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1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

1. The aim of this document is to describe the criteria that will be used by Nordiq Canada (NC) for nominating Para-Nordic (PN) athletes for Sport Canada's Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) for the 2020-2021 carding year.
2. This document is published under the authority of the High-Performance Manager-Para (HPM-P), in the absence of a High-Performance Director (HPD), in consultation with the Para Nordic Committee (PNC).
3. The Sport Canada policy and procedures that govern the AAP and the establishment and application of criteria can be found on the Sport Canada website: [Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Program](#).
4. It is the athlete's responsibility to read and understand the contents of this document and other supporting documents and policies. For clarification on the content of this document, contact the HPM-P.
5. The twelve-month carding cycle, which includes development cards, will run from June 1, 2020. Athletes will be eligible to accumulate carding points (international and domestic) from November 1, 2019 until the end of March 2020.
6. Nominees for AAP carding will be presented and reviewed at the annual PNC meeting, scheduled for early April 2020.
7. The Nordiq Canada HPM-P, upon review of the PNC, makes the final nomination recommendations to Sport Canada based on Nordiq Canada's Para Nordic carding criteria. Sport Canada is responsible for approving nominations in accordance with the AAP policies and published Nordiq Canada approved and AAP compliant carding criteria.
8. **The deadline to submit an appeal to Nordiq Canada regarding nomination/re-nomination recommendations is May 21, 2020. Please refer to Section 7 for Appeals process.**
9. **Amendments and Unforeseen Circumstances:** In the event of circumstances beyond the control of Nordiq Canada, including but not limited to; changes made by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), Canadian Paralympic Committee (CPC) or event organizers, that prevents the fair implementation of these criteria, as written, Nordiq Canada reserves the right to determine an appropriate course of action, which may include the right to review and change any part of the criteria. Changes to this document will be communicated directly to the ski community within 72 hours of changes by posting to Nordiq Canada website and direct email to PN Committee representatives and active PN coaches.

10. Curtailment of Training and Competition for Health Related Reasons (COH) – Carded athletes unable to achieve the carding standard due to injury or illness may be considered for nomination ONLY if the athlete meets the conditions outlined in (9.1.2 and 9.1.3 of Sport Canada’s Athlete Assistance Program – Policies and Procedures) as well as those below:

- Notification to the HPD/HPM at the time the injury/illness occurs
- Consistent communication of the athlete’s health and performance status to the HPD/HPM during the time the athlete is unable to train or compete
- Documentation confirming diagnosis by a licensed medical physician¹
- A letter from the athlete’s coach outlining the impact of the illness, or injury on the athlete’s training
- A return to training and competition plan for the current and upcoming season
- Supporting documentation of the athlete’s treatment by an accredited professional (physiotherapist/massage, etc.) that supports the return to training and competition plan
- Written declaration to the HPD (or HPM in absence of an HPD) by the athlete that they are making a submission under the COH

This provision ONLY applies when long-term athlete performance is compromised due to the inability to train or compete for an extended period and has a positive prognosis to return to high performance competition within 8 to 12 months.

Medical documents will be reviewed and verified by the NST Team Physician. In the case the team physician is unavailable, another NC approved physician will be appointed to review the documentation.

COH submissions will be reviewed and decided upon by the HPD/HPM with consultation by the PNC and NST Coaches. Acceptance or denial of a COH will be evaluated on the impact and relevance the injury had on the athlete’s performance. Acceptance of a COH does not guarantee carding.

All documentation must be submitted to the HPD/HPM before April 4, 2020 11:59 AM MST. Submissions will not be accepted after this deadline.

2.0 ELIGIBILITY

1. To qualify for AAP carding, an athlete or guide must meet the following criteria set by Sport Canada:
 - a. The athlete must be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada at the beginning of the carding cycle the athlete is being nominated.

¹ A Doctor of Medicine licensed to practice medicine in Canada.

