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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 consists of the athletes, coaches and sport administrators who now access or wish to access the program.

In general, the AAP recognizes the commitment athletes make to long-term training and competitive programs and seeks to relieve some of the pressures associated with participation in international sport. In particular, the AAP provides financial assistance to Canadian high-performance athletes. This assistance goes *directly* to athletes and helps them with their training and competition needs. *The AAP is the only Sport Canada program that provides direct financial support to athletes.*

The AAP is one of several Sport Canada programs designed to assist in the development of high-performance sport. It is not intended to meet all the needs of Canada's high-performance athletes. The AAP complements other Sport Canada initiatives, such as support for the sport science program, coaching, National Sport Centres programs and National Team programs; the success of the AAP depends on the coordinated efforts of National Sport Organizations (NSOs), athletes and Sport Canada.

Sport Canada hopes the AAP will encourage provincial government agencies and provincial sport organizations to assist athletes ranked just below those receiving AAP funding. Such support would provide continuity in the development of international-class Canadian athletes.

This document has 13 sections, as follows:

- Section 1: Program Overview
- Section 2: Eligibility for AAP Support
- Section 3: NSO, Athlete and Sport Canada Responsibilities
- Section 4: Allocating Cards to Eligible NSOs
- Section 5: Carding Criteria
- Section 6: Application for and Approval of Cards
- Section 7: Athlete/NSO Agreement
- Section 8: Financial Benefits
- Section 9: Illness, Injury or Pregnancy
- Section 10: Voluntary Withdrawal from the AAP
- Section 11: Withdrawal of Carding Status
- Section 12: Policy on Anti-doping and AAP Support
- Section 13: Appeal Policy

Note: Sport Canada has also developed the *Athlete Assistance Program Athlete Handbook*, which summarizes the AAP policies and procedures athletes need to know. *The Athlete Assistance Program Athlete Handbook* is distributed annually to all carded athletes and is available upon request from NSOs and national coaches. *Athlete Assistance Program Policies and Procedures* is also available on the Sport Canada Web site at <http://www.pch.gc.ca/sportcanada>.

Section 1 Program Overview

1.1 What Is the AAP?

The Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) is a national-level program designed to contribute 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 already placed, or having the potential to place, in the top 16 in the world.

Athletes who are approved for funding and are financially supported through the AAP are referred to as CARDED ATHLETES. AAP support is 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.

Note: The AAP is the only Sport Canada program that provides funding *directly* to athletes.

1.2 How Does the AAP Carding Process Work?

National Sport Organizations (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.

This part of the AAP carding process...	Is described in...
Sport Canada approves eligible NSOs for funding	Minimum Eligibility Requirements for NSOs
Sport Canada allocates cards to eligible NSOs	Allocating Cards to Eligible NSOs
NSOs develop sport-specific carding criteria that athletes must meet to be nominated for AAP support	Carding Criteria
NSOs nominate or re-nominate eligible athletes for AAP support at a given level	Minimum Eligibility Requirements for Athletes Application for and Approval of Cards
Sport Canada reviews and approves nominations based on the sport-specific carding criteria and AAP policies	Application for and Approval of Cards
Athletes complete the AAP Application Form provided by their NSO and sign an Athlete/NSO Agreement	Application for and Approval of Cards Athlete/NSO Agreement

<p>This part of the AAP carding process...</p>	<p>Is described in...</p>
<p>Athletes approved for carding receive benefits during the period of time for which they are approved</p>	<p>Financial Benefits Illness, Injury or Pregnancy</p>
<p>AAP funding may be withdrawn as a result of 1) voluntary withdrawal from the AAP or 2) withdrawal of carded status</p>	<p>Voluntary Withdrawal from the AAP Withdrawal of Carded Status Policy on Anti-doping and AAP Support</p>
<p>Athletes may wish to appeal an NSO or a Sport Canada decision or recommendation about carding</p>	<p>Appeals Policy</p>

Section 2 Eligibility for AAP Support

To be nominated by Sport Canada for AAP funding, NSOs must meet certain minimum requirements; similarly, athletes must meet various minimum requirements before their NSO can nominate them for AAP support at a given level. This section provides a detailed description of these requirements.

2.1 Main Principles of Eligibility for AAP Support

AAP support is subject to three main principles, as follows:

- Except where otherwise indicated in the policies in this handbook, AAP financial support is usually limited to athletes in sports whose high-performance programs are financially supported by Sport Canada as a result of the implementation of the Sport Funding and Accountability Framework (SFAF).
- Normally, 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.
- Sport Canada reserves the right to cancel or reduce the amount of AAP funding if Parliament changes the funding levels.

Note: Olympic demonstration sports or Olympic demonstration events are not considered Olympic sports for the purposes of the AAP.

2.2 Minimum Eligibility Requirements for NSOs

- Normally, the NSO's high-performance program must be funded by Sport Canada through SFAF.
- The sport must have a sanctioned World Championship, World Cup or equivalent championship that is held at least every other year.
- The NSO must have a clearly articulated national team program with appropriate training and competitive opportunities (both domestic and international) for each of the proposed carded athletes.
- The NSO's national team program must be based on year-round training principles that include significant daily training activities.
- The NSO must ensure that athletes who may be eligible for nomination for the AAP have an individualized annual training program based on year-round training principles that include significant daily training activities. See Annex B for recommended training volumes for carded athletes.
- The NSO must formally monitor and evaluate athletes' training and competitive programs. The NSO must designate a national coach or a person with equivalent qualifications and status (e.g., High Performance Director) to perform these tasks.
- 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 procedures must include access to independent arbitration through the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC).
- The NSO must have in place an Athlete/NSO Agreement that is consistent with [Section 7](#) of this document. The agreement is to be signed by all carded athletes.

Normally, sports must be funded through SFAF

2.3 Minimum Eligibility Requirements for Athletes

- The athlete's NSO must meet the minimum requirements listed in [Section 2.2](#).
- AAP support is subject to athletes' availability to represent Canada in major international competitions, including World Championships, Olympic Games and Paralympic Games; participation in preparatory and annual training programs; and adherence to their respective Athlete/National Sport Organization (NSO) Agreement.
- 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, and the athlete shall have been resident in Canada (student status, refugee status, work visa, or permanent resident) for a minimum period of one year before being considered for AAP support. The athlete would normally be expected to have participated in NSO-sanctioned programs during that time period.
- 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 events, including World Championships, at the beginning of the carding cycle for which the athlete is being nominated.
- Athletes must meet the carding criteria as a member of a Canadian team and represent Canada at international events or in a domestic event or events sanctioned by the NSO for such purposes.
- For athletes in Olympic or Paralympic sports who have been a permanent resident of Canada for three years, continued eligibility to receive AAP support is contingent on the athlete becoming eligible to represent Canada at the Olympic or Paralympic Games.
- The following athletes are not eligible to be nominated for AAP support:
 - Athletes who have previously been sanctioned by the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES), an International Federation, a Major Games Organization, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), or any other anti-doping organization;
 - Athletes who have been ruled ineligible for participation in sport for two years or more for an anti-doping rule violation and who have not, in the case of pre-2004 violations, subsequently been reinstated; and
 - Athletes who are serving a sanction of less than two years of sport ineligibility at the time of AAP nominations.

Note: It is recommended that NSOs include the above information with their carding criteria.

Athletes in non-Olympic/Paralympic events that are under consideration for inclusion in the official program of future Olympic/Paralympic Games *may* be considered for carding under the Olympic/Paralympic sport criteria following confirmation by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) or International Paralympic Committee (IPC) that the sport/event has been added to the program of the next Olympic/Paralympic Games.

