to the Panel, to review the written submissions of the other parties, and to provide written rebuttal and argument;
- The applicable principles and timelines set out above are respected.

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## Information that May be Considered

As a general rule, the Panel will consider only information that was before the original decision maker, namely the following:

- Information provided by the NSO in its annual AAP submission;
- Published NSO approved, AAP compliant carding criteria; and
- Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Program Policies and Procedures (this document).

At its discretion, the Panel may consider new information that is material and that was not available at the time of the original decision.

## Decision

Within 30 days of concluding the Appeal, the Panel shall issue its written decision, with reasons. In making its decision, the Panel shall have no greater authority than that of the original decision-maker. The Panel may decide to void, vary or confirm the decision being appealed.

## 13.2 Recourse against a Decision of the Panel

An athlete or a NSO may seek recourse against a decision of the Panel only by applying for dispute resolution to the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC) within 30 days of the communication of the decision that is being appealed.

The dispute resolution referred to in the previous paragraph will be conducted under the auspices of the SDRCC and pursuant to its Code of Procedure.

By applying for dispute resolution of a decision of the Panel before the SDRCC, the applicant agrees that all disputes regarding that decision shall be resolved through the SDRCC process and that he or she will not start any action or application for judicial review regarding any decision made by the Panel.

Notwithstanding any provisions of the SDRCC Code of Procedure, the decision being appealed may be set aside by the SDRCC arbitrator or by the SDRCC panel only if the athlete or NSO proves the following:

- Sport Canada failed to act in accordance with the *Athlete Assistance Program Policies and Procedures*;
- Sport Canada failed to observe a principle of natural justice or procedural fairness; or
- The decision was based on an erroneous finding of fact made in a perverse or capricious manner or without regard for the material before it.

In cases where the decision being appealed is one taken by Sport Canada under Section 6 ([Application for and Approval of Cards](#)), the decision being appealed may be set aside only if the athlete or NSO proves that such breach in the decision-making process had a material impact on the athlete's ability to meet the established carding criteria.

The jurisdiction of the SDRCC arbitrator or SDRCC panel is limited to making a decision on the existence of an error and, where there is such a finding, to returning the matter with written reasons for the finding to Sport Canada for a proper decision.

Sport Canada will reconsider the matter in accordance with the principles established by the decision of the SDRCC arbitrator or SDRCC panel and render a new decision. This new Sport Canada decision shall be final and binding upon the parties.

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## Appendix A: Training Expectations for Carded Athletes

Athletes carded under the Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) are expected to rank amongst the top 16 in their discipline at the World Championships or at Olympic/Paralympic Games. To achieve such high levels of performance, athletes must adhere to a carefully planned program of specialized training and competition activities.

The type and the amount of training done by athletes carded under the AAP should correspond to the stage they are at in their sport's Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model. As a rule, carded athletes have reached the *Training to Compete* or the *Training to Win* stages of athletic preparation.

A review of the available literature indicates that at these competitive levels there is a high correlation between the volume of training performed by the athlete and the quality of the performances achieved. Because the optimal way of measuring and prescribing training volume and intensity may vary from one sport to another, it is not within the scope of this document to make specific recommendations in this regard.

However, it is the position of Sport Canada that athletes carded under the AAP should follow an annual periodized program that is 1) adapted to their stage of athletic development and 2) consistent with their sport's LTAD model with regard to the type, the amount, and the sequential organization of training activities to be carried out.

### References

Balyi I., Cardinal C., Higgs C., Norris S. and R. Way. *Long-Term Athlete Development - Canadian Sport for Life*. Canadian Sport Centres.

Bompa, T. *Theory and Methodology of Training*. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt, 1994.

Platonov V. N. *L'entraînement sportif: Théorie et Méthodologie* [Athletic training: theory and methodology]. Paris: Éditions Revue EPS, 1988 (translation of original document published in Russian, 1984).

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## **Appendix B: Athlete Rationale Form - Individual Sports**

Athlete's name:

National Team Level:

Card Level Nomination:

Rational for carding (which criteria did the athlete met):

Personal coach:

Training location:

University/school (if applicable):

Fitness testing results (if required for carding support):

How will the athlete's training be monitored?

