





Quest for Gold
Ontario Athlete Assistance Program
2009-2010 Guidelines for PSO/MSOs

Please direct all inquiries to:

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July 22, 2009

SAMPLE LETTER SENT TO ALL PSO/MSOs

Re: Administration of the 2009-2010 Ontario Card - *Quest for Gold* - Ontario Athlete Assistance Program (OAAP)

On behalf of the Ministry of Health Promotion (the Ministry), I thank PSO NAME HERE for agreeing to participate in the administration of the 2009-2010 Ontario Card - *Quest for Gold* – OAAP (*Quest for Gold*). *Quest for Gold's* overarching goal is to increase the performance and number of Ontario athletes competing at the highest national and international levels, thereby contributing to the improved performance of Canada at international competitions. The program supports Ontario's amateur athletes through direct financial assistance, enhanced coaching and enhanced training and competitive opportunities.

The purpose of this letter is to confirm the specific details of your PSO/MSO's participation in the *Quest for Gold* Program for the 2009-2010 fiscal year. I send this letter pursuant to Article 4.9 "Additional Terms and Conditions" of the Terms and Conditions applying to the PSO and MSO Base Funding Program for 2009-2010, where applicable.

PSO NAME HERE will be allocated **X** Ontario Cards for 2009-2010. The PSO/MSO may choose to split a maximum of **Y** of these cards into 'half cards'. Your PSO/MSO will be administered in **CYCLE X**. To switch Cycles please contact Scott Cooper directly as referenced below.

The terms and conditions relating specifically to the administration of the *Quest for Gold* Program are:

1. The PSO/MSO will participate in the administration of the Ontario Card - *Quest for Gold* - OAAP in accordance with the *Quest for Gold* Guidelines for 2009-2010, (the Guidelines) as issued by the Ministry. The PSO/MSO acknowledges having received a copy of those Guidelines.
2. The PSO/MSO will submit to the Ministry a completed copy of the Association Contact Information Form indicating the two primary contacts for administration of the *Quest for Gold* Program. (already submitted)
3. The PSO/MSO will indemnify and hold harmless the Indemnified Parties (defined in Appendix 1) from and against any and all liability, loss, costs, damages and expenses (including legal, expert, and consultant fees), causes of action, actions, claims, demands, lawsuits or other proceedings, by whomsoever made, sustained, incurred, brought or prosecuted, in any way arising out of or in connection with the PSO/MSO's administration of the *Quest for Gold* Program, unless solely caused by the negligence or wilful misconduct of the Ministry.
4. If the PSO/MSO has not already furnished the following materials to the Ministry, in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the 2009-2010 PSO/MSO Base Funding Program:
 - a valid certificate of insurance (see insurance coverage requirements in Appendix 1), and
 - minutes of the PSO/MSO's most recent Annual General Meeting,it will submit a copy of these materials when it returns a signed copy of this letter to the Ministry.
5. The PSO/MSO will fulfil all of the requirements relating to PSO/MSOs, as outlined in the Guidelines. In particular, the PSO/MSO will:
 - a. Develop sport-specific athlete selection criteria for Ontario Card Applicants using the MHP-provided template. The PSO/MSO must consult with MHP regarding their athlete selection criteria and have the criteria approved by the PSO/MSO Board of Directors prior to release to the membership. Minutes of the Board of Directors meeting where the Selection Criteria was approved by the Board must also be submitted to the Ministry with the selection criteria. The criteria must be fair, open, transparent and applied without discrimination or conflict of interest;

NOTE: In the event of a conflict or inconsistency, the selection criteria established by the Ministry and set out in the Guidelines binder and duplicated in the Athlete Handbook provided to each nominated athlete shall prevail over the selection criteria established by the PSO/MSO.

