



Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) Criteria for Nominations for the 2026-2027 carding cycle Olympic and Paralympic Programs

This version of the AAP criteria for nominations for the 2026-2027 carding was approved on November 1st 2025.

Situations may arise that do not allow this document to be applied as written or modified according to procedure due to time constraints or other exceptional and unforeseen circumstances. In such situations, any decision, including nomination decisions, will be made by the individual(s) with decision-making authority, as stated in this AAP criteria nominations, in consultation with the relevant individual(s) or committee(s) (as applicable), and in accordance with the stated performance objectives and selection philosophy and approach as stated herein. Should it be necessary to make any decision in this manner, The Canadian Fencing Federation will communicate with all affected individuals as soon as possible.

Introduction

The purpose of this section is to present the criteria for the determination of the CFF / Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Program (AAP). The target audiences are athletes and the coaches of such athletes who now access or wish to access the program.

The AAP (carding) recognizes the commitment a fencer makes to long-term training and competitive programs and seeks to relieve some of the pressures associated with the participation in international sport. In particular, the AAP provides financial assistance to Canadian high-performance fencers to assist them in seeking enhanced training opportunities intended to progress their performances. To this end, the assistance helps fencers with their training and competition needs and is paid directly to the fencer. The AAP objective is to support Canadian



athletes identified and nominated by the CFF as performing at or having the greatest potential to reach the top 8 at Olympic/Paralympic Games and World Championships.

The coach remains a critical component of the team and in conjunction with the CFF manages and directs the fencers' training plan. The AAP is the only Sport Canada program to provide direct financial support for athletes.

The AAP is not a reward for past performance. It is financial support to assist athletes to progress to the podium. Consequently, carding status cannot be awarded indefinitely. An athlete with a Development card must progress to the Senior National Team card level. Likewise, an athlete with a Senior National Team card must progress to the Senior International card level.

Each card section below outlines restrictions on its duration and progress.

The CFF's Authority for Decisions

All matters relating to the nomination of athletes for AAP are the authority of the Executive Director (ED) and High Performance Director (HPD) of the CFF. The ED and HPD make decisions relating to AAP nominations on the basis of the approved CFF AAP Criteria and requirements.

The number of months of carding support allocated to each athlete is determined by the ED and HPD and is based on the athlete commitment to the National Team Program and the number of training and competition days the athlete will be involved in during the carding cycle.

Sport Canada is responsible for the final approval of nominations to the AAP.

Eligible Athletes:

- Athletes competing in 2028 Olympic/Paralympic events are eligible to be nominated for AAP support.
- Athletes must hold validated licenses from the CFF for the 2026-2027 season, and be members of the CFF HP program.
- Athletes must be a **Canadian citizen** at the beginning of the carding cycle for which the fencer is being nominated (i.e October, 2026). and be eligible to represent Canada at major international competitions such as the World Championships or Olympic Games
- Fencers must meet all the AAP Athlete Eligibility Requirements described in section 2.3 of the Government of Canada AAP Policies and Procedures: [Policies and Procedures – Athlete Assistance Program - Canada.ca](#)
- Carded athletes may train at any club in Canada as approved by the High Performance Director. Carded athletes are committed to training full time and agree to follow the annual training program developed by the High Performance Director and the National Coach. This plan includes all daily training, as well as other types of training (e.g.,



strength and conditioning, mental preparation, etc.), performance tests, medical examinations, tournaments, training camps and training periods in Canada and abroad approved by the High Performance Director.