2.4 Other Eligibility Considerations

What About 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. Athletes leaving Canada should be fully aware that any exceptions will be made only through special submissions by the NSO concerned. 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 the NSO.

Athletes who have been living full-time outside Canada for more than two successive years normally will not 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.

What About Athletes Attending Foreign Post-Secondary Educational Institutions?

Athletes who are attending any foreign post-secondary educational institution (including 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.

What if Athletes Are Under 18?

All athletes under the age of 18 must have their parent or legal guardian sign their AAP application form.

What if Non-carded Athletes Are Named to Olympic/Paralympic Teams?

Athletes who are not carded but who are selected as members of the Canadian Olympic or Paralympic teams by the Canadian Olympic Committee (COC) or Canadian Paralympic Committee (CPC) will be carded by Sport Canada for a period of four months, starting four months before the beginning of the Olympic/Paralympic Games.

Athletes' funding may be approved before the COC/CPC names its Olympic/Paralympic Teams 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: 1) IF eligibility criteria; 2) COC/CPC eligibility criteria; and 3) NSO team selection criteria.
- The NSO confirms in writing that the athlete will be nominated for Olympic Team selection.
- 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.

What About Athletes in Sports Not Funded by Sport Canada?

As a general rule, AAP financial aid is limited to athletes in sports whose high-performance programs are funded by Sport Canada under the Sport Funding and Accountability Framework (SFAF).

Exceptions may only be made if *all* of the following conditions are met:

- The *athlete* meets the international criteria for Senior Cards at World Championships or Olympic/Paralympic Games
- The athlete meets all other eligibility criteria for athletes (see [Section 2.3](#)).
- The athlete's NSO meets all AAP NSO eligibility requirements (see [Section 2.2](#)).

What About Olympic Sports Where There Is No Women's Event in the Games?

Women in Olympic sports where there is no comparable event for women in the Games will be eligible for carding if all of the following conditions are met:

- There are no physiologically comparable events on the Olympic program that the woman athlete is eligible for.
- The woman athlete meets the international criteria for Senior Cards.
- The athlete's sport meets all AAP NSO eligibility requirements (see [Section 2.2](#)).

Section 3 NSO, Athlete and Sport Canada Responsibilities

When National Sport Organizations (NSOs) nominate athletes and when athletes 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 nominations, which occur annually, the NSO agrees to the following responsibilities:

- Develop and submit carding criteria for Sport Canada's review for compliance with AAP policies and procedures.
- Communicate the NSO carding criteria that will be used in nominating athletes for AAP support to NSO members in a timely manner.
- Nominate athletes for AAP support based on the NSO's published carding criteria.
- Communicate with athletes both orally and in writing in the official language of their choice (English or French).
- Produce and give the 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 carding criteria to be used for nominating 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
 - credit to the Government of Canada for the funding provided to athletes and NSOs through Sport Canada.
- Submit all nominations for carding at least three weeks before the beginning of the NSO's carding cycle. The NSO provides these nominations to Sport Canada through the appropriate Sport Canada Program Officer and the AAP Manager (see [Section 6.1](#)).
- Provide athletes with forms required for the AAP, including tuition vouchers and application forms.
- Develop and provide to all carded athletes an Athlete/NSO Agreement that complies with AAP policies.
- Review and recommend requests for special-needs assistance and deferred tuition. Recommendations should be forwarded to the Sport Canada AAP Manager.
- Ensure that each carded athlete adheres to an NSO-approved competition and training plan throughout the carding cycle. At a minimum, this requires monthly contact with each athlete.
- Advise the AAP Manager immediately if a carded athlete fails to honour his or her AAP commitments.
- Inform the Sport Canada AAP Manager in a timely manner of an athlete's retirement or withdrawal from the AAP.
- Inform the Sport Canada AAP Manager in a timely manner of all assertions of anti-doping rule violations resulting from international testing.

Note: If the NSO fails to notify Sport Canada in a timely manner of an athlete's retirement, withdrawal from the AAP, or an assertion of an anti-doping rule violation and the athlete subsequently receives AAP benefits for which he or she is not eligible, it is the responsibility of the NSO to facilitate return of that overpayment to Sport Canada. 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.

- Develop discipline and appeal procedures based on due process that include access to independent arbitration through the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC).
- Provide Sport Canada with written confirmation that all carded athletes have signed their Athlete/NSO Agreement. This must occur within two (2) months of the start of the NSO's carding cycle. The Agreement is not considered signed if any sections have been 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 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.
- 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 as the person conducting the evaluation considers necessary for the proper conduct of the evaluation.

Note: It is strongly recommended that all NSOs ensure all carded athletes have inside-Canada and outside-Canada medical and dental insurance.

3.2 Athlete Responsibilities

Athletes applying for AAP support commit to the following responsibilities:

- Adhere to the competitive and training program and administrative requirements specified by their NSO throughout the cycle for which they are carded.
- Refund any assistance provided if their carding status changes or is withdrawn. This refund will be effective on the date their carding status changes or is withdrawn. Such refunds are payable to Canada's Receiver General.
- Respect and abide by the Government of Canada's Canadian Policy Against Doping in Sport, the Canadian Anti-Doping Program of the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport and any related anti-doping policy of the NSO.
- 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.
- 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 program evaluation activities. 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 the person conducting the evaluation considers 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 approving nominations for AAP support, 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 NSOs.
- Review all nominations of eligible athletes for AAP support made by the NSO.
- Approve nominations in accordance with AAP policies and the published NSO carding criteria.
- Arrange payments in accordance with AAP policies and procedures.
- Provide information to NSOs and athletes regarding the development of carding criteria, athlete agreements, appeals procedures, due process, athlete monitoring, and other areas concerning athlete assistance and related services.
- Provide NSOs with AAP materials (application forms, tuition vouchers, etc.).
- Provide a review procedure to both athletes and NSOs on any Sport Canada AAP operational decision in accordance with [Section 13](#) of this document.

Section 4 Allocating 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

AAP cards are allocated to the following types of sports:

- Olympic sports
- Paralympic sports
- Non-Olympic sports

There are three kinds of cards in the AAP, as follows:

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

Card quotas are allocated to NSOs as an equivalent number of Senior Cards (International or National). The quota will include Senior International (SR1/SR2) Cards.

NSOs are permitted to allocate their card quota as Senior International, Senior National, or Development Cards, according to NSO carding criteria. A C1 Card is considered a full SR Card for the purposes of the quota, and two SR Cards are considered equivalent to three D Cards.

Given the issues surrounding the Paralympic classification system and the plethora of Paralympic events in a single sport, the quota system for Paralympic sports is, of necessity, different from that for Olympic sports.

Given the differences between them, individual and team sports are handled in disparate and distinct ways.

Given the priority placed on Olympic sports, the quota system for Olympic sports is, of necessity, different from that for non-Olympic sports.

4.2 Procedures

The allocation of AAP cards is determined by

- an objective process; and
- a sport-review process.

Objective Process

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

- The technical needs of the sports, as determined by Sport Canada; and
- The results of the Olympics/Paralympics and World Championships in the 4-year period before the allocation exercise.

Sport-Review Process

The sport-review process takes into consideration factors that the objective process cannot adequately capture.

Each eligible NSO is reviewed to determine whether it should receive more AAP cards than the objective process alone would suggest. The review consists of an assessment that may include but is not restricted to the following:

- The number of entries allowed per country in events on the Olympic program (1, 2, or 3);
- The sport's potential to contribute to Canadian goals at future Olympic and Paralympic Games; and
- The quality of the national team program.

