

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 audiences for this document are 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 helps athletes with their training and competition needs, and it goes *directly* to athletes. *The AAP is the only Sport Canada program to provide direct financial support for 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 of sport science program, coaching, National Sport Centres and National Team programs; the success of the AAP depends on the co-ordinated 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 15 sections:

- Section 1: Program Overview;
- Section 2: Principles of AAP Support and Minimum Requirements;
- Section 3: NSO, Athlete and Sport Canada Responsibilities;
- Section 4: Card Allocation;
- 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: Athlete Withdrawal;
- Section 11: Non-renewal and Withdrawal of Carding Status;
- Section 12: Doping Violations;
- Section 13: Appeal Process;
- Section 14: Annex A: Model Athlete/NSO Agreement; and
- Section 15: Index.

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 to NSOs and national coaches. *Athlete Assistance Program Policies and Procedures* is also available on the Sport Canada Web site at www.pch.gc.ca/sportcanada.

Section 1 Program Overview

This section answers a number of broad questions about the Athlete Assistance Program (AAP):

- What is the goal of the AAP?
- What are the objectives of the AAP?
- How does the AAP achieve its objectives?

1.1 What Is the Goal of the AAP?

The goal of the AAP is to contribute to improved Canadian performances at major international sporting events such as the Olympic/Paralympic Games, Commonwealth Games, Pan Am Games and World Championships. To this end, the AAP identifies and supports athletes already at or having the potential to be 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 referred to as CARDING.

1.2 What Are the Objectives of the AAP?

The AAP has three specific objectives:

- to identify and support Canadian athletes performing at or having the greatest potential to achieve top 16 results at Olympic/Paralympic Games and World Championships;
- to help Canada's international-calibre athletes excel at the highest level of competition while assisting them to prepare for a future career or engage in full- or part-time career activities; and
- to allow athletes to maintain a long-term commitment to training and competition to further their athletic goals.

1.3 How Does the AAP Achieve Its Objectives?

The AAP achieves its objectives by —

- providing national standards for the identification and support of eligible sports and athletes;
- ensuring that National Sport Organizations (NSOs) have appropriate selection procedures and criteria in place for the nomination of athletes for AAP support;
- providing AAP carding support in a consistent and timely manner to athletes who meet their sport-specific carding criteria in those sports that meet AAP eligibility requirements;
- providing directed support to younger athletes with the potential to achieve results in the top 16 in the world, to assist in their transition from junior to senior international competition;
- providing a living and training allowance to help offset some of the costs athletes incur as a result of their involvement in high-performance sport;
- providing financial support in the form of tuition and deferred tuition payments to allow athletes to attain academic goals and assisting in the preparation for a post-athletic career;

- ensuring, in conjunction with the NSO, that appropriate training and competitive opportunities are in place and providing annual, ongoing and long-term evaluation of athlete performance and potential; and
- providing a focal point for government support to high-performance sport and athletes.

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

Section 2 Principles of AAP Support and Minimum Requirements

This section presents the following information about AAP support:

- the three principles such support is subject to;
- the minimum requirements NSOs must meet to qualify for the AAP; and
- the minimum requirements athletes must meet to qualify for the AAP.

2.1 Main Principles of AAP Support

AAP support is subject to three main principles:

- 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).
- In Olympic/Paralympic sports supported by Sport Canada, normally 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 funding if Parliament changes the funding levels.

2.2 Minimum Requirements for NSOs to Qualify for the AAP

- 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 biennially.
- 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.
- The NSO must formally monitor and evaluate athletes' training and competitive programs. The NSO must designate a national coach or a person of 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. Rules and procedures for selection 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

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

2.3 Minimum Requirements for Athletes to Qualify for the AAP

- 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 Athlete/National Sport Organization (NSO) Agreement.
- The athlete must be a **Canadian citizen or PERMANENT RESIDENT OF CANADA**, on the date of the beginning of the carding cycle, and the athlete shall have been a legal 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.
- The athlete, under the eligibility requirements of the sport's International Federation (IF), **as it pertains to citizenship or residency status**, must currently be eligible to represent Canada at major international events, including World Championships.
- Athletes must meet the carding criteria as a member of a Canadian Team at international events or in a domestic event or events sanctioned by the NSO for such purposes.
- For athletes in Olympic or Paralympic sports, following a three-year period as a permanent resident, continued eligibility to receive AAP support is contingent on the athlete becoming eligible to represent Canada at the Olympic or Paralympic Games.

Note: It is recommended that NSOs include the above 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.

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 maintained at an appropriate level by the NSO.

Athletes who are full-time permanent residents 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.

Athletes who are eligible and meet the carding criteria but are not funded because they are living outside Canada should be nominated for carding by the NSO and recorded by Sport Canada. This could result in the C-1 card status being waived should the athlete meet the national criteria for Senior Cards in subsequent years and move back to Canada.

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 Team 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.

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

- The *athlete* meets the international criteria for Senior Cards.
- 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).

Replacement Carding

"Replacement" carding to fill vacant positions caused by retirement, departure from a national team program, or de-carding during the carding cycle will not normally be provided during the course of the carding year. (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.)

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.

Section 3 NSO, Athlete and Sport Canada Responsibilities

When NSOs nominate athletes and when athletes apply for AAP support, they agree to carry out certain responsibilities. Similarly, when Sport Canada approves nominations for AAP support, it agrees to carry out specific responsibilities. This section describes these responsibilities in detail.