- b. Distribute *Quest for Gold* application forms to PSO/MSO members, inform them of application deadlines and publish information or otherwise make known to members information relating to the selection criteria and appeals process. The PSO/MSO will post the approved Selection Criteria, and subsequently the names of the nominated athletes on the association's website in a direct link from the home page using the *Quest for Gold* icon supplied by the Ministry. **This information shall remain on the website until the end of the fiscal year, March 31, 2010.**
 - c. For athletes living/training outside of Ontario, the PSO/MSO will require those athletes to submit written documentation clearly identifying how they meet the residency exceptions identified in the Ministry's General Eligibility Criteria. The PSO/MSO agrees that they only will nominate athletes who meet all eligibility criteria as set out in the OAAP Guidelines and that it is their responsibility to determine that each athlete nominated is eligible.
 - d. Please note that the one-year Ontario residency requirement is waived for any applicant who is a spouse or dependant of: a Regular Force member of the Canadian Forces; or a Reservist currently deployed by the Canadian Forces into active service. This means that eligible military family members now qualify for OAAP funding immediately upon becoming residents of Ontario. Please see Tab 2 of the 2009-2010 *Quest for Gold* Guidelines binder for more details, including a list of documents that the Ministry will require in order to verify eligibility for this Military Family Residency Exemption.
 - e. Submit to MHP the Athlete Nomination and Substitution of Alternate Form including the complete list of all athletes considered, in ranked order, by the Nomination Committee.
 - f. Reconsider any applications that may be referred back to the PSO/MSO by the Appeals Committee.
6. The PSO/MSO will require all nominated athletes to enter into a Sports Organization – Athlete Agreement as required by the Guidelines. Using the template provided in TAB 12 of the *Quest for Gold* Guidelines binder, the PSO/MSO will send written confirmation to MHP that all **nominated athletes** have entered into a Sports Organization – Athlete Agreement with the PSO/MSO and are in full compliance with the terms and conditions of that agreement. **This confirmation must be received by MHP by the deadline posted in TAB 9 of the Guidelines binder. Athlete funding will not be released until this confirmation is received.** The PSO/MSO will fulfil its obligations under that Agreement

and will monitor compliance by all Applicants who receive assistance under the *Quest for Gold* Program (Grant Recipients). The PSO/MSO will notify the Ministry immediately in the event that:

- a. a Sports Organization – Athlete Agreement is terminated or expires;
 - b. a Grant Recipient is in material default of a Sports Organization – Athlete Agreement and fails to remedy the default to the satisfaction of the PSO/MSO in accordance with the terms of that Agreement; or
 - c. the PSO/MSO learns that a Grant Recipient has knowingly provided false or misleading information in his or her grant application or in any other communication with the Ministry or in any public communications regarding his or her *Quest for Gold* grant.
7. The PSO/MSO will comply with all applicable federal and provincial laws relating to the collection, use or disclosure of an Applicant's personal information, including personal health information. The PSO/MSO will take prudent measures to ensure that Applicants' social insurance numbers are not used or disclosed, except where authorized or required by law. This will include, but not necessarily be limited to, ensuring that social insurance numbers are deleted from all copies of applications distributed inside or outside the PSO/MSO, except copies that are to be forwarded to the Ministry.
 8. The PSO/MSO will ensure that all materials, communications and publicity relating to the *Quest for Gold* Program acknowledge the support of the Government of Ontario.
 9. The Ministry plans to conduct evaluations of the *Quest for Gold* Program. The PSO/MSO will participate in such evaluations.
 10. The Ministry plans to track the performance of *Quest for Gold* funded athletes. The PSO/MSO will complete performance tracking forms distributed by the Ministry to assist them in tracking the progress of the athletes.
 11. The PSO/MSO will keep records and documents relating to the *Quest for Gold* Program, including records relating to individual applications and awards, for a period of seven (7) years which is consistent with the agreed upon record retention schedule as stipulated in Article 7.3 in the Terms and Conditions of the 2009-2010 PSO and MSO Base Funding Program. The PSO/MSO will, if requested, make such records and documents available for inspection or review by the Ministry. The PSO/MSO authorizes the Ministry and its agents to inspect and copy such records and documents at the PSO/MSO's premises during normal business hours and upon 24 hours notice.

12. The PSO/MSO will provide the Ministry with such records and information as the Ministry may require relating to individual *Quest for Gold* applications and awards and the administration of the *Quest for Gold* Program.

