Athletics Canada
2016-2017 Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) Policy
Paralympic Stream

1. General program description and purpose

The Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) is a federal government program administered by Sport Canada that provides financial assistance and tuition support to high performance athletes. Also referred to as ‘carding’, AAP funding is intended to contribute to an athlete’s living and training costs. It is not intended to serve as an athlete’s sole source of income. Under Athletics Canada policy, AAP funding is designed to support athletes for the upcoming year who have:

- Demonstrated an ability to finish in the Top 3 at an IPC World Championships in Athletics or a Paralympic Games, or
- Have been identified by Athletics Canada (AC) as progressing towards a finish in the Top 3 at future IPC World Championships in Athletics or Paralympic Games

This policy was developed by AC’s National Team Committee (NTC) and was reviewed by Sport Canada before publication to ensure consistency with Sport Canada AAP Policies. The criteria in this policy are designed to enable AC to identify those athletes and coaches whose performances, progression, and training environment are indicative of the athlete’s ability to achieve future Paralympic medal performances.

This policy applies to the carding cycle beginning December 1, 2016 and ending November 30, 2017. It sets out the process and criteria that will be used to recommend nominations for carding to Sport Canada. There are two appendices associated with this policy, all of which form an integral part of this policy:

Appendix 1 – Categories of Cards
Appendix 2 – Application form

**DEADLINE: November 10, 2016**

2. Eligibility for AAP

To be eligible to be considered for carding nomination, an athlete must meet these requirements:

- Must be a current registered member of AC, in good standing with a provincial branch
- Must have participated in the 2016 Canadian Championships and Rio Selection Trials unless a request for an exemption due to injury, illness, or other exceptional circumstances is approved, in advance, by the Chief Technical Officer (CTO)/Head Coach – or the event is not offered at the Championships
- Must possess Canadian citizenship by December 1, 2016 and must submit supporting documentation indicating that he/she will be eligible to compete for Canada in IPC events within the 2016-2017 carding cycle
• Must not be under suspension or other sanction for any doping or doping-related offense. Athletes who have been sanctioned for anti-doping rule violations for a period of two years or greater, are not eligible for AAP support
• Must sign an Athlete Agreement approved by Athletics Canada and the Athlete Directors. This agreement can be modified as required to accommodate individual needs or situations
• Must have a 2016-17 Training and Competition Plan approved by the Head Coach/CTO, before any funding will be released. Failure to submit an approved plan may result in AC withdrawing the nomination to Sport Canada. For the AC YTP (Yearly Training Plan) template – click here
• Must otherwise comply with all eligibility requirements set out by Sport Canada in the Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) Policies and Procedures
• Must be in an event that was contested at the 2016 Paralympic Games
• Must have a minimum of national classification
• Must not currently be pregnant, injured or have medical condition that prevents full training for longer than 3 months into the carding cycle, unless applying for a Medical card
• Must participate in major championship events (Paralympic Games, World Championships, CWG) if selected, unless exempted by the Head Coach/CTO

3. Authority for Carding Decisions

The NTC will apply the criteria contained within this document to nominate athletes for carding to Sport Canada. Ultimately, the final decision on granting AAP carding is made by Sport Canada.

The NTC for the 2016-2017 carding cycle is comprised of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chair</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CTO/Head Coach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Voting Members
Athletics Canada Technical Staff (two, the CTO/Head Coach and one appointed by the CTO/Head Coach), Event Group Experts (two, appointed by the CTO/Head Coach – one from endurance and one from speed and power), Branch Representatives (two, as designated by Branch Council), Athlete Representatives (up to two, as designated by the Athlete Directors)

Non-voting – present at NTC carding meeting
Athletics Canada Staff (ex-officio, support)
Athletics Canada coaching and IST staff as necessary, statistician, legal advisor, note-taker as required

4. Allocation of Cards

AC’s Paralympic Program has been allocated funds for the 2016-2017 carding cycle. The breakdown of these funds into Senior Cards, Development Cards and Medical Cards, is at the sole discretion of the NTC in consultation with AC technical staff. Appendix 1 (attached) provides additional details about these different categories of cards, and
specifies further requirements that must be fulfilled by athletes nominated in these categories, in addition to those eligibility requirements in Section 2.

5. The Carding Process

Nominations for carding will be made using a two phase approach, as follows:

Phase 1 – General Carding Pool

An athlete must first be in the General Carding Pool to be considered for carding, but this does not guarantee nomination. Phase 1 is simply a list of the athletes who will be considered in the process outlined in Phase 2.