The results of processes such as the Olympic and Paralympic sport-review process and the SFAF High Performance Sport Assessment may be taken into account in the sport-review process.

Section 5 Carding Criteria

This section describes the criteria that athletes must meet to be nominated for AAP support at a given level.

5.1 General Policy

AAP cards are awarded on the basis of carding criteria.

Senior Cards are awarded on the basis of 1) international criteria and 2) national criteria.

Development Cards are awarded on the basis of 1) sport-specific criteria and 2) training centre criteria.

There are special considerations for team sports.

Carding cycles are *usually* 12 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 an NSO chooses to change its carding cycle, athletes may be carded for a period of more or fewer than 12 months, depending on the circumstances.

5.2 Policies for Senior Cards

Senior Cards are awarded on the basis of two different sets of criteria: international and national.

International Criteria

International criteria recognize and reward Canadian athletes for outstanding performances in World Championships or Olympic/Paralympic Games.

Sport Canada establishes the international criteria used to award Senior Cards. These criteria are based on international performance at Olympic Games, Paralympic Games, or World Championships.

Athletes who meet the international criteria are eligible to be nominated by the 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. The second year of carding is contingent on the athlete being re-nominated by the NSO and maintaining a training and competitive program approved by the NSO. The athlete must also sign an Athlete/NSO Agreement and complete an AAP Application Form for the year in question.

The following are the current standards for the international criteria. Sport Canada reserves the right to review and revise these criteria with appropriate notice.

International criteria recognize and reward Canadian athletes for outstanding performance in World Championships or Olympic/Paralympic Games

- Finish in the top 8 in events limited to one entry per country; finish in the top 12 in events limited to two entries per country; finish in the top 16 in events with 3 more entries per country; and
- Finish in the top half of the field.

In Olympic/Paralympic years, new Senior Cards based on these criteria will be awarded only on the basis of results achieved in the Olympic/Paralympic Games.

In Paralympic events that do not have a minimum of 10 countries entered, these cards will be available to athletes who placed in the top 3 at Paralympic Games or World Championships with a minimum of 10 entries and a minimum of five (5) countries.

Sport Canada believes in equity of opportunity for all athletes within AAP-eligible sports to achieve Senior Card status. However, in sports that do not have a major event (World Championship or Olympic/Paralympic Games) in each year of the quadrennial, equal opportunity to qualify for Senior Cards based on international criteria does not exist.

Therefore, in an effort to provide equal opportunity for all athletes, international criteria may be based on performances other than those achieved in Olympic/Paralympic Games or World Championships. This would apply only in years in which there is no World Championship or Olympic/Paralympic Games in a given sport or event. Normally, events such as an annual World Cup, World Cup rankings, or world ranking lists will be considered.

For results to be considered for carding at this level, the NSO must demonstrate that the performance criteria used are of equal significance and quality as a World Championship OR it must demonstrate that a World Cup ranking or world ranking list is comprehensive and indicative of the athlete's actual ranking in the world. Senior Cards awarded in this manner would be awarded on a one-year basis only.

Notes

- 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 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, or pairs events, the performance must be achieved in conjunction *with 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.
- All Senior Cards based on international criteria but awarded on the basis of results achieved in events other than the World Championships or Olympic/Paralympic Games will be for a one-year period.

Can Senior Carding Based on International Criteria Be Retroactive?

Yes. An athlete *may* be carded at the Senior Card level for a two-year period retroactive to the beginning of the carding cycle

- *if* 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
- *if* the NSO and Sport Canada so agree at the annual AAP Review Meeting.

What if an Athlete Cannot Re-qualify for Senior Carding Based on International Criteria?

In keeping with a philosophy of consistent long-term support, an athlete carded at the Senior Card (SR2) level who is unable to re-qualify for this card in a World Championships, Olympic Games, or Paralympic Games may be permitted to retain his or her Senior Card (SR2) status if, in the judgement of the NSO and Sport Canada, continuation of Senior Card (SR2) status is warranted. *The athlete may be permitted to retain his or her Senior Card (SR2) status by achieving the agreed-upon maintenance criteria.* The following guidelines apply in such cases:

- Only athletes carded at the Senior Card (SR2) level in the carding cycle immediately before the new carding cycle will be considered under the maintenance criteria. No new Senior Cards will be awarded on the basis of maintenance criteria.
- The NSO must demonstrate to Sport Canada that continuation of Senior Card (SR2) status is warranted based on the athlete meeting equivalent international criteria in the same carding year. Such criteria may be established on the basis of results from major international events, World Cup rankings, world ranking lists, etc. The maintenance criteria must be negotiated with and approved by Sport Canada the year *before* the new carding cycle. The NSO must demonstrate that the standard used is of the same significance and quality as the performance required at Olympic/Paralympic Games or World Championships OR it must demonstrate that a World Cup ranking or World ranking list is comprehensive and a valid indicator of the athlete's actual ranking in the world for that year.
- Senior Cards awarded on the basis of the maintenance criteria will be for a one-year period and will not be awarded for two consecutive years.

What if Athletes Compete in Relay Events?

Athletes who compete in the finals of relay events will be awarded Senior Cards (SR1 or SR2), depending on the result of the relay team in that final. Athletes who participate in qualifying or semi-finals in a relay event but do not compete in the finals of the event will be carded on the basis of the level of performance required to advance to that final.

For example, if a relay team is required to finish in the top 8 overall in the semi-finals to advance to the final, an athlete who participated in the semi-finals and contributed to the relay team advancing to a finals with 8 teams but did not participate in that final would be carded at the Senior Card (SR1 or SR2) level.

National Criteria

National criteria identify athletes who have the potential to achieve [international criteria](#).

National criteria for Senior Cards are established by the NSO and are reviewed every year to ensure that they meet AAP policy requirements by Sport Canada. 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 consistent with the sport's national training and competitive program and be accessible to the majority of the best athletes in Canada.

Senior Cards based on national criteria are awarded for one year and are called SR/C1 Cards. Athletes who meet the national criteria for Senior Cards for the first time are known as C1 Cards and are funded at the Development Card level.

What is the C1 Card?

A probationary card has been established for the first year for which an athlete has satisfied the national criteria for Senior Cards. 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. These cards are designated as C1 Cards. 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

How Long Are Senior Cards Based on National Criteria Good For?

Senior Cards based on national criteria are normally awarded for a one-year period. However, this may vary, depending on the athlete's involvement in the NSO's National Team Program. For example, if an athlete is training outside Canada on an NCAA scholarship, the athlete may be funded for only that part of the year when he or she is NOT attending the NCAA institution and IS training or competing under the direct supervision of the NSO. The carding cycle may also be shortened or extended, depending on the NSO's competition cycle in relation to major events such as World Championships.

How Many Years Can Senior Cards Based on National Criteria Last?

Athletes are normally expected to improve each year to maintain a Senior Card based on national criteria. The criteria for Senior Cards based on national criteria should 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 will be negotiated between Sport Canada and each NSO.

If an athlete does not reach Senior Card level based on international criteria within the prescribed number of years and the athlete is again nominated as a Senior Card based on national criteria, the athlete's year-to-year improvement, progression toward the standard based on international criteria, and future potential will be reviewed. On the basis of this review, Sport Canada will, in conjunction with the NSO, determine whether an additional year of support as a Senior Card based on national criteria is warranted.