13. The terms and conditions contained in this letter shall apply to the administration of the *Quest for Gold* OAAP during the 2009-2010 fiscal year. These Terms and Conditions remain in effect for the duration of the *Quest for Gold* Program, unless revoked or amended earlier by the Ministry, in writing. The Ministry maintains the discretion to impose additional terms and conditions, which must be communicated to the PSO/MSO in writing.

On behalf of the PSO/MSO, please indicate your acceptance of these terms and conditions by signing both copies of this letter in the space provided, and returning one copy by **August 5, 2009.**

The *Quest for Gold* Program will be operated by Scott Cooper and Kojo Mensah. Please contact them directly with any inquiries you may have:

Scott Cooper
Scott.cooper@ontario.ca
416-314-7692

Kojo Mensah
Kojo.mensah@ontario.ca
416-314-8110

I wish you every success in your participation in the *Quest for Gold* Program.

Best regards,

Rick Beaver
Director (A)
Sport and Recreation Branch

c: Scott Cooper, Sport Consultant

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

On behalf of and with the authority of the PSO/MSO, I hereby certify that the PSO/MSO has read, understands and agrees to abide by the additional terms and conditions outlined above.

Signature of Authorized Signing Officer

Date

Print Name of Authorized Signing Officer

Signature of Witness

Date

Print Name of Witness

APPENDIX 1: INSURANCE

“**Indemnified Parties**” means Her Majesty the Queen in right of Ontario, her Ministers, agents, appointees and employees.

Insurance

The PSO/MSO shall put into effect and maintain insurance for the term of this Agreement, at its own cost and expense, with insurers having a secure A.M. Best rating of B+ or greater, or the equivalent, all the necessary and appropriate insurance that a prudent person in the business of the PSO/MSO would maintain, including commercial general liability insurance on an occurrence basis for third party bodily injury, personal injury and property damage, to an inclusive limit of not less than two million dollars (\$2,000,000) per occurrence. The policy shall include the following:

- (a) the Indemnified Parties as additional insured with respect to liability arising in the course of performance of the Recipient’s obligations under, or otherwise in connection with, the Agreement;
- (b) directors and officers liability insurance;
- (c) a cross-liability clause;
- (d) contractual liability coverage; and
- (e) a 30 day written notice of cancellation, termination or material change.

Proof of Insurance. The Recipient shall provide the Ministry with certificates of insurance, or other proof as may be requested by the Ministry, that confirms the required coverage. Upon the request of the Ministry, the Recipient shall make available to the Ministry a copy of each insurance policy.

Program Overview – *Quest for Gold* Ontario Athlete Assistance Program

- [What are the goals and objectives of the *Quest for Gold* - Ontario Athlete Assistance Program \(OAAP\)?](#)
- [How will the *Quest for Gold* - OAAP achieve its objectives?](#)
- [How will direct financial assistance be provided to Ontario athletes?](#)
- [What are the eligible expenses that a carded athlete can spend funding on obtained through the *Quest for Gold* - Ontario Athlete Assistance Program?](#)

1. What are the goals and objectives of the *Quest for Gold* - Ontario Athlete Assistance Program?

The Ontario Athlete Assistance Program (OAAP) is one aspect of the funding offered under the 2009-2010 *Quest for Gold* Program. In addition to the OAAP the *Quest for Gold* Program also provides funding to enhance access to high performance coaching and to provide enhanced competitive opportunities and services for Ontario athletes. Funding for the *Quest for Gold* Program is obtained from revenues generated in 2009-2010 by the *Quest for Gold* lottery game that is administered by the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG).

The overarching goal of the *Quest for Gold* - OAAP is directly related to the Enhanced Excellence goals of both *ACTIVE2010* and the *Canadian Sport Policy* – i.e. to improve the performance and number of Ontario athletes performing at the national and international level; thereby contributing to the improved performance of Canada at international competitions. Specific objectives of the program are:

- a) To help athletes continue their pursuit of athletic excellence at the highest levels of national and international competition;
- b) To encourage athletes to stay in Ontario to live and train;
- c) To compensate athletes for earnings lost while training;
- d) To enable athletes to successfully pursue excellence in sport while fulfilling their educational goals;
- e) To increase athlete access to improved high performance coaching; and
- f) To enhance training and competitive opportunities available to athletes.