3.1 NSO Responsibilities

NSOs are responsible for nominating eligible athletes for AAP support on an annual basis. In providing nominations for AAP on behalf of an athlete, the NSO agrees to the following responsibilities:

- to communicate with athletes both orally and in writing in the language of their choice (French or English).
- to produce and provide to 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:
 - Sport-Canada-approved 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.
- to 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).
- to provide athletes with forms required for the AAP, including tuition vouchers and application forms.
- to review and recommend requests for special-needs assistance and deferred tuition. Recommendations should be forwarded to the Sport Canada AAP Manager.
- to 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.
- to advise the AAP Manager immediately if a carded athlete fails to honor his or her AAP commitments.
- to inform Sport Canada in a timely manner of an athlete's retirement and all anti-doping rule violations resulting from international testing. If the NSO fails in this regard and the athlete subsequently receives excess AAP benefits, 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 provided to an athlete that is the result of a false application or fraudulent misrepresentation on the part of the athlete or the NSO.
- to develop discipline and appeal procedures based on due process that include access to independent arbitration, through the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of

- Canada (SDRCC).
- to 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 signing confirmation from the NSO may have their AAP payments suspended until the NSO confirms in writing that the Agreement is 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 advise Sport Canada why the Agreement has not been signed.
 - to 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 and 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:

- to adhere to the competitive and training program and administrative requirements specified by their NSO throughout the cycle for which they are carded.
- to refund any assistance provided if their carding status changes or is withdrawn. This refund will be effective the date their carding status changes or is withdrawn. Such refunds are payable to Canada's Receiver General.
- to abide by the Canadian Policy on Doping in Sport and the policy of the NSO related to the use of banned performance-enhancing substances, doping controls and sporting contacts with other countries.
- to 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.
- to communicate regularly with the NSO using the reporting mechanism specified in the NSO's athlete monitoring plan. Communication may occur directly or through the athlete's personal coach.
- to immediately advise Sport Canada, through their NSO, of any change of address. This is needed to ensure timely receipt of AAP cheques and program information.
- to initiate any AAP-related appeal directly with their NSO. Athletes may request that Sport Canada review such AAP-related decisions *after* their appeal to their NSO is complete.
- to comply with AAP policies and procedures, including those dealing with AAP-related disputes with Sport Canada as per Section 13 of this document.
- to 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 and provide such data as the person conducting the evaluation considers necessary for the proper conduct of the evaluation.

- to provide true statements in their application and supporting documentation and to verify these statements if requested by Sport Canada.
- to indicate if they are current or former federal government employees, and if so, to 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:

- to communicate with NSOs and athletes both orally and in writing in the language of their choice (French or English);
- to review all nominations for AAP support made by the NSO;
- to approve nominations in accordance with AAP policies and to arrange payments in accordance with AAP policies and procedures;
- to provide information to NSOs and athletes regarding the development and approval of carding criteria, athlete agreements, appeals procedures and due process, athlete monitoring and other areas of athlete assistance and related services as requested by the NSO or athletes or both;
- to provide NSOs with AAP materials (application forms, the booklet *Athlete Assistance Program Policies and Procedures*, tuition vouchers, etc.);
- to ensure that NSOs adhere to carding criteria in the selection of athletes for athlete assistance; and
- to provide a review procedure to both athletes and NSOs on any AAP operational decision as per Section 13 of this document.

Section 4 Card Allocation

This section covers the following aspects of card allocation:

- policy;
- principles; and
- procedures.

4.1 Policy

AAP cards are allocated to the following types of sports:

- Olympic individual sports;
- Olympic team sports;
- Paralympic sports; and
- non-Olympic sports.

4.2 Principles

Card quotas will be allocated to NSOs as an “equivalent” number of Senior (SR/C-1) cards. (Senior Cards based on national criteria are awarded for one year and are called SR Cards; for more information on these cards, see Section 5.)

The quota will include SR1/SR2 cards. (Athletes who meet international criteria are eligible to be nominated by the NSO for two consecutive years, with the card for the first year referred to as SR1 and the card for the second year referred to as SR2. For more information on these cards, see Section 5.)

NSOs will be provided with the flexibility to allocate their card quota as SR1/SR2, SR/C-1 and D cards, according to the criteria approved by Sport Canada. A C-1 card would be considered a full SR card for the purposes of the quota.

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

Given the differences in individual and team sports, team sports will be dealt with in a manner separate from that for individual sports.

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

4.3 Procedures

The Card Quota allocation process will include the allocation of a number of cards to each sport based on an objective process, plus an AAP sport review process that will take into consideration factors that cannot be adequately addressed through objective measures.

Objective Allocation

Card quotas will be allocated using objective data as follows:

- the technical needs of the sports, as measured by the number of athletes required to field a team of one entry per event on the program of the Olympic/Paralympic Games or World Championships; and
- the results of the Olympics/Paralympics and World Championships in the 4-year period before the allocation exercise.

AAP Sport Review Process

An individual review will be conducted for each sport to award additional cards based on an assessment of the following areas, which cannot be adequately addressed through objective means. These may include but are not restricted to the following:

- the number of entries allowed per country in events on the Olympic program (1, 2 or 3);
- the potential for the sport to contribute toward Canadian goals at the 2010 and 2012 Olympic Games; and
- the quality of the national team program.

In addition, the results of processes such as the Olympic and Paralympic sport review process, and the SFAF High Performance Sport Assessment may be taken into consideration in allocating additional AAP cards to each sport.

Section 5 Carding Criteria

This section covers the following aspects of carding criteria:

- policy;
- procedures for Senior Cards;
- procedures for Development Cards;
- special considerations for team sports.

5.1 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) international criteria, 2) sport-specific criteria and 3) 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.

When an NSO chooses to change its carding cycle, athletes may be carded for a period of greater or fewer than 12 months, depending upon the circumstances.

Carding Criteria for Senior Cards

Senior Cards are awarded on the basis of two different sets of criteria:

- **International Criteria.**
 - Sport Canada sets these criteria for Senior Cards. Athletes who meet the international criteria are eligible to be nominated by the NSO for two consecutive years, with the card for the first year referred to as SR1 and the card for the second year referred to as SR2. The second year of carding is contingent on the athlete being re-nominated by the NSO and a training and competitive program approved by the NSO and Sport Canada being maintained. The athlete must also sign an Athlete/NSO Agreement and complete an AAP Application Form for the year in question.
- **National Criteria.**
 - National criteria for Senior Cards are negotiated between Sport Canada and the NSO and are approved by Sport Canada each year. Senior Cards based on national criteria are awarded for one year and are called SR Cards.
 - Senior cards awarded to athletes who meet the national criteria for Senior Cards for the first time are called C-1 Cards and are funded at the Development Card level.