5.3 Policies for Development Cards

Development Cards are generally allocated to sports in which the technical complexity or training cycle is such that athletes must follow sophisticated programs for many years before attaining international standards at the senior level and where it is in the best interest of the athlete and the sport to bring the athlete under the auspices of the NSO and the National Team Program.

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. If the development needs of the athlete can largely be met by existing club/provincial programming and related assistance opportunities, the athlete would generally not be considered for Sport Canada AAP support.

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.

Development Cards are offered to a sport only if three or more of the following conditions are satisfactorily met:

- Athletes are identified or endorsed for nomination as Development Cards by the National Coach (or comparable NSO technical expert).
- The athlete has an annual training and competitive program based on year-round training principles that is designed, supervised, and monitored by the NSO National Coach or designate. This training program includes international competition, adequate domestic competition and significant daily training activities.
- The NSO signifies its intent and ability (in human, program and financial resource terms) to make a long-term commitment to Development-Card athletes, and vice versa.
- NSOs demonstrate how and with what specific human and financial resources they will facilitate and direct the long-term development of athletes on whose behalf they are applying for Development Cards.

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.

Development Card Criteria

Criteria for Development Cards are established by the NSO and are reviewed by Sport Canada each year to ensure that they meet AAP policy requirements.

The following guidelines/principles should be followed when establishing Development Card criteria:

- The criteria must be objective and must clearly demonstrate that the athlete has superior high-performance potential.
- In addition to using international and domestic results in the development of sport-specific criteria, NSOs may use other physical or physiological parameters. Measures of technical ability and skill levels may also be used.
- A long-term commitment to a Sport Canada/NSO-recognized High Performance Training Centre may be used as one of the criteria for the awarding of a Development Card. The athlete will also have to meet the majority of the conditions outlined in [Policies for Development Cards](#) to be considered for such Development Cards. This may include athletes in team sports, athletes in sports with crew events, or athletes in sports in which training partners are essential for the continuing development of the athlete.
- 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.
- Athletes who have achieved Senior Card status are not normally eligible for Development Cards. Any exception to this must be justified by the NSO and included in writing in the criteria.
- It can be demonstrated, on a sport-specific basis, that if an athlete has not reached a minimum performance level by a certain age, it is unlikely that the athlete will ever achieve Senior Card international criteria. Development Card criteria should, therefore, be established with this in mind to ensure that Development Card criteria identify those athletes who still have the potential to achieve international criteria for Senior Cards.
- The reference to age in the criteria should not be established arbitrarily; the purpose of the criteria should be clearly stated in the criteria. 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 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.

- The criteria must be reasonable for most athletes in a given sport/discipline; they do not need to be justified with respect to every athlete.

5.4 Special Considerations for Team Sports

Here are some general considerations and guidelines to keep in mind regarding carding in team sports:

- AAP support for team sport carding is intended to help *support* athletes already at or having the potential to reach the Senior Card's international criteria; it is not the purpose of the AAP to simply *reward* individuals who make a commitment to a National Team program during the summer months.
- The AAP must be fair to athletes in both individual and team sports. It must also be recognized that in team sport there are *role players* who may not be among the top players in the country in terms of scoring, for example, but who nevertheless fulfil a specific function on the team and are essential to the successful performance of the team. In other words, some subjectivity is typically necessary in the selection of a team.
- Increasingly, NSOs want to provide programs for athletes below the National Senior Team level. To ensure the commitment of these athletes to centralized training, the NSO, through the AAP, may need to expedite the provision of financial support to these athletes while they are participating in National Team programs. This type of assistance is also provided to ensure continued participation by Canadian athletes in the Canadian sport system.
- There is a requirement for full-time centralization for long periods in some sports. However, it is acknowledged that some team sport athletes may need to remain in their home environment for legitimate personal, educational or professional reasons. On the recommendation of the national coach, these athletes may be eligible for a reduced level of carding support at the Development Card level while they stay in their usual home location (i.e., away from the National Team Centre).
- The monitoring and availability of team-sport athletes is a key issue in the provision of AAP support. Sport Canada may provide AAP support to team-sport athletes while they are participating in competitive situations outside Canada, provided they are being monitored by their NSO and have the support of the National Coach. These situations are generally handled on a sport-by-sport, individual basis.
- At the annual AAP Review Meeting, the NSO will present results and evaluations of the previous year's programs to ensure it has met the agreed-to standards. The NSO will then identify the annual program for all teams and athletes for which carding is requested and will indicate the detailed year-round training and competition programs and the process for monitoring athlete training and performance.

General Requirements

Development 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 time periods during the carding year. Development Card support for team sports will vary according to the intensity and duration of the program; it may include monthly stipends and tuition support, or combinations of the two. The duration and intensity of team camps/competition tours will determine whether athletes receive monthly stipends only or monthly stipends plus tuition support, as well as the number of months per year for which such support will be provided.

The NSO should make an advance commitment to operate these programs as outlined in the NSO multi-year plan. If these commitments are not sustained, Sport Canada may withdraw AAP support for athletes in these programs.

In years when the Junior or National B Team programs are limited, carding support may not be available. National A Team training squad members may be eligible for Development Card support if minimum program requirements are met.

In general, Sport Canada will consider Junior/National B Team carding only in sports where

- there is an intent (for example, a program outline and budget allocation);
- funding is available to undertake significant Junior or National B Team programs or both throughout the quadrennial;
- there is a logical flow without gap from Junior Team to the National Team or from Junior to National B Team to the National Senior Team.

Minimum Standards for Development Cards in Team Sports

To be eligible to receive full funding at the Development Card level (12 months of living and training allowance plus tuition, where applicable), team sports must meet the following minimum standards:

- A National Team program of a minimum duration of sixty (60) days must be in place. The program must consist of a minimum of four (4) hours of team practice daily and should include a minimum of one tournament or four games of international competition during or following the sixty-day training period.
- All athletes must be involved in year-round intensive training programs that are supervised or monitored by the NSO National Coach or designate.
- A monitoring plan for each athlete that will allow for an evaluation of each athlete's individual training plan and progress must be in place.

Note: Reduced support may be provided for programs that last for a minimum of thirty (30) days and meet the last two standards outlined above.

The National Senior Team

Senior Cards and Development Cards are assigned to athletes who are members of the National Senior Team. These cards are based on the team's performance and on the contribution of each athlete to that performance.

Senior Cards based on national criteria are awarded to athletes who are members of National Senior Teams who have not yet reached the international criteria for Senior Cards. Athletes awarded a Senior Card for the first time are awarded C1 Cards and are funded at the Development Card level.

Funding for Senior Cards is available only to athletes involved with National Senior Team programming, as outlined by the NSO. For this reason, athletes unable to commit to all portions of the program may be carded at the Senior Card level if they are a member of the National Senior Team, but they will usually not be eligible for full funding or funding at that carding level. Exceptions will be considered only in special circumstances, on the basis of submissions from the NSO and with the support of the National Coach.

Athletes who are available to train or play with national teams on a limited basis may be supported while they are with the National Senior Team at the usual stipend level on the basis of athlete/team

performance, provided the athlete commits to involvement with the team for the major events of the quadrennial (i.e., the Olympic Games and related qualification events). This provision would normally be applied to athletes playing outside Canada. The level and duration of the support will be considered by Sport Canada on a case-by-case basis.

Centralized athletes nominated for carding by the National Coach who wish to leave the National Training Centre for academic or other acceptable reasons will be eligible for financial support only at the Development Card level. Athletes supported under this provision must make a commitment to an approved training program and to participation in the major competitive events of the quadrennial (World Championships, Olympic/Paralympic qualification tournaments, Olympics/Paralympics, etc.).