2. How will the *Quest for Gold* - OAAP achieve its objectives?

The *Quest for Gold* - OAAP achieves its objectives by:

- Providing additional direct financial assistance (Canada Card designation) to Ontario athletes who are carded at the national level by Sport Canada;

- Providing standards for the identification and support of eligible sports and eligible junior-aged Ontario athletes to be carded at the Provincial level (Ontario Card);
- Ensuring that Provincial Sport and Multi-Sport Organizations (PSO/MSOs) have appropriate selection procedures and criteria in place, for the nomination of Ontario athletes to be carded at the Provincial level (Ontario Card);
- Providing OAAP carding support in a consistent and timely manner to athletes who meet their sport-specific carding criteria in those sports that meet OAAP eligibility requirements;
- Focusing support on junior-aged athletes to assist in their transition from junior to senior national and international competition;
- Providing a living and training allowance to help offset some of the costs athletes incur as a result of their involvement in high-performance sport;
- Allowing financial assistance provided to be used to offset tuition costs to allow athletes to attain academic goals;
- Ensuring, in conjunction with the PSO/MSO, that appropriate training and competitive opportunities are in place and providing annual, ongoing and long-term evaluation of athlete performance and potential.

3. How will direct financial assistance be provided to Ontario athletes?

Direct financial assistance will be provided to eligible Ontario athletes in the form of a living and training allowance. Assistance will be provided through two carding designations – Canada Card and Ontario Card.

Canada Card - Eligibility is limited to Ontario athletes who are carded by Sport Canada. Canada Card will provide up to an additional 33% in funding over and above the full value of the carding designation the athlete is receiving from Sport Canada – the actual value of the card is dependant on funding available.

Ontario Card - Ontario Card will provide direct financial assistance to Ontario junior-aged athletes identified by PSO/MSOs. The Ministry will also consider Ontario Card designation for some senior-aged ParaSport/Paralympic athletes and able bodied athletes in certain circumstances – See Tab 2. The actual value of the card is dependant on funding available.

Note: “Junior-aged athlete” is defined as those athletes who fall within the eligible age range for the Canada Games - 11 to 22 years of age. (Consideration will be given to older junior-aged athletes if a PSO/MSO’s NSO-approved Long Term Athlete Development model (LTAD) identifies older athletes in the “Train to Train” and “Train to Compete” categories).

- By way of example, these junior-aged athletes would ordinarily compete in one of the following developmental categories:
- a) National Junior Team/ National Junior Development Team or Training pool;
 - b) Canada Games level;
 - c) Provincial age group/ Elite club/ Ontario Games level.

An Athlete with a Disability (AWAD) is defined as an athlete nominated by a PSO/MSO that is recognized by the Ministry of Health Promotion as being responsible for governance of a particular Paralympic sport.

Both the sport and athlete eligibility criteria must be met before financial assistance can be awarded to any athlete.

4. What are the eligible expenses that a carded athlete can spend funding on obtained through the *Quest for Gold* - Ontario Athlete Assistance Program?

Carded athletes receiving funding under the Ontario Athlete Assistance Program can spend funding obtained only on the following items:

- Normal living costs;
- Costs directly associated with training (e.g. coaching, facility fees, other athlete services);
- Costs associated with attending training camps and competitions (e.g. entry fees, travel costs);
- Sport-specific equipment;
- Tuition and education related expenses (e.g. books, fees, commuting costs).

4. Are *Quest for Gold* – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program grants considered “income” under the Federal *Income Tax Act*?

The Government of Ontario was required to issue OAAP-funded athletes a T4A form for any grants paid in 2006, but subsequently obtained an interpretation from the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) on how the financial assistance in the T4As and the related athlete expenses were to be reported.

The CRA has advised that, upon review of the program, the benefits received from the *Quest for Gold* – OAAP Program will generally be received by recipients tax free within the meaning of the *Federal Income Tax Act*.