The following athletes will be admitted to the General Carding Pool provided they submit a completed and signed Application Form (Appendix 2) and training and competition plan by the deadline date (November 10, 2016):

- Current SR1 or SR2 carded athletes
- Athletes who are ranked in the top 25% of their event on the IPC Annual Recorded Best Performances lists
- Athletes eligible for Development cards who achieved a performance* in 2016 with a minimum score of 750 points on the Athletics Canada point score table – using the version available at the time this criteria was published - Click here for the score table
  *in an individual event/class according to the 2016 Paralympic program
- Athletes who competed in a relay event at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games
- Athletes introduced by the CTO/Head Coach under special circumstances
- Athletes who are currently carded and who have submitted a “Notification of Injury, Illness or Pregnancy” form to maintain their carding status during the carding cycle, and who have otherwise fulfilled all requirements to be considered for a Medical Card

Phase 2 – Nomination to Sport Canada

In November, 2016, the NTC will review the athletes in the General Carding Pool, and select athletes to be nominated for carding. The NTC will consider athletes by proceeding through the following five steps in sequential order:

**Step 1** Athletes who won a Gold medal at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games, AND who the NTC believe demonstrate a realistic potential to win an individual Gold medal at the 2017 IPC World Championships

**Step 2** Athletes who won a medal in an individual event and/or Relay events at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games AND who the NTC believe demonstrate a realistic potential to win an individual and/or Relay medal at the 2017 IPC World Championships
**Step 3** Athletes ranked in the IPC Top 8 (minimum 16 athletes ranked in the event) in an individual event in 2016, who are not eligible under Steps 1 or 2 AND who the NTC believe demonstrate a realistic potential to win a medal at the 2017 IPC World Championships. For events with fewer than 16 athletes on the IPC ranking – Athletes ranked in the top ½ of the field will be considered.

**Step 4** Athletes eligible for Development Cards ranked in the IPC Top 16 (and top ½ of the field) in an individual event in 2016 AND/OR who the NTC believe demonstrates realistic potential to win a medal in an individual event at the 2017/19 IPC World Championships and/or the 2020 Paralympic Games. For events with fewer than 32 athletes on the IPC ranking – Athletes ranked in the top ½ of the field will be considered.

**Step 5** If there are any nominations remaining, all athletes in the Carding Pool who have not been nominated through any of the above 4 steps will be considered based on the factors (outlined below) which identify an athlete’s realistic potential to win a medal at 2020 Paralympic Games and/or 2017 or 2019 IPC World Championships.

In determining an athlete's "realistic potential to win a medal", as set out in the above steps, the NTC will consider the following factors:

- **Athlete’s performance profile/“Bridging the Gap analysis”**
  - Athlete performance trend over the past 3 years compared with event progression (using Paralympic Games/World Championship medalist and top 3 World Rankings in years without a major championship) over the past 3 years
- **The Athletics Canada point score table and IPC ranking (Annual Recorded Best Performances)**
- **The athlete’s ability to consistently repeat performances, particularly at peak times in the season (major championships and championship trials)**
- **International and major event performances (Paralympic Games and or World Championships)**
- **The athlete’s medical history, in the case of Medical Cards**
- **The fulfillment of any previous conditions and/or targets set for the athlete, where applicable**
- **Any other information introduced by the CTO/Head Coach and deemed relevant by the NTC**

All NTC members will participate in this process unless a NTC member has a conflict of interest in relation to any athlete being considered, in which case he or she must declare the conflict. The Chair of the NTC will decide if that NTC member can participate in the deliberations of the NTC in relation to that particular athlete.

The Chair of the NTC will determine the order in which athletes will be considered for carding within each of the 5 steps described above. All members of the NTC will vote on carding nominations decisions. A member will abstain from voting if the member has declared a conflict of interest. The CTO/Head Coach will have a tie-breaking vote in the event there is a tie.

In determining carding nominations, the NTC will also have the discretion to determine the relative allocation of cards among the different categories of cards (Senior, Medical and Development).
Funding Opt-Out
AAP funding is intended to contribute to an athlete’s living and training costs. An athlete who expects to earn in excess of $100,000 in the 2016 – 17 season may choose to decline / opt-out of receiving AAP funding; however, those athletes will still be listed on the AAP Carding list and will remain eligible for enhanced funding, CSI access, CPC services and the Bell Athlete’s Connect program. The opt-out carding funds would then create another position for an athlete to be named to the carding list.

Results
AC makes every effort to track athletes’ results that may qualify them for carding; however, a large portion of results may be achieved at events outside the National Team program so it is impossible for AC to be aware of all relevant performances. Therefore, it is the responsibility of each athlete to ensure that AC is aware that they are eligible for carding support by checking that the AC Ranking page has the most up-to-date performance recorded.