- Athletes living outside of Canada are not normally eligible for AAP support. Any exceptions to this requirement must be approved by the CFF and Sport Canada. An athlete leaving Canada should be fully aware that an exception will be made only through special submissions to Sport Canada by the CFF. Athletes living outside of Canada for athletic or academic purposes must demonstrate to the satisfaction of Sport Canada that appropriate training programs are in place and are being monitored by the CFF. Athletes who have been living full-time outside of Canada for more than two successive years will not normally 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 CFF National Team, carding may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Athletes who are attending any foreign post-secondary educational institution, including National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) institutions, and are receiving an athletic scholarship in any sport, are **not eligible** to receive AAP support for the months in which they are attending the foreign post-secondary educational institution. This applies also in the rare case where an NCAA affiliated institution is located in Canada. These athletes may be nominated by the CFF for AA Living and Training support during the months they are involved in national team training and competition activities and not attending the foreign post-secondary institution. In addition, athletes cannot access tuition nor can they defer tuition during the carding cycle during which they are receiving an athletic scholarship from a foreign post-secondary institution.
- Athletes who are no longer receiving an NCAA athletic scholarship but continue to attend school in the USA for the purpose of finishing their degree or to pursue a post-graduate degree are eligible to be nominated for AAP funding as long as they commit to support National Team Program activities, and the training and competitions program is approved by CFF.
- Cards may be withdrawn during the cycle. National Team coaching staff will evaluate the performance of carded athletes; if it is determined that an athlete does not meet the conditions of the High-Performance program, the athlete will be withdrawn, and the remaining quota may be transferred to the next eligible candidate. A minimum of 4 months of support must be available to assign another card (see "Withdrawal of Cards" on page 12). Fencers of high school age (or younger) who achieve the carding criteria while living and training in Canada but are forced to move out of the country for reasons beyond their control will normally be eligible for AAP funding until they are of university age if their training and competitions program are approved by CFF.



At this time their circumstances will be reviewed by the CFF.

Carding Opportunities – Fencing Athletes

- Sport Canada is currently reviewing the carding quota for all sports. The current quota for Fencing's Olympic program is the equivalent of **thirteen (13)** Senior level cards **(\$339,300)** and of **two (2)** Senior cards for the Paralympic program **(\$52,200)** but is subject to change following Sport Canada's review.
- The athletes are nominated for the carding cycle that starts on October 1st, 2026 and ends on September 30th, 2027.
- Of the Olympic program's carding quota, a minimum of two (2) athletes will be recommended for D cards if eligible.

Prioritizing of Carding Nominations

Eligible athletes who met the carding criteria will be recommended in the following priority order:

	Olympic program	Paralympic program
1 st	Athletes that met the SR1 criteria	Athletes that met the SR1 criteria
2 nd	Athletes that met the SR2 criteria	Athletes that met the SR2 criteria
3 rd	Top 2 athletes that meet the Development card criteria by priority order (see section "Development Cards" on page 10 the previous year.	Athletes carded at SR1/SR2 criteria the previous year and met the illness, injury and pregnancy condition.
4 th	Athletes carded at SR1/SR2 criteria the previous year and met the illness, injury, and pregnancy condition.	Athletes that met the SR criteria.
5 th	Athletes that met the SR criteria by priority order (see section "Senior Cards" on page 7) the previous year.	Athletes carded that met the SR criteria the previous year and met the illness, injury, and pregnancy condition.
6 th	Athletes carded that met the SR criteria by priority order (see section "Senior Cards" on page 7) the previous year and met the illness, injury and pregnancy condition.	Athletes that met the D criteria.
7 th	Athletes that met the Development card criteria by priority order (see section "Development Cards" on page 10) the previous year.	

General Information and Definitions

- Olympic Program: Where the term “World Ranked” or World Ranking” is used, these shall be the Official FIE Rankings of performances completed for the 2025-2026 international season and as published on the FIE website (www.fie.ch) on August 31, 2026, at the end of the FIE season.



