

Para Nordic Athlete Assistance Program

Selection Criteria

2023-24



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COVID – 19 Virus

Nordiq Canada is carefully following the coronavirus pandemic and all related impacts on the global and domestic level and how it may affect the criteria for Para Nordic Trip Team selection. Situations related to the coronavirus pandemic may arise that require these criteria to be modified. Any modifications will be made promptly and as often as required following developments that directly impact the criteria. In such circumstances, any modifications will be communicated to all affected individuals as soon as possible.

International Governance

On May 26, 2022, the International Ski and Snowboard Federation (FIS) membership voted 94% in favour of taking over the governance of all Para winter snow sports (Alpine, Snowboard, Nordic, and Biathlon) from the IPC. The transference of governance will take place beginning in the 2022-23 season. While we anticipate a smooth transition to FIS, there may be decisions and changes beyond the control of Nordiq Canada . Any modifications will be made promptly and as often as required following developments that directly impact the criteria. In such circumstances, any modifications will be communicated to all affected individuals as soon as possible.

Para Nordic Teams

Beginning in the 2023-24 season, to align terms used across within the Canadian sport system that describe athletes and team tiers along the high performance pathway, Para nordic will revise the team names in the following order:

- *World Cup – Para Nordic World Cup Team*
- *NextGen – Para Nordic Athletes forecasted to have medal potential in 4-8 years*
- *Development – Para Nordic athletes forecasted to have medal potential 8+ years*
- *Prospects – Para Nordic athletes who have been identified with potential to make Development or NextGen team in 4-8 years*

Situations may arise 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.

1.0 General Information

1. This document establishes the criteria that will be used by Nordiq Canada for nominating Para Nordic (PN) athletes to Sport Canada's Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) for the 2023-2024 carding year.
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](#).
3. This document is created following Nordiq Canada's *NST Selection, Nomination, and Announcement Policy*.
4. Nordiq Canada's High Performance Director-Para (HPD-Para) makes the final nomination recommendations to Sport Canada based on Nordiq Canada's carding criteria.
5. Sport Canada is responsible for approving nominations in accordance with their AAP policies and the published Nordiq Canada *Para Nordic Athlete Assistance Program* selection criteria.
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.
7. The Nordiq Canada HPD-Para, or the NSO assigned designate¹, 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-Para 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 Paralympic 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*

¹ In the event the HPD-PARA is unavailable, a designate will be appointed within Nordiq Canada to be the decision-making authority.

Selection, Nomination and Announcement policy. Nordiq Canada is not responsible or liable in any way to anyone as a result of any amendments.

8. Athletes and coaches are responsible for reading and understanding the contents of this and supporting documents and policies. For clarification contact the HPD-Para, Kate Boyd kboyd@nordiqcanada.ca.
9. The qualification period is November 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023. The twelve-month carding cycle will run from June 1, 2023, to May 31, 2024. Athletes will be eligible to accumulate carding points (international and domestic) from November 1, 2022, until the end of March 2023.
10. This policy does not require Nordiq Canada to select any or all athletes to the maximum number of allotted cards.
11. Athletes will only be nominated when eligibility requirements have been verified by Nordiq Canada and Sport Canada.
12. Athletes who meet criteria but are ranked lower than allocated cards will not be selected.

2.0 Eligibility

1. To qualify for AAP carding, an athlete or guide must meet the following criteria set by Sport Canada and Nordiq 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.
 - 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 FIS Para Snow Sports (FIS PSS) World Championships and Paralympic WinterGames. 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 FIS Para Snow Sports (FIS PSS) World Championships and Paralympic WinterGames. 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 FIS Para Snow Sports (FIS PSS) 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 (3) 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. The athlete must be a member of the Para Nordic World Cup Team, PN NextGen Team, PN Development, or PN Prospects Team.
 - i. A member in good standing² 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 HPD-Para or designate.
 - j. Development card athletes must achieve 150 FIS PSS points or less to be carded.
2. Nordiq Canada 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 5;
 - 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.

² Please refer to the Nordiq Canada bylaws or a full description of member in good standing.

3.0 Curtailment of Training and Competition for Health-Related Reasons (COH)

1. Nordiq Canada will consider 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 an injury or illness 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/C1 or D nomination. An injury or illness 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 an athlete's 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.
2. A SR1/SR2/SR or D carded athlete who met 2023-24 PNST objective criteria based on results from 2022-23, 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 nomination for the upcoming year provided the following conditions are met:
 - a. An athlete must, within seven (7) days following the incident or occurrence, submit to the HPD-Para:
 - i. certificate of diagnosis;
 - ii. consistent communication of the athlete's health and performance status to the HPD-Para 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-Para 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. The athlete may be nominated for a SR or D card on the grounds of injury, a medical condition (including pregnancy) or illness at the sole discretion of the HPD-Para 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 Integrated Support Team (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-Para;
- f. the advice of medical experts provided to the HPD-Para; 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.
- h. Documentation must be submitted to the HPD-Para by **April 3, 2023, 11:59 PM MST**.

