Canada Games Council
Games Policy and Procedures

NAME:	Athlete Eligibility Policy
FUNCTIONAL AREA:	34 Accreditation & Registration
APPROVED BY:	Canada Games Council Sport & Games Committee
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RELATED POLICIES:	Appeal Policy, P/T Team Registration Policy, Sport Technical Packages

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1. PREAMBLE

Since 1967, the Canada Games have strengthened the fabric of Canada through the power of sport. Held every two years, alternating between summer and winter, the Games are Canada's largest multi-sport event and represent the pinnacle of interprovincial/territorial sport competition for athletes of all abilities. The Canada Games spark greatness in the next generation of athletes and leaders on and off the field of play. More than 80,000 athletes, 30,000 coaches and officials and 140,000 volunteers have been a part of the Canada Games Movement and helped champion sustainable legacies in communities from coast to coast to coast.

Athlete eligibility and residency requirements are set by the Canada Games Council (CGC) Sport & Games Committee, in consultation with the Federal-Provincial/Territorial Sport Committee (FPTSC). Changes to these principles are not permitted without the approval of both the CGC Sport & Games Committee and FPTSC.

Sport specific eligibility requirements are set by the National Sport Organizations (NSO) and must not conflict with the principles established by the CGC Sport & Games Committee and FPTSC.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

All athletes participating in the Canada Games must meet the eligibility requirements outlined within this Athlete Eligibility Policy and the Sport Technical Package for their respective sport.

3. DEFINITIONS

- *Canada Games Council (CGC)*: The franchise holder and overseer of each edition of the Canada Games and steward of the Canada Games movement.
- *Canadian Citizen*: A person who, by place of birth, nationality of one or both parents, or naturalization is granted full rights and responsibilities as a member of Canada.
- *Chef de Mission*: An individual responsible for the management and leadership of a provincial or territorial team.
- *National Sport Organization (NSO)*: The recognized association responsible for the overall governance and development of a particular sport in Canada. NSOs, through a Technical Representative and Major Technical Officials, run the sport competition at the Canada Games.
- *Permanent resident*: A person who has been given permanent resident status by immigrating to Canada, but is not a Canadian citizen. Permanent residents are citizens of other countries.
    - A person in Canada temporarily, such as a student or foreign worker, is not a permanent resident.
    - Someone who makes a refugee claim in Canada does not become a permanent resident at that time. To become one, the Immigration and Refugee Board must first approve their claim. Then, they must apply for and get permanent resident status.
- *Primary residence:* The dwelling where an individual usually lives (typically a house or an apartment).
- *Protected person:* Protected Persons are individuals who hold a valid Verification of Status document issued by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, or a valid Protected Persons Status Document issued prior to January 1, 2013. A decision letter ("Notice of Decision") from the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) is also a valid form of identification. Protected Persons can include convention refugees, humanitarian-protected persons abroad, and persons in need of protection. A person in need of protection is a person in Canada whose removal to their country of nationality or former habitual residence will make them subject to the possibility of torture, risk of life, or risk of cruel and unusual treatment or punishment.
- *Provincial/Territorial Sport Organization (P/TSO)*: Provincially/Territorially recognized sport organization responsible for the governance and development of a particular sport within

a particular Province/Territory. P/TSOs are responsible for developing and selecting the teams that compete in the Canada Games, but have no formal role in the planning or staging of the Games.

- *Provincial/Territorial Team (P/T Team)*: The entirety of accredited participants and mission staff from a Province/Territory. Led by the Chef de Mission.

4. COUNCIL'S ROLE IN IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY

The CGC's Registration and Accreditation functional area lead will develop the tools, processes and forms required to submit, communicate and monitor requests for athlete eligibility rulings.

The CGC's Registration and Accreditation functional area lead will work as the main point of contact for the P/T Chefs de Mission to submit requests for athlete eligibility rulings as well as communicate all decisions made by the CGC Sport & Games Committee.

The CGC Sport & Games Committee or delegate is responsible to review and rule on all received athlete eligibility ruling requests.

