

# USA Hockey (NGB) Athlete Selection Procedures 2026 Olympic Winter Games

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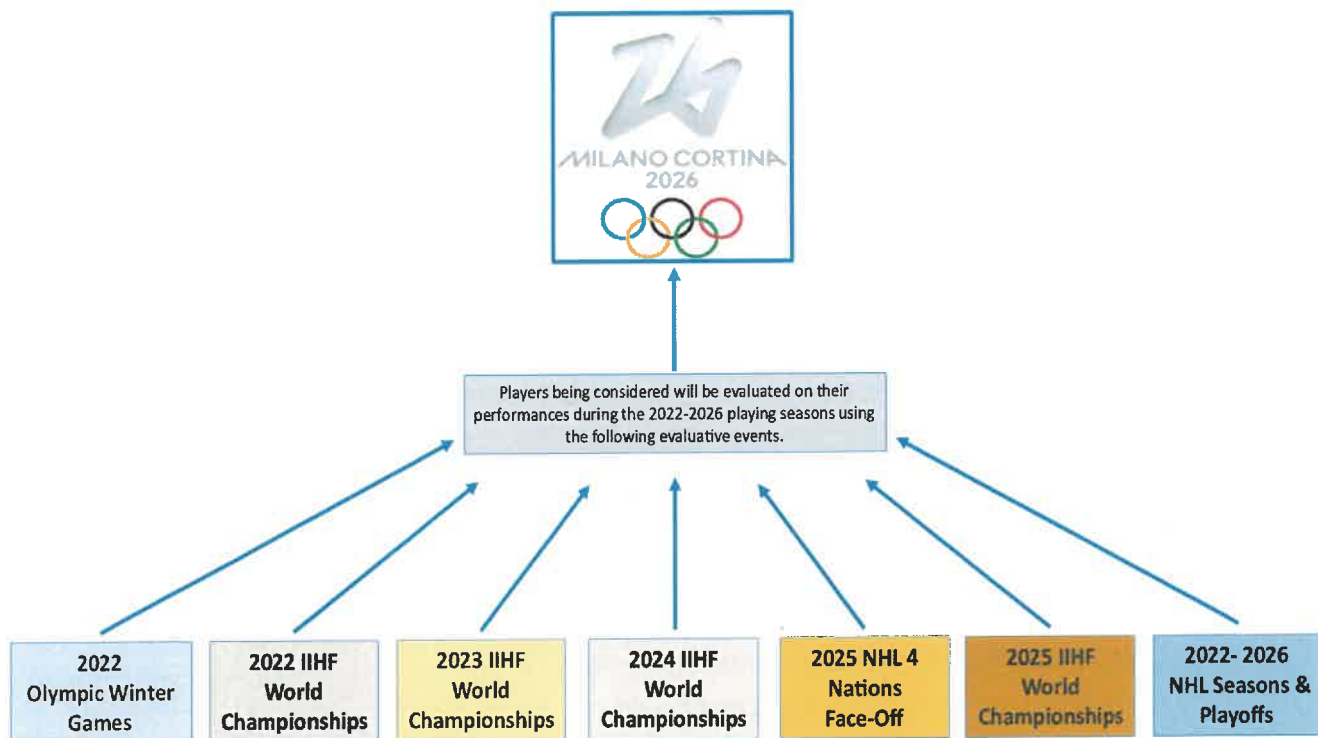
- Publication Date: June 11, 2025
- *The events at which players will be evaluated for nomination to the Men's Olympic Team were previously posted in a Preliminary Notice posted at: [Olympic Men's Team Selection Procedures](#)*

## SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

These procedures outline the pathway for nomination to the Milano-Cortina 2026 Olympic Games in Men's Ice Hockey. The maximum Team size can be 25 athletes.