4.0 Types of Cards and Funding Allocation

1. Nordiq Canada Para is awarded 11 Senior Cards or the equivalent to \$232,980 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.
2. Nordic Canada will distribute the funding as per the criteria in 5.0 in priority order until all funds are utilized or there are no more eligible athletes.
3. A minimum of four (4) months of carding support must be available to nominate an athlete to the AAP.
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).
5. There are two types of cards: Senior (SR) and Development (D).

SENIOR CARDS

6. **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 Para World Ski Championships or Paralympic Winter Games.
 - ii. Athletes achieving the criteria are eligible for two (2) 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 Team and adhering to an HPD-Para approved training.
 - iii. Following a season where there are no PWG, WCH, or World Para Biathlon Championships, there will be no nominations for SR1 cards.

- b. National Criteria (SR/C1):**
 - i.** Senior cards awarded based on national criteria are to support athletes with the potential to reach international criteria.
 - ii.** Senior cards based on national criteria are awarded for one year.
 - iii.** 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 (1) year and are funded at the Development card level.
 - 7. Progression Criteria:** Athletes are expected to make progress in their results in order to maintain SR card status. Normally eight (8) 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 (8) years in order to demonstrate progress toward 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.
 - 8. Eligibility for Senior cards:**
 - a.** Only athletes on the PN World Cup or NextGen Teams are eligible for SR cards.
 - b.** The HPD-Para will confirm the PNST team selections using the posted *PNST 2023-24 Team Selection Criteria*. Therefore, the performance standards and ranking mechanisms contained in the *PNST 2023-24 Team Selection Criteria* also function as the entry standard for AAP Carding.
 - c.** The *2023-24 PNST Team Selection Criteria* can be found on the Nordiq Canada website.

DEVELOPMENT CARDS

- 9. Development Cards** are to meet the development needs of athletes who clearly demonstrate the potential to achieve the Senior card international criteria.
 - a.** Development cards are awarded for one year and are referred to as D cards.
 - b.** An athlete who has qualified for a development card as well as for a SR card has the choice to accept either the D card or the SR card.
 - 10. Progression Criteria:** Athletes are expected to make progress in their results in order to progress to SR card status. Three years (3) 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 (5) years in order to demonstrate progress toward a performance equivalent to top-16 and top half at the FIS PSS WCH or PWG, which then warrants nomination of D 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 (2) years or more at the Senior Card level (SR1, SR2, SR and C) are not normally eligible to be nominated for D cards.
 - 11. Eligibility for Development cards:**
 - a.** Only athletes on the PN Development Team or Prospects Team will be eligible for D cards.

- b. The HPD-Para will confirm the team selections using the *posted 2023-24 Para Nordic Team Selection Criteria*. Therefore, the performance standards and ranking mechanisms contained in the *2023-24 Para Nordic Team Selection Criteria* also functions as the entrystandard for AAP Carding.
- c. The *2023-24 PNST Team Selection Criteria* can be found on the Nordiq Canada website.

5.0 Senior Carding Criteria

1. 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
2. International Criteria (SR1/SR2) - International criteria recognizes Canadian athletes for outstanding performance at World Championships or the Olympic/Paralympic Winter Games. In Olympic and Paralympic sports, only results from events that are on the program of the upcoming Olympic/Paralympic Winter Games will be considered for carding under the international criteria. The following are the current standards for international criteria:
 - a. For the 2023-24 carding year, SR1 cards will be awarded for international criteria to athletes achieving a top eight (8); **AND** top half of the field at the FIS PSS World Championships in a Paralympic event. Athletes will be ranked in accordance with their single best individual placing. In a year where no FIS PSS World Championships or Paralympic Winter Games are held, there will be no SR1 cards awarded.
 - b. For the 2023-24 carding year, carded athletes who held a SR1 card in 2022-23 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 HPD-Para and PNST National Team Coaches;
 - iii. If injured, follow submissions as per section 3.
3. National Criteria (SR/C1) – Nomination of athletes for SR cards will be made in the following priority order:
 - a. **SR Card Priority 1** – Athletes who achieve 30 FIS PSS points or less at a World Championships or PWG.
 - b. **SR Card Priority 2** – FIS PSS World Cup (WC) athletes placing top-8 **AND** top half of the field individual result at a 2022-23 FIS PSS World Cup. Athletes will be ranked in accordance with their single best individual placing at any 2022-23 FIS PSS World Cup
 - c. **SR Card Priority 3** – FIS PSS WC athletes placing 9th to 16th and top half of the field

in an individual race result at the 2022-23 FIS PSS WC. Athletes will be ranked in accordance with their single best individual placing at any 2022-23 FIS PSS World Cup.

