

# Athlete Assistance Program

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Selection Criteria

**2023-24**



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*Situations may arise, such as COVID-19, that do not allow these criteria to be modified or applied as written due to time constraints or other exceptional and unforeseen circumstances. In such situations, any decision, including nomination decisions, will be made by the individual(s) with decision-making authority, as stated in these criteria in consultation with the relevant individual(s) or committee(s) (as applicable), and in accordance with the stated performance objectives and selection philosophy and approach as stated herein. Should it be necessary to make any decision in this manner, Nordiq Canada will communicate with all affected individuals as soon as possible.*

## **1. General Information**

- 1.1.** This document establishes the criteria that will be used by Nordiq Canada for nominating Olympic stream athletes for Sport Canada's Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) for the 2023-24 carding year.
- 1.2.** 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](#).
- 1.3.** This document is created following Nordiq Canada's *NST Selection, Nomination and Announcement* policy.
- 1.4.** Nordiq Canada's High Performance Director (HPD) makes the final nomination recommendations to Sport Canada based on Nordiq Canada's carding criteria.
- 1.5.** Sport Canada is responsible for approving nominations in accordance with their AAP policies and the published Nordiq Canada *Athlete Assistance Program* selection criteria.
- 1.6.** Appeals of Nordiq Canada's AAP nomination/re-nomination decision or recommendation to withdraw carding, may be pursued through the Nordiq Canada's *Dispute Resolution and Appeal* policy. Appeals of the Sport Canada AAP decision made under Sport Canada's *AAP Policies and Procedures* (Section 6 or 11) may be pursued through Section 13.
- 1.7.** The Nordiq Canada HPD, or the NSO assigned designate, has the authority, and reserves the right to amend this document prior to the selection date under the following circumstances:
  - a.** In the event of unforeseen circumstances beyond the control of Nordiq Canada that prevents the HPD from fairly and objectively implementing these selection procedures.
  - b.** When additional (or altered) information deemed relevant by Nordiq Canada to the criteria is provided by external parties, such as (but not limited to) an event

organizing committee, Sport Canada, The Canadian Olympic Committee, FIS, or any other relevant organization.

- c. To correct, clarify or amend any inconsistencies, errors or omissions in the criteria.
- d. COVID-19 occurrences pertaining to, but not limited to: race cancellations or rescheduling, any country border limitations, travel restrictions, travel limitations, inability to maintain safety of athletes, etc.

Changes to this document will be communicated as per the Nordiq Canada *NST Selection, Nomination and Announcement* policy. Nordiq Canada is not responsible or liable in any way to anyone as a result of any amendments.

- 1.8. Athletes and coaches are responsible for reading and understanding the contents of this and supporting documents and policies. For clarification contact the HPD.
- 1.9. The qualification period is November 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023. The twelve-month carding cycle, which includes development cards, is from June 1, 2023 to May 31, 2024.
- 1.10. This policy does not require Nordiq Canada to select any or all athletes to the maximum number of allotted quota positions.
- 1.11. Athletes will only be nominated when eligibility requirements have been verified by Nordiq Canada and Sport Canada.
- 1.12. Athletes who meet criteria but are ranked lower than quota spots permit will not be selected.

## 2. Eligibility

- 2.1. To be considered for AAP selection, athletes must:
  - a. be a Nordiq Canada member in good standing<sup>1</sup>;
  - b. be registered with a Nordiq Canada club;
  - c. have a valid Canadian passport;
  - d. have a valid Nordiq Canada race license; and,
  - e. have a valid Canadian FIS license.
- 2.2. To qualify for AAP carding, an athlete must meet the following criteria set by Sport Canada in the [Athlete Assistance Program Policy](#):
  - 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.

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<sup>1</sup> Please refer to the Nordiq Canada Bylaws for a full description of member in good standing

Permanent residents must live in Canada for the full year preceding the carding cycle for which the athlete is being considered for AAP support.

- b. The athlete must be available to represent Canada in major international competitions, including World Championships and Olympic Winter Games. Further, under the eligibility requirements of the sport's International Federation (IF) as it pertains to citizenship or residency status, the athlete must be eligible to represent Canada at major international competitions, including World Championships, at the beginning of the carding cycle for which the athlete is being nominated.
- c. 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 Olympic Winter Games.
- d. The athlete must meet the published NSO approved, AAP compliant sport specific carding criteria.
- e. The athlete must participate in national team preparatory and annual training programs as outlined by the NST coaching staff and HPD.