Coaching
For a carded athlete’s coach to be listed on the AAP Carding list, they must complete the following:
- Submit a completed AC YTP (Yearly Training Plan)
- Write the training plan and be present in the DTE (daily training environment) for that athlete at least 80% of the year
- Submit quarterly reports with training and competition/camp benchmarks

6. Requirements to Remain Carded
All athletes approved by Sport Canada for carding must sign a final Athlete Agreement that stipulates obligations that the athlete must fulfill to remain carded. All carded athletes are expected to remain fully engaged with AC’s high performance programming, including ongoing communication with AC staff which may include signing any written agreements required by AC staff coaches.

On a case by case basis, the NTC may impose additional criteria for the athlete to maintain his or her carding in the subsequent year. These criteria will be clearly communicated to the athlete in writing at the beginning of the carding cycle.

Athletes must complete monthly self-reports on the AC Information Portal.

7. Appeals
Athletes who are not nominated for carding may appeal, which will be heard in accordance with AC’s Procedures for Carding outlined in Rule 140 – Commissioner’s Office – Terms of Reference of AC’s Rules and Bylaws. Appeals are restricted to those athletes who were eligible to be considered for carding by virtue of meeting the requirements set out in Section 2, who met the requirements to be admitted to the General Carding Pool as described in Section 5 and who fulfilled any additional requirements for the different categories of cards as specified in Appendix 1. The full process for appeals can be found here.
8. Amendments to this document

The NTC reserves the right to amend this document at any time up to the Selection Date for changes imposed by parties external to the NTC or for changes that, in the opinion of the NTC would improve or enhance the selection process. Any changes made by the NTC are deemed to come into effect immediately upon publication on the AC website. Additional publication of the amended Selection Criteria will be made by whatever means and wherever the original Selection Criteria was published.
Appendix 1 – Categories of Cards

Senior Cards
- Senior Cards are the top level of cards and are valued at $1,500 per month, except the first year of a Senior Card that is referred to as a C-1 Card and is valued at $900 per month. An athlete may only receive a C-1 Card once
- SR1 and SR2 Cards are International cards granted to those athletes who reach the podium at the IPC World Championships or the Paralympic Games. Alternates in relays who do not compete are not eligible for this card
- SR1 Cards are typically awarded for two years (with the second year of the card termed SR2), provided the athlete adheres to an approved training plan, and achieves prescribed performance targets and benchmarks over the course of the two years
- SR and C-1 Cards are Senior level cards for those athletes who have qualified to be nominated for carding at the Senior level but not as a SR1 or SR2 card. An athlete may only continue to receive a C-1/SR Card if they can show they are progressing towards a medal at a Paralympics Games or IPC World Championships in Athletics.

Medical Cards
- Athletes who are currently carded and who become ill, injured or pregnant must submit a “Notification of Injury, Illness or Pregnancy” within 30 calendar days to maintain their carding status during the carding cycle. Must report pregnancy within 30 days into the second trimester
- To renew carding, the athlete must submit a medical doctor’s diagnosis and prognosis for the athlete’s return to high performance training and competition, and must include a rehabilitation and training program prepared by the athlete, coach and coordinating therapist which is acceptable to AC’s medical personnel
- A request for a Medical Card does not guarantee nomination. Athletes may be nominated for Medical Cards at the sole discretion of the NTC based on the number of cards available, the nature and details of the diagnosis and prognosis, the documentation provided, the quality of the athlete’s rehabilitation and training plan, the advice of medical experts, and the realistic expectation that the athlete can continue to progress towards World Top 8 or Top 3, as the case may be
- Athletes may only receive a Medical Card for an injury or illness once, special considerations may be given for a 2nd year on CTO/Head Coach discretion
- Athletes may only receive a Medical Card for a pregnancy once in their athletic career, but may receive up to an additional 6 months of AAP funding on a case-by-case basis during the following year. Special considerations may be given for a 2nd pregnancy on CTO/Head Coach discretion
- Athletes may not receive Medical Cards in consecutive years

Development Cards
- Development Cards are valued at $900 per month. The purpose of Development Card, is to support developing athletes who have demonstrated to the satisfaction of the NTC that they are on a path to earn a Senior Card in the future
- Athletes may only receive a Development Card for a maximum of 4 years post-Junior before progressing to a Senior Card
- Athletes who have previously received Senior Cards (including C1 Card) are not eligible for Development Cards
Appendix 2 – Application Form

The online application form must be completed in its entirety and submitted to AC on or before November 10, 2016 and must be accompanied by a Training and Competition Plan. Should you have any questions please contact carding@athletics.ca –