- Paralympic program: Where the term “World Ranked” or World Ranking” is used, these shall be the Official IWAS World Rankings of performances completed for the 2025-2026 international season and as published on the IWAS website (<https://wheelchair-fencing.org>) on September 15, 2026, at the end of the IWAS season.
- The Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Program funds fencers in Olympic/Paralympic events at two levels:

I. Senior Cards:

1. Senior International Card – SR1 & SR2 (\$2,175.00/month)
2. Senior National Team Card – SR (\$2,175.00/month)

II. Developmental Cards: (\$1305.00/month)

Eligible Performances

- The qualifying period for the 2026-2027 carding cycle shall be October 1st, 2025 to August 31st, 2026.
- Carding for athletes in the **Olympic program** will be determined based on the following:
 - a) performances at the following competitions:
 - 2026 Senior World Championships
 - 2026 Senior Pan-American Championships
 - 2025-2026 Senior World Cups and Grand Prix
 - Designated 2025-2026 NAC DIV 1 / Junior / Cadet
 - 2026 Junior World Championships
 - 2026 Cadet World Championships
 - b) The Official FIE Ranking as of the close of the 2025-2026 international season (Senior and Junior).
 - c) The final HP Selection Ranking (senior, junior, cadet) 2025-2026 on August 31st, 2026.
- Carding for athletes in the **Paralympic program** will be determined based on the following performances:
 - a) 2026 World Championships
 - b) 2025-2026 World Cups
 - c) the Official IWAS Ranking as of the close of the 2025-2026 international season.



SENIOR CARD (SR1/SR2/SR)

Senior International Card Criteria (SR1/SR2)

A) Olympic program

SR1-1 ¹

Individual events: Medal at 2026 Senior World Championships

Team events: Medal at 2026 Senior World Championships. Athletes must have fenced in a top 8, top 4 or medal match.

SR1-2

Individual events: Top 8 and top half at the 2026 Senior World Championships

Team events: Top 5 and top half at 2026 Senior World Championships. Athletes must have fenced in a top 8, top 4 or placement match.

If there are fewer cards than athletes meeting the Senior International criteria, the athletes will be ranked according to their best placing in an individual event at the 2026 Senior World Championships.

If a tie needs to be broken, the athletes will be ranked based on their individual ranking in the 2025-2026 Individual Official Final FIE Ranking as of August 31st, 2026. If still tied, the athlete with the best result in one 2025-2026 Grand Prix/World Cup will be ranked higher. If there is still a tie, the tie will be broken by the number of points in the Senior HPP Selection Rankings.

B) Paralympic program

Athletes who placed **in the top 8 and top half** at the 2026 Senior World Championships.

If there are fewer cards than athletes meeting the Senior International criteria, the athletes will be ranked according to their best placing in an individual event at the 2026 Senior World Championships.

If a tie needs to be broken, the athletes will be ranked based on their individual ranking on the 2025-2026 Senior Individual Official IWAS Individual Rankings following the 2026 Senior World Championships. If still tied, the athlete with the best result in one 2025-2026

¹ SR1-1 and SR1-2 are two different levels of prioritization for SR1 cards, as shown in the page 14 chart.



Senior World Cup will be ranked higher.

Notes: Athletes who meet the Senior International criteria are eligible to be nominated by the CFF 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 recommended by the CFF. Athletes will be recommended for the SR2 card if they have met the minimum HP criteria as per the **AAP Carding Priority Summary chart on page 14**, and are maintaining an approved training and competitive program recognized by the CFF and Sport Canada. Athletes must also register for the 2026-2027 HPP.

Senior National Team Card Criteria (SR)

Senior National Team carding eligibility for 2026-2027 will be based on the following criteria for the Olympic and Paralympic programs and will be made in the following orders of priority:

a) Olympic Program

Priority 1: Top 8 Individual FIE ranking after the 2026 Senior World Championships

Priority 2: Top 16 placing in an individual event at the 2026 Senior World Championships **or** top 16 individual FIE ranking after the 2026 Senior World Championships

Priority 3: Team Gold Medal at the 2026 Senior Pan Am Championships (must have fenced in a top 4 or medal match and met the minimum HP criteria as per the **AAP Carding Priority Summary chart on page 14**)

Priority 4: Top 30 Senior individual FIE ranking after the 2026 Senior World Championships (must have met the minimum HP criteria as per the **AAP Carding Priority Summary chart on page 14**)

Priority 5: Individual Medal at the 2026 Senior Pan American Championships (must have met the minimum HP criteria as per the **AAP Carding Priority Summary chart on page 14**)

Priority 6: Top 75 Senior individual FIE ranking after the 2026 Senior World Championships (must have met the minimum HP criteria as per the **AAP Carding Priority Summary chart on page 14**)

If two athletes have the same priority, they will be ranked according to the final 2025-2026 Senior FIE Rankings.