Carding Criteria for Development Cards

Development Cards are awarded on the basis of three different sets of criteria:

- international criteria. Sport Canada sets these criteria for Development Cards based on results at Junior World Championships.
- sport-specific criteria. These criteria are negotiated by Sport Canada and the athlete's NSO.
- training centre criteria. These criteria are negotiated by Sport Canada and the athlete's NSO.

Setting Criteria

Carding criteria are approved by Sport Canada and should be distributed by the NSO, under normal circumstances, 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 results. 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.

The opportunity to meet competitive results required for carding should be consistent with a sport's national training or competitive program and be accessible to the majority of the best athletes in Canada.

Criteria should be based on objective results

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 Section 6, "Application for and Approval of Cards."

Criteria requiring NSO involvement should normally 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.
- Sport Canada reviews and approves the criteria for general publication within each sport.

5.2 Procedures for Senior Cards

International Criteria

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.

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.

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

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, such events as an annual World Cup, World Cup rankings or World list rankings 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 demonstrate that a World Cup list 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.

What Are the International Criteria?

Generally, Senior Cards based on international criteria are available to athletes in eligible sports based on results achieved in the Olympic Games, Paralympic Games or World Championships. In Olympic years, new Senior Cards based on these criteria will be awarded only on the basis of results achieved in the Olympic/Paralympic Games. The following are the current standards for the international criteria. Sport Canada reserves the right to review and revise these criteria with appropriate notice:

- finish in the top 8 (1 entry/event), 12 (2 entries/event), or 16 (3 entries/event); and
- finish in the top half of the field.

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

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

qualification processes or other types of entry restrictions, the requirement regarding the top half of the field may be waived.

Note: In team, crew or pairs events, the performance must be achieved in conjunction *with Canadian athletes only* to meet the international criteria for Senior Cards. A performance that is the result of teaming up or pairing with athletes from other nations will not be considered for carding purposes.

How Long Are Senior Cards based on International Criteria Good For?

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

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 Requalify 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 requalify 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 Championship OR demonstrate that a World Cup list 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 based on the maintenance criteria will be for a one-year period and will not be awarded for two consecutive years.

National Criteria

National criteria for Senior Cards are negotiated between Sport Canada and the NSO and are approved by Sport Canada each year. 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 criteria 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.

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 the 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.

Probationary Period for Senior Cards

A probationary card has been established for the first year 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 Senior Card even if they have previously been carded at the Development (D) level. These cards are designated as C-1 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.

Athletes who are eligible for the AAP and meet the carding criteria but are not funded because they are on a foreign athletic scholarship or are living outside Canada should be nominated for carding by the NSO and recorded by Sport Canada. This *could* result in the probationary Development Card status being waived if the athlete moves back to Canada and meets the national criteria for the Senior Card in subsequent years.

C-1 Cards are for the first year an athlete has achieved the national criteria for Senior Cards

Senior Cards (SR1 and SR2) 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 based on 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 semifinals 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.

5.3 Procedures 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 unable to meet the Senior Card criteria. If the development needs of the athlete would be largely 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 assists in enhancing conditions of younger athletes who have not had the same training, coaching and competitive experience of 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 those athletes with the greatest potential.

Development Cards will be offered to a sport only in cases where the majority of the following considerations are satisfactorily met:

- Athletes identified or endorsed for nomination as Development Cards by the National Coach (or comparable NSO technical expert) will be considered for support by Sport Canada.
- The athlete must have 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 should include international competition, adequate domestic competition and significant daily

training activities.

- The NSO must signify its intent and ability (in human, program and financial resource terms) to make a long-term commitment to Development-Card athletes, and vice versa.
- 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.
- NSOs will be expected to 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.

What Are the Criteria for Development Cards?

To be considered for Development carding based on international criteria, athletes must satisfy the following criteria:

- finish in the top 8 in a world championship at the junior level;
- finish in the top third of their field in a world championship at the junior level;
- have a record of international and domestic success; and
- exhibit dominant domestic results in their sport or event OR have been a national junior champion.

Sport Canada reserves the right to review and revise these criteria with appropriate notice.

How Long Are Development Cards Good For?

Development Cards based on international criteria are awarded for one year. However, Sport Canada is aware that multi-year financial and technical support of young high-performance athletes is necessary to ensure that they develop to the best of their potential. Sport Canada also recognizes that these athletes may not have an opportunity to requalify for a Development Card in a Junior World Championship each year. Sport Canada therefore provides up to three years of support for a Development-Card athlete once he or she has met the initial criteria at Junior World Championships.

Support in subsequent years is based on an assessment of the athlete's progress in physical and technical training, as well as on an assessment of the athlete's international and domestic competitive results.

Are There Sport-Specific Criteria?

Yes. Each NSO can negotiate sport-specific criteria for Development Cards with Sport Canada. The NSO must demonstrate that the majority of the considerations outlined above for Development Cards are in place.

Consideration will be given to the NSO's demonstrated ability to develop athletes who are capable of achieving the Senior Card's international criteria through its programming and leadership and the demonstrated capability of the NSO to apply this expertise to the athletes nominated as Development Cards.

What Are the Guidelines for Developing Sport-Specific Development Criteria?

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.
- The NSO must establish a maximum number of years that 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 guideline 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 Senior Card international criteria.
- 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 Senior Card international criteria. The NSO must further be able to demonstrate that it has no alternative to the use of age to identify developing athletes.
- The criteria should be reasonable for most athletes in a given sport/discipline; they do not need to be justified with respect to every athlete.

Training Centre Criteria

Development Cards are intended for younger athletes who have the potential to achieve Senior Card status. Certain athletes may qualify for Development Card status if they are required to make a long-term commitment to a Sport Canada/NSO-recognized High Performance Training Centre. Only athletes who meet the majority of the general considerations outlined in the Development Card criteria will 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.