OAAP-funded athletes may contact Scott Cooper at the Ministry of Health Promotion, (416) 314-7692 if they wish to obtain a copy of the April 2, 2007 CRA letter that provides an interpretation of the *Income Tax Act* as it relates to OAAP grants. If OAAP-funded athletes have any questions regarding their personal tax situation, they should contact the CRA at 1-800-267-6999 or online at www.cra-arc.gc.ca.

Athletes who receive an OAAP grant in 2009-2010 will not be issued a T4A form for grants received in the 2009 calendar year.

6. Payments for the 2009-2010 *Quest for Gold* - OAAP

For 2009-2010 eligible athletes will receive carding status for one carding year starting from April 1, 2009 – March 31, 2010. All payments will be processed before March 31, 2010. The amount of total payment to eligible athletes will be determined at a later date, once the total quantity of eligible athletes is known.

Minimum Sport and Athlete Eligibility Requirements – Ontario Cards

- [What are the Minimum Eligibility Requirements and Responsibilities for Provincial and Multi-Sport Organizations?](#)
- [What are the Minimum Eligibility Requirements for Athletes?](#)

1. What are the minimum eligibility requirements and responsibilities for Provincial Sport and Multi-Sport organizations?

General Sport Eligibility Criteria:

- Sport must have a Provincial Sport Organization / Multi-Sport Organization (PSO/MSO) that is formally recognized by the Ministry of Health Promotion as per the Ministry's *Sport Recognition Policy*.
- Sport and sport discipline must have been, or must be a participant in the regular program of at least one of:
 - i. 2010 Olympic / Paralympic Winter Games, 2012 Olympic / Paralympic Summer Games;
 - ii. 2009 Canada Summer Games or 2011 Canada Winter Games;
 - iii. 2008 Ontario Games (youth) – eligible sports in this category may fluctuate depending on eligibility in a particular Games event.
- The sport must have a sanctioned provincial and national championship that is held at least biennially.
- If the PSO/MSO has not already furnished the following materials to the Ministry, in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the 2009-2010 PSO and MSO Base Funding Program:
 - a valid certificate of insurance (see insurance coverage requirements in Appendix 1), and
 - minutes of the PSO/MSO's most recent Annual General Meeting,it will submit a copy of these materials when it returns a signed copy of the PSO/MSO Letter of Agreement to the Ministry.
- The PSO/MSO must demonstrate that they have a clearly articulated junior-aged provincial team program ("junior-aged" refers to chronological age, not a sport's specific age category) with appropriate training and competitive opportunities for each of the proposed carded athletes.
- The PSO/MSO's junior-aged provincial team program must be based on ongoing training principles that include significant daily training activities.
- The PSO/MSO must demonstrate how they formally monitor and evaluate the training of athletes and competitive programs.

Note: Organizations that did not participate in the 2008-2009 *Quest for Gold* - OAAP will be required to complete the PSO/MSO Provincial

High Performance Program Questionnaire to demonstrate compliance with the above criteria.

- The PSO/MSO must conduct a formal process for nominating athletes for Ontario Cards. Rules and procedures must be published and made known to all concerned, along with procedures for appealing decisions. These procedures are provided to PSO/MSOs in TAB 6 of these guidelines.
- The PSO/MSO must have in place a Sports Organization - Athlete Agreement signed by each individual athlete who is being nominated for an Ontario Card. The Sports Organization - Athlete Agreement must contain in writing the rights, responsibilities and obligations of the athlete and the PSO/MSO.
- The PSO/MSO must have a signed agreement (“PSO/MSO Letter of Agreement”) with the Ministry in which it agrees to the terms and conditions of the PSO/MSO’s participation in the program as stipulated by the Ministry.