National Team Coach's comments on the athlete's performance in the previous year and on the athlete's objective for upcoming year:

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## Appendix C: Athlete Rationale Form - Team Sport

Athlete's name:

National Team Level:

Card Level Nomination:

Number of months:

Position & rank at position:

Overall rank on team:

Personal coach:

Training location:

Club/team name:

League:

Professional: Yes/No

University/school (if applicable):

International caps:

Fitness testing results (if required for carding support):

How will the athlete's training be monitored?

National Team Coach's comments on the athlete's performance in the previous year and on the athlete's objective for upcoming year:

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## Appendix D: Model Athlete/National Sport Organization (NSO) Agreement

AGREEMENT made this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 201\_\_

**BETWEEN**

\_\_\_\_\_, having its national office at \_\_\_\_\_  
(hereinafter referred to as “the NSO”)

**AND**

\_\_\_\_\_, residing at \_\_\_\_\_  
(hereinafter referred to as “the Athlete”).

**WHEREAS** the Athlete wishes to be an active competitor in NSO-sanctioned events with his or her rights and obligations clearly defined;

**WHEREAS** the NSO is recognized by \_\_\_\_\_ (the NSO’s International Federation) and Sport Canada as the sole National Sport Organization governing the sport of \_\_\_\_\_ in Canada;

**WHEREAS** the NSO and \_\_\_\_\_ recognize the need to clarify the relationship between the NSO and the Athlete by establishing their respective rights and obligations;

**AND WHEREAS** the Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Program (hereinafter referred to as “the AAP”) requires these rights and obligations to be stated in a written agreement to be signed by the NSO and the Athlete who applies for assistance under the AAP;

**AND WHEREAS** the International Federation requires that the NSO certify the eligibility of the Athlete to compete as a member in good standing;

**NOW THEREFORE** the parties agree to the following:

***NSO’s Obligations***

**1. The NSO shall:**

- a) organize, select and operate teams of athletes, coaches and other necessary support staff (a National Team) to represent Canada in the sport of \_\_\_\_\_ throughout the world;
- b) communicate with athletes both orally and in writing in the language of their choice (French or English);

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- c) publish selection criteria for all national teams at least three months before the selection for any particular team and at least eight months before the selection of major games teams (e.g., Olympic, Commonwealth, Pan American, Fédération internationale du sport universitaire (FISU) and World Championship Teams);
  - d) conduct selection of members to all national teams in a manner that is in conformity with the generally accepted principles of natural justice and procedural fairness;
  - e) publish NSO approved, AAP compliant criteria for the selection of Eligible Athletes to be nominated for the AAP ten months before the start of the AAP eligibility cycle for the particular sport;
  - f) nominate all eligible athletes who meet the published NSO approved, AAP compliant carding criteria;
  - g) organize programs and provide funding for the development and provision of coaching expertise, officials and event training centres in Canada in the sport of \_\_\_\_\_ in accordance with the budget of the NSO;
  - h) assist the Athlete in obtaining quality medical care and advice;
  - i) provide the Athlete selected to be a member of the National Team with the National Team uniform;
  - j) protect the eligibility of the Athlete by ensuring that a mechanism for the establishment of a trust fund for the Athlete exists that is in accordance with International Federation rules and advise the Athlete of the nature of all payments to and withdrawals from the trust fund;
  - k) regularly provide National Team program information (training and competition) to the Athlete in the form of mailed correspondence;
  - l) provide a formal review of the Athlete's annual training program;
  - m) provide funding for the Athlete for training camps and competitions in accordance with the budget of the NSO;
  - n) provide athletes with the opportunity to be informed and to provide input into matters affecting them, particularly in the area of national team programming. This input may be achieved through a variety of means, but opportunities must be planned and announced, not determined on an *ad hoc* basis; and
  - o) provide an appeal procedure that is in conformity with the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness, which shall include access to an independent dispute resolution process with respect to any dispute the Athlete may have with the NSO, other than those related to the Athlete Assistance Program, and publish the details of this procedure in a prominent manner so that it is freely available to all athletes or any person requesting this information by or on behalf of the Athlete.