- b. Permanent residents must live in Canada for the full year preceding the carding cycle for which the athlete is being considered for AAP support. All athletes are expected to have participated in National Sport Organization (NSO) sanctioned programs during that time
 - c. The athlete must be available to represent Canada in major international competitions, including World Para Nordic Skiing (WPNS) World Championships and Paralympic Winter Games. Further, under the eligibility requirements of the sport's International Federation (IF) as it pertains to *citizenship or residency status*.
 - d. The athlete must be available to represent Canada in major international competitions, including World Para Nordic Skiing (WPNS) World Championships and Paralympic Winter Games. Further, under the eligibility requirements of the sport's International Federation (IF) as it pertains to *classification* requirements;
 - e. The athlete must be eligible to represent Canada at major international competitions, including WPNS World Championships, at the beginning of the carding cycle for which the athlete is being nominated:
 - f. For athletes who have been permanent residents of Canada for three years or more, continued eligibility to receive AAP support is contingent on the athlete becoming eligible to represent Canada at the Paralympic Winter Games;
 - g. The athlete must meet the published NSO approved, AAP compliant sport specific carding criteria;
 - h. Athletes must meet the carding criteria as the member of a Canadian team, at international events or at a domestic event or events sanctioned by NC for such purpose;
2. NC has established that Guides of visually impaired athletes will be eligible for Sport Canada AAP support under the following conditions:
 - a. The guide will be considered for AAP support based upon the results and awarding of AAP support for the visually impaired athlete they are guiding;
 - b. The guide must guide the athlete in a qualifying event as outlined in Section 4;
 - c. More than one guide may be nominated for Sport Canada AAP support. Each guide must have a full training and competition schedule and be fully integrated with the visually impaired athlete's program. Sport Canada must approve additional guides for AAP support.
3. NC has established the additional criteria to be eligible for AAP support, an athlete or guide must be:
 - a. A member of the Para-Nordic National Ski Team (PNST) - Para-Nordic World Cup Team, Development Team or NextGen (Prospects) Team;
 - b. A member in good standing of a Nordiq Canada club and follow an annual periodized program consistent with Nordiq Canada's Long-Term Athlete Development model. This program will be approved and monitored by Nordiq Canada's HPM-P or designate.

3.0 ALLOCATION AND TYPES OF CARDS

Allocation

Nordiq Canada - Para has received the 11 senior cards or the equivalent to \$232,980 in funding.

Nordic Canada will distribute the funding as per the criteria in 4.0 in priority order until all funds are utilized or there are no more eligible athletes.

A minimum of 4 months of carding support must be available to nominate an athlete to the AAP.

Types of Cards

There are two types of cards: Senior cards and Development cards:

A. SENIOR CARDS

Senior International Cards (SR1/SR2) (\$1,765.00/month).

- Criteria as determined by Sport Canada;
- Awarded to an athlete who achieves a Top 8 AND Top Half Performance in a Paralympic event at a Senior World Para Nordic Skiing Championship or Paralympic Games;
- Athletes are eligible for two (2) years of carding. The second-year nomination is dependent on the athlete meeting eligibility and training criteria;
- Following a season where there are no PWG, WCH, or World Para Biathlon Championships, there will be no nominations for SR1 cards.

Senior National Cards (SR) (\$1,765.00/month).

- National criteria for Senior cards are negotiated between Sport Canada and NC and are approved by Sport Canada each year.
- First year Senior National Card (C1) (\$1,060.00/month)
- C1 cards are awarded to athletes who meet the national criteria for Senior cards for the first time. They are awarded for a period of one year and are funded at the Development card level

B. DEVELOPMENT CARDS

Development Cards (D): (\$1,060.00/month)

- Development card criteria are negotiated between Sport Canada and NC and are approved by Sport Canada each year.
- Development cards are awarded for one year and are referred to as D cards

4.0 CARDING CRITERIA

Athletes will be nominated for the AAP in the following priority order until no further funding remains in the quota:

- a. Athletes eligible under the [SR1 Card Criteria](#);
- b. Athletes eligible under the [SR2 Card Criteria](#);
- c. Athletes eligible under the [SR/C1 Card Criteria](#);
- d. Athlete eligible under the [D Card Criteria](#)