The CGC will ensure NSOs and P/T Teams are aware of the Athlete Eligibility Policy and their responsibilities outlined within it.

5. PARTNER ROLES IN IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY

Federal - Provincial/Territorial Governments

- Establish the overarching eligibility requirements for the Canada Games.

Provincial/Territorial Teams

- Ensure that all athletes under their jurisdiction are eligible to participate in the Canada Games. This includes monitoring eligibility requirements and residency requirements.
- Responsible for submitting athlete eligibility requests to the CGC when the eligibility of an athlete is not clear.

National Sport Organizations

- Subject to the approval of the CGC, have the responsibility to establish sport specific eligibility requirements as outlined within the Athlete Eligibility Policy and published in a sport's Technical Package.

6. REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

6.1. JURISDICTION OF ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

6.1.1. The eligibility requirements identified in this policy shall apply to all athletes participating at the Canada Games.

6.1.2. Any deviations from Canada Games eligibility requirements made by a provincial/territorial team may only be of a more stringent nature.

6.2. CLASSIFICATION

6.2.1. As per Governments' Renewed Strategic Priorities for the Canada Games and the CGC's 2022-2027 Strategic Plan:

- The Canada Games are an important tool for high performance athlete development;
- The Canada Games provide meaningful experiences that align with and complement the NSO's athlete development pathway;
- The Canada Games act as a stepping stone on the pathway, inspiring athletes toward success on national teams, at world championships, Olympic and Paralympic Games and Special Olympics World Games.

6.2.2. Given the priorities established under 6.2.1, the Canada Games will target the participation of athletes who comprise the next generation of national team athletes.

6.2.3. The decision of the precise stage of athlete development and subsequent minimum and maximum age is to be determined by a process led by the NSO with meaningful P/TSO input. This engagement is to be sufficiently formalized as to be verifiable.

6.2.4. NSOs must consider the following overarching principles when determining the stage of athlete development and the subsequent minimum and maximum ages for athletes:

6.2.4.1. Athletes who comprise the next generation of national team athletes* should be the target for Canada Games participation.

*Next generation national team athlete refers to athletes who are typically within the high end of Train to Train or low-mid range of Train to Compete within the NSO's Long-Term Development (LTD) pathway. This would include athletes one to two quadrennials away from the podium within the NSO's podium pathway. Next generation national team athletes may include Junior, Youth or Espoir National Team members.

6.2.4.2. As a pan-Canadian multi-sport event, all Provinces and Territories have the opportunity to send teams to the Canada Games in a manner that enhances sport development in their jurisdiction.

6.2.4.3. NSOs should consider meaningful competition when setting their age category. Age categories, split age categories and/or tiered/altered competition formats are all tools available to the NSO in achieving a meaningful competition for all athletes.

6.2.4.4. NSOs should consider how the Canada Games fits into their athlete development framework, including in the context of their podium pathway (as applicable).

6.2.4.5. In team sports, the four small jurisdictions (NT, NU, PE, YT) have the opportunity to request approval from the relevant NSO and the CGC Sport & Games Committee to have over-aged athletes on their roster provided they demonstrate the need, and that the athletes to be added are shown to be in the proper stage of LTD based on sport development. Generally, over-aged is defined as being no more than 12 months older than the maximum allowed age, but NSOs may request a different definition. The number of permitted over-aged athletes is to be determined by the NSO in consultation with their P/TSOs.

6.2.5. With the exception of NSOs approved under 6.2.5.1, NSOs that choose to set a minimum age must also establish a review mechanism to consider exemptions for underage athletes. The process for underage athletes to be considered using this mechanism must be clearly identified as an appendix in the sport specific technical package. If exceptional cases are reviewed and approved, the athlete in question must sign a waiver to save harmless the CGC, NSO, and Host Society from any physical or emotional harm sustained by the athlete through the course of normal training and competition for the Games.

