



**Carding Nomination Criteria for the 2025-2026 Sport Canada  
Athlete Assistance Program (AAP)**

*“Qualification for 2025-2026 AAP Carding”*

June 13, 2024



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## Introduction

- a) This document describes the criteria that will be used by Freestyle Canada (FC) for nominating athletes for Sport Canada's Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) for the 2025-2026 cycle from June 1, 2025, to May 31, 2026.
- b) The nomination of athletes to the AAP is the responsibility of the FC's Chief Executive Officer, acting on the recommendations of Freestyle Canada High Performance Plan (HPP) staff. Sport Canada is responsible for the final approval of nominations to the AAP.
- c) Sport Canada's general policies and procedures governing AAP can be found on the Sport Canada website at:
  - [Policies and Procedures – Athlete Assistance Program – Canada.ca](#)
  - This includes all information pertaining to the establishment and application of criteria used by FC.
  - In the event of discrepancy between this document and the Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Program Policies and Procedures, the Sport Canada AAP document will take priority.

Each Freestyle Canada High Performance Program (HPP) discipline has specific protocols and definitions which are published in their National Team Selection Protocols and available on [www.freestylecanada.ski](http://www.freestylecanada.ski). Eligibility criteria in the HPP Selection Protocols are applicable to this document.

## Intention Statement

The support provided by Sport Canada through the AAP program contributes toward improved Canadian performances at major international sporting events (such as the Olympic Games and World Championships). The funding received by eligible athletes helps relieve some of the financial pressures through a living and training allowance. SC allocates FC a finite amount of financial support to distribute as cards eligible athletes.

FC's priority for carding distribution to eligible athletes is based on the progress of a skier towards a medal at a next (or a future) major event. The progress of each eligible skier, in each discipline, is considered as these criteria are applied.

## Priority of Nominations

Cards will be allocated in the following priority order:

- A. SR1: Athletes who meet Senior International 1 (SR1) criteria.
- B. SR2: Athletes who meet Senior International 2 (SR2) criteria.
- C. SRI: Athletes who were carded at SR2 in 2025-2025 who have health-related circumstances who meet the Exceptional Circumstance clause in the HPP Team selection criteria (Senior International Injury/Illness).
- D. SR: Athletes who meet the Senior (SR) criteria in the order described in the Senior National Card Criteria (SR) section of this document.



- E. SRI Athletes who were carded at SR level in 2024-2025 who have health-related circumstances who meet the Exceptional Circumstances clause in the HPP Team selection criteria (Senior Injury/Illness).
- F. D: Athletes who meet the Development (D) Card criteria in the order described in this document.
- G. DI: Injured athletes who were carded at D in 2024-2025 who meet the Exceptional Circumstances clause in the HPP Team Selection criteria (Development Injury/Illness).
- H. For Development Cards only, slopestyle / big air and halfpipe athletes who are selected to the National Team in one discipline and do not meet the carding criteria in that discipline but meet the criteria in the other discipline, can be eligible for a D card when there is funding left over.

Specific descriptions of each discipline's Exceptional Circumstance clause (points C, E and G, above) can be found on separate HPP Selection Criteria available at:

[National Team Policies](#).

## Allocation Timelines

FC and Sport Canada will normally hold their review meeting before the end of May each year; this meeting will determine the nominations for the allocation of carding. Consistent with AAP policies and procedures, it is understood that additional nominations may occur later in the carding cycle depending on changes to the status of those athletes initially nominated and accepted for carding, and available funding. These additional nominations will be prioritized according to the procedures detailed in this document.

Variables that affect the allocation of the AAP funding include retirements, voluntary withdrawal from AAP, injury decisions, an athlete's decision to decline carding support and adjustments to current year funding amounts.

- A. On or before June 10<sup>th</sup> Freestyle Canada will provide notice to the athletes of Sport Canada approved AAP Carding allocations for the coming season.
- B. July 30<sup>th</sup>, target to finalize carding allocation confirmation.
- C. Should any funding for carding become available during the season, Freestyle Canada will work with SC to nominate the next eligible athlete on the Performance Allocation ranking list.

## AAP Carding Support Eligibility

To qualify for AAP Carding support, an athlete must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- A. The athlete must be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada at the beginning of the carding cycle for which the athlete is being nominated. Permanent residents must live in Canada for the full year preceding the



carding cycle for which the athlete is being considered for AAP support. The athlete would normally have been expected to participate in FC sanctioned activities during that period.