If there is still a tie, the tie will be broken by their individual result at the 2026 Senior World Championships. If there is still a tie, the tie will be broken by their best result in a 2025-2026 Senior World Cup/Grand Prix. If there is still a tie, the tie will be broken by the number of points in the Senior HPP Selection Rankings.



b) Paralympic Program

Senior National Team carding eligibility for 2026-2027 will be based on the following criteria for the Paralympic program and will be made in the following order of priority:

Priority 1: Athletes placing in the top 16 and top half of the 2026 Senior World Championships

Priority 2: Athletes ranked **in the top 16 in the final official IWAS Senior Individual Final Rankings** for 2025-2026.

If two athletes have the same priority, they will be ranked according to the final 2025-2026 Senior IWAS Rankings.

If there is still a tie, the tie will be broken by their individual result at the 2026 Senior World Championships. If there is still a tie, the tie will be broken by their best result in a 2025-2026 IWAS Senior World Cup.

Maximum number of years at the Senior National level:

- i. An athlete can be carded at the Senior National Team level for a maximum of 6 years in total, excluding injury cards. If the athlete does not advance to the Senior International level after the maximum time limit, the athlete will undergo a stringent review by the CFF. To be carded at Senior National Team level for a seventh year and beyond, the CFF& Sport Canada must be satisfied that the athlete's performances are progressing, and that the fencer has the potential to advance to the Senior International level.
- ii. Any year of carding at the Senior National level (SR/C1) when the athlete is FIE Junior age (20 years of age or younger) will not count towards the maximum.



DEVELOPMENTAL CARD CRITERIA (D)

A) Olympic program

Development Cards are intended to support the developmental needs of younger athletes who clearly demonstrate the potential to achieve the Senior International Card criteria but are not yet able to meet the Senior National Card criteria.

An athlete previously carded at the Senior Card levels (SR1, SR2 SR, SR inj., C1) for more than three (3) years is no longer eligible for the Development card unless the athlete was FIE junior aged (20 years of age or younger) when he/she was awarded Senior card(s).

An athlete may only be carded a maximum of five (5) years at the Development card level.

A Development Card may not be awarded to an athlete older than seven (7) years past the FIE junior age category. The FIE Junior age is 20 years or younger, so athletes that are more than 27 years of age on September 31st, 2026 are not eligible for this card level.

After five years have expired or age 27 exceeded, CFF will conduct a comprehensive review of the athlete's performance over the past four years to demonstrate progress, which may warrant nomination of "Development" card status for an additional year. This process must be followed for all subsequent years that the athlete is nominated at this level.

Eligibility for D cards for 2026-2027 will be based on following criteria for the Olympic and Paralympic programs and will be made in the following order of priority:

A) Olympic Program

A minimum of two (2) athletes will be recommended for D cards if eligible. Additional Development cards are subject to the number of cards awarded in the Senior International and Senior National Team levels.

Priority 1: Qualified for and competed in the 2026 Senior World Championships and met the minimum HP criteria for qualification as per the **AAP Carding Priority Summary chart on page 14**.

Priority 2: Top 8 placing in an individual event at the 2026 Junior World Championships

Priority 3: Top 4 placing in an individual event at the 2026 Cadet World Championships

Priority 4: Top 3 placing in a team event at the 2026 Junior World Championships (must have fenced in a top 8, top 4 or medal match)

Priority 5: Top 75 Individual senior FIE ranking after the 2026 Senior World Championships

Priority 6: Highest number of points in the 2025-2026 Junior HPP selection rankings. Must have achieved a minimum of 1000 Junior HPP points.