## ***Athlete's Obligations***

### **2. The Athlete shall:**

- a) recognizing the responsibilities of the coaches in coaching-related decisions, follow the training and competitive program mutually agreed to by the following;
  - the NSO representative responsible for developing and monitoring National Team training and competitive programs (the National Coach or High Performance Director, for example),
  - the Athlete's personal coach; and
  - the Athlete.
- b) avoid living in an environment not conducive to high-performance achievements or taking any deliberate action that puts his or her ability to perform at risk or limits performance;
- c) provide the National Coach or his or her designate, by mail sent to the National Office, with an annual training chart and monthly updates of changes to the chart or any other appropriate information that the NSO may request;
- d) subject to paragraph 2(e), participate in all mandatory training camps and competitions as described in Appendix A of this Agreement (Appendix A is sport specific and is not included in this document);
- e) notify the NSO immediately in writing of any injury or other legitimate reason that will prevent the Athlete from participating in an upcoming event referred to in Appendix A of this Agreement (Appendix A is sport specific and is not included in this document) and ensure in the case of an injury that a certificate from a medical doctor setting out the specific nature of the injury is forwarded to the NSO within three weeks of the injury;
- f) dress in the National Team uniform and other official clothing, if applicable, while travelling or participating as part of the National Team;
- g) avoid any action or conduct that would reasonably be expected to significantly disrupt or interfere with a competition or the preparation of any Athlete for a competition;
- h) during or at National Team training camps and competitions, avoid alcoholic consumption to a level that would reasonably be expected to impair the Athlete's ability to speak, walk or drive, or cause the Athlete to behave in a disruptive manner;
- i) avoid the use of banned substances that contravene the rules of International Olympic Committee (IOC), the rules of the International Federation and the Canadian Policy on Doping in Sport;
- j) submit, without prior warning, to unannounced doping-control tests in addition to other prior-notice tests and submit at other times to doping-control testing when requested by the NSO, the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES) or other authorities designated to do so;
- k) complete the CCES on line anti-doping education module within 6 months of the beginning of their initial year of carding and at times thereafter as required by Sport Canada. Failure to do so will result in AAP payments being suspended until requirements are completed.

- l) avoid the possession of anabolic drugs and neither supply such drugs to others directly or indirectly nor encourage or condone their use by knowingly aiding in any effort to avoid detection of the use of banned substances or banned performance enhancing practices;
- m) participate, if asked by the NSO to do so, in any Doping Control/Education Program developed by the NSO in co-operation with Sport Canada and the CCES;
- n) avoid participating in any competitions where federal government sport policy has determined that such participation is not permitted;
- o) participate in sport-related, non-commercial promotional activities on behalf of the Government of Canada. The NSO usually makes such requests for participation and arranges the activities. Unless supplementary compensation is arranged, these activities do not normally involve more than two working days per athlete per year;
- p) adhere to and comply with the NSO's appeal procedure; and
- q) actively participate in all AAP evaluation activities. Athletes will co-operate fully in any evaluation of the AAP that may be conducted by the Minister or anyone authorized to act on the Minister's behalf and provide such data as the person conducting the evaluation considers necessary for the proper conduct of the evaluation.

### **3. Default of Agreement**

- a) Where one of the parties to this agreement is of the opinion that the other party has failed to conform with its obligations under this agreement, the following shall occur shall forthwith:
  - i) The one party shall notify the other party in writing of the particulars of the alleged default.
  - ii) If there exists a reasonable opportunity to correct the default and the default is not so fundamental as to amount to a repudiation of this agreement, the notifying party shall indicate in the notice the steps to be taken to remedy the default and a reasonable period of time to complete the remedial steps.
  - iii) The parties agree that the giving of the above referred-to notice by a party will not prevent that party from later asserting that the default was so fundamental as to amount to a repudiation of this agreement.
- b) If the party receiving the notice remedies the breach within the specified time, the dispute shall be considered resolved and neither party shall have any recourse against the other concerning the matter alleged to comprise the default. If the party receiving the notice fails to remedy the breach within the specified time and either party wishes recourse against the other concerning the matters alleged to comprise the default, that party shall use the dispute settlement mechanism of this agreement to resolve the differences between the parties.

**Duration of Agreement**

This AGREEMENT comes into force on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 201\_\_, and terminates on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 201\_\_ .

**Athlete Declaration**

I hereby declare that in return for any financial assistance provided by the Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Program, I undertake to fulfil all commitments and responsibilities outlined in the booklet *Athlete Assistance Program Policies and Procedures* and my Athlete/NSO Agreement. I agree to refund any assistance provided to me, payable to the Receiver General of Canada, should my eligibility status change or my carded status be withdrawn, effective the withdrawal/change of status date.

\_\_\_\_\_ (the NSO)

_____	_____	_____
Witness	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	NSO Representative

_____	_____	_____
Witness	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Athlete