Below the National Senior Team

Additional AAP support to individuals on teams below the National Senior Team level may be provided at the Development Card level 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.

Development Cards for team sports may be available to athletes in team sports who are members of the National A Team training squad or National B Team. This level of card is also available to athletes on Sport-Canada-supported Junior National Teams who make a significant commitment to the Junior National Team Program.

An athlete at the Development Card (Team Sports) level who makes the National Team during the carding year will normally be carded and funded at the Senior Card level at the start of the next carding year.

Centralization of Development Card Athletes

Developing athletes in team sports who agree to centralize at a national team centre on a year-round basis at the request of the NSO/National Coach may be eligible for Development Cards, provided training centre criteria are met.

5.5 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 source of potential replacements is 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 only be provided during the course of the carding year should the athlete’s funding be terminated within the first six (6) months of the carding cycle. 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.

5.6 Setting Criteria

Carding criteria are submitted by the NSO and reviewed by Sport Canada for compliance with the AAP. Under normal circumstances, NSOs distribute these criteria 8 to 10 months before the beginning of the sport's carding year. Carding criteria should be published no later than the beginning of the competition cycle for the upcoming carding period.

Wherever possible, the criteria should be based on objective measures. The NSO may choose to use the results from designated Canadian competitions (which may include National Championships), designated international competitions or a combination of these competitions. Team-sport carding criteria should normally be linked to National Team selection criteria and the National Team depth chart.

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 athletes in Canada.

The working documents or data used to nominate athletes using approved criteria (actual results of World Championships, National Championships, world ranking lists, etc.) and to validate actual performances shall be made available to Sport Canada at the time of nomination. Further information on the application process and submission format is outlined in [Application for and Approval of Cards](#).

Criteria should be set in a manner similar to the following:

- The NSO Head Coach, Coaching Committee or appropriate body within the NSO proposes the carding criteria.
- The Athlete Representative and appropriate NSO decision-making body review the criteria and make recommendations regarding the criteria.
- The appropriate NSO Technical Committee reviews and approves the criteria.

Note: It is recommended that NSOs include the following information with their carding criteria:

- 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.
- Athletes in non-Olympic/Paralympic events that are under consideration for inclusion in the official program of future Olympic/Paralympic Games may be considered for carding under the Olympic/Paralympic sport criteria following confirmation by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) or International Paralympic Committee (IPC) that the sport/event has been added to the program of the next Olympic/Paralympic Games.

To help NSOs produce new or revised carding criteria, Sport Canada has produced a step-by-step guide to the development of carding criteria.

This guide is available from Sport Canada. It introduces key concepts and principles, and it includes text that NSOs can use verbatim in their carding criteria. The guide is intended for the technical staff and volunteers who are involved with athlete selection and nomination to the AAP.

Please do not hesitate to contact AAP staff for assistance concerning the design or revision of your carding criteria.

Section 6 Application for and Approval of Cards

This section describes the overall procedure for obtaining approval of NSO carding nominations. It also describes in detail how to prepare an application package for AAP support.

6.1 Procedures

- The NSO determines who is eligible to be nominated or [renominated](#) for AAP support at a given carding level.
- The NSO decides which eligible athletes to nominate for AAP support.
- The NSO provides an AAP Application Form to the athletes it has decided to nominate. The athlete fills in the AAP Application Form, which includes the Declaration to Accept/Decline AAP Financial Support, and submits it to the NSO.
- The NSO prepares an application package for review by Sport Canada. See [below](#) for a description of the contents of the application package.
- Sport Canada reviews and may approve nominations of eligible athletes, given the published sport-specific carding criteria and the policies and procedures of the AAP.
- Irregular nominations (i.e., nominations of ineligible athletes) will not be considered and will be returned to the NSO.
- If Sport Canada does not approve an NSO carding nomination and there are valid reasons for 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](#).

Note: For funding to be granted and processed, Sport Canada must receive the AAP Application Form within the carding cycle for which AAP funding is approved.

Renomination Issues

Maintaining carded status depends on

- the NSO renominating the athlete. Renomination is based on the athlete meeting approved carding criteria and continuing to improve performance.
- Sport Canada approving the renomination during the NSO's annual AAP Review Meeting.

If the NSO does not renominate the athlete at the end of the carding cycle, the NSO must

- advise the athlete in writing that he or she has not been renominated. The reasons for the decision must be included in the notice.
- advise the athlete who is not being renominated about opportunities that are available, such as National Team program activities (camps, competitions, etc.).
- ensure that all athletes who are not nominated or renominated have access to an appeals 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 recarded.

Application Package

NSOs prepare an application package and schedule a review of this package with their Sport Canada Program Officer. These review meetings occur annually, and NSOs nominate eligible athletes annually.

It is the NSO's responsibility to schedule the review meeting. To ensure that funding to carded athletes is not interrupted, the NSO and Sport Canada should schedule this meeting so that it occurs at least three weeks before the end of the NSO carding cycle.

NSOs must send a copy of the entire application package to both their Sport Canada Program Officer *and* the Manager of the AAP no later than five working days before the annual AAP Review Meeting.

What's in the Application Package?

The application package contains the following:

- Covering letter
- Table of contents
- Summary of athletes' results
- National Team depth chart (team sports only)
- List of eligible athletes being nominated for carding
- List of athletes not being renominated for carding
- Outline of the National Team's competitive and training program
- Changes to carding criteria
- Recommendations for changes in carding-cycle dates
- Athlete/NSO Agreement
- Copy of the NSO's *National Team Handbook* or comparable document

Covering Letter

- Prepared by the NSO contact responsible for managing the NSO's AAP.
- 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.

Table of Contents

- Lists the entire contents of the application package.

Summary of Athletes' Results

- Includes results of all Canadian athletes—whether or not they are members of the National Team, whether or not they are nominees for carding — at World Championships and major games.
- Includes results from applicable world championships (Senior, Junior, or Espoir) and major games.
- May include results of other major international events.
- Presents results on the [generic Sport Canada form](#) or any other form that provides the same information.

National Team Depth Chart

- Provides a depth chart of the National Team by position that includes all athletes selected to the National Team and nominated for carding.
- If possible, includes all athletes who are carded at the Development Card level.
- Includes a description of the method used to select the athletes and a ranking summary.

List of Eligible Athletes Being Nominated for Carding

- Lists eligible athletes nominated for carding according to published carding criteria. Includes athletes nominated for carding for the first time and those being nominated for recarding. Indicates the level of card for which an athlete is being nominated, as well as the rationale for carding. For team sports, this list must reflect the National Team depth chart.
- Includes the following in the rationale for carding an eligible athlete:
 - A complete summary of the athlete's competitive results (important international and domestic results, including National Championships) in the previous year. Results must be in chronological order, and the summary must highlight results demonstrating that the athlete has met the approved carding criteria.
 - A written appraisal of the athlete.
- For team sports, use the form [Athlete Nomination for Team Carding, Team Sport](#).

List of Athletes Not Being Renominated for Carding

- Lists *all* athletes who were carded in the previous year and are not being renominated for carding, as well as the reason(s) for this decision (the athlete did not meet the carding criteria, the athlete retired, etc.).

Outline of the National Team's Competitive and Training Program

- Includes a detailed outline of the National Team's competitive and training program for the next year, as outlined in the NSO's multi-year and annual plans. If applicable, includes the programs for those carded at the Development Card (Team Sports) level.
- Includes individual athletes' competitive and training programs if they are available. Specifies how carded athletes' training and competitive programs are 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

- 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.