### **3. Curtailment of Training and Competition for Health-Related Reasons (COH)**

- 3.1. Nordiq Canada will consider re-nominating Athletes for an injury card in accordance with section 9.1.3 of the Sport Canada AAP policy. The basic philosophy for selecting an athlete by granting health-related request is that all things being equal, the athlete nominated has clearly demonstrated superior performances in previous competition to other athletes being considered for an SR1, SR2, SR or D nomination. A health-related request is considered as the last means by which an athlete can earn selection and is intended to provide for exceptional circumstances outside the normal selection criteria rather than being part of the normal means by which an athlete can earn selection. This provision only applies when performance is compromised because they have not been able to train or compete for an extended period and has a positive prognosis within 8 to 12 months.
- 3.2. A SR1/SR2/SR or D carded athlete who met 2022-23 NST objective criteria based on results from 2020-21, and not through a ranking list nomination, who at the end of the carding cycle, has not achieved the standard required for the renewal of carding status strictly because of health-related reasons, may be considered for re-nomination for the upcoming year provided the following conditions are met:
  - a. An Athlete must, within 7 days following the incident or occurrence, submit to the HPD a report which includes:
    - i. Certificate of diagnosis;
    - ii. consistent communication of the athlete's health and performance status to the HPD or designated Nordiq Canada coaching or IST staff during the time the athlete is unable to train or compete;

- iii. documentation confirming diagnosis by a licensed, relevant, and medical practitioner;
    - iv. a return to training and competition plan for the current and upcoming season;
    - v. supporting documentation of the athlete's treatment by an accredited professional (e.g. physiotherapist/ massage) that supports a return to training and competition plan.
  - b. In the case of injury or illness, no Carding nominations will be made for injuries that are determined by the HPD in consultation with medical professionals to be career-ending.
  - c. If an Athlete competes in a qualifying event, they may not invoke Section 3 in respect to the qualifying event in which he or she competed. The intention of this provision is to ensure that Athletes who are injured, suffering from an illness, or medical condition do not compete, which could cause further ill health, or harm.  
**If an Athlete does compete, they must accept the race result they have achieved.**
- 3.3. The Athlete may be nominated for a Senior Card or Development Card on the grounds of injury, a medical condition (including pregnancy) or illness at the sole discretion of the HPD based on the following factors:
  - a. the number of cards available;
  - b. the nature and details of the diagnosis and prognosis;
  - c. assessment and training data provided by the Athlete that is verifiable by the discipline coach and IST;
  - d. evidence of the Athlete's level of performance prior to injury;
  - e. the strength of the Athlete's rehabilitation and training plan as evaluated by the HPD;
  - f. the advice of medical experts provided to the HPD; and
  - g. the realistic expectation that the Athlete can return to competition ready performance and continue to demonstrate the potential to perform at the Top-8 level and progress toward the podium.

Documentation must be submitted to the HPD by **April 4, 2023, 11:59 PM MST**.

#### 4. Types of Cards and Funding Allocation

- 4.1. Nordiq Canada is awarded the equivalent of 18 Senior Cards or \$381,240 in AAP funding for the June 1, 2023, to May 31, 2024 Carding cycle. Sport Canada reviews its carding allocations regularly therefore this amount is subject to change.
- 4.2. There are two types of card: Senior (SR1/SR2/SR/C1) and Development (D).
- 4.3. A minimum 4 months of carding support must be available to nominate an athlete for AAP.

4.4. Senior cards are \$21,180 (\$1,765 /month x 12). C1 cards are \$12,720 (\$1,060 /month x 12). Development cards are \$12,720 (\$1,060 /month x 12).

4.5. **Senior Cards** are awarded on two sets of criteria:

a. International Criteria (SR1/SR2). Sport Canada sets these criteria.

- i. Senior cards based on international criteria are awarded to recognize outstanding performance at the World Ski Championships or Olympic Winter Games.
- ii. Athletes achieving the criteria are eligible for two years of AAP support. The first carding year is a SR1 card and second is a SR2 card. The second year is subject to the athlete meeting requirements in 2.0 Eligibility, completing the online anti-doping courses, signing an Athlete NSO Agreement, selection to the National Ski Team and adhering to an HPD approved training program.

*Note: No athlete will be nominated for SR1 cards immediately following a season where there is no Olympic Winter Games or World Ski Championships.*

b. National Criteria (SR/C1)

- i. Senior cards (SR) are awarded based on national criteria to athletes with the potential to reach international criteria.
- ii. SR cards based on national criteria are awarded for one year.
- iii. C1 cards are awarded to athletes who meet the national criteria for SR cards for the first time. They are awarded for a period of one year and are funded at the Development card level.

4.6. **Progression criteria for Senior cards:** Eight (8) years is the maximum 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 to demonstrate progress toward meeting the 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.