- B. The athlete, under the Freestyle Skiing eligibility requirements of the Federation International de Ski (FIS), must currently be eligible to represent Canada at major international events, including FIS World Championships.
- C. To be eligible for Sport Canada Carding an athlete must be a member in good standing with FC and the High Performance Program.
- D. Only athletes competing in Olympic Winter Games medal events – single moguls, dual moguls, aerials, team aerials, halfpipe, slopestyle, and big air – will be considered for Sport Canada Carding. Team aerial results are only considered for Senior International Card allocations under the criteria detailed the Senior International Carding Criteria section.
- E. To receive carding, all athletes must complete and submit the Sport Canada AAP application, sign their Freestyle Canada / Athlete agreement, and undertake the CCES and AAP educational requirements. Athletes who have not completed these tasks will have their AAP payments withheld until all requirements are fulfilled.
- F. If requested by Freestyle Canada, agree to be subject to any proceedings taken under the UCCMS, including, without limitation, signing a UCCMS Participant consent form and accepting the jurisdiction of the Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner/Abuse-Free Sport.
- G. Before the first AAP first payment is released by Sport Canada the following tasks must be undertaken:
  - the FC Athlete Agreement must be signed and returned,
  - FC membership has been paid (or a payment plan arranged).
  - Any outstanding balance owed to Freestyle Canada from previous periods has been addressed.

## AAP Cards

TYPE OF CARD	ALLOCATED FOR	AMOUNT (updated to reflect updated stipend amounts)
Senior International Card (SR1, SR2)	2 years SR1: 1 <sup>st</sup> year of this card SR2: 2 <sup>nd</sup> year of this card	\$26,100 per year (\$2,175 per month)
Senior National card (SR)	1 year (maximum 5 years)	\$26,100 per year (\$2,175 per month)
Development card (D)	1 year (maximum 5 years)	\$15,660 per year (\$1,305 per month)

*\*The current AAP allotment for Freestyle Canada is the equivalent of 43 Senior cards. Sport Canada regularly reviews its allocation of cards to National Sport*



*Organizations therefore, this number is subject to change.*

## Senior International Carding Criteria (SR1/SR2)

**Cards in this category are awarded for results in the most recent World Championships or Olympic Winter Games.**

- A. Eligible athletes placing in the top 8 and top half of the field (counting a maximum of three entries per country) at the FIS World Championships or at the Olympic Games may be nominated for SR1/SR2.
- B. In Olympic years, nominations for carding will be based on results from athletes competing in Olympic Winter Games in the following medal events – single moguls, dual moguls, aerials, team aerials, halfpipe, slopestyle, and big air.
- C. In FIS World Championships years, nominations for carding will be based on results from athletes competing in Olympic Winter Games. Only results from events that are on the program of the upcoming Olympic Games will be considered for carding under the International Criteria.
- D. Athletes that qualify for carding under the Senior International criteria are eligible for two years of AAP support, with the card for the first year referred to as a SR1 Card and the card for the second year referred to as a SR2 card. The second year is subject to the athlete being re-nominated by FC, training and competitive program approved by FC and Sport Canada, signing an Athlete/FC agreement, completing the on-line anti-doping courses, and completing the AAP application form for the year in question.

## Senior National Card Criteria (SR)

- A. Carding in this category will be granted for a period of one year at a time.
- B. Freestyle Canada expects each athlete to make progress in their results and/or maintain top 8 international rankings (i.e., WC FIS standings for dual moguls, moguls, aerials, slopestyle, big air, and halfpipe), in order to maintain SR Card status. Normally, five (5) years is the maximum that an athlete will be carded at the senior level based on national criteria (excluding years when the athlete was awarded a SRI card or carded as a Senior Card while still eligible to compete at the Junior international age level). If an athlete qualifies for a SR card for a sixth or subsequent year, Freestyle Canada may present this case to Sport Canada for their consideration. Sport Canada will, in discussion with the NSO, exercise its discretion in determining whether an additional year of support as a Senior Card based on National Criteria is warranted. Sport Canada will require a comprehensive thoroughly documented review of the athlete's performance over the past five years to demonstrate progress toward performance equivalent to top 8 and top half at the FIS World Championships or Olympic Games, which then warrants nomination of "Senior National" card status for an additional year. If an additional year is granted, the NSO and the



athlete must agree on performance targets to be attained by the athlete for carding consideration in subsequent carding cycles. This process must be followed for all subsequent years that the athlete is nominated at this level.