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

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

Generic Sport Canada Form

Summary of Athletes' Results, World Championships

Sport:
Competition:
Date:
Location:

Event	Athlete	Rank	Number of Entries	Number of Countries	Standard (distance, time, etc.)	Top Eight Countries								
						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	

Athlete Nomination for Carding, Team Sport

Athlete's name: _____

Athlete's date of birth: _____

Number of years athlete carded: _____

Athlete's present carded status: _____

Athlete's playing position: _____

Athlete's rank at position: _____

Athlete's rank on team: _____

Athlete's personal coach: _____

Athlete's training location: _____

Athlete's club/team: _____

Athlete's occupational status: _____

Athlete's university/school (if applicable): _____

How will the athlete's training be monitored? _____

The following information may also be presented, depending on the sophistication of the NSO's team-selection process and ability to gather relevant game statistics:

- Any relevant physical statistics (height, weight, etc.); and
- Any relevant "game stats" for each athlete.

Section 7 Athlete/NSO Agreement

Athletes approved for AAP funding must sign an Athlete/NSO Agreement. This section describes the policies and procedures associated with this agreement.

7.1 Policy

All athletes approved for carding and their NSOs must sign an Athlete/NSO Agreement each carding cycle.

The purpose of the Athlete/NSO Agreement is to set down 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 year).
- Specific Sport Canada and NSO policies the carded athlete must abide by, including the following:
 - The Canadian Policy Against Doping in Sport;
 - The Canadian Anti-Doping Program;
 - The NSO's anti-doping policy;
 - AAP policies and procedures (this document); and
 - Federal government sport policy regarding competitions where participation is not permitted.
- The hearing and appeal procedure that will be used in any dispute between the carded athlete and the NSO. This procedure must conform with natural justice and procedural fairness 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 selection criteria (i.e., how far ahead of the next carding cycle the selection criteria will be published).

Notes:

- Sport Canada carding is not contingent upon an athlete agreeing in his or her Athlete/NSO Agreement to any conditions other than those specified above. In other words, all aspects of the Athlete/NSO Agreement other than those specified above are to be negotiated between the athlete and the NSO.
- All clauses in the Agreement must clearly define the athlete's expected conduct.
- The Agreement must be in plain, understandable language, not legal jargon. Basic rights such as freedom of speech and confidentiality of medical records must be respected.

7.2 Procedures

A model Athlete/NSO Agreement is approved by the NSO and the athletes' elected representative on the NSO's Board of Directors (or another appropriate committee).

The model Agreement is modified as required. 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 Annex A). 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. Athlete/NSO agreements should be modified as needed to reflect the individual sport's characteristics and the individual athlete's needs.

It is the NSO's responsibility to ensure that all carded athletes sign their Athlete/NSO Agreement. Within two months of the start of the NSO's carding cycle, the NSO must provide Sport Canada with written confirmation that all carded athletes have signed their Athlete/NSO Agreement. Athletes for whom Sport Canada has not received confirmation of signing from the NSO may have their AAP payments withheld until the NSO confirms in writing that the Agreement is signed.

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 certain conditions, *the NSO* may request that carding payments be withheld until the athlete has signed his or her Athlete/NSO Agreement. If this occurs, it is still the responsibility of the NSO, once the Agreement has been signed, to inform Sport Canada that the Agreement has been signed and to request that the athlete's carding payments start.

Section 8 Financial Benefits

This section sets out the policies and procedures associated with AAP financial benefits.

8.1 Policy

The AAP offers three types of financial support to eligible athletes:

- Living and training allowance;
- Tuition and deferred tuition support; and
- Special-needs assistance.

Athletes may opt to have their AAP payments deposited directly into their Canadian bank account or have a cheque sent to their mailing address.

8.2 Living and Training Allowance

Policy

Athletes approved for carding by Sport Canada are eligible for a living and training allowance. This allowance is usually paid in advance every other month.

The allowance paid varies with the athlete's carding status, as follows:

Carding Status	Monthly Allowance
Senior Card	\$1,500
Development Card	\$900

8.3 Tuition and Deferred Tuition Support

Policies

General

The Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) tuition support is intended to help athletes obtain a minimal post-secondary level education. The following policies apply to both tuition and deferred tuition support.

- AAP tuition support applies only to post-secondary schooling.
- To defer tuition credits, carded athletes must be eligible to attend school at the post-secondary level.
- Athletes who are eligible for AAP tuition support and receive an academic or athletic award from any post-secondary school will remain eligible for AAP tuition support unless that award is designated specifically to offset full or partial tuition fees.
- Tuition fees will be supported as outlined in these policies; however, this support is limited to a maximum of \$10,000 annually.
- The following incidental school costs, which may be included with tuition fees, are not supported by the AAP:
 - Medical fees
 - Health fees
 - Dental fees
 - Bus passes

- Parking fees
 - Interest charges
 - Late fees
 - Taxes (GST, for example)
 - Textbooks
 - Any other fees that are optional to the student
- AAP tuition support is subject to predetermined course limits. The AAP will normally support a maximum of 40 university undergraduate courses toward the completion of an undergraduate degree.
 - Athletes must successfully complete the courses for which they receive support. Those who fail or do not complete courses risk being unable to complete their degree, diploma or certificate program with the tuition support for which they are eligible from the AAP.

Schools Eligible for Tuition Support

Athletes attending Canadian publicly supported universities or colleges are eligible for tuition support.

Athletes attending other educational institutions may be eligible for tuition support. The AAP must approve those educational institutions for tuition support on a case-by-case basis.

If approved, tuition support for athletes attending private schools or schools outside Canada cannot exceed the average course cost for a full-time undergraduate program, as determined by the AAP, at Canadian publicly supported universities.

Programs Eligible for Tuition Support

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

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

Tuition Support for Carded Athletes

The AAP provides tuition support to athletes who are able to attend post-secondary school and meet high-performance training and competitive requirements. This support is available for the period during which the athlete is carded.

Athletes who attend school while carded are required to claim eligible tuition fees in the year they are attending school. This will be verified when deferred tuition credits are accessed.

Tuition support is not usually available for schools outside Canada. Any exceptions must have the full support of the NSO and be approved by the AAP. In addition, carded athletes must be able to maintain their full training and competitive commitments to the satisfaction of the NSO and Sport Canada. The NSO must show that it has a system in place for monitoring athletes while they train outside Canada.

Carded athletes are eligible for tuition support at approved Canadian post-secondary institutions for each year they are carded.

The maximum allowable tuition support is as follows:

- College/CEGEP/apprenticeship: 4 full-time semesters or equivalent (unless the standard program length exceeds 2 years);
- University undergraduate degree: normally 8 full-time semesters or equivalent;
- University graduate degree: normally 4 full-time semesters or equivalent (unless the standard program length exceeds 2 years); and
- University post-graduate degree: normally 4 full-time semesters or equivalent (unless the standard program length exceeds 2 years).

Deferred Tuition Support

Deferred tuition support was put in place to assist carded athletes who are unable to attend post-secondary school full-time because of their involvement in sport.

The AAP automatically calculates deferred tuition credits for eligible carded athletes. This allows athletes to use available deferred tuition credits once they have retired from sport or are no longer carded.

In situations where an eligible athlete has not been able to access the allowable tuition credits while carded, deferred tuition credits may be applied toward post-secondary education.

Athletes who have accessed the equivalent of eight full-time semesters (40 courses) of tuition support while carded are not eligible to defer tuition credits.