4.1 SENIOR CARDS

4.1.1 International Criteria (SR1/SR2)

- a. For the 2020-21 carding year, SR1 cards will be awarded for international criteria to athletes achieving a top eight AND top half of the field at the 2019-20 WPNS World Para Biathlon Championships in a Paralympic Event. Athletes will be ranked in accordance with their single best individual placing.
- b. For the 2020-21 carding year, carded athletes who held a SR1 card in 2019-20 may be eligible for nomination for a SR2 card provided they:
 - i. Meet all eligibility requirements outlined in Section 2.0;
 - ii. Must be following an NSO approved Yearly Training Program as reviewed by the HPM-P and PNST National Team Coaches;
- c. Athletes with a SR1 card in 2019-20 who are injured, are eligible to be nominated for a SR2 card provided they:
 - i. meet the eligibility requirements outlined in Section 2, AND
 - ii. have documented their injury as per the Curtailment of Health requirements outlined in 1.10, AND
 - iii. are following an NSO approved return to competition plan.

4.1.2 National Criteria (SR)

Progression Criteria

Athletes are expected to make progress in their results in order to maintain SR card status. Normally, eight years is the maximum that an athlete will be carded at the senior level based on national criteria after which time, Sport Canada will require a comprehensive thoroughly documented review of the athlete's performance over the past eight years in order to demonstrate progress towards meeting the senior international criteria which then warrants nomination of "Senior National" card status for an additional year. This process must be followed for all subsequent years that the athlete is nominated at this level.

Eligibility

- a. Only athletes on the PNST will be eligible for SR cards.
- b. The PNST is comprised of Para-Nordic World Cup Team and the Para-Nordic Development Team.
- c. The Para-Nordic Committee will confirm the PNST team selections using the posted PNST 2020-21 Team Selection Criteria. Therefore, the performance standards and ranking mechanisms contained in the PNST 2020-21 Team Selection Criteria also functions as the entry standard for AAP Carding.
- d. The 2020-21 PNST Team Selection Criteria can be found at this link: [LINK TO COME](#)

Nomination

- a. **SR Card Priority 1** – WPNS World Cup (WC) athletes placing top 8 AND top half of the field individual result at a 2019-20 WPNS World Cup. Athletes will be ranked in accordance with their single best individual placing at any 2019-20 WPNS WC
- b. **SR Card Priority 2** – WPNS WC athletes placing 9th to 16th and top half of the field individual results at the 2019-20 WPNS WC. Athletes will be ranked in accordance with their single best individual placing at any 2019-20 WPNS WC.
- c. **SR Card Priority 3** - Nomination of athletes for SR Card Priority 3 cards will be made in the following order of priority:
 - I. Athletes who held SR2 cards in 2019-20 and who fall under the [AAP Policy for “Curtailement of Training and Competition for Health Related Reasons”](#). (Refer to Section 1.10)
 - II. Athletes selected to the PNST – World Cup Team in accordance with the 2020-21 PNST Team Selection Criteria, but not already nominated for international carding criteria or national priority 1 and 2. Athletes will be ranked in accordance with their best result (lowest WPNS points) individual result in any WPNS WC during the 2019-20 season. This assessment will consider quality of competition;
 - III. Athletes holding SR/C1 cards in 2019-20 who fall under the [AAP Policy for “Curtailement of Training and Competition for Health-Related Reasons”](#) (Refer to Section 1.10)

4.2 DEVELOPMENT CARDS

Progression Criteria

Athletes are expected to make progress in their results in order to progress to SR card status. Normally, three years is the maximum that an athlete will be carded at the development level. After which time, Sport Canada will require a comprehensive thoroughly documented review of the athlete’s performance over the past five years in order to demonstrate progress toward a performance equivalent to top 16 and top half at the WPNS WCH or PWG, which then warrants nomination of “Development” card status for an additional year. This process must be followed for all subsequent years that the athlete is nominated at this level. Athletes who have previously been carded for two years or more at the Senior Card level (SR1, SR2, SR and C) are not normally eligible to be nominated for Development cards.