2. What are the minimum eligibility requirements for athletes?

- Athlete must be a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant.
- Athlete must be a resident of Ontario for one year prior to his/her nomination for carding status.
- Athletes must be living in and continuing to train in Ontario. Exceptions will be made **on a case specific basis** providing that the athlete can substantiate in writing at the time of application/nomination for carding status that:
 - He/She cannot receive the required level of training in Ontario and is out of the province **temporarily** during the year (i.e. due to lack of facilities, coaching, competitions);
 - He/She must attend a post-secondary institution out-of-province because the course of study is not available to him/her in Ontario;
 - It is more financially feasible to attend a post-secondary institution out-of-province, or other extenuating circumstances that require the athlete to be out of the province;
 - The onus is on the athlete to demonstrate that he/she needs to be out of province. **The athlete will submit written documentation to their PSO/MSO’s Selection Committee by the posted deadline, clearly indicating how they meet these residency exceptions.** The Ministry may require that the athlete provide additional supporting documentation from the athlete’s PSO/MSO, National Sport Organization (NSO) or other sources to verify reasons for athlete’s absence from the Province of Ontario.

Residency Exemption for Military Families: The one-year Ontario residency requirement is waived for any Ontario Card or Canada Card applicant who is

a spouse or dependant of a: Regular Force member of the Canadian Forces; or Reservist currently deployed by the Canadian Forces into active service. This means that eligible military family members now qualify for OAAP funding immediately upon becoming residents of Ontario. Please see page 20 of TAB 2 of these Guidelines for details of this exemption, including a list of documents needed to verify eligibility for this waiver of the one-year Ontario residency requirement.

Minimum eligibility requirements for athletes – continued:

- Athlete must be a member in good standing with PSO/MSO and NSO where applicable;
- Athlete must have entered into a Sports Organization - Athlete Agreement with his or her PSO/MSO and must be in full compliance with the terms and conditions of that agreement;
- Athlete must demonstrate a commitment and dedication to a proper training and competitive program;
- Athlete must be instructed by a coach who has been trained and certified in the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) Level 2 or equivalent;
- Athlete must not be under sanction as per the Canadian Anti-Doping Policy;
- Athlete must be attending an educational institution full-time (i.e. elementary and secondary schools):
 - Exceptions will be made provided that the athlete can substantiate that his/her training will not allow for full-time attendance or if an athlete requires special needs that preclude full or part-time attendance (e.g. Athlete with a disability (AWAD) athlete);
- Athletes who have completed their area of study at the secondary level (i.e. high school) and who continue to train towards participation in major national or international competitions will also be given consideration;
- If eligible, the athlete must compete, and continue to compete for Ontario and/or Canada for one year from the date of the Minister's letter informing the athlete of acceptance into OAAP program, at Canada Games and other national competitions involving provincial team competitions;
- Athletes who have achieved Canada Card status are not eligible for Ontario Cards;
- Eligibility will be limited to Ontario junior-aged athletes, ages 11-22 ("junior-aged" refers to chronological age, not a sport's specific age category - only exception is for PSO/MSOs using 30% of Ontario Card allotment for Senior level athletes not funded by Sport Canada – see below) who have been identified as a next generation national team athlete as demonstrated by:
 - Identification within the NSO pool of identified next generation national team athletes for the last two competitive seasons; OR
 - Results at regional championships, national championships (junior and/or senior) or other recognized national/international competitions over the last two competitive seasons; OR
 - Representation on a Canadian National Team (developmental and/or junior). Athletes training for Canada Games or provincial teams may also be considered.

Age of athletes:

The primary purpose of the Ontario Card designation is to provide direct financial assistance to “junior-aged” high performance athletes. Age criterion is different for able bodied athletes and AWAD athletes.

Able Bodied Athletes:

A minimum of 70% of a PSO/MSO’s Ontario Card allotment must be distributed to junior-aged athletes (11 to 22 years of age) in able bodied sports (consideration will be given to older junior-aged athletes if a PSO/MSO’s NSO-approved LTAD model identifies older athletes in the “Train to Train” and “Train to Compete” categories).

The onus will be on the PSO/MSO to demonstrate that the athlete in question is still competing and training at the “junior” level.

The Ministry recognizes that athletes who have graduated from the junior level but have not yet received funding support from Sport Canada are also in need of funding support. Therefore, the Ministry will allow PSO/MSOs to provide a maximum of 30% of its Ontario carding allotment to able bodied athletes no longer eligible for “junior athlete” status. This is contingent on the following:

- The athlete must be identified by the sport’s NSO as a national team athlete or potential next generation national team athlete.