These cards will generally be allocated to sports where the technical complexity or training cycle of the sport is such that athletes must follow sophisticated programs for many years before attaining international standards and where it is in the best interest of the athlete and the sport to bring the athlete under the auspices of the NSO, the National Team Program and the High Performance Training Centre.

The specific criteria required for these Development Cards should be negotiated on a sport-specific basis by the NSO and Sport Canada. The criteria should, wherever possible, be based on objective results obtained in designated domestic or

international competitions. The competitions used in the criteria should be consistent with the sport's international and domestic training and competitive program and be accessible to the majority of the best young athletes in Canada.

How Long Are Development Cards based on Training Centre Criteria Good For?

Development Cards based on training centre criteria are awarded for one year. To receive an extension past the initial year, the athlete must meet the criteria for this card again and commit to training at the NSO High Performance Sport Centre.

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 Athlete Assistance Program simply to *reward* individuals who make a commitment to a National Team program during the summer months.
- Sport Canada's AAP must be fair to athletes in both an individual or team sport. 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 normal 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.

Senior Cards and Development Cards: 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 performance of the team and 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. Development Cards are for athletes at the Senior Card level in their first year of National Senior Team carding. These cards are called C-1 Cards.

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

Athletes who are available to train or play with national teams on a limited basis may be supported while they are with the National Team at the usual stipend level based on 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.

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 qualification tournaments, Olympics, etc.).

Development Cards: 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 the AAP Card Allocation Formula 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 and 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 are available to athletes in Olympic team sports who are members of the National A Team training squad or who are members of a Sport Canada supported Universiade or National B Team. This level of card is also available to athletes in Olympic team sports and is awarded to athletes on Sport Canada supported Junior National Teams who make a significant commitment to the Junior National Team Program.

Development Cards for team sports are not available to all team sports. However, such cards may be available if the NSO satisfies the general requirements and minimum standards outlined below.

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 summer. Depending on the intensity and duration of the program, Development Card support for team sports will vary. It may include monthly stipends and tuition support or combinations thereof. 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) and where funding is available to undertake significant Junior or National B Team programs or both throughout the quadrennial and where 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

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

- A National Team summer 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 additional minimum standards outlined above.

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 based on training centre criteria (see the section "Training Centre

Criteria”).

See Section 5.1 for more information on carding criteria for Development Cards.

Section 6 Application for and Approval of Cards

This section describes the application and approval process for cards.

6.1 Procedures

- The NSO determines who may be eligible for nomination according to the AAP carding criteria.
- The NSO provides the athlete with an AAP Application Form.
- 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 nominates the athlete for AAP support and prepares a submission package for review by Sport Canada. See below for a description of the submission package's contents.
- Sport Canada reviews and approves nominations based on the approved sport-specific carding criteria and the policies and procedures of the AAP.

Note: Sport Canada recommends that athletes with annual income after sport expenses of \$50,000 or more *decline* AAP financial support. Funds declined in this way are reallocated to other athletes in the same sport whose income is below the voluntary income guideline.

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 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 should send a copy of the entire application package to both their Sport Canada Program Officer *and* the Manager of the AAP. Each should receive an application package at least five working days before the annual AAP Review Meeting.

What's in the Application Package?

The application package contains the following components:

- covering letter;
- table of contents;
- summary of athletes' results;
- National Team depth chart — team sports only;
- nominations for carding;
- names of athletes who were carded in the previous year and are not being re-nominated for carding by the NSO;
- outline of the National Team's competitive and training program;
- recommendations for changes in carding criteria;
- recommendations for changes in carding-cycle dates;
- Athlete/NSO Agreement; and

- 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 (requests for changes in carding criteria, for changes in carding-cycle dates, for more cards, etc.).
- Outlines any AAP issues that could be contentious in the upcoming year.

Table of Contents

- Lists the entire contents of the submission 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.
- Also 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 (see page 6-4) 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 Development Card level. Includes a description of the method used to select the athletes and a ranking summary.

Nominations for Carding

- Lists athletes nominated for carding according to approved carding criteria. Includes athletes nominated for carding for the first time and those being nominated for re-carding. Indicates the level of card for which an athlete is being nominated, as well as the rationale for carding. For team sports, this list should generally reflect the National Team depth chart.
- Includes the following in the rationale for carding an individual athlete:
 - a complete summary of the athlete's competitive results (important international and domestic results, including National Championships) in the previous year. Results should be in chronological order, and the summary should highlight results demonstrating that the athlete has met the approved carding criteria.
 - a written appraisal of the athlete.
- For team sports, uses the format presented on page 6-5.

Lists of Athletes Not being Re-Nominated by the NSO

- Lists *all* athletes who were carded in the previous year and are not being re-nominated for carding, as well as the reason(s) for 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 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.

Recommendations for Changes in Carding Criteria

- Includes all recommendations for changes in 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, as well as any proposed changes. All changes being proposed must be approved by the appropriate NSO committee and endorsed by the athletes' designated representative.

Summary of Athletes' Results, World Championships

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 carding 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

This section describes the following aspects of the Athlete/NSO Agreement:

- policy; and
- procedures.

7.1 Policy

All carded athletes and their NSOs must sign an Athlete/NSO agreement.

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 NSO's anti-doping policy;
 - the Canadian Policy on Doping in Sport;
 - the AAP Policies and Procedures; and
 - avoid participating in any competitions where federal government sport policy has determined that such 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 to any other conditions in his or her Athlete/NSO Agreement. In other words, all other aspects of the Athlete/NSO Agreement 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

1. 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).
2. 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 signing confirmation 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, Sport Canada will work with the NSO and the athlete to reach acceptable terms, or the athlete and the NSO will be referred to mediation through 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 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 describes the following aspects of AAP financial benefits:

- policy; and
- procedures.

8.1 Policy

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

- living and training allowance;
- tuition support, including deferred tuition support; and
- special-needs assistance.

These benefits are subject to specific requirements.

Living and Training Allowance

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

The support paid varies with the athlete's carding status:

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

Tuition Support

Sport Canada provides tuition support to athletes able to attend school *and* meet high-performance training and competition requirements. This support is available *during the period the athlete is carded*.