In the event of a tie, the tie will be broken using the final 2025-2026 Senior FIE Rankings. If there is still a tie, the tie will be broken by their result at the 2026 Senior World Championships. If there is still a tie, the tie will be broken by their best result in a 2025-2026 Senior World Cup/Grand Prix. If there is still a tie, the tie will be broken by the number of points in the Senior HPP Selection Rankings.

B) Paralympic program

Paralympic Development Cards are intended to support the developmental needs of developing athletes who clearly demonstrate the potential to achieve the Senior Card criteria.

Athletes will be recommended in the following priority order:

Priority 1: Athletes who are ranked **in the top 32** (and top half of ranked fencers) on the 2025-2026 IWAS World Rankings following the 2026 World Championships, in any one of their events is eligible for nomination at the Development (D) level.

Priority 2: Athletes earning a medal at the 2026 U23 World Championships AND finishing in the top 20%.

If two athletes have the same priority, they will be ranked according to the final 2025-2026 Senior IWAS Rankings. If there is still a tie, the tie will be broken by their individual result at the 2026 Senior World Championships. If there is still a tie, the tie will be broken by their best result in a 2025-2026 IWAS Senior World Cup.

Notes:

In the case competitions listed in any of the above the classification grids being cancelled, or attendance of all Canadian athletes impossible due to reasons of force majeure, the HP Director, after consultation with the High-Performance Advisory Committee, may propose to replace the cancelled competition with another competition or replace it with identified criteria. All decisions must be validated by the Executive Director and the CFF Board of Directors before being communicated to all athletes registered in the HP program.

Illness, Injury or Pregnancy Condition

At the end of a carding cycle during which a carded athlete has, for strictly health-related reasons or pregnancy, not achieved the standards required for the renewal of carded status, he or she may be considered for re-nomination for the upcoming carding period under the following conditions:

- i. Olympic Program: The athlete was carded at the Senior International or Senior National card levels at the end of previous carding cycle, and ranked in the top 16 of the Individual FIE international rankings or finished in the top 8 of the world championships or Olympic games at the end of the 2024 or 2025 seasons. For the Paralympic program, the athlete must have been carded at the end of previous carding cycle.
- ii. Cards for injured athletes must be approved by the HPAC committee
- iii. Athletes must have completed the Athlete Pre-Participation Medical in CAMP to be considered for injury or pregnancy card application.
- iv. All new injuries or pregnancy must be recorded in CAMP by treating medical professionals within 14 days of the date of diagnosis or of the date when the athlete had to interrupt his/her training. A licensed sport medicine practitioner must make any such signed diagnosis.
- v. Athletes must give CFF access to CAMP injury/pregnancy documentation pertaining to the injury/illness or pregnancy in consideration of injury/pregnancy card status.
- vi. Athletes need to submit a “Verification of Athlete Illness or Injury form.” (<http://fencing.ca/wp-content/uploads/Injury-Form-March-2016.pdf>) in cases of injury or illness.
- vii. “Verification of Athlete Illness or Injury Form” is to be completed only by a Canadian National Sport Centre Physician holding a CASEM Diploma of Sport Medicine or other CASEM Diploma of Sport Medicine Physician approved by the Canadian Fencing Federation.
- viii. Fencers receiving an injury card must report monthly to the CFF’s National coach in their Weapon on their rehabilitation activity and progression. This must continue until such time as they are deemed fit to return to full training by a certified sport medicine practitioner. Failure to report monthly may result, in the sole discretion of the CFF, in a recommendation to Sport Canada to withdraw carding.
- ix. Conditions outlined in the Sport Canada AAP policy entitled “Curtailed Training and Competition for Health-Related Reasons” apply to all injury and health condition applications.

WITHDRAWAL OF A CARD

The High-Performance Advisory Committee, on the recommendation of the High Performance Director, may at any time recommend the withdrawal of an athlete's Sport Canada card if the following steps have been taken:



1. The athlete has received a verbal warning specifying the steps to be taken and the timeline to remedy the situation, as well as the consequences of not complying with the warning.
2. A subsequent written warning has been sent to the athlete.
3. If the above steps do not resolve the issue and the CFF wishes to recommend the athlete's carding be withdrawn, the CFF must send a letter to its Sport Canada Program Officer and the AAP Director, with a copy to the athlete, recommending the withdrawal of carding.

