



**WATER POLO CANADA
2021-22 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 National Training Center Program is one who is living and training full time at National Training Center (Montreal) while following the prescribed training program by the Head Coach, Lead Coach or the designated coach.

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 the NSO. 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 pending on the performance of the program (s) and Sport Canada's policy. As of September 1st, 2021 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 National Training Center Program 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 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 Training Center Program based on carding 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 detail in AAP policy 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 national senior team, has competed in 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 (minimum 60 days) 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 Coach and Lead Coach in consultation with the High Performance Director and is based on the athlete commitment to the National Team Program (ie.: number of training and

competition days the athlete will be involve 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 National Training Center Program. 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 Coach and Lead Coach to select the best possible group of athletes for the National Training Center Program. To fulfill this responsibility, the Head Coach will have a high degree of discretion and flexibility. This being said, the criteria outlined below will be the primary tool used by the Senior National Team Head Coach and Lead Coach in developing the National Team depth chart and to select the National Training Center Team.

- 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

The information in this section 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 full-time to the National Team Training Center 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 to benefit from an 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.
 - ii. Athlete meeting the requirements of SR/C1 nominations as prioritized by the national team depth chart.
- b. Remaining carding allocations will be nominated using the following guidelines for

prioritization of National Team Training Center Program or National Team Age Group athletes not able to commit full-time to the National Training Center Program:

- i. Ranking on the National Team depth chart.
- ii. Required minimum commitment of 60 days to the National team Program over the course of the carding cycle
- iii. Availability to attend key events as determined by the Senior National Team Head Coach
- iv. Athletes must be in a training situation deemed suitable by the Senior National Team Head Coach

3.3 Other considerations for AAP carding nominations

The following considerations will apply to athletes under WPC Approved Professional League Contracts and athletes from the National Training Center programs that are attending NCAA programs on a full-time basis:

a. **Professional League Contracts.**

- i. SR carded athletes, excluding C1, under WPC approved professional league contracts of a duration of more than 5 months benefiting from fully supported residency with their pro teams (defined as fully funded lodging with a meal plan; or lodging with a form of payment in lieu of a meal plan) will be limited to 9 months of carding. A special dispensation can be approved by WPC if there are remaining AAP funds after all carding priorities as detailed in section 3.2 of this document have been exhausted.
- ii. All carded athletes under WPC approved pro league contracts will be responsible for the costs associated to their relocation to the training National Team training center within one week of the end of their league activities.

- b. **NCAA athletes.** If identified by the WPC AAP policy, 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.

4. AAP Nomination Appeal process

An athlete who wishes to appeal an AAP Decision shall have fifteen days from the communication of the decision for which the Appeal is being requested to initiate an Appeal.

For all matters related to this appeals process, please consult the Sport Canada's Athlete 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.** National team managers will inform identified athletes of their potential AAP status with Water Polo Canada. Identified athletes are to receive a WPC Athlete Agreement, Sport Canada AAP application and tuition forms. The WPC High Performance Director 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 and Lead Coach responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Senior National Team Head Coach and Lead Coach (men's and women's teams) to identify athletes for AAP nominations and to submit the following information by September 30th 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 selection dates;
Disclaimer: Finalized competitions plans are dependent on the availability of FINA & UANA 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 30th of each year to the HPD.

5.2.2 National Team Managers responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the National Team Managers 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 each National Team 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 AAP recipients, the HPD will forward a copy to the National Team coaches / managers concerned and 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.