## SECTION 2: SELECTION PROCESS DIAGRAM

The following provides a high-level overview of how athletes will be nominated to the Team:



*USA Hockey has successfully earned a quota to enter a team into the 2026 Winter Olympic Games through the May 2023 IIHF World Ranking Allocation.*

**Note: This diagram is for informational purposes only. In the event of a conflict between the diagram and any written section herein, the written sections will take precedent.**

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#### SECTION 3: ATHLETE REQUIREMENTS

1. Nationality/Passports Requirements:
  - Have a valid United States passport as of January 5, 2026 that does not expire for six months after the conclusion of the 2026 Olympic Winter Games (Games).
2. Minimum International Olympic Committee (IOC) Requirements:
  - Abide by the rules in the Olympic Charter, including nationality/citizenship requirements.
    - For additional information regarding an athlete who is a national of two or more countries, has changed his or her nationality or acquired a new nationality, refer to the [Olympic Charter](#) (Rule 41).
  - Abide by the IOC Eligibility of Conditions Form/Conditions of Participation Form
3. Organizing Committee of the Olympic Games (OCOG) Requirements:
  - Comply with all rules and policies implemented by the OCOG for Milano-Cortina 2026.
4. International Ice Hockey Federation Requirements:
  - Comply with all International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) eligibility requirements found here: <https://www.iihf.com/en/static/5453/eligibility>.
    - Additional eligibility requirements can be found here (see Qualification): <https://olympics.com/ioc/documents/olympic-games/milano-cortina-2026-olympic-winter-games>
5. USOPC Requirements:
  - Comply with all USOPC rules applicable to the Games (e.g., Demonstrations).
  - Complete all USOPC Games Registration requirements by the stated deadline.
  - Comply with the USOPC Delegation Terms, including the Conduct Requirements, which will be made available here: <https://www.usopc.org/games-and-qualification>
  - Comply with the [USOPC Athlete Safety Policy](#) and the [U.S. Center for SafeSport Code](#) including education and training requirements.
  - Comply with the current [USOPC Background Check Policy](#).
6. USA Hockey Requirements:
  - Comply with the USA Hockey Athlete Agreement.
  - Comply with the USA Hockey [Code of Conduct](#)
  - Comply with the USA Hockey [Safe Sport](#) Program.
  - Athlete must have an active USA Hockey membership.
  - Athlete does not have an active suspension from the U.S. Center for SafeSport that would make the Athlete ineligible to participate in the Games.
  - Athlete does not have an active sanction for an anti-doping rule/policy violation that would make the Athlete ineligible to participate in the Games.

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#### SECTION 4: OTHER MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE TEAM

- Agree to be bound by and adhere to all IOC, WADA, IIHF, USADA and USOPC anti-doping protocols, policies and procedures, as applicable. This includes participation in Out-of-Competition Testing and an agreement to be bound to the results management authority of the IOC, WADA, IIHF, USADA, or other Anti-Doping Organization as applicable.
- Meet all health and safety protocols, to include vaccine requirements and/or testing requirements set forth by the government, local laws, USOPC, IIHF and/or the OCOG.

#### SECTION 5: EVALUATIVE EVENTS

Event names, dates and locations of all trials, competitions, and camps to be used as part of the selection process:

- 2022 Olympic Winter Games – China (see [Additional Information](#))
- 2022 World Championships – Finland
- 2023 World Championships – Finland and Latvia
- 2024 World Championships – Czechia
- 2025 NHL 4 Nations Face-Off – Canada and United States
- 2025 World Championships – Denmark and Sweden
- 2022 through 2026 (Up to Nomination Date) National Hockey League (NHL) Seasons and Playoffs

#### SECTION 6: SELECTION PROCESS

##### 6.1 TOTAL QUOTA PLACES:

Per the [IIHF Qualification Guide](#), USA Hockey has successfully earned a quota to enter a Team into the 2026 Winter Olympic Games through the May 2023 IIHF World Ranking Allocation.

##### 6.2 EVALUATION EVENT QUALIFICATION PATHWAY:

Player selection for the World Championships from 2022 through 2025 primarily included athletes from NHL teams who were no longer competing in that year's playoffs. Selections are based on player availability, willingness to participate, and the criteria outlined in Section 7.2. Each year, the management team—comprised of NHL team personnel and USA Hockey staff—makes the final selections for the World Championship roster.