6.2.5.1. NSOs may seek approval from the CGC Sport & Games Committee for an exemption from the requirement to include a review mechanism for underage athletes, if there are legitimate safety concerns with permitting underage athletes to compete.

6.2.6. Beyond the requirements established for small jurisdictions above, NSOs may set different age categories for different provinces/territories in order to maximize the meaningful competition at the Games and better support athlete development within the sport.

6.3. ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY

Citizenship

6.3.1. Athletes must meet at least one of the following requirements to be eligible for the Canada Games:

6.3.1.1. are a Canadian citizen;

6.3.1.2. are an Indigenous person (registered under the federal Indian Act);

6.3.1.3. are a permanent resident;

6.3.1.4. have status in Canada and are applying for permanent residency and:

6.3.1.4.1. have submitted an application to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC);

-AND-

6.3.1.4.2. IRCC has confirmed they have reviewed the application and that the individual meets the eligibility requirements to apply;

-AND-

6.3.1.4.3. the application has not yet been denied;

6.3.1.5. are a convention refugee or other protected person (as defined by Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada);

6.3.1.6. newcomers processed using temporary measures to facilitate them fleeing for safety due to a crisis.

Membership

6.3.2. Athletes must be registered members in good standing of a P/TSO for their sport under the terms of principles 6.3.3 and 6.3.4 below.

(NOTE: In exceptional circumstances, an athlete in a given sport within a province/territory with no recognized P/TSO for the sport may be named to the P/T Canada Games team based on established criteria developed by the P/T Government and agreed to by the CGC and NSO. The established criteria should include, but is not limited to the following:

- the athlete is an active member of an established club,
- is being coached by an NCCP certified coach (preferably with Competition-Development certification),
- is competing in regional, provincial/territorial and/or national level competitions,
- is adhering to a monitored yearly training plan. The criteria may also include other measures as developed by the respective P/T.

6.3.3. The P/TSO must be recognized and/or funded by the provincial/territorial government, subject to exceptional circumstances.

6.3.4. The P/TSO must be a member in good standing of the NSO.

(NOTE: In exceptional cases where there is a dispute between an NSO and its P/TSO in a given sport, the CGC will contact the respective P/T government to discuss the facts of the dispute. All parties will encourage the sport to resolve the matter through the NSO's internal mediation process. Should the dispute not be resolved satisfactorily through the NSO's internal process, the P/T governments will jointly determine the participation of the affected P/TSO in the Canada Games in collaboration with the CGC).

6.3.5. Athletes under suspension or provisional measures by a P/TSO and/or NSO for their sport, a league sanctioned by the P/TSO and/or NSO for their sport, or Sport Integrity Canada are not eligible to compete in the Canada Games until their suspension is over.

Level of Athlete

6.3.6. Provincial/territorial teams are made up of the best athletes from each jurisdiction that have not yet represented Canada internationally at a Senior World Championships or major multi-sport Games. Senior National Team athletes and/or athletes holding an SR, SR1 or SR2 Sport Canada

Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) card are not eligible for the Canada Games in the sport for which they hold the card. Athletes who are in their first year of Senior National Team status may be deemed eligible on a case by case basis. Requests must be submitted by the respective P/T Team Chef de Mission and approved by the CGC's Sport & Games Committee.

6.3.6.1. No athlete will be rendered ineligible for the Canada Games within 90 days of the opening of the Games due to National Team status, carding status or competing in an excluded event.

6.3.7. Due to the smaller available pool of para athletes compared to able body athletes, NSOs may request to the CGC Sport & Games Committee a modification to principle 6.3.5 for para athletes only. Any modification must continue to restrict athletes who are beyond the Train to Compete phase of LTD.

6.3.8. NSOs may seek approval from the CGC Sport & Games Committee to include additional eligibility restrictions beyond what is stipulated in section 6.3.5 of this policy.

6.3.9. All levels of athlete conditions (sections 6.3.5 - 6.3.10 of this policy) refer to the specific sport in question only (i.e. an athlete with AAP carding in swimming would still be eligible in diving even if AAP carding was an eligibility restriction for diving).