Eligibility

To be eligible for a Development Card, athletes must meet the following criteria:

- a. Be a member of the PNST – World Cup Team, Development Team or NextGen (Prospects) Team
- b. Athletes must be a member of a Nordiq Canada club program and follow an annual periodized program that is:
 - i. Adapted to their stage of athletic development;
 - ii. Consistent with Nordiq Canada’s sport Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model, with regard to the type, the amount, and the sequential organization of training activities

to be carried out. This program will be designed and delivered by a Nordiq Canada sport-specific, NCCP qualified coach and monitored by a Nordiq Canada National Coach or designate.

- c. All such athletes must also achieve 150 average WPNS points on the posted WPNS March 2020 ranking list.

Nomination

Nomination of athletes for Development Cards will be made in the following order of priority:

- a. Athletes on the PNST – Development Team ranked in accordance with their best (lowest WPNS points) individual result at any WPNS sanctioned COC, WC or WCH race during the 2019-20 season.
- b. Athletes on the PNST – NextGen (Prospects) Team ranked in accordance with their best (lowest WPNS points) individual result at any WPNS sanctioned COC, WC or WCH race during the 2019-20 season.
- c. Athletes holding Development cards in the 2019-20 season who fall under the [AAP Policy for “Curtailed Training and Competition for Health-Related Reasons”](#). (Refer section 1.10)

5.0 TIE BREAKER PROCESS

Where a tie exists between ranked athletes, the tie breaker will be the lowest of the WPNS points on the final March 2020 ranking list published by the WPNS/IPC.

6.0 WITHDRAWAL OF AAP FUNDING

6.1 ATHLETE

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

- a. If the athlete has not fulfilled his/her responsibilities with respect to mandatory training camps, testing, and competitions;
- b. If the athlete has not fulfilled his/her responsibilities as identified in the NC Athlete Agreement;
- c. If the athlete has not fulfilled his/her responsibilities as identified in the NC Code of Conduct or NC Discipline Policy;
- d. If the athlete has demonstrated repeated toxic behavior eroding the NC Culture of Excellence;
- e. If the athlete has not adhered to his/her responsibilities as they pertain to WADA, and CCES antidoping protocols;
- f. Fraudulent misrepresentation Carded Athlete Program (2019-2020) ; and
- g. Gross breach of discipline;

The High-Performance Manager – Para may recommend the withdrawal of an athlete’s carded status to Sport Canada, under the following conditions:

- Provide a written warning to the athlete, including the steps and timelines to remedy the situation and the consequences of a failure to heed the warning;

If the above steps are not successful in resolving the matter and NC still wishes to recommend withdrawal of carded status, NC must send a letter to the Sport Canada Program Officer and the AAP Manager with a copy of the athlete’s carded status. This letter must indicate:

- The grounds on which the recommendation is being made;
- The steps already taken to address the issue (verbal warning followed by a formal letter of warning);
- Provide notice to the athlete of the athlete’s right to contest the NC recommendation to withdraw carded status through NC’s internal appeal process within the prescribed time.

6.2 GUIDE

During the carding cycle, the NSO may recommend withdrawal of the carding support of a guide for health-related reasons or if the guide is no longer a member of the National Team. The remaining months of carding may be allocated to a new guide as long as the National Team Coach recommends them and they are a member of the National Team. In the case of a SR1, SR2 or SR card replacement, if the new guide has never been carded at the Senior level before they will be eligible for a C1 card.

7.0 APPEAL PROCESS

Appeals of Nordiq Canada AAP nomination/re-nomination decision or of Nordiq Canada’s recommendation to withdraw carding may be pursued only through Nordiq Canada’s review process, which includes an application to the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC). Appeals of AAP decisions made under [Section 6 \(Application for the Approval of Cards\)](#) or [Section 11 \(Withdrawal of Carding Status\)](#) may be pursued through [Section 13 of the AAP Policies, Procedures and Guidelines](#).