Player selection for the 2025 4 Nations Face-Off were based on requirements that all players be from NHL teams using the criteria in Section 7.2.

##### 6.3 NOMINATION TO THE TEAM:

USA Hockey will not use a formal try-out to facilitate the player nomination process. In conformance

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with the requirements of the IIHF and NHL, six of the players will be named on or before June 16, 2025. A pool of approximately forty potential players will be invited on or before July 1, 2025 and encouraged to attend an orientation in late July 2025.

Players being considered for nomination to the 2026 Winter Olympic Team will be evaluated on their performance at the events listed in Section 5 during the 2022 – 2026 playing seasons, up to the nomination date of January 11, 2026. NHL players and/or players from other recognized hockey organizations will be eligible for consideration by the Player Evaluation Committee identified in Section 7.3 for nomination to the 2026 Olympic Team.

As a team sport, a variety of criteria, both objective and subjective (see Section 7), will be used to nominate eligible players to the 2026 Olympic Team. The maximum Team size can be 25 athletes.

## SECTION 7: DISCRETIONARY CRITERIA TO SELECT ATHLETES FOR THE TEAM

### 7.1 RATIONALE FOR UTILIZING DISCRETIONARY SELECTION:

The sport of hockey is not a measured or timed event. In the nomination of athletes who will compete together as a team, it is difficult to make nominations based solely upon objective criteria. It is the belief of USA Hockey that considering a mix of Selection Criteria set forth above, which includes subjective components as well as objective statistical measures in evaluation of performance ability, will result in nomination of athletes who will work best together as an effective team and contribute to team success.

### 7.2 DEFINE THE DISCRETIONARY CRITERIA TO BE USED:

The Player Evaluation Committee (Section 7.3) will consider the following factors, observed at the Evaluation Events (Section 5), when evaluating players for nomination to the Team. The factors below are not listed in priority order.

- Willingness to participate – *The Player's willingness and commitment to participation in the Olympics and any required pre-Olympic activities.*
- Availability to participate -- *The Player's availability and health condition permit the Player to participate.*
- Playing ability/proficiency -- *The Player's capability to participate at the highest level as compared to other Player candidates for the Team.*
- Playing position and Role – *The Player plays a position of need to the team (i.e., forward, defense or goalie) as well as a role on the Team (power play, penalty kill, defensive specialist, etc.).*
- Coachability -- *Exhibiting the ability to process and incorporate input from the coaching staff. The Player should be open to and embracing of new ideas as well as constructive criticism.*
- Attitude -- *Exhibiting enthusiasm and support of teammates and the Team.*

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- Contribution to Team Chemistry -- *The willingness to fulfill a role that leads to Team success. The Player is committed to placing the Team's needs above their own.*

#### 7.3 SELECTION COMMITTEE

The committee that will be responsible for making discretionary selections or other decisions and recommendations directly impacting athletes in the nomination process.

Committee Name: Player Evaluation Committee

- Assistant Executive Director of Hockey Operations
- Team General Manager
- Team Assistant General Manager
- Head Coach
- Athlete Representative (must be 10-year Athlete)
- Athlete Representative (may be either 10-year or 10+ Athlete)

#### SECTION 8: MANDATORY TRAINING AND/OR COMPETITION

Mandatory training will not be conducted for the period between the nomination of the Olympic Team and the departure for the Men's Ice Hockey competition at the Winter Olympic Games in Milan, Italy. If time permits, the Team will practice prior to competition in the Games.

#### SECTION 9: DATE OF TEAM NOMINATION

USA Hockey will nominate the Team, including any replacements/alternates to the USOPC on or before January 11, 2026.

#### SECTION 10: REMOVAL OF ATHLETES FROM THE TEAM

##### 10.1 USA HOCKEY JURISDICTION

USA Hockey has jurisdiction over athlete nominees until athlete entries have been submitted by the USOPC to the Organizing Committee of the Olympic Games (OCOG).