- d. **SR Card Priority 4** – In the absence of any international events due to Covid or other, PNST athletes who held a SR2 card in the 2022-2023 cycle will be re-nominated for SR carding pending where possible:
 - i. Adhered to PN National Team Coach and HPD-Para approved 2022-2023 training program;
 - ii. FIS/IBU racing results, compared to FIS PSS points, support continued progress and improvement.
- e. **SR Card Priority 5** - Athletes who held SR2 cards in 2022-23 and who fall under section 3 COH.
- f. **SR Card Priority 6** - Athletes selected to the PN World Cup Team in accordance with the *2023-24 PNST Team Selection Criteria*, but not already nominated for international carding criteria or national priority 1, 2 and 3. Athletes will be ranked in accordance with their best result (lowest FIS PSS points) individual result in any FIS PSS WC during the 2022-23 season. This assessment will consider the quality of competition;
- g. **SR Card Priority 7** - Athletes holding SR/C1 cards in 2022-23 who fall under Section 3 COH.

6.0 Development Card (D) Criteria

- 1. Selection Criteria - Nomination of athletes for D cards will be made in the following order of priority:
 - a. **D Card Priority 1** - Athletes on the PNST NextGen ranked in accordance with their best (lowest FIS PSS points) individual result at any WC or WCH race during the 2022-23 season.
 - b. **D Card Priority 2** - Athletes on the PNST Development Team ranked in accordance with their two (2) best (lowest FIS PSS points) individual result at any FIS PSS sanctioned COC races (i.e., US Para Nordic Nationals), WC or WCH race during the 2022-23 season. Athletes must achieve a combined average of 150 FIS PSS points or less to be considered.
 - c. **D Card Priority 3** – In the absence of any international events due to Covid or other reasons, athletes who held a Development Card in the 2022-2023 cycle will be re-nominated for Development Card based on the following:
 - i. ranking from Nordiq Canada Para Nordic Canadian Ski Nationals with respect to FIS PSS points achieved in head-to-head competition against a proven current international performer who has achieved a WC medal or top-5 in a WC/WCH/PWG.
 - ii. FIS/IBU racing results, compared to FIS PSS points, support continued progress and improvement.
 - d. **D Card Priority 4** - Athletes holding D cards in the 2022-23 season who fall under section 3 COH.
 - e. **D Card Priority 5** In the absence of any international events due to Covid or other reasons, athletes in the 2022-2023 cycle may be nominated for a D card

based on the following which support a progression towards 2026 Paralympic Winter Games podiums. Athletes will be ranked as follows:

- i. Priority 1: ranking from Nordiq Canada Para Nordic Canadian Ski Nationals with respect to FIS PSS points achieved in head-to-head competition against a proven current international performer who has achieved a WC medal or top-5 in a WC/WCH.
- ii. Priority 2: FIS/IBU racing results, compared to FIS PSS points, that support continued progress and improvement.

7.0 Tie Breaker Process

1. Where a tie exists between ranked athletes, the tie breaker will be the lowest of the FIS PSSpoints on the final ranking list published by the FIS PSS/IPC.

8.0 Withdrawal of AAP Funding

1. The HPD-Para may recommend the withdrawal of an athlete’s carded status to Sport Canada, under one of the following conditions:
 - a. If the athlete has not fulfilled responsibilities with respect to mandatory training camps, testing, and competitions;
 - b. If the athlete has not fulfilled responsibilities as identified in the NC Athlete Agreement;
 - c. If the athlete has not fulfilled responsibilities as identified in the NC Code of Conduct or NC Discipline Policy;
 - d. If the athlete has demonstrated toxic behavior eroding the NC Culture of Excellence, as outlined in the NC Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy;
 - e. If the athlete has not adhered to responsibilities as they pertain to WADA, and CCES antidoping protocols;
 - f. Fraudulent misrepresentation of the AAP program; or,
 - g. Gross breach of discipline.
2. The procedure for the withdrawal of carding by Nordiq Canada are:
 - a. Provide a written warning to the athlete, including the steps and timelines to remedythe 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. Thisletter 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 appealprocess within the prescribed time.
3. During the carding cycle, the NSO may recommend withdrawal of the carding support of a Guidefor 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. In the case of a SR1, SR2 or SR card replacement, if the new Guide has never been carded at the SR level, they will be eligible for a C1 card.