



**WATER POLO CANADA  
2022-23 ATHLETE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (AAP) POLICY**

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Additional attachments **to be provided to AAP identified athletes:**

- a. Water Polo Canada, Athlete Agreement;
- b. Sport Canada AAP Application;
- c. Sport Canada Direct Deposit form
- d. Sport Canada Tuition support details;
- e. Sport Canada Relocation form;
- f. AAP Anti-Doping requirements

## WATER POLO CANADA ATHLETE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (AAP) POLICY

### **1. Sport Canada's Athlete Assistance Program (AAP)**

The Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) is a sport funding program of the Federal government (Sport Canada) that contributes to the pursuit of excellence. The AAP helps high performance Canadian athletes to combine their sport and academic or working careers while training intensively in pursuit of world-class performances.

The Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Program's objectives are to:

- a. Financially support Canadian athletes identified by National Sport Organizations (NSOs) as performing at or having the greatest potential to achieve Senior International carding criteria at Olympic/Paralympic Games and World Championships;
- b. Assist Canada's carded athletes in preparing to engage in full- or part-time career activities; and
- c. Enable Canada's carded athletes to participate in year-round national training and competition regimes to further their athletic goals.

The Water Polo Canada (WPC) AAP must comply with the Sport Canada AAP Policies and procedures at the following link:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/athlete-assistance/policies-procedures.html>

The WPC Athlete Assistance Program is intended to assist our National Team athletes to offset expenses incurred during training and competing. The program is not intended to meet all the needs of our national team athletes, but rather to complement or assist them. Under the program, carded athletes will be eligible to receive direct financial assistance to facilitate the attainment of their long-range goals of excellence at Olympic or world competition. Besides monthly living / training allowances, Sport Canada provides other financial assistances including tuition support. For more information on the AAP financial benefits, see section 8 of the Sport Canada AAP Policies and procedures.

#### **1.1 Definition of Terms**

An athlete committing full-time to the Senior National Team Program is one who is either living and training full-time at National Training Center (Montreal) while following the prescribed training program assigned by the National Team Head Coach or designated coach, or one who is living and training elsewhere while still following the prescribed training program assigned by the National Team Head Coach or designated coach, and has been approved to do so by WPC.

## 2. AAP Carding Cycle

### 2.1 Carding cycle and number of cards

Athletes approved by Sport Canada will receive AAP funding for a maximum of a 12-month period from November 1 to October 31. However, in the case of athletes who meet the international criteria, they may be eligible to be nominated by WPC for two consecutive years; the card for the first year is referred to as an SR1 card, while the second year card is known as an SR2 card. The second year of carding is contingent on the athlete meeting the depth chart ranking standard, maintaining a training and competitive program approved by WPC and being re-nominated by WPC. The athlete must also sign an Athlete/NSO Agreement and complete an AAP Application Form for the year in question and the required online anti-doping courses.

The number of cards for each National Team Program may vary from year to year, depending on the performance of the program (s) and Sport Canada's policy. As of September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022 Water Polo Canada receives the following number of cards (Sport Canada regularly reviews its allocation of cards to all eligible sport disciplines; therefore these numbers are subject to change):

**Men:** 14 SR cards (\$296,520)  
**Women:** 15 SR cards (\$317,700)

### 2.2 AAP carding levels and number of months of carding support

The current Sport Canada levels of carding are:

- a. **Senior International Cards (SR1 and SR2):** Athletes selected to the Senior National Team Talent Pool who placed top 8 and top 1/2 of field at Olympic Games or World Championships may be eligible for nomination for a SR1 card (\$1,765/month). Furthermore, for the sport of Water Polo, in order for an athlete who was carded SR1 in the previous cycle to be eligible for a SR2 carding level, he or she must maintain a Top-13 ranking on the Water Polo Canada National depth chart applicable to that carding cycle.
- b. **Senior National Card (SR / C1):** Athletes selected to the Senior National Team Talent Pool based on National Team Selection Criteria may be eligible for nomination for a Senior National Card. (\$1,765/month). A first-time carded athlete meeting the Senior National Card criteria is awarded a C1 card (see details in AAP policy, section 5.2.2), which is funded at the D card level (\$1,060/month). If, however, the athlete has been previously carded at the SR1 or SR2 level, has been named to the Senior National Team, has competed in Senior World Championships before meeting the national criteria for the Senior Card for the first time, the athlete will be funded at the Senior Card (SR) level rather than at the Development Card level.
- c. **Development card (D):** Athletes identified to the Age Group National Team Program or selected to attend the National Training Center Program on a seasonal basis based on

carding selection criteria, may be eligible for nomination for a D card.

The number of months of carding support allocated to each athlete is determined by the National Team Head Coaches in consultation with the High Performance Director and is based on the athlete's commitment to the National Team Program (ie.: number of training and competition days the athlete will be involved during the carding cycle), the athlete position on the depth chart, the nomination criteria written in section 3.1, and the number of cards available.