- a. An athlete who is nominated to the Team by USA Hockey may be removed for any of the following reasons, as determined by USA Hockey:
  - i. Voluntary withdrawal. Athlete submits a written letter to the USA Hockey Assistant Executive Director, Hockey Operations, requesting to voluntarily withdraw from the Team.
  - ii. Injury or illness. A physician (or medical staff) approved by USA Hockey provides certification that the Athlete has a debilitating condition. If Athlete refuses to provide verification of their illness or injury by a physician (or medical staff), their injury will be assumed to be debilitating and they may be removed from the Team.
  - iii. Failure to participate. Athlete does not participate in all Mandatory Training and/or

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Competition as defined in these procedures.

- iv. Code of Conduct Violation. Athlete violates the USA Hockey Code of Conduct located at [www.usahockey.com/annualguide](http://www.usahockey.com/annualguide)
  - v. Athlete Agreement. Athlete violates a term in their signed NGB Athlete Agreement.
  - vi. Non-compliance. Athlete does not meet the athlete eligibility requirements listed in Section 3 and Section 4 of these selection procedures.
- b. An Athlete may be removed as a nominee to the Team or from the Team if found to have violated IOC, WADA, IIHF, USADA and/or USOPC anti-doping protocol, policies and procedures, the U.S. Center for SafeSport Code, the USOPC Athlete Safety Policy and NGB SafeSport policies, as applicable.

#### 10.2 USOPC JURISDICTION

- a. Once Athlete entries have been submitted by the USOPC to the Organizing Committee of the Olympic Games, the USOPC has jurisdiction over the Team.
- b. USOPC's Delegation Conduct Requirements apply in addition to the USA Hockey Code of Conduct. The Delegation Conduct Requirements in the USOPC Games Delegation Terms are specific to each Games and are made available during the Games registration process.
- c. The USOPC's Grievance Procedures and Hearing Process are found within the USOPC Dispute Resolution Policy and Hearing Procedures.
  - i. See [www.usopc.org/governance/dispute-resolution](http://www.usopc.org/governance/dispute-resolution) for more information.

#### SECTION 11: SELECTION PROCESS IF ATHLETE VACANCY OCCURS PRIOR TO SUBMISSION OF ENTRIES BY NAME TO THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE OF THE OLYMPIC GAMES

11.1 Should a vacancy occur prior to submission of Entries by Name by the USOPC to the Organizing Committee of the Olympic Games, replacement players will be determined on an as needed basis made up of those who are recommended by the Player Evaluation Committee based on the needs of the Team using the criteria set forth in Section 7. Replacements will be considered primarily from the players invited to participate in the orientation in July 2025. However, it is possible, depending on positional need and available replacement player position, that other players outside that group who participated in the Evaluation Events (Section 5) would be considered.

11.2 All replacement athletes must meet all requirements listed in Sections 3-4.

#### SECTION 12: SELECTION PROCESS IF ATHLETE VACANCY OCCURS AFTER SUBMISSION OF ENTRIES BY NAME TO THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE OF THE OLYMPIC GAMES

12.1 Should a vacancy occur after submission of Entries by Name by the USOPC to the Organizing Committee of the Olympic Games, the same process outlined in Section 11.1 will be used provided USA Hockey is still authorized to add a replacement athlete to the Team, in accordance with the [IIHF](#)

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[Qualification System](#), and any applicable IOC rules or policies including the Late Athlete Replacement policy (LAR).

12.2 All replacement athletes must meet all requirements listed in Sections 3-4.

#### SECTION 13: RIGHT TO A HEARING

An athlete who is removed from the Team has the right to a hearing per the NGB's complaint procedures located in Bylaw 10 in the current USA Hockey Annual Guide located at <https://www.usahockey.com/annualguide> and the USOPC Bylaws, Section 9 (<https://www.usopc.org/governance/dispute-resolution>).

#### SECTION 14: REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

In addition to the USOPC Delegation Conduct Requirements, the following documents are required to be signed by an athlete as a condition of nomination to the Olympic Games:

- USA Hockey Code of Conduct, a copy of which is located at: <http://www.usahockey.com/annualguide>
- USA Hockey Athlete Agreement: a copy of which will be provided to each Athlete on or prior to final Team nomination.