- C. To be eligible for AAP SR Carding, an athlete needs to meet one of two specific performance benchmarks:
- One World Cup podium or,
  - Achieve two World Cup *Final Placing Standards* in an individual World Cup, Olympic Winter Games or World Championship event; these must be in the top percentage of the field size as indicated in the table below:

<i>Eligible Final Placing Standards by Discipline</i>			
<b>Group</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>A combination of two qualifying results from the below scenarios:</b>	
Moguls and Dual Moguls (women and men)	From either Moguls or Dual Moguls	If field size is greater than 24, a top-12 result is required for a result to be eligible for use.	If field size 24 or less, then a top 1/2 result is required (rounding up will be used to benefit the athlete).  Example: If FS = 13 * 50% = 6.5 so an athlete must be 7 <sup>th</sup> or better to use as an eligible result.
Aerials (women and men)	Only placings from the individual event are eligible		
Slopestyle and Big Air – women and men	From either Slopestyle or Big Air Events		
Halfpipe (women and men)	From Halfpipe events		

Results for Final Placing Standards may also be achieved in World Championship (WCh) or Olympic Winter Games (OWG) events (i.e., 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> would count as an eligible result; in the WCh and OWGs, 1<sup>st</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> place skiers are eligible for SR International cards).

*Note: For any discipline where there are four (4) or fewer WC / WCh / OWG eligible competitions in a season, an athlete would only need to achieve one eligible Final Placing Standard (specific to his or her discipline) per the above chart.*

### **Tie Breaking Process**

- A. If more athletes meet Senior National Card criteria than available cards, and there is a need to compare athletes from different disciplines or within a discipline, the following tiebreaking will be used:
- The athlete’s two best eligible placings from high level competitions (i.e., FIS World Cups and Tier 1 neutral or boosted events) held in the previous twelve months, will be given a value



of the placing (1<sup>st</sup> =1 point, 7<sup>th</sup> = 7 points). The athlete with the lowest sum of points will be ranked highest. If a tie remains it will be broken in favor of the athlete with the best eligible placing.

- If a tie remains, it will be broken in favor of the athlete with the best ranking on the final 2024-2025 FIS World Cup standings list of their discipline.

## Returning Olympic / World Top-8 Athletes

An athlete who is returning to the national team after a period of no more than one competitive season may be nominated for an SR card if they demonstrate the following criteria:

- Has previously obtained a top-8 result at the most recent Olympic Winter Games and/or at one of the two most recent World Championships,
- Is currently demonstrating they are tracking well towards the competitive skill levels as described in section D, “SR NATIONAL CARD CRITERIA (SR).” The HPP selection committee will determine within the timelines of this policy,
- A commitment to international competition in the upcoming season, and
- An approved training and coaching plan.

Returning athletes will be ranked at the end of all SR card nominations, in the discipline order for the given carding cycle. In the case of more than one such nomination within any discipline, the nominations will be ranked in order of their placement at the most recent Olympic Winter Games. Those with no Olympic result will be ranked after the returning Olympic medalist(s) and ranked in order of their placement at the most recent Worlds, followed by the preceding Worlds. Placement in the aerial team event will not be used in any of these cases.

## Athletes Named to the Team based on Exceptional Circumstances

Athletes named to the 2024-2025 World Cup Teams or National ‘A’ and ‘B’ groups through the “Exceptional circumstances” clause, as outlined in the HPP team selection protocols and who had a SR card for the 2024-25 carding cycle, may be eligible for nomination for a SRI card.

## Development (D) Card Criteria

### A. Introduction

After all eligible Senior National and Senior International cards have been allocated, it is possible for there to be a remaining balance of funds to be allocated to Freestyle Canada; any remaining amount is allocated to Development Cards. This remaining amount is divided into Development Cards and distributed to eligible athletes under the guidelines and process in this section.

### B. Development Card Principles

1. Discipline Equity: In the Primary Allocation equal funding and equal distribution of cards will be considered where there are enough eligible





athletes in each discipline.

2. **Gender Equity:** In the Primary Allocation of Development Cards, gender balance will be considered in each discipline where there are enough eligible athletes of each gender. Details are available in Section D: Distribution of Development Cards.
3. **Performance Consideration:** In the case of uneven cards available to the disciplines or a tie between disciplines or genders, performance will be prioritized.

#### **C. Development Card Restrictions:**

1. Once an athlete has reached the Senior FIS age, as defined by the FIS age categories, athletes are eligible to be carded a maximum of five (5) years at the D card level (excluding years when the athlete was awarded a D injury/illness (DI) card).
2. Any athlete previously carded at the Senior card levels (SR1, SR2, SR or C1) for more than two years is not eligible for nominations under the Development card criteria. An exception may be made, at Sport Canada's sole discretion, for example if they were at the FIS Junior age category when carded at the Senior Level.