The letter must:

- Specify the reasons for the recommendation.
- Indicate what steps have already been taken to rectify the situation (verbal warning followed by a warning letter).
- Inform the athlete of his or her right to challenge the CFF's recommendation for withdrawal of carding through the CFF's internal appeal process within the prescribed time frame.

CFF Selection Appeals Policy

Appeals of the CFF's AAP nomination/re-nomination decisions or of the CFF's recommendation to withdraw carding may be pursued only through the CFF's Appeal process, which includes an application to the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC).

For information on the CFF Appeals Policy, please reference the following document:

<http://fencing.ca/wp-content/uploads/Appeals-Policy.pdf>

<http://fencing.ca/wp-content/uploads/Politique-dappel.pdf>

AAP Carding Priority Summary

AAP Card Level	CFF Priority Level	HP Criteria		Result	Notes
	Senior Card				
SR1	SR1-1			Individual or Team Medal – 2026 Senior World Championships * For team, athletes must have fenced in a top 8, top 4 or medal match.	Athletes that qualify for Senior Card: 1. Can reside and train anywhere in Canada or outside 2. Can attend any post-secondary university in Canada or outside, but cannot receive AAP financial assistance while receiving an NCAA athletic scholarship 3. Athletes that are injured may qualify provided the athlete was carded at the Senior International or Senior National card levels at the end of previous carding cycle, and ranked in the top 16 of the Individual FIE international rankings or finished in the top 8 of the world championships or Olympic games at the end of the 2024 or 2025 seasons. For the Paralympic program, the athlete must have been carded at the end of the previous carding cycle.
SR1	SR1-2			Top 8 Individual or Top 5 Team – 2026 Senior World Championships * For team, athletes must have fenced in a top 8, top 4, or placement match	
SR2	SR2	Yes	AND	Second Year of carding for those that were SR1 in 2025-2026 season	
SR	SR-1			Top 8 - Individual FIE ranking after the 2026 Senior World Championships	
SR	SR-2			Individual Top 16 result at 2026 Senior World Championships or Top 16 FIE ranking after the 2026 Senior World Championships	
SR	SR-3	Yes	AND	Team Gold Medal at Senior Pan Am Championships (athletes must fence in a top 4 or medal match)	
SR	SR-4	Yes	AND	Top 30 Senior Individual FIE ranking after the 2026 Senior World Championships	
SR	SR-5	Yes	AND	Individual Medal – 2026 Senior Pan American Championships	
SR	SR-6	Yes	AND	Top 75 Senior Individual FIE ranking after the 2026 senior world championships	
	Developmental Card				
D	D1	Yes	AND	Qualify and compete at the 2026 Senior World Championships	Athletes that qualify for Development Card: 1. Must be training at and representing a Canadian club and/or training at a National Designated training centre and living full time in Canada (10 months per year), except for athletes attending an NCAA institution who are NOT receiving an athletic scholarship 2. Must be born 1999 or later (1998 or older is not eligible for Development Card)
D	D2			Top 8 - 2026 Junior World Championships - Individual	
D	D3			Top 4 - 2026 Cadet World Championships - Individual	
D	D4			Top 3 – 2026 Junior World Championships - Team (athletes must fence in a top 8, top 4 or medal match)	
D	D5			Top 75 - Individual Senior FIE ranking after the 2026 Senior World Championships	
D	D6			Most HP Points - Junior (Must have achieved a minimum of 1000 Junior HPP points)	

HP Criteria (Column 3): Athlete must have made top 25% Individual result (twice) during the 2025 / 2026 season at Grand Prix or Senior World Cups (8 events – 5 World Cups and / or 3 Grand Prix) OR One top 8 placement at the October 2025 or January 2026 USA Fencing Division I NAC AND one (1) top 25% Individual result in a designated Senior World Cup or Grand Prix event.