#### SECTION 15: DISCLAIMERS

These procedures are based on IOC and IIHF rules and regulations as presently known and understood. Any change in the selection procedures caused by a change in IOC and/or IIHF rules and regulations will be distributed to the affected athletes immediately. The selection criteria are based on the latest information available to USA Hockey.

However, the selection criteria are always subject to unforeseen, intervening circumstances, and realistically may not have accounted for every possible contingency. If any force of nature, pandemic, or force majeure, should cause the alteration or cancellation of any of the selection events listed in this document, these selection procedures may require revisions, pursuant to their resubmission to the USOPC.

#### SECTION 16: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All members of the Selection Committee (Section 7.3) and all individuals who developed these selection procedures (Section 21) must comply with the USA Hockey [Conflict of Interest Policy](#), to include completing and submitting a disclosure form consistent with the USA Hockey Conflict of Interest Policy before convening the committee.

- A copy of USA Hockey's Conflict of Interest Policy may be found at <https://www.usahockey.com/annualguide>.

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#### SECTION 17: QUESTIONS REGARDING ATHLETE SELECTION PROCEDURES

USA Hockey Contact Information:

Athletes may contact the individuals listed below for information about these selection procedures.

Name: John Vanbiesbrouck

Position: Assistant Executive Director – Hockey Operations

Email: [johnv@usahockey.org](mailto:johnv@usahockey.org)

Name: Taylor Lipsett

Position: Team USA Athletes' Commission Representative

Email: [taylor.lipsett1987@gmail.com](mailto:taylor.lipsett1987@gmail.com)

#### ATHLETE OMBUDS

The Team USA Athlete Ombuds serves as a safe, independent, confidential place for Team USA Athletes to seek advice about any sport-related rule, policy, or process; how to navigate raising or responding to concerns; or access legal and mental health resources.

Team USA Athletes may contact the Athlete Ombuds:

PHONE: (719) 866-5000

EMAIL: [ombudsman@usathlete.org](mailto:ombudsman@usathlete.org)

WEBSITE: [usathlete.org](http://usathlete.org)

#### SECTION 18: GRIEVANCES

The NGB Grievance Procedures can be found in Bylaw 10 of the USA Hockey Bylaws, which can be found in the current USA Hockey Annual Guide here: <http://www.usahockey.com/annualguide>

Section 9 of the USOPC Bylaws provides a process for an athlete to file a complaint with the USOPC against an NGB alleging that they have been denied, or threatened to be denied, with the opportunity to participate in a Protected Competition, as defined in the USOPC bylaws. Additional information on how to file a complaint can be found here: <https://www.usopc.org/governance/dispute-resolution>

#### SECTION 19: NON-RETALIATION

The USOPC and USA Hockey have zero tolerance for retaliation against people who make good faith reports of potential ethical, policy, or legal violations, or who cooperate with investigations of those reports. That means no USOPC or USA Hockey staff, Board or Committee member, or volunteer may threaten, harass, discriminate against, or take any negative employment or related action (e.g., discharge, demotion, suspension, negative review) on that basis.

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- Individuals may report concerns to USA Hockey by emailing the USA Hockey Ethics Committee Chair at: [EthicsChair@usahockey.org](mailto:EthicsChair@usahockey.org) and/or the USA Hockey General Counsel at: [CJorgensen@usahockey.org](mailto:CJorgensen@usahockey.org).
- Individuals may report concerns to the USOPC confidentially, or anonymously, online using the [USOPC Integrity Portal](#) or individuals may call the USOPC Integrity Hotline at 1-877-404-9935.
- Additional information can be found in the USOPC's [Speak Up Policy](#).

#### SECTION 20: SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

NGB will retain the approved Selection Procedures and all supporting documents, including scouting or evaluation forms, etc., and data from the selection process as required by the USA Hockey Records Retention Policy or for six months past the date of the Closing Ceremony of the Games, whichever is longer.