The onus is on the PSO/MSO to provide supporting documentation from the NSO to demonstrate that the athlete has been identified as per above. Documentation to be provided could include a letter from NSO documenting/identifying athlete as being on national development team or pool.

- To be deemed a potential next generation national team athlete, in the year following receipt of Ontario Card funding the athlete must not surpass the maximum age limit for national team qualification. Example: If an NSO has a rule which states national team athletes must not exceed 30 years of age, an athlete that turns 30 during the fiscal year April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011 would not be eligible for an Ontario Card in fiscal year April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010.

Note: The Ministry reserves the right to request additional documentation/information at its discretion.

Athletes with a Disability (AWAD):

The Ministry recognizes that junior/developmental level ParaSport/Paralympic athletes are generally older than those in able bodied sports. This recognition is supported by detailed study of AWAD development models as reflected in

No Accidental Champions, the LTAD for Athletes with a Disability. Therefore, the age guidelines for Ontario Cards for AWAD are different from able bodied athletes. In 2009-2010 the following guidelines will apply for the nomination of eligible AWAD for Ontario Cards:

- Paralympic sports in Canada Games - Must use Canada Games technical package guidelines (maximum age of 24 years old).
- Non-Canada Games Paralympic sports - no specific age limit but the PSO/MSO must demonstrate that the athlete being nominated has been identified as having real potential to get to the national team level (i.e. the athlete must be identified by NSO or through the PSO High Performance identification process).

3. What if athletes are under the age of 18?

All athletes under the age of 18 must have their parent or legal guardian sign their OAAP application form. Cheques will be processed in the name of the eligible athlete.

4. What about professional / semi-professional athletes or athletes who have normal living and training costs covered?

Athletes who receive or who have received funding in excess of normal living and training costs through exercising their skills as a professional or semi-professional athlete, or have these costs covered by virtue of involvement on a team through a formal agreement, within the same sport as the one for which they wish to receive OAAP funding, will not be eligible for OAAP support. The onus is on the athlete to prove that he/she meets the eligibility requirements.

5. Can an athlete be nominated for Ontario Card status in two sports? (i.e. receive two cards)?

No. If an athlete is nominated in two separate sports the athlete will have to decide which sport he/she wishes to receive carding support from.

6. Does the Ministry of Health Promotion require receipts from the carded athletes?

The terms and conditions of the *Quest for Gold* Program (contained within athlete application) require athlete recipients to retain all records and documents related to the grant (e.g. receipts) for a three-year period and must make them available for inspection by the Ministry of Health Promotion when requested. However, the Ministry will not be requesting receipts from carded athletes on an ongoing basis. The PSO/MSO can request receipts on an ongoing basis if this requirement is stipulated in the Sports Organization - Athlete Agreement.

Carded athletes receiving funding under the *Quest for Gold* – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program can spend funding obtained on the following items:

- a. Normal living costs;
- b. Costs directly associated with training (e.g. coaching, facility fees, other athlete services);
- c. Costs associated with attending training camps and competitions (e.g. entry fees, travel costs);
- d. Sport specific equipment;
- e. Tuition and education related expenses (e.g. books, fees, commuting costs).

7. If a sport has a number of disciplines that meet the general sport eligibility criteria does the Ministry of Health Promotion designate cards towards each discipline within that sport?

No, the Ministry of Health Promotion will not be designating cards towards each discipline within a sport.

For those PSO/MSOs that have a number of disciplines that meet the general sport eligibility criteria, it is up to the individual PSO/MSO to develop the Sport Specific Athlete Selection Criteria (see Tab 4) and nominate their athletes within their various disciplines and distribute their allotment of cards accordingly.

8. If a sport doesn't have enough high performance athletes to fill the carding allotment, what happens to the cards that are not used?

Sport organizations should only be carding athletes that are in a high performance program and that have been identified as next generation senior team national athletes (see minimum eligibility requirements for athletes – previously in this section). If a PSO/MSO does not have enough high performance calibre athletes to use its total allotment of Ontario Cards it should not award them to athletes who are not participating in the sport's high performance program.

