

CURLING CANADA NATIONAL WHEELCHAIR CURLING PROGRAM CARDING PROGRAM 2025-2026 STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

The National Wheelchair Curling Program (hereinafter the “National Program”) exists for the purpose of training athletes with the potential to represent Canada in the World Championships and the Paralympic Games.

CARDING PROGRAM

Sport Canada currently provides the equivalent of seven (7) Senior cards to the National Program (\$182,700.00). Sport Canada regularly reviews the allocations; therefore, this amount is subject to change.

ACCESS

Access to the program shall be gained because of national/international performance, agreeing to meet National Program standards and guidelines, and upon signing the athlete agreement form (attached).

ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- 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;
- Under the eligibility requirements of the sport’s International Federation (IF) as it pertains to citizenship or residency status, the athlete must be eligible to represent Canada at major international competitions, including World Championships, at the beginning of the carding cycle for which the athlete is being nominated;
- The athlete must participate in national team preparatory and annual training programs during the time period in which they are qualifying for AAP support;
- The athlete must be available to represent Canada in major international competitions, including World Championships, Olympic Games and Paralympic Games;
- For athletes in Olympic or Paralympic sports who have been permanent residents of Canada for three years or more, continued eligibility to receive AAP support is contingent on the athlete becoming eligible to represent Canada at the Olympic or Paralympic Games;
- The athlete must meet the published NSO-approved, AAP-compliant sport-specific carding criteria

CARDING PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

In the carding year/cycle (July 1st, 2025, to June 30th, 2026) the following athletes shall be eligible to apply for carding provided they meet the required criteria:

- Athletes who participated in the 2025 World Wheelchair Curling Championship or 2025 World Wheelchair Mixed Doubles Curling Championship
- Highest ranked athletes from the National Program who did not participate in either the 2025 World Wheelchair Curling Championship or 2025 World Wheelchair Mixed Doubles Curling Championship and who meet the carding criteria.

PRIORITY ACCESS

- Priority #1: The seven athletes that participated in the 2025 World Wheelchair Curling Championship or 2025 World Wheelchair Mixed Doubles Curling Championship

- Priority #2: Highest ranked athletes from the National Program that were not selected to participate in either the 2025 World Wheelchair Curling Championship or 2025 World Wheelchair Mixed Doubles Curling Championship and who meet the carding criteria (see Appendix 1 for carding details)

PROGRAM INCLUSION

National Program members who meet established criteria and sign all pertinent agreements shall be eligible to be nominated by Curling Canada to the Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Program (AAP).

APPEALS

- Any appeals related to carding shall be heard pursuant to Curling Canada's Appeal Policy.
- Upon receiving a notice of an appeal and the athlete's appeal, Curling Canada and the athlete may first attempt to resolve the dispute pursuant to Curling Canada's *Dispute Resolution Policy* or through the Early Resolution Facilitation services offered by the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC); and
- Notwithstanding the aforementioned, by agreement of the parties, the internal appeal process may be bypassed, and the appeal may be heard directly before the SDRCC.

COMPETITION

All athletes with Senior or Development Carding status shall compete in a minimum of three regional, national, or international competitions as approved by Curling Canada. Each year an athlete is selected to the National Program, the athlete shall make every effort to qualify and participate in the World Championship and Winter Paralympics.

TRAINING

- National Program athletes shall collaborate with the National Program's High-Performance Leadership Team (HPLT) to create an individualized Annual Competition and Individual Performance Plan for a year-round training program which involves scheduled training in the following competitive components:
- A comprehensive planning, training and assessment resource will be provided by the National Program to assist the athlete, Team Coach and National Program Coach in implementing a year-round training program which includes significant engagement in the daily training environment.
- National Program athletes shall make themselves available to participate in high-performance camps or training sessions as identified in the Annual Competition and Training Plan. These initiatives will be formatted based on National Program athlete and coach input.
- National Program athletes will be provided access to sport science support as determined by the athlete and National Program HPLT and will be based on the National Program budget.