6.3.10. NSOs may set minimum performance standards for the Canada Games for safety reasons. Such measures must be submitted to the CGC Sport & Games Committee for approval prior to implementation.

6.3.11. For individual sports, NSOs in consultation with P/TSOs must establish performance guidelines for athlete selection. For team sports, NSOs in consultation with P/TSOs must establish guidelines for appropriate team preparation.

Residency

6.3.12. An athlete's primary residence must be located, for at least 180 days prior to the Opening Ceremony, within the recognized boundaries of the province/territory they wish to represent. An athlete can only have one primary residence. Should an athlete not meet this requirement, they may be ruled as eligible under sections 6.3.12, 6.3.13, or 6.3.14 below.

6.3.13. If an athlete's primary residence changes as a result of parental relocation within 180 days of the Games, the athlete shall remain eligible to represent the province/territory of their immediate previous primary residence or the province/territory of their new primary residence, however, the athlete must still meet clause 6.3.16.

6.3.14. An athlete may represent a province/territory that falls outside the recognized boundaries of their primary residence provided they can demonstrate a commitment to the province/territory they wish to represent by:

6.3.14.1. Having been a member of a club or P/TSO in that province/territory for the entire previous or current competitive season;

-AND-

6.3.14.2. Having represented that province/territory on a Provincial/Territorial Team or on a club/team registered in the province/territory at national or regional championships (if applicable);

-AND-

6.3.14.3. Not having received direct development funding from their province/territory of permanent residence within a year of the Opening Ceremony, unless the funding jurisdiction provides permission for the athlete to compete for another team;

-OR-

6.3.14.4. Other similar circumstances may be considered.

6.3.15. Athletes who attend school on a full time basis outside of the province/territory of their primary residence for no less than one (1) full academic session (i.e. a term, block, semester, etc.) prior to the Opening Ceremony of the Games are eligible to participate for the Province/Territory in which they attend school.

Selection, Registration and Substitutions

6.3.16. The CGC does not have jurisdiction or authority regarding the selection of participants (including: coaches, managers, athletes, or technical support) for the Canada Games. Provincial/territorial teams and P/TSOs are

responsible for determining the selection process of all participants within their province/territory.

6.3.17. An athlete is permitted to try out for any P/T they are eligible to compete for, but can only try out for one P/T per sport.

(i.e. an athlete may try out for swimming for one P/T but cannot try out for swimming for another P/T. An athlete may try out for one P/T in swimming, and may try out for another P/T in diving.)

6.3.18. Athletes may only compete for one P/T at a single Canada Games.

7. TIMELINES

Item	Timeline prior to Games
Tools and forms required for submitting and monitoring requests for an athlete eligibility request distributed to P/T Team Chefs de Mission	18 months
CGC begins accepting requests for an athlete eligibility ruling	18 months
Deadline to submit requests for an athlete eligibility ruling	16 days

APPENDIX A
PROCEDURES TO CONFIRM ELIGIBILITY OF AN ATHLETE

1. If a P/T team is uncertain regarding the eligibility of one of their athletes, the Chef de Mission is able to submit a request for an athlete eligibility ruling to the CGC's Sport & Games Committee.

2. The CGC will distribute the tools and forms used to submit a request for an athlete eligibility ruling to P/T Team Chefs de Mission 18 months prior to the Opening Ceremony.

3. The CGC will begin accepting requests for an athlete eligibility ruling 18 months prior to the Opening Ceremony.

4. The CGC will review requests and communicate decisions to all directly impacted parties in a timely manner.

5. All decisions and rationale for decisions will be made publicly available.

6. The deadline to submit a request for an athlete eligibility ruling is 16 days prior to the Opening Ceremony.

    6.1. Where there are exceptional circumstances, the CGC Sport & Games Committee may consider requests for an athlete eligibility ruling within 16 days of the Opening Ceremony.

7. Decisions made by the CGC Sport & Games Committee will be subject to the CGC's Appeal Policy.