#### SECTION 21: DEVELOPMENT, APPROVAL & CERTIFICATION OF SELECTION PROCEDURES

The following committee of individuals developed these selection procedures.

NAME	ROLE
Pat Kelleher	UA Hockey Executive Director
John Vanbiesbrouck	USA Hockey Assistant Executive Director, Hockey Operations
Kris Knauss	USA Hockey Vice President, International Council
Brian Gionta	10 Year Athlete
Chris Clarke	10+ Year Athlete

The following individual approved these selection procedures and through their signature, certifies that the procedures comply with the standards and criteria set by the IIHF. The following individual further certifies that the information provided herein regarding Athlete Selection Procedures represents the method approved by USA Hockey and that these selection procedures will be posted on USA Hockey's [website](#).

POSITION	NAME	SIGNATURE	DATE
USA Hockey Executive Director	Pat Kelleher		6-16-25

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The following individual affirms that they read and understand the selection procedures.

POSITION	NAME	SIGNATURE	DATE
Team USA Athletes Commission Representative*	Taylor Lipsett	<i>Taylor Lipsett</i>	06/15/2025

\* If the Team USA Athletes' Commission Representatives have delegated authority to another 10 Year Athlete Representative to sign the Selection Procedures, attach a letter from the Team USA AC Representative indicating the reason they have delegated authority.

\* Signature by the Athlete Representative constitutes that they have read and understand the Selection Procedures. If the Athlete Representative reads and does not agree with the Athlete Selection Procedures being submitted by the NGB, they may submit those reasons in writing to their USOPC Sport Performance Team.

\* If, for some reason, a sport does not have an elected Team USA AC Representative, the NGB must designate a 10 Year Athlete from that sport to review and sign the Selection Procedures.

#### Revision History

Date	Revisions
June 11, 2025	Original document published

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#### APPENDIX A – COMMONLY USED ACRONYMS

**AAC** – Athletes' Advisory Council

**AC** – Athletes' Commission

**Act or TSOASA** – Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act

**APC** – Americas Paralympic Committee

**CAS** – Court of Arbitration for Sport

**Center or CSS** – U.S. Center for SafeSport

**CF** – Continental Federation

**IMS** – Internally Managed Sport (sport managed by the USOPC)

**IOC** – International Olympic Committee

**IPC** – International Paralympic Committee

**IF** – International Federation

**LOC** – Local Organizing Committee

**NGB** – National Governing Body

**NOC** – National Olympic Committee

**NPC** – National Paralympic Committee

**OCOG** – Organizing Committee of the Olympic Games

**PAG** – Pan American Games

**Panam Sports or PASO** – Pan American Sports Organization

**PPAG** – Parapan American Games

**PSO** – Paralympic Sport Organization

**TEAM USA AC** – Team USA Athletes' Commission (formerly USOPC AAC)

**USADA** – United States Anti-Doping Agency

**WADA** – World Anti-Doping Agency

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#### APPENDIX B – GLOSSARY

**Contingency** means a future event or circumstance which is possible but cannot be predicted with certainty.

**Delegation Event** means the Olympic Games, the Olympic Winter Games, the Paralympic Games, the Paralympic Winter Games, the Pan American Games, and the Parapan American Games.

**Force Majeure** means an event or effect that cannot be reasonably anticipated or controlled (e.g., hurricane, tornado, etc.).

**Grievance Procedures** means the process that enables an athlete to file a complaint with the NGB or USOPC.

**Jurisdiction** means the power or authority to make decisions and judgments.

**Nominated** means an athlete, coach or staff member whose name has been submitted to the USOPC by an NGB for participation in a Delegation Event.

**Protected Competition** means a Delegation Event or a Qualifying Competition.

**Qualifying Competition** means either of the following:

- i. **NGB Qualifying Competition:** Any competition or activity organized or approved by the NGB where the athlete's performance or results are considered in the published selection criteria to represent the United States in a Delegation Event.
- ii. **International Qualifying Competition:** Any international sport competition where (i) athletes represent the United States against athletes representing other nations, (ii) the NGB officially designates entrants, as required by the competition organizers, and (iii) athlete results or performance are included in the published criteria to qualify, or be selected, to represent the United States in a Delegation Event.