Deferred Tuition

Tuition support also takes the form of *deferred* tuition support. Deferred tuition support was put in place to assist athletes who are unable to attend post-secondary school because of their sport involvement and are therefore unable to obtain a post-secondary education. This AAP option provides *tuition credits* to carded athletes for each year they are carded and allows them to use these credits when they have retired from sport or are no longer carded.

The intent of deferred tuition is to assist athletes in obtaining a minimum level of education at the post-secondary level. It is not the intent of deferred tuition support to contribute toward a second undergrad degree or a post-graduate (Master's or Ph.D.) degree.

However, in recognition that students may enter some professional degrees directly without having completed an undergraduate degree or other post-secondary education, AAP policies may allow deferred tuition to be applied to professional degrees. Therefore, in situations where an athlete does not hold an undergraduate degree, deferred tuition may be applied to professional degrees in medicine, dentistry or law.

Sport Canada's Deferred Tuition Program became effective September 1, 1995. *Deferred tuition policies are not applicable before that date.* Athletes and NSOs should refer to the more detailed information on deferred tuition presented later in this section.

Carded athletes will be eligible for a maximum amount of \$10,000 in tuition payments each fiscal year.

Note: AAP tuition support applies only to *post-secondary* schooling.

What Schools Are Eligible for Tuition Support?

- Canadian publicly supported universities or colleges and public CEGEPs are eligible for tuition support.
- Other institutions, such as correspondence schools or private colleges (physiotherapy colleges, for example), *may* be eligible for tuition support, but Sport Canada must approve them for tuition support on a case-by-case basis.

Note: Private schools below the post-secondary level are *not* eligible for tuition support.

Is Tuition Support Available for Schools Outside Canada?

Not usually.

Exceptions must have the full support of the NSO and be approved by Sport Canada. In addition, the athlete must be able to maintain his or her full training and competitive commitments to the satisfaction of the NSO and Sport Canada, and the NSO must show that it has in place a system for monitoring athletes while they train outside Canada.

What Schools Are Eligible for Deferred Tuition Support?

- Post-secondary educational institutions are eligible for deferred tuition support.

What Programs Are 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 or professional.
- Courses that are legitimate credits toward apprenticeships in trades or professions or correspondence courses leading to a legitimate degree, diploma or certificate, as determined by Sport Canada, *may* be eligible for tuition support.

What Programs Are Eligible for Deferred Tuition Support?

- Deferred tuition can normally be accessed only to complete an athlete's first undergraduate degree.
- Courses that are legitimate credits toward apprenticeships in trades or professions or correspondence courses leading to a legitimate degree, diploma or certificate may be eligible for deferred tuition support if Sport Canada has not provided the athlete with support to complete an undergraduate degree or equivalent.
- Deferred tuition credits cannot normally be applied to graduate courses. However, exceptions may be considered in a pre-Olympic year. An athlete in a

graduate program who wishes to train full-time in a pre-Olympic year must apply in writing to Sport Canada for deferred tuition support. The athlete's NSO must endorse the application.

How Much Tuition Support Is Available?

- Carded athletes are eligible for tuition support at a post-secondary institution 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: 8 full-time semesters or equivalent; and
 - university graduate degree: 8 full-time semesters or equivalent.
- Tuition support for private schools or schools outside Canada cannot exceed the average tuition fees for equivalent programs, as determined by Sport Canada, at Canadian publicly funded universities or colleges.
- Athletes who have completed a college, university or professional degree will not be eligible for tuition support toward a second analogous degree. This restriction applies to both undergraduate and graduate degrees.
- Tuition for graduate degrees is generally available only while an athlete is carded.
- Carded athletes who are attending CEGEP and decide not to access tuition support will be eligible for deferred tuition support for that year at the level of the CEGEP tuition.

Note: AAP tuition support is subject to predetermined semester and course limits, for example, ten (10) semester courses per athlete per year or forty (40) undergraduate semester courses per athlete. Sport Canada further expects athletes to *successfully* complete the courses they receive support for. Athletes who do not do so therefore risk accessing all the tuition support they are eligible for *before* completing their degree, diploma or certificate program.

How Much Deferred Tuition Support Is Available?

- Athletes who are eligible to attend a post-secondary school and who do *not* access tuition support in a year they are carded are eligible for deferred tuition credits for that year.
- Athletes are allowed to defer a maximum of two full-time semester credits (five courses per semester) for each year they are carded to a maximum of eight full-time semester credits. For example, an athlete who attends school part-time and takes two courses in a semester is eligible for three courses in deferred tuition credits for that semester when he or she retires or is no longer carded.
- The *monetary value* of one deferred tuition credit equals the average cost of full-time tuition in an AAP-eligible program at a Canadian publicly funded AAP-eligible school for the carding year for which the deferred credit is awarded divided by the average number of courses in eligible programs.
- The *monetary value* of deferred tuition credits can be applied to completing an undergraduate degree when the athlete retires or is no longer carded. Given recent increases in tuition costs, the monetary value of the deferred credits may cover fewer courses than the credits were awarded for.
- Athletes who have accessed the equivalent of eight full-time semesters of tuition

while carded or who have an undergraduate university degree are not eligible for deferred tuition credits.

- Deferred tuition credits may be accessed in any year an athlete is not carded, provided that year is within five years of the last year of carding support.
- Carded athletes who are attending CEGEP and decide not to access tuition support will be eligible for deferred tuition for that year in the amount of the CEGEP tuition.

Special-Needs Assistance

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

What Expenses Are Eligible?

Eligible special needs are child-care expenses, relocation assistance and retirement assistance.

Child-Care Expenses

When an athlete is required to obtain the services of a baby-sitter to attend approved training or competitions, the following may be paid:

- generally, up to \$25 per day when the NSO certifies that the athlete is required to 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 per fiscal year.

Relocation Assistance

When it has been determined by both the NSO and Sport Canada that a carded athlete is required to move to or from an approved single-sport National Team Training Centre, Sport Canada may assist in offsetting some of the relocation costs.