### **3 Water Polo Canada (WPC) AAP Nomination Criteria and Procedures**

#### **3.1 Water Polo Canada AAP nomination criteria**

AAP nominations will be on the basis of selection to the Senior National Team Talent Pool. As Water Polo is a team sport, it is difficult to base selection to any program strictly on individual athletic performance and therefore subjective judgment is required. It is the responsibility of the Head Coaches to select the best possible group of athletes for the Senior National Team Talent Pool. To fulfill this responsibility, the Head Coaches will have a high degree of discretion and flexibility. The criteria outlined below will be the primary tool used by the Senior National Team Head Coaches in developing the National Team depth chart and to select the Senior National Team Talent Pool.

- a. Individual / team play characteristics
- b. Technical abilities and positional considerations
- c. Tactical knowledge
- d. Needs of the team to perform at the international level
- e. Physical characteristics and attributes
- f. Demonstration of personal characteristics required
- g. Attitude and team dynamics
- h. Statistical compilations from various events

This information will be used to determine an athlete's position on the Water Polo Canada depth chart, which will be updated annually and in accordance with the WPC AAP timeline as presented in section 5.1.

#### **3.2 Prioritization of athletes for WPC AAP nomination**

WPC will prioritize carding nominations in the following manner in its AAP submission to Sport Canada:

- a. Athletes selected for and committing to the Senior National Team Training Program, including athletes with WPC Approved Professional League contracts (Annex A of the Water Polo Canada Athlete Agreement) in the following order:
  - i. Athlete meeting the requirements SR1 and SR2 carding nominations (section 2.2.a) by having played minutes in an official game at World championships or Olympic Games. As previously stated in section 2.2.a of this document, in order for an athlete who was carded SR1 in the previous



Assistance Program (AAP) policies and procedure, section 13.

## **5. WPC AAP Submission**

### **5.1 Timeline**

Every program year (September-August), WPC will attempt to respect the following AAP timeline and administrative cycle:

- a. **Sept 15-30.** National Team Head Coaches' and Lead Coaches AAP identified athlete nominations to be submitted to Water Polo Canada with an updated national team depth chart.
- b. **By October 1.** The High Performance Manager will inform identified athletes of their potential AAP status with Water Polo Canada. Identified athletes are to receive a WPC Athlete Agreement and Sport Canada AAP application forms. The WPC High Performance Director and / or Manager will inform in writing the currently carded athletes who are no longer identified for carding.
- c. **By October 15.** WPC AAP submission to Sport Canada.
- d. **By October 31.** Yearly AAP review, date set by Sport Canada annually.
- e. **Post AAP review.** Confirmation and communication of AAP nominations as approved by Sport Canada.

### **5.2 Specific staff responsibilities with regards to the WPC AAP submission**

#### **5.2.1 Senior National Team Head Coaches' responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the Senior National Team Head Coaches (men's and women's teams) to identify athletes for AAP nominations and to submit the following information by September 30<sup>th</sup> of each year, to the WPC HPD:

- a. A list of athletes to be carded with rationale for their selection which should include: percentage of play, depth chart ranking for their position and specific technical feedback;
- b. A list of athletes to be de-carded with rationale;
- c. Up to date national team depth chart;
- d. Annual plan for the upcoming year including competition and training program and respective team planned selection dates;  
*Disclaimer: Finalized competitions plans are dependent on the availability of FINA & Pan Am Aquatics calendars and are also dependent on levels of funding for each season.*
- e. Suggested carding selection criteria that may differ from the previous year's;
- f. Provide a summary of National team results from the previous season by September 30<sup>th</sup> of each year to the HPD.

### **5.2.2 High Performance Manager's responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the High Performance Manager to:

- a. Inform identified athletes of their potential AAP status with Water Polo Canada.
- b. Ensure the transmission of all AAP required documents to the identified athletes

### **5.2.3 High Performance Director responsibilities**

It is the HPD's responsibility to:

- a. Coordinate and prepare WPC AAP submission for approval to Sport Canada
- b. Ensure that the High Performance Manager forwards an annual AAP package to the nominated list of athletes. The AAP package will include:
  - i. Water Polo Canada, Athlete Agreement;
  - ii. Sport Canada AAP Application;
  - iii. Sport Canada Direct Deposit form
  - iv. Sport Canada Tuition support details;
  - v. Sport Canada Relocation form;
  - vi. AAP Anti-Doping requirement details
- c. Ensure proper communication of the AAP recipients as approved by Sport Canada.
- d. Approve the WPC AAP submission
- e. Conduct a quadrennial review of the WPC AAP Policy
- f. Ensure annual updates to the WPC AAP Policy

### **5.3 Communication of AAP Decision**

Once Sport Canada has informed WPC of the confirmed and approved AAP recipients, the HPD will forward a copy to the National Team Coaches and High Performance Manager, and will inform the Provincial Associations.

Individual carding will be initiated when the WPC Athlete Agreement and the Sport Canada AAP Application have been signed and received by the HPD, sent to, received and approved by Sport Canada.

### **5.4 Activation**

Once the Carding Nominations have been approved by Sport Canada they can only be activated after an athlete signs the WPC Athlete Agreement and all of their obligations have been fulfilled.