FITNESS STANDARDS

- National Program athlete shall meet or surpass the physical fitness standards previously agreed to by the athlete and the National Program HPLT. These fitness standards shall be documented in the athletes' individualized Annual Competition and Training Plan and achieved within a time frame agreed to by the athlete and National Program HPLT.
- Fitness testing shall be scheduled by the athlete in consultation with the National Program Sport Science Lead.

TRAINING/PERFORMANCE MONITORING

- National Program athletes shall adequately prepare for and engage in (bi-)monthly Individual Performance Planning meetings to outline, monitor, and adapt individualized training plans, strategies, and practices over the program season.

DRUG TESTING REQUIREMENT

- National Program athletes shall make themselves available to drug testing procedures as and when requested to do so by an authorized person/agency in Canada and overseas, as required by Curling Canada/athlete agreement and as stated in the AAP Policies and Procedures Manual.

CURLING CANADA/ATHLETE AGREEMENT

- Athletes seeking access to the National Program and Sport Canada carding shall study, sign and return the agreement to the Curling Canada office. The agreement shall be considered valid for the period of National Program inclusion and for the carding period of one year. The agreement shall be returned to the Curling Canada office on or before June 15th of the appropriate year. (Agreement attached)

SPORT CANADA ATHLETE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Each athlete's specific Sport Canada carding status shall be determined by their national/international performance and sport specific carding guidelines as determined by Sport Canada in consultation with Curling Canada (Appendix 1 attached). Information on Sport Canada's Athlete Assistance Program is available at the following web site:

https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/pch/documents/services/sport-policiesacts-regulations/app_policy_procedures_eng.pdf

If you do not have internet access, please request a hard copy.

TEAM COMPONENT

- Athletes who are in the National Program and nominated for carding are not obligated to compete with the team whose success earned them the carding opportunity. The athlete(s) must maintain their National Program training and competitive commitments and compete with a team(s) that is recognized by Curling Canada as national level.
- Athletes who have been selected to the Paralympic Team Athlete Pool must remain active in the Pool to be eligible for National Program inclusion. Athletes may lose their Paralympic Team Athlete status for the following reasons:
 1. Failure to maintain their National Program training and competition commitments as determined at the beginning of the National Program season in consultation with the National Program Coach.
 2. Failure to consistently perform at the pre-established National Program standard in a championship environment (Canadian Championships, World Championships, International competitions).
 3. Failure to uphold the National Program Athlete Agreement.

NATIONAL TEAM PROGRAM APPLICATION

- Curling Canada will endeavor to provide each athlete who meets program access requirements with the program application package at the conclusion of the competitive season and prior to May 30th.

NOTIFICATION TO ATHLETE ON REQUEST FOR SPORT CANADA CARDING

- Curling Canada will endeavor to meet with appropriate Sport Canada representatives to present each athlete's application for carding prior to June 15th and as a result notify each athlete in writing of their carding status prior to June 30th.

I have read, understand, and agree to the Standards and Guidelines as outlined in this document.

Date:

Name:

Signature:

APPENDIX 1

National Wheelchair Curling Carding Program 2025-2026

CRITERIA

Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Program (Carding) Criteria

- The AAP carding status of National Program athletes shall be based on their national/international performance, ability to meet National Program standards and Sport Canada carding guidelines and adhere to the National Program Athlete Agreement. In the carding cycle (July 1st to June 30th) that includes the Paralympics, athletes must be selected to and maintain their status in the Paralympic Team Athlete Pool.
- Sport Canada provides the equivalent of seven (7) Senior Cards in card quota to the National Program. Senior cards may be converted to Development Cards. After every Olympic/Paralympic Games, Sport Canada reviews carding allocations for all sports. As a result, the number of cards allocated to the Curling Paralympic Program is subject to change.
- Curling Canada will nominate a minimum of seven (7) eligible Wheelchair Athletes at the Senior card level (SR1/SR2/SR).