4.7. **Development Cards (D)** are to meet the development needs of younger athletes who clearly demonstrate the potential to achieve the Senior card international criteria. Development cards are awarded for one year.

4.8. **Progression criteria for Development cards:** Three years (3) is the maximum an athlete will be carded at the development level (this criterion applies once the athlete reaches the post-junior category). After which time, Sport Canada will require a comprehensive document review of the athlete's performance demonstrating progress toward meeting the senior international criteria, which then may warrant nomination of D card status for an additional year at this level.

- 4.9. Athletes previously carded at the SR card levels (SR1, SR2, SR and C1) are not eligible for D cards. An exception can be made for the U23 age category when carded at the senior levels.

## 5. Senior Card (SR) Criteria

- 5.1. International Criteria (SR1/SR2) - International criteria recognize and reward Canadian athletes for outstanding performance at World Championships or the Olympic/Paralympic Games. In Olympic and Paralympic sports, only results from events that are on the program of the upcoming Olympic/Paralympic Games will be considered for carding under the International Criteria. The following are the current standards for International Criteria:

- a. Finish in the top eight, counting a maximum of three entries per country; **AND** finish in the top half of the field.
- b. Athletes with a SR1 card during the preceding carding cycle are eligible to be nominated for a SR2 card provided they meet the eligibility requirements outlined in Section 2.0 and have shown compliance to an HPD approved training plan.
- c. Athletes with a SR1 card during the preceding carding cycle who are injured, are eligible to be nominated for a SR2 card provided they:
  - i. meet the eligibility requirements outlined in Section 2.0, **AND**
  - ii. have documented their injury as per the Curtailment of Health requirements outlined in Section 3.0, **AND**
  - iii. are following an NSO approved return to competition plan.

- 5.2. National Criteria (SR) – Nomination of athletes for SR cards will be made in the following priority order:

- a. Athletes who qualified for the NST Gold Team on point 5.7.1 of the *2023-24 National Ski Team Selection Criteria* in order of NST qualification.
- b. Athletes who qualified for the NST Silver Team on point 5.7.2 of the *2023-24 National Ski Team Selection Criteria* in order of NST qualification.
- c. Athletes who qualified for the NST Bronze Team on point 5.7.3 of the *2023-24 National Ski Team Selection Criteria* in order of NST qualification.
- d. 2022-2023 SR carded athletes with an accepted Curtailment of Health as defined in Section 3.

## 6. Development Card (D) Criteria

- 6.1. Selection Criteria – Nomination of Development cards will be made in the following order:

- a. Athletes who qualified for the NST Development Team in order of NST qualification.
- b. 2022-2023 D carded athletes with an accepted Curtailment of Health as defined in Section 3.



- c. Non-NST athletes in order of ranking from the NST Development Team aggregate selection rankings as per the 2023-24 National Ski Team Selection Criteria point 5.4. Ties will be broken by the athlete with the most points in the aggregate ranking. Further ties will be decided up on the number of 1, 2, 3 place race finishes. For example, an athlete with two first place finishes and two second place finishes will rank higher than an athlete with two first place finishes, one second place finish and one third place finish.

## 7. Definitions

Definitions relevant to understanding criteria procedures

- 7.1. Individual Final Finish Race Result - The final time and ranking attributed to an athlete at the completion of an entire individual event, i.e. time of day, qualification heats, pre-qualification times, team relay, or team sprint times are not considered individual final finish race results. World Cup (WC) points must be awarded for any result to be considered a WC race result.
- 7.2. Competition Ready: - Defined as the ability of the athlete to achieve equal or superior performance(s) onsite at the scheduled event, as compared to the performance(s) the athlete achieved in qualifying.

## 8. Withdrawal of AAP Funding

- 8.1. The High Performance Director may recommend the withdrawal of an athlete's carded status to Sport Canada, under the following conditions:
  - a. the athlete has not fulfilled his/her responsibilities with respect to mandatory training camps, testing, and competitions;
  - b. the athlete has not fulfilled his/her responsibilities as identified in the NC Athlete Agreement;
  - c. the athlete has not fulfilled his/her responsibilities as identified in the NC Code of Conduct or NC Discipline Policy;
  - d. the athlete has demonstrated repeated toxic behavior eroding the NC Culture of Excellence;
  - e. the athlete has not adhered to his/her responsibilities as they pertain to WADA, and CCES antidoping protocols;
  - f. fraudulent misrepresentation to the AAP program; and
  - g. gross breach of discipline.
- 8.2. The procedures for the withdrawal of carding by Nordiq Canada are:
  - a. 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;
  - b. 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:
    - i. The grounds on which the recommendation is being made;

- ii. The steps already taken to address the issue (verbal warning followed by a formal letter of warning);
- iii. 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.