#### **D. Development Card Eligibility:**

In addition to the discipline specific eligibility requirements for mogul, aerial, halfpipe, slopestyle / big air, athletes named to HPP nominated for a Development card (D) must meet the following general eligibility requirements:

1. Commit to relocating to a designated Freestyle Canada Training Centre or approved training program, under the terms set out in her or his FC/High Performance Program Athlete Agreement.
2. Compete in at least three competitions eligible for National team selection in the season just ended.
3. Athletes must meet the minimum performance level described below, to be eligible for card nomination:

#### **Moguls Athlete Development Card Eligibility:**

Mogul Athletes, named to HPP, who meet qualifier #1 or #2 or #3 may be eligible for nomination for Development Carding:

#1 - One (1) medal at a Tier 2 level event (recognized by Freestyle Canada for HPP selection purposes) in single moguls or dual moguls.

#2 - Two (2) top 8 at Tier 2 level events (or other Tier 2 events recognized by Freestyle Canada for HPP selection purposes) in single or



dual moguls (final placing only).

#3 - Top 40% of field size at a WC event in single or dual moguls (final placing only).

**Aerial Athlete Development Card Eligibility:**

Aerial Athletes, named to HPP, who meet qualifier #1 or #2 below may be eligible for nomination for Development Carding.

#1 - One (1) medal and Top 50% of field size at a Tier 2 level event recognized by Freestyle Canada for HPP selection purposes.

#2 - Achieve one jump raw score of 25.8 or higher from HPP National ranking eligible events, while performing a degree of difficulty of 2.6 or higher (bLT) for women and 2.9 or higher for men (bLF).

**Halfpipe and Slopestyle / Big Air Athlete Development Card Eligibility:**

Halfpipe, Slopestyle and Big Air athletes, named to HPP, who meet qualifier #1, #2 or #3 below may be eligible for nomination for Development Carding from identified HPP Ranking Eligible events.

#1 - Two (2) Top 8 and top 2/3rds at a Tier 2 level or higher event

#2 - One (1) Top 16 and top 2/3rds at a Tier 1

#3 – One (1) podium at a Tier 2 event

Tier 2 events include NorAms, Nationals, Junior World Ski Championships, and the Youth Olympic Games. An athlete can become eligible for Development carding using a result from Tier 2 events. Calculation of the Ranking Lists is detailed in each discipline's National Team Selection Criteria on the Freestyle Canada website: [National Team Policies](#) and based on the quality of field / event, all Tier 2 events held in the season may or may not be used for the calculation.

**E. Distribution of Development Cards:**

There are two sequential steps in the allocation of Development Cards:

1. Discipline Allocation: the funding is equally distributed between the four disciplines:
  - a. Any carding dollar amount not dividable by four falls to the Performance Allocation step (below)
  - b. Gender distribution is considered within each discipline.
2. Performance Allocation: any carding dollar allocation remaining after the Discipline Allocation will be distributed using Performance Allocation. This amount consists of any amount after the initial allocation by discipline or any



funds freed up when athletes previously nominated turn down funding. Performance Allocation will be distributed by using one list that includes both genders and all disciplines created using each athlete's top-2 eligible performance results.

#### Discipline Allocation Step for Development Cards

Any money remaining after SR1/SR2 and SR cards have been approved will be divided equally between the four disciplines: aerials, moguls, halfpipe, and slopestyle / big air.

1. Cards will be distributed in multiples of four based on each discipline having eligible athletes; the order of disciplines is irrelevant as only cards in multiples of four will be distributed in this step.
2. It is likely that the number of cards will not directly match the next group of eligible disciplines; any number of cards remaining will be distributed through the Performance Allocation method.
3. Allocations within each discipline (intra-discipline allocation is independent of any other discipline's allocation):
  - Within each discipline, gender balance will be considered:
    - Cards will be distributed evenly between the two genders within each discipline.
    - In the event of an odd number of available cards, the available card will be allocated to the higher ranked athlete using the tie breaking method outlined in the Performance Allocation method (later in this document); the other athlete will automatically revert to the Performance Allocation method.
    - If there are not enough skiers of one gender within a discipline, remaining Card(s) will remain within that discipline and be allocated to the next eligible athlete(s) of the other gender.
  - If there are not enough eligible athletes within a discipline, any remaining cards will revert to the Performance Allocation method.
  - Cards will be allocated within each discipline's gender according to the discipline's 2024-25 HPP Final Rankings per gender (see HPP selection protocols for ranking procedure), including previously carded athletes who qualify under the Extra-ordinary clause and are ranked accordingly in the HPP ranking of their discipline.