Such assistance is generally limited to one-half of actual relocation expenses, to a maximum of \$500 per move. Also, Sport Canada will cover 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.

Retirement Assistance

Athletes who have been carded for a minimum of three years may receive some readjustment support through a special-needs application.

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

- local transportation;
- food supplements and vitamins;
- training equipment and clothing;
- personal clothing;
- food and rent (including phone, hydro, etc.);
- club fees;
- coaching expenses;

- medical, dental, physiotherapy or chiropractic expenses; and
- lost-time expenses (any lost wages are expected to be covered through the monthly living and training allowance).

8.2 Procedures

What Is the Application/Payment Procedure for Special-Needs Assistance?

All special-needs requests from athletes must initially be sent to the NSO for recommendation. 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.

With the exception of “relocation expenses,” athletes requesting special-needs assistance will be subject to an assessment of financial means. All special-needs requests must be approved in advance by the AAP Manager and be for the current carding year.

The assessment of financial means will require a statement, with supporting documentation, of the athlete’s annual income and expenses, including rent, food, transportation and sport-related expenses. 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 must provide original receipts for expenses associated with special needs and should not have claimed this expense for income-tax purposes.

The supporting documentation required by the athletes includes:

- a copy of Revenue Canada’s Notice Of Assessment for the most recent taxation year;
- a written statement from the athlete indicating his or her current and anticipated income and expenses over the next year; and
- the reason for the special needs request.

If Sport Canada determines that the athlete can adequately support the special needs for which he or she is requesting support, no support for the request will be approved.

Maximum Amount

The maximum amount of special-needs assistance for which an athlete is eligible is \$5,000 per fiscal year per athlete.

What Is the Application/Payment Procedure for Tuition Support?

Sport Canada approves tuition and deferred tuition support based on AAP policies and procedures:

1. Sport Canada provides a *tuition voucher* to the athlete’s NSO.
2. The NSO completes its part of the tuition voucher and then provides the tuition voucher to the athlete.
3. The athlete fills in the tuition voucher and submits it to his or her school. The school or the athlete must list each AAP-supported course on his or her voucher, as well as the fee for each course.

4. The school sends Sport Canada a bill for the courses listed on the athlete's voucher, as well as a copy of the voucher.

If it is not possible for Sport Canada to pay tuition directly to the athlete's school, Sport Canada will reimburse the athlete after receiving an *original* official registration receipt indicating what courses the athlete has registered for and what the fee for each course is.

Note: Athletes who receive an academic award from a Canadian school are eligible for tuition assistance unless that award is designated specifically for tuition.

What Is the Application/Payment Procedure for Deferred Tuition?

1. The athlete advises his or her NSO in writing that he or she wishes to access the AAP Deferred Tuition Program. The NSO forwards the application to the AAP Program Officer with its recommendation.
2. The athlete also submits to the AAP Program Officer a current, official student transcript from his or her school(s) and completes the Deferred Tuition Form, which is available from the NSO.
3. On receiving this information, Sport Canada reviews the athlete's file and decides the number of eligible Deferred Tuition credits the athlete is eligible for, as well as the monetary value of these credits.
4. The athlete submits an official, original registration receipt to the AAP Program Officer. This may take the form of a transcript stamped by the school indicating payments made or a written receipt on official school letterhead.

Note: The AAP does not make payment directly to the athlete's school.

5. The AAP reimburses the athlete directly up to the monetary value of the deferred tuition credit(s) the athlete is eligible for.

Note: Deferred tuition credits cannot normally be applied to graduate courses. However, exceptions *may* be considered in a pre-Olympic year. See Section 8.1 for the policy related to this exception. An athlete in a graduate program who wants to train full-time in a pre-Olympic year must apply in writing to Sport Canada for deferred tuition support, and the athlete's NSO must support the application. If the application is accepted, tuition from the pre-Olympic year can be deferred until the athlete retires or is no longer carded.

Section 9 Illness, Injury or Pregnancy

This section describes the following aspects of the handling of illness, injury or pregnancy in the Athlete Assistance Program:

- policy; and
- procedures.

9.1 Policy

There must be arrangements 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; and
- failure to meet renewal criteria 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 periods 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.
- In the case of injured or ill athletes, a positive prognosis for the athlete’s return to training and competition at the carded-athlete level in the sport within 8 to 12 months is required from an NSO team physician or equivalent.

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 renewal of carded status, he or she may be considered for re-nomination for the upcoming carding period under the

following conditions, provided the NSO has a method to prioritize 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 and, despite making every reasonable effort to attain the applicable carding standards during the year in which the injury, illness or pregnancy occurred, has failed to do so, in the view of the NSO, for reasons 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 rules 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 Athlete Withdrawal

This section describes the following aspects of athlete withdrawal from the AAP:

- policy; and
- procedures.

10.1 Policy

Athletes may withdraw from the AAP.

Athletes may withdraw from the AAP by expressing their wish to do so to their NSO. This may involve retiring permanently *or* temporarily foregoing the commitments of carded status.

If their NSO recommends it, athletes who retire permanently in mid-season may be allowed two months of AAP support past the date of their actual retirement to help them adjust to their post-athletic situation. This does not preclude the athlete from 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 retirement 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.

Replacement Carding

"Replacement" carding to fill vacant positions caused by retirement, departure from a National Team program, or de-carding during the carding cycle will not normally be provided during the course of the carding year. (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.)

An athlete at the Development Card (Team Sports) level who makes the National Team during the carding year, whether this is the result of an athlete retiring, being released from the National Team or being de-carded, will normally be carded and funded at the Senior Card level at the start of the next carding year.

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.