**Selected** means an athlete, coach or staff member whose name has been submitted by the USOPC to the OCOG at the final submission date, as determined by the OCOG.

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#### APPENDIX C – ATHLETE RESOURCES

##### **TEAM USA ATHLETES' COMMISSION (Team USA AC)** *(Formerly Athletes' Advisory Council)*

The Team USA AC is responsible for broadening communication between the USOPC and active athletes and serves as a source of input and advice to the USOPC Board of Directors.

WEBSITE: [www.usopc.org/teamusa-athletes-commission](http://www.usopc.org/teamusa-athletes-commission)

##### **ATHLETE LEGAL AID**

The purpose of the Athlete Legal Aid Program is to assist elite athletes without sufficient financial means to seek aid for fees and costs associated with legal representation or the proceeding itself with respect to claims before an anti-doping organization, NGB, IF, the U.S. Center for SafeSport, USOPC, IOC/IPC, Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), or other sport-related tribunal within the Olympic and Paralympic Movement.

WEBSITE: [www.usopc.org/ombuds/athlete-legal-aid-program](http://www.usopc.org/ombuds/athlete-legal-aid-program)

##### **ATHLETE OMBUDS**

The Team USA Athlete Ombuds serves as a safe, independent, confidential place for Team USA Athletes to seek advice about any sport-related rule, policy, or process; how to navigate raising or responding to concerns; or access legal and mental health resources.

Team USA Athletes may contact the Athlete Ombuds:

PHONE: (719) 866-5000

EMAIL: [ombudsman@usathlete.org](mailto:ombudsman@usathlete.org)

WEBSITE: [usathlete.org](http://usathlete.org)

##### **USOPC DISPUTE RESOLUTION UNIT (DRU)**

USOPC's DRU oversees the administration of dispute resolution services to athletes and other members of NGBs for grievances under the USOPC's jurisdiction to ensure the complaints are heard in a timely and fair manner. For more information about this process, please visit the [dispute resolution website](#).

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#### USOPC ETHICS AND COMPLIANCE

USOPC's Ethics and Compliance team is responsible for ensuring the USOPC and NGBs comply with the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act, their own bylaws and policies, and any other applicable laws or regulations. Any individual may report concerns confidentially, or anonymously, online using the [USOPC Integrity Portal](#) or individuals may call the USOPC Integrity Hotline at 1-877-404-9935 to report their concern over the phone.

#### USOPC SECURITY AND ATHLETE SAFETY REPORTING PORTAL

Athletes can report an incident of emotional, physical, or sexual misconduct, a violation of the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP) or a general security incident or concern through the [Safety Reporting Portal](#). Athletes may also report to the USOPC over the phone at 719-866-3869.

#### SAFESPORT HELPLINE

The SafeSport Helpline provides crisis intervention, referrals, and emotional support specifically designed for athletes, staff, and other SafeSport participants affected by sexual violence. Through this service, support specialists provide live, confidential, one-on-one support that is available 24/7. Individuals can call the Helpline at 866-200-0796 or visit [www.safesporthepline.org](http://www.safesporthepline.org).

#### TEAM USA ATHLETE SERVICES

The USOPC helps support Team USA athletes from the start of their career to their retirement and beyond through direct funds, programs and services that help athletes excel in their day-to-day lives, on and off the field of play.

WEBSITE: [www.usopc.org/athlete-benefits-and-resources](http://www.usopc.org/athlete-benefits-and-resources)

#### TEAM USA MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

For those in need of mental health support, USOPC Psychological Services is available at [psychservices@usopc.org](mailto:psychservices@usopc.org), or you can connect with a licensed mental health provider 24/7 through the USOPC Psychological Services Support Line at 719-866-2255. You can also visit [TeamUSA.org/psychservices](http://TeamUSA.org/psychservices) for information about all available resources or complete our referral link at: [go.teamusa.org/referrals](http://go.teamusa.org/referrals) to get connected.