Deferred tuition credits may be accessed in any year an athlete is no longer carded, provided that year is within five years of the last day of carding support.

Athletes who are attending post-secondary schools outside Canada and are receiving an athletic or academic scholarship are not eligible to defer tuition credits while in receipt of the scholarship.

The AAP does not make deferred tuition payments directly to the athlete's school.

Athletes are allowed to defer a maximum of 10 courses (two full-time semesters) for each year they are carded and eligible to receive tuition support, up to a maximum of 40 deferred course credits. For example, a carded athlete who attends school part-time and takes four courses is eligible for six deferred tuition course credits for that carding year. If, however, in the next carding year the courses taken total 11, the remaining deferred tuition credits would be five course credits.

An exception to the maximum number of 40 courses for deferred tuition support may be considered in a pre-Olympic year. An athlete in a graduate or post-graduate program who wishes to train full-time in a pre-Olympic year may apply in writing to the AAP for deferred tuition support. The athlete's NSO must endorse the application.

The monetary value of a deferred tuition credit is established by the AAP and equals the average tuition cost of two full-time undergraduate semesters (in eligible programs at Canadian publicly supported universities) in the carding year for which the deferred tuition credit is awarded, divided by ten.

Once the athlete retires or is no longer carded, the monetary value of deferred tuition credits can be applied to the completion of post-secondary education. It should be noted, however, that the

monetary value of the deferred tuition credits may support fewer courses than the credits for which they were awarded.

Procedures

Application/Payment Procedure for Tuition Support when Carded

- The AAP approves tuition support based on AAP policies and procedures.
- The AAP provides tuition vouchers to the NSO.
- The NSO completes the appropriate part of the tuition voucher and then provides the tuition voucher to eligible carded athletes who are attending Canadian publicly supported post-secondary schools.
- The athlete completes the appropriate section of the tuition voucher and submits it to the eligible school.
- The school completes the tuition voucher and either lists the courses being taken or attaches an official school registration form with a list of courses being taken.
- The school sends the AAP an invoice along with a copy of the completed tuition voucher and a breakdown of incidental costs.
- If it is not possible for the AAP to pay tuition support directly to the athlete's school, the athlete will be reimbursed directly. To be reimbursed, the athlete must forward to the AAP the original official receipt of payment, along with the official list of the courses in which he or she is registered, the fee for each course, and a breakdown of incidental costs.

Application/Payment Procedure for Deferred Tuition

- The AAP approves deferred tuition support based on AAP policies and procedures.
- The athlete submits to the AAP a current official student transcript from his or her school(s), along with a completed Deferred Tuition Form (available from the NSO).
- On receiving this information, the AAP reviews the athlete's file and determines the number of deferred tuition credits for which the athlete is eligible, as well as the monetary value of these credits.
- The athlete submits an official original receipt of payment to the AAP. This may take the form of an invoice stamped by the school indicating payments made or a written receipt of payment on official school letterhead. The receipt must include a breakdown of the fees paid.
- The AAP reimburses the athlete directly up to the monetary value of the deferred tuition credit(s) for which the athlete is eligible.

8.4 Special-Needs Assistance

Policies

Certain special needs have been recognized by the AAP as deserving of financial support under the AAP.

Generally, special-needs requests are considered only from athletes for whom AAP support is their primary or major source of income or for athletes who must relocate for sport purposes.

Special needs assistance is limited to a maximum of \$5,000 annually.

All special-needs requests must be for the current carding year.

The following expenses are eligible for special-needs assistance:

- Child-care expenses
 - Consideration will be given to granting child-care assistance when an athlete must obtain the services of a baby-sitter to attend approved training or competitions and when the NSO certifies that the athlete must be absent from home to attend approved training or competition and no member of the family or other ongoing daycare service (including nannies) is available to provide the baby-sitting service.
 - Child-care assistance is limited to a maximum of \$1,000 annually.
- Relocation expenses
 - When both the NSO and the AAP have determined that a carded athlete must move to or from an approved *single-sport* National Team Training Centre, the AAP may assist in offsetting some of the relocation costs.
 - The AAP will support only two moves during an athlete's career: either from home to the training centre or from the training centre to the athlete's home.
 - Relocation assistance is generally limited to one-half of actual transportation costs associated with relocation, to a maximum of \$500 per move.
- Retirement expenses
 - Athletes who have been carded for a minimum of three years may receive some support for their adjustment to retirement through a special-needs application.

The following expenses are NOT considered special needs and are to be supported by the athlete through monthly allowances or other sources:

- Local transportation (taxi, bus, car rental, etc.);
- Food supplements and vitamins;
- Training equipment and clothing;
- Personal clothing;
- Furniture and appliances;
- Food and rent (phone, hydro, etc.);
- Club fees;
- Coaching expenses;
- Medical, dental, physiotherapy or chiropractic expenses; and
- Lost-time expenses (any lost wages are expected to be supported through the monthly living and training allowance).

Procedure

- The athlete sends his or her special-needs request to the NSO.
- Athletes requesting special-needs assistance for child-care or retirement expenses undergo an assessment of financial means:
 - The athlete provides a statement, with supporting documentation, of his or her current income and expenses, as well as income and expenses expected over the next year; these expenses include rent, food, transportation, and sport-related expenses. This statement also explains why the athlete is seeking special-needs assistance.
 - The athlete's supporting documentation must include a copy of Revenue Canada's Notice of Assessment for the most recent taxation year.
 - The statement of income and expenses must be verified and approved by the NSO as part of the request for special-needs assistance.
 - The athlete provides original receipts for expenses associated with special needs and must not have claimed this expense for income-tax purposes.

- The NSO forwards its recommendation regarding the request for assistance to the AAP Manager for approval.
- The AAP Manager approves or denies the request for assistance. If the AAP Manager determines that the athlete can adequately support the special needs for which he or she is requesting support, the request for support will not be approved.

Section 9 Illness, Injury or Pregnancy

This section describes AAP policy and procedures for dealing with athletes' illness, injury or pregnancy.

9.1 Policy

There must be arrangements in place for handling illness, injury or pregnancy.

The AAP has been carefully designed to handle exceptions to "normal" training and competition. AAP policy covers the following special situations related to illness, injury or pregnancy:

- Short-term curtailment of training and competition for health-related reasons;
- Long-term curtailment of training and competition for health-related reasons;
- Failure to meet renewal criteria for health-related reasons; and
- Voluntary withdrawal from carded-athlete training and competition for health-related reasons.

9.2 Procedures

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

Health-related circumstances that limit training and competition for relatively short periods (i.e., less than four months) are a matter strictly between the NSO and the athlete and do not fall under AAP policy.

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% of the AAP financial support to which they would otherwise be entitled, provided the following conditions are met:

- The athlete undertakes in writing to train or rehabilitate or both under the supervision of the NSO (or its designate) 1) 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 2) 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 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 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.

Failure to Meet Renewal Criteria for Health-related Reasons

At the end of a carding cycle during which an athlete has, for strictly health-related reasons, not achieved the standards required for the renewal of carded status, he or she may be considered for renomination for the upcoming carding period under the following conditions, provided the NSO has 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.

- 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 an 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 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.

Voluntary Withdrawal from Carded-Athlete Training and Competition for Health-related Reasons

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 usual procedures for [voluntary withdrawal](#) from the AAP apply. The athlete will no longer be eligible for the monthly living and training allowance but will be eligible, if qualified, for deferred tuition support or special-needs assistance.

Section 10 Voluntary Withdrawal from the AAP

This section describes the policy and procedures associated with voluntary withdrawal from the AAP.