#### Performance Allocation Step/Method for Development Card Allocation

Performance Allocation is used to allocate any cards or partial cards that aren't allocated in the Discipline Allocation step. Examples include:

- Insufficient Development Cards to be equally distributed to between



- the four disciplines,
- Remaining cards due to insufficient eligible athletes in a given discipline in the Discipline Allocation, or
  - Any additional funds (i.e., through a late retirement of a previously nominated athlete), or
  - Tie breaking methods described in the Performance Allocation step will be used when ties exist in any Development card allocation decision.

### Performance Allocation Ranking Process

Development Cards are allocated from the highest skier on the Performance Allocation list down until there is no more carding. Athletes who do not receive a card will remain eligible in the order of the list should additional Cards become available. Note that this step is based on performance: men and women athletes are ranked on one list based solely on their performance results.

1. Tier 1 Grouping: All athletes with a Top 16 and Top 2/3 of field size in a high-level event (i.e., FIS World Cup or Tier 1 event. (Including dual moguls)). Athletes will be ranked in order of the best result (i.e., 8<sup>th</sup> ranked higher than 12<sup>th</sup>). In the event of a tie between two or more athletes, each athlete's next best WC or Tier 1 result will be compared. Tier 1 skiers will appear first on the Performance Allocation ranking list followed by Tier 2 ranked skiers.
2. Tier 2 Grouping: Each athlete's two best eligible placings from FIS NorAms or HPP eligible Tier 2 events held in the 2024-2025 competition season, will be given a value of the placing (1<sup>st</sup> =1 point, 7<sup>th</sup> = 7 points) The athlete with the lowest score will be ranked highest. If a tie remains it will be broken in favor of the athlete with the best top placing. See each discipline's National Team Selection Criteria for details on how the discipline Ranking Lists are calculated.

If a tie is not able to be broken using results, it will be broken in favor of the athlete with the highest number of FIS points, from the most recent published list.

### Failure to Meet Renewal Criteria for Health-Related Reasons

1. A failure to meet the renewal criteria for health-related reasons will require the use the regulations outlined in the HPP team selection protocols under "Exceptional Circumstances".
2. An athlete who was not carded in the previous season is not eligible for a Senior or Development health related circumstances card.
3. An athlete who was carded in the previous season and was unable to meet the carding criteria strictly due to health-related reasons as outlined in the HPP teams' selection document under "Exceptional Circumstances", may be eligible for a Senior or Development HC Card if the following conditions are met:



- The athlete meets the extra-ordinary circumstance criteria in the discipline specific HPP Team Selection policy.
  - The athlete must be recommended for an Injury/Illness Card by the HPP Selection Committee.
4. An athlete who has been carded at the SRI level for two consecutive years must have at least one eligible competition start and show skill progression in their second year of SRI to be eligible for a third year of SRI carding should they be in an Exceptional Circumstance once again. An athlete may only be carded for a maximum of three consecutive years at the SRI level.
  5. Development health related circumstances (DI). An athlete may not be nominated for renewal based on health related circumstances for development cards (DI) in consecutive years.

Conditions for the carded athlete dealing with an illness, injury, pregnancy, or other health-related circumstance:

The athlete does not withdraw from the High Performance Program during that period and provides written confirmation of his or her intention to return to full participation in the HPP at the earliest possible date after clearance from the Freestyle Canada medical team.

1. Written evaluation is provided by both, the FC's coaching staff and a FC designated physician, indicating that the athlete can be expected to achieve at least the minimum standards required for carding during the upcoming carding period.
2. The athlete undertakes in writing to train and/or rehabilitate under the supervision of Freestyle Canada or its designate at a level that minimizes risk to the athlete's personal health and ensures optimum return to full training and competition at the earliest possible date after clearance from the Freestyle Canada team. Failure to follow such a program without due cause shall be grounds for immediate termination of carding.

## Temporary or Permanent Withdrawal

If an athlete wishes, for health-related or other reasons, to withdraw temporarily or permanently from normal carded athlete training and competition activities, the procedures for voluntary withdrawal from the AAP apply (see Section 10 of the AAP Policies and Procedures). The athlete will no longer be eligible for monthly training and living support but will be eligible for deferred tuition and/or Supplementary AAP Retirement Allowance.

## Appeal Process

In the event an athlete feels an error was made in the application of this criteria they should immediately contact their HPP Director. If the situation is not resolved through this discussion an athlete may file an appeal through the regular Freestyle Canada process (Appeal Policy). The policy can be found at this link: [Appeal Policy](#)