10.2 Procedures

When the NSO is informed that the athlete is withdrawing from the AAP, the following must occur:

- The NSO must advise its Sport Canada Program Officer and the AAP Co-ordinator *in writing* of the effective date of withdrawal. The NSO will provide Sport Canada with a written declaration from the athlete confirming his or her withdrawal from the program and the reasons for the decision.
- Any allowances previously paid to the athlete for periods subsequent to the

withdrawal date 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 by reason of an athlete's decision to retire, the following shall apply:

- The AAP Manager requests that the NSO provide written confirmation that the athlete in question has retired.
- After the initial request for confirmation is sent from the AAP Manager to the NSO, AAP financial benefits may be withheld pending confirmation of the athlete's status.
- If, following the NSO's report, Sport Canada wishes to continue proceedings for withdrawing AAP support, the AAP Manager notifies the athlete by registered mail that AAP support is being withdrawn based on information from the NSO that the athlete has retired. This letter also informs the athlete that he or she has 30 days from the date the letter is received 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 retired.

Section 11 Non-renewal and Withdrawal of Carding Status

This section describes the following aspects of non-renewal and withdrawal of carding status:

- policy; and
- procedures.

11.1 Policy

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

- non-renewal of carded status;
- failure to meet training or competitive commitments;
- violation of the Athlete/NSO Agreement;
- athlete's failure to meet responsibilities outlined in AAP policies;
- gross breach of discipline; and
- fraudulent misrepresentation.

Note: In many cases, *the NSO* may recommend that carded status be withdrawn. Sport Canada may also withdraw carded status without an NSO recommendation. These situations are noted in the following sections.

Furthermore, the process for carding withdrawals resulting from anti-doping rule violations are outlined in Section 12 of this document.

11.2 Procedures

Non-renewal of Carded Status

Maintaining carded status depends on

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

If the NSO does not re-nominate the athlete at the end of the carding cycle, the following must occur:

- If the NSO decides not to re-nominate the athlete, the NSO must advise the athlete in writing that he or she has not been re-nominated. The reason(s) for the decision must be included in the notice.
- The NSO must advise the athlete about opportunities that are available, such as National Team program activities (camps, competitions, etc.), and provide details of the Deferred Tuition Program.
- The NSO must ensure access to an appeals process for athletes not nominated or not re-nominated for carding. The athlete shall also have the right to request that Sport Canada review the NSO's appeal decision. In any such review, Sport Canada will decide whether to provide AAP support to an athlete on the basis of written submissions from the NSO and the athlete. The athlete would have a

subsequent right to refer this issue to the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC).

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

Failure to Meet Training or Competitive Commitments

Failure to meet agreed-to training or competitive commitments may include

- a decision by the athlete to live in an environment not conducive to high-performance achievement;
- any deliberate action by the athlete that significantly risks or limits performance; 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 allegedly failing to meet agreed-to training and competitive commitments, the NSO must comply with the following:

- The NSO must send a letter to the athlete indicating its intention to recommend that Sport Canada withdraw the athlete's carded status. This letter must —
 - indicate the grounds on which the recommendation would be made; and
 - inform the athlete that he or she may respond to or challenge the NSO's grounds for recommending the withdrawal of carded status through the appropriate NSO appeals procedure.
- A copy of this letter must be also sent to the NSO's Sport Canada Program Officer and the AAP Manager.
- Pending resolution of any appeal, Sport Canada will continue to provide the athlete with AAP allowances for a two-month period after the initial letter from the NSO.
- Should the appeal process continue for more than two months, Sport Canada will consider continuing AAP support on a monthly basis should the athlete wish to make representations to Sport Canada to justify such action. Some conditions might justify continuing of AAP support on a monthly basis, for example, if withdrawing support could cause financial hardship that would prevent an athlete from training, or if there have been significant delays in the process despite the athlete doing everything required to move the process along.
- Following the completion of the NSO appeal procedure, the NSO will notify Sport Canada of the outcome of the appeal and make its recommendation to Sport Canada.
- The NSO must adhere to procedural fairness throughout.
- If the NSO recommends that Sport Canada withdraw the athlete's carded status, the AAP Manager must advise the athlete by registered mail of receipt of the recommendation from the NSO and will enclose a copy of the recommendation in the letter to the athlete and give the athlete 30 days to make representations to

Sport Canada regarding why it should not act on the recommendation of the NSO.

- 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 shall take a decision and provide written notification to the athlete and the NSO.

If the athlete requests a review by Sport Canada as per Section 13 of this handbook, Sport Canada will, in due course, consider the recommendation of the NSO together with any representations made by or on behalf of the athlete and will provide a ruling on the matter. Sport Canada will provide all parties with the reasons for its decision.

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

- accept the recommendation of the NSO and withdraw carded status from the athlete;
- dismiss the recommendation altogether;
- dismiss the recommendation but impose some lesser penalty; or
- make additional recommendations to either party if it believes some useful purpose might be served by so doing.

Should the athlete not be satisfied with the decision of the Sport Canada AAP Review Committee, the athlete may refer the dispute to the SDRCC as per Section 13 of this document.

If Sport Canada wishes to withdraw an athlete's AAP support 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, during the carding cycle, 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.

Athlete's Failure to Meet Responsibilities Outlined in AAP Policies

If *Sport Canada* wishes to withdraw an athlete's AAP support because it has reason to believe the athlete has failed to meet responsibilities outlined in the AAP policies, the following shall apply:

- The AAP Manager requests of the NSO by registered mail that an investigation with appropriate due process be undertaken regarding the alleged failure to meet AAP responsibilities. A copy of this letter is also sent to the athlete by registered mail.
- After the initial letter is sent from the AAP Manager to the NSO, AAP financial benefits may be withheld pending resolution of the matter.
- If, following the NSO's report of its investigation, Sport Canada wishes to continue proceedings for withdrawing AAP support, the AAP Manager notifies the athlete by registered mail of the allegations against him or her. This letter also informs the athlete that he or she has 30 days from the date the letter is received 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, impose a lesser penalty or continue AAP support if it is determined that the allegations against the athlete are groundless.