10.1 Policy

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 NSO.

Athletes who retire permanently in mid-season will be allowed two months of 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 assistance or deferred tuition support (see [Section 8.1](#)).

Should an 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.

10.2 Procedures

When the NSO becomes aware or is informed that an athlete wishes to voluntarily withdraw from the AAP, the following must occur:

- The NSO must advise its Sport Canada Program Officer and the AAP Manager *in writing* of the effective date of withdrawal.
- Any allowances previously paid to the athlete beyond the period of transitional support must be refunded by the athlete to Canada's Receiver General. It is the responsibility of the NSO to facilitate the return of these funds.

Before Sport Canada withdraws an athlete's AAP support because of an athlete's decision to voluntarily withdraw from the AAP, the following shall apply:

- The AAP Manager will request that the NSO provide written confirmation that the athlete concerned has voluntarily withdrawn from the AAP.
- Once this request is sent from the AAP Manager to the NSO, AAP financial benefits may be withheld pending final confirmation of the athlete's status.
- 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 gives the athlete 30 days from its receipt to make representations 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.

Section 11 Withdrawal of Carded Status

This section describes the policy and procedures associated with withdrawing carded status from an athlete.

11.1 Policy

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

- Failure to meet training or competitive commitments;
- Violation of the Athlete/NSO Agreement;
- The athlete's failure to meet responsibilities outlined in AAP policies;
- Gross breach of discipline;
- Investigation for cause; and
- Violations of anti-doping rules.

Note: In many cases, the NSO may recommend that carded status be withdrawn. 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

Failure to Meet Training or Competitive Commitments

Failure to meet agreed-to training or competitive commitments may include the following:

- 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; and
- An inability to meet the training and competition obligations outlined in the athlete's annual training/competitive 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 competitive commitments.

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

- 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; and
- Where applicable, follow-up with a written warning to the athlete.

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 do the following:

- Provide written notification to the NSO's Sport Canada Program Officer and the AAP Manager, 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 is being made;
 - indicate the steps already taken to address the issue (verbal warning followed by formal letter of warning); and

- 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.

Following receipt of a written notification from an 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; and
- 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 any appeal, Sport Canada will continue to provide the athlete with AAP 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, including the following:

- Representations that withdrawal of support could cause financial hardship that would prevent an athlete from training;
- Representations that 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 will notify Sport Canada 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 (2) 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.
- 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 for it 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](#).

If Sport Canada wishes to withdraw an athlete's carded status for allegedly failing to meet training or competitive requirements, the steps listed below under [Investigations for Cause](#) will apply.

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.

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.

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, the steps listed in [Investigation for Cause](#) will apply.

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.
- The athlete may request that Sport Canada continue AAP support on a monthly basis until the matter is resolved. Sport Canada will consider representations from the athlete to continue AAP support pending the results of the investigation, including the following:
 - Representations that withdrawal of support could cause financial hardship that would prevent an athlete from training;
 - Representations that 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 AAP funding subject to conditions.

Following 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
- reinstate 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.

Anti-Doping Rule Violations

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, 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](#).

Section 12 Policy on Anti-doping and AAP Support

This section describes the anti-doping policy related to AAP funding.

12.1 Policy

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

It is the responsibility of CCES to inform Sport Canada of an adverse analytical finding under the Canadian Anti-Doping Program 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.

For all assertions of anti-doping rule violations made by CCES, an International Federation, a Major Games Organization, the World Anti-Doping Agency or other anti-doping organization, AAP benefits will be withheld pending the determination of an anti-doping rule violation or until such time as a final ruling is made on any subsequent appeal.

An athlete who is currently under sanction or who has previously been sanctioned by CCES, an International Federation, a Major Games Organization, the World Anti-Doping Agency or any other anti-doping organization for two years or more of sport ineligibility for an anti-doping rule violation and who has not, in the case of pre-2004 violations, been reinstated is permanently ineligible for AAP support.

Athletes who commit and are sanctioned for an anti-doping rule violation for a period of less than two years of sport ineligibility are ineligible for AAP support during the period of sport ineligibility and are ineligible to be nominated for AAP support during this time.

Following their period of ineligibility for AAP support, athletes must meet the carding criteria for the carding cycle for which they are applying for support and all other AAP eligibility requirements to again be eligible for AAP support.

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, his or her carding will be placed on hold pending resolution of the matter.

If the athlete exercises his or her right to have the B sample analyzed and the laboratory analysis of the B sample confirms the analysis of the A sample, the athlete's AAP benefits will continue to be withheld pending the determination of an anti-doping rule violation or until such time as a final ruling is made in any subsequent appeal.

If the laboratory analysis of the B sample does not confirm the results of the A sample, the athlete's AAP benefits will be reinstated from the date of the suspension of AAP funding.

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.

If an athlete's appeal is upheld in a [subsequent appeal](#) and it is determined that no anti-doping rule violation occurred, the athlete's AAP benefits will be reinstated from the date of the suspension of AAP funding.

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](#).

Section 13 Appeals Policy

This section presents the appeals policy of the AAP.

13.1 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 an NSO.¹

Appeal does not include an appeal of an NSO's AAP nomination/renomination decision or of an NSO's recommendation to withdraw carding. These NSO decisions may be appealed only through the NSO's review process, which includes an application for arbitration to the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC).

- For greater certainty, *Appeal* does not include a review of an NSO's published carding criteria.
- *Panel* means the Sport Canada Executive Director of Sport Excellence, the Manager of High Performance, and a Manager from the NSO's unit who together review Appeals of AAP Decisions.
- *Days* shall mean total days, including weekends or holidays.

13.2 Policy Statement

1. 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

2. An athlete or an NSO who wishes to appeal an AAP Decision shall have 15 days from the communication of the decision for which the Appeal is being requested to initiate an Appeal.
3. 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 paragraph 2 above. 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

4. 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.

¹ If an athlete makes such a request, Sport Canada will so inform the NSO.

Procedure for Documentary Appeal

5. 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:

5.1 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.

5.2 The applicable principles and timelines set out above are respected.

Information that May be Considered

6. 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 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

7. 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.

13.3 Recourse against a Decision of the Panel

An athlete or an NSO may seek recourse against a decision of the Panel only by applying for arbitration to the SDRCC within 30 days of the communication of the decision that is being appealed.

The arbitration 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 arbitration 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 SDRCC arbitrator's or SDRCC panel's jurisdiction 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.

Annex A Model Athlete/NSO Agreement

Model Athlete/NSO Agreement

AGREEMENT made this _____ day of _____, 200__

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 Federation 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);
- c) publish selection criteria for all national teams at least three (3) months before the selection for any particular team and at least eight (8) months before the selection of major games teams (e.g., Olympic, Commonwealth, Pan American, 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 criteria for the selection of athletes to the AAP ten (10) months before the start of the AAP eligibility cycle for the particular sport;
- f) nominate all athletes who meet AAP 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 for a representative elected by the athletes to sit as a voting member of the relevant decision-making body of the NSO (for example, the Board of Directors or National Team Committee); 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 arbitration 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 the 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, Sport Canada, the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES) or other authorities designated to do so;
- k) 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;

- l) 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;
- m) avoid participating in any competitions where federal government sport policy has determined that such participation is not permitted;
- n) 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;
- o) adhere to and comply with the NSO's appeal procedure; and
- p) 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 _____, 200__, and terminates on the _____ day of _____, 200__ .

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 NSO Representative

Witness Date Athlete

Annex B Training Expectations for Carded Athletes

Athletes carded under the 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 competitive 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).