SENIOR CARD CRITERIA

Sport Canada International Criteria (SR1/SR2 Cards)

In a World Championship year (i.e., years 1, 2, and 3 of the quadrennial):

- Mixed: World Wheelchair Curling Championship top 4
- Mixed Doubles: World Wheelchair Mixed Doubles Curling Championship top 6

In a Paralympic year (i.e., year 4 of the quadrennial):

- Mixed: Paralympic Games top 4
- Mixed Doubles: Paralympic Games top 4

Note 1: 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 an SR1 Card and the card for the second year referred to as an SR2 card. The second year is subject to the athlete having participated at the most recent World Wheelchair Curling Championship or World Wheelchair Mixed Doubles Curling Championship. The athlete must also be re-nominated for AAP carding by Curling Canada and sign the AAP application and Curling Canada/Athlete agreement.

Note 2: In a Paralympic year, only the results of the Paralympic Games are considered for new Senior International carding status.

National Team Criteria (SR Cards)

If any of the Team Canada athletes (i.e., athletes who participate as part of Team Canada at the World Wheelchair Curling Championship, World Wheelchair Mixed Doubles Curling Championship, or Paralympic Games) do not meet the Senior international criteria, they will be eligible for a one-year SR card. The highest ranked athlete(s) in the National Program/Paralympic Team Athlete Pool that were not selected to Team Canada may be nominated for a 6-month SR card. Priority will be given to support gender equity. Additional cards may be assigned providing there are sufficient funds available to allocate a minimum of a 4-month card.

Failure to meet renewal criteria for health-related reasons (“Injury” Card criteria)

Any carded athlete who at the end of the carding cycle has not achieved the standard required for the renewal of carding status because of strictly health related reasons may be considered for renomination for the upcoming year provided the following conditions are met:

- The athlete has fulfilled all reasonable training and rehabilitation requirements aimed at a speedy return to full high-performance training and competition during the period of his or her injury, illness or pregnancy or is continuing a rehabilitation program approved by the Curling Canada;
- In the view of the Curling Canada, the athlete’s failure to attain the applicable carding standards is strictly related to the injury, illness, or pregnancy;
- Curling Canada, based on its technical judgement and that of the National Program Medical Lead, indicates in writing to Sport Canada the expectation that the athlete will achieve at least the minimum standards required for carding during the upcoming carding period;
- The athlete has demonstrated and continues to demonstrate his or her long-term commitment to high performance training and competition goals, as well as his or her intention to pursue full high-performance training and competition throughout the carding period for which he or she wishes to be renewed despite not having met the carding criteria.

Priority for Nomination

Curling Canada will nominate a minimum of seven (7) eligible Wheelchair Athletes at the Senior card level (SR1/SR2/SR). The eligible athletes will be nominated in the following priority order:

- Priority #1: Athletes eligible under the SR1/SR2 criteria
- Priority #2: Athlete(s) that meet the Injury Card criteria
- Priority #3: Athletes eligible under the SR criteria

APPEALS

Appeals of Curling Canada AAP nomination/re-nomination decision or of a Curling Canada’s recommendation to withdraw carding may be pursued only through the Curling Canada’s review process, which includes an application to the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC). Appeals of AAP Decision made under Section 6 ([Application for and Approval of Cards](#)) or Section 11 ([Withdrawal of Carding Status](#)) may be pursued through Section 13 of the AAP Policies, Procedures and Guidelines.

ADDITIONAL CARDS

In the event that additional cards are made available to the National Program, due to changes to Sport Canada carding allocations and/or athlete retirements, the highest ranked athlete(s) in the National Program/Paralympic Team Athlete Pool that were not selected to Team Canada will be nominated for a portion of an SR card. More specifically, priority will be given to support gender equity (i.e., the number of cards allocated to male and female athletes will be equal or +/- 1).

Moving forward, in non-Paralympic years, our intention is to distribute the additional card(s) to development athletes, while continuing to prioritize gender equity, in support of mid- and long-term program success.