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 AAP support because it has reason to believe the athlete is guilty of a gross breach of discipline the following shall apply:

- The AAP Manager requests of the NSO by registered mail that an investigation with appropriate due process be undertaken regarding the alleged breach of discipline. A copy of this letter is also sent to the athlete by registered mail.
- After the initial letter is sent from the AAP Manager to the NSO, AAP financial benefits may be withheld pending resolution of the matter.
- If, following the NSO's report of its investigation, Sport Canada wishes to continue proceedings for withdrawing AAP support, the AAP Manager notifies the athlete by registered mail of the allegations against him or her. This letter also informs the athlete that he or she has 30 days from the date the letter is received 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, impose a lesser penalty or continue AAP support if it is determined that the allegations against the athlete are groundless.

Fraudulent Misrepresentation

Fraudulent misrepresentation may include, but is not limited to, making a false application to obtain AAP benefits for which the athlete would have otherwise been ineligible (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 fraudulent misrepresentation:

- The AAP Manager requests of the NSO by registered mail that an investigation with appropriate procedural fairness be undertaken regarding specific allegations against an athlete. A copy of this letter is also sent to the athlete by registered mail.
- After the initial letter is sent from the AAP Manager to the NSO, AAP financial benefits may be withheld pending resolution of the matter.
- If, following the NSO's report of its investigation, Sport Canada wishes to continue proceedings for withdrawing AAP support, the AAP Manager notifies the athlete by registered mail of the allegations against him or her. This letter also informs the athlete that he or she has 30 days from the date the letter is

received 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 declare that no misrepresentation occurred.

Sport Canada reserves the right to impose penalties for fraudulent 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 the fraudulent application.

If an athlete has his or her carding withdrawn because of false or fraudulent 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.

Section 12 Doping Violations

This section describes the following aspects of doping violations as they relate to the AAP:

- policy; and
- procedure for reinstatement of AAP support.

12.1 Policy

Athletes carded under the AAP will have their carding withdrawn and shall be permanently ineligible to receive any direct financial support provided by the Government of Canada if they commit and are sanctioned for an anti-doping rule violation pursuant to or recognized under the Canadian Anti-Doping Program **with a two-year period of sport ineligibility or greater**.

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

It is responsibility of the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES) to inform Sport Canada of an adverse analytical finding under the Canadian Anti-Doping Program or any other assertions by the 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.

In the case of an adverse analytical finding, the athlete's AAP benefits will under normal circumstances be withheld pending the outcome of the analysis of the B sample. If the B sample does not confirm the A sample analysis, the athlete's AAP support will be reinstated retroactive to the date on which it was originally withheld.

If the laboratory analysis of the B sample confirms the A sample analysis, the athlete's AAP benefits will continue to be withheld pending the outcome of the Doping Tribunal hearing under the Canadian Anti-Doping Program, or until such time as a final ruling is made in any subsequent appeal. If the Doping Tribunal finds that an anti-doping rule violation did not occur, the athlete's AAP benefits will be reinstated retroactively. If the athlete's appeal is upheld in a subsequent appeal and it is determined that an anti-doping violation did not occur, the athlete's AAP benefits will be reinstated retroactively.

For all other assertions of anti-doping rule violations made by the CCES, AAP benefits will be withheld pending the outcome of the Doping Tribunal hearing under the Canadian Anti-Doping Program, or until such time as a final ruling is made on any subsequent appeal. If the Doping Tribunal finds that anti-doping rule violation did not occur, the athlete's AAP benefits will be reinstated retroactively. If the athlete's appeal is upheld in a subsequent appeal and it is determined that an anti-doping violation did not occur, the athlete's AAP benefits will be reinstated retroactively.

Section 13 Appeal Process

This section describes the following aspects of the AAP appeal process:

- policy; and
- procedures for review and appeal.

13.1 Policy

NSOs must ensure that an internal review process for the resolution of AAP-related complaints is in place and made known and available to all athletes. Only once the NSO's internal review process has been exhausted can an athlete request Sport Canada to review the NSO decision.

An NSO may request a review of an AAP decision to Sport Canada on behalf of an athlete. If an athlete makes a request for review of an AAP decision to Sport Canada, Sport Canada will do the following before proceeding with a review:

- inform the NSO; and
- ensure that the NSO's internal review process has been exhausted.

13.2 Procedures for Review and Appeal

Requests for review to Sport Canada are directed to the Manager of the AAP, who will refer the matter to the Sport Canada AAP Review Committee for a decision. The AAP Review Committee consists of the Executive Director of Sport Excellence, the Manager of High Performance and the Manager of National Sport Organizations.

Any application for a review of an AAP-related decision by an athlete or an NSO must be made within thirty (30) days from the communication of the decision for which the review is being requested.

In making its decision, the AAP Review Committee will consider the following information:

- Information provided by the athlete and/or NSO in requesting the review and any subsequent information provided by the athlete or the NSO;
- The decision of the NSO appeal process;
- The information provided by the NSO in its annual AAP submission; and
- The decision made by Sport Canada during the Annual AAP Meeting with the NSO.

Decisions of the Sport Canada AAP Review Committee under the Athlete Assistance Program are final and binding on all parties except for those decisions where an appeal is possible pursuant to the following paragraph.

Recourse by an athlete or an NSO against a decision of the Sport Canada AAP Review Committee under Section 6 ("Application for and Approval of Cards") or under Section 11 ("Non-renewal and Withdrawal of Carding Status") may be made only by an application for arbitration to the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC) within the period referred to below.

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

Any application for arbitration by an athlete or an NSO must be made within thirty (30) days from the communication of the decision that is being appealed.

By applying for arbitration of a decision of the Sport Canada AAP Review Committee before the SDRCC, the applicant agrees that all disputes in respect of that decision will be resolved through the SDRCC process and that he or she will not start any action or application for judicial review in respect of any decision made by the Sport Canada AAP Review Committee.

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

- 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 had a material impact on the athlete's ability to meet the established carding criteria.

The arbitrator or arbitration panel's jurisdiction is limited to making a decision on the existence of an error and where there is such a finding to return 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 arbitrator's decision and render a new decision. The new Sport Canada decision is appealable.

Section 14 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, it the following shall occur shall forthwith:
 - i) The one part 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

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