Unused Ontario Cards will not be allotted to other sports. The number of Ontario Cards distributed will decrease, thereby increasing the monetary value of the Ontario Cards awarded to all other eligible athletes.

9. Does a PSO/MSO's Ontario Card allotment include the cards for Sport Canada-carded athletes?

No. If an athlete is listed on the Sport Canada list, is a resident of Ontario, or has had the one year residency requirement waived because he/she is a member of a military family (see page 20, TAB 2) and their sport meets the MHP general sport eligibility criteria, they will be eligible to apply for a Canada Card. It is a completely separate allotment from the Ontario Card. If a PSO/MSO Selection Committee is uncertain which athletes are in receipt of Sport Canada carding, this information can be obtained from MHP staff.

10. Is an athlete previously funded by Sport Canada eligible for an Ontario Card?

An athlete that received Sport Canada Carding between April 1, 2008 and March 31, 2009 and/or April 1, 2009 and March 31, 2010 and is no longer in receipt of Sport Canada Athlete Assistance shall not be eligible to receive *Quest for Gold* funding during fiscal year 2009-2010 (April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010.)

The intent of this rule is to prevent athletes whose performance levels and rankings no longer qualify them for Sport Canada carding from taking an Ontario Card from a future national-level athlete. However, exceptions may apply and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Exceptions may include, but may not be limited to logistical or administrative changes, injuries, etc.

11. What about athletes attending foreign post-secondary educational institutions?

Athletes who are attending any foreign post-secondary educational institution (including NCAA institutions) and are receiving an athletic scholarship in any sport are *not* eligible to receive OAAP support.

12. How does receipt of *Quest for Gold* - OAAP funding impact on an athlete's current or future eligibility for a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) scholarship or their eligibility to compete in a non-scholarship NCAA sport?

The onus is entirely on the athlete to determine the impact of accepting OAAP funding on current or future NCAA eligibility and to decide whether or not to accept OAAP funding. The athlete will be required to acknowledge this onus and responsibility when signing the OAAP Ontario Card application form and agreeing to the related terms and conditions of the program. The Ministry accepts no responsibility for any consequences that may follow, or losses that may be sustained in connection with an athlete's eligibility or ineligibility for a NCAA scholarship, or in connection with an athlete's eligibility or ineligibility to compete in a non-scholarship NCAA sport.

The Ministry strongly urges the PSO/MSO and individual athletes to contact the NCAA Eligibility Center to determine the impact of *Quest for Gold* - OAAP funding on current or future eligibility for a NCAA scholarship or on eligibility to compete in a non-scholarship NCAA sport.

National Collegiate Athletic Association

www.ncaa.org

NCAA Eligibility Center mailing address:

NCAA Eligibility Center
P.O. Box 7136
Indianapolis, IN 46207

Customer service hours - 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Eastern time Monday through Friday.
Toll-free phone number (U.S. callers) - Customer service line – 877-262-1492
Phone number (international callers) - Customer service line – 317-223-0700
Fax number - 317-968-5100

It is the Ministry's general understanding that the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) stipulates that any athlete who accepts direct funding from a provincial or state government run program will likely forfeit their eligibility for an NCAA scholarship and their eligibility to participate in that sport or to participate in a non-scholarship NCAA sport. This understanding is based on the information currently available to the Ministry, which could change.

As far as the Ministry can determine there are 20 sports that currently qualify for OAAP that are also full NCAA scholarship sports. These sports are:

Athletics (M/W - including cross country M/W) Baseball (M) Basketball (M/W) Diving (M/W) Fencing (M/W) Field Hockey (W) Golf (M/W) Gymnastics (M/W) Ice Hockey (M/W) Lacrosse (M/W)	Rifle (M/W) Rowing (W) Skiing (M/W) Soccer (M/W) Softball (W) Swimming (M/W) Tennis (M/W) Volleyball (M/W) Water Polo (M/W) Wrestling (M)
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The NCAA has also recognized designated “emerging sports” intended to provide additional athletics opportunities to female student-athletes. While athletic scholarship opportunities in these sports are limited in comparison to full NCAA sports, if competing at the varsity level these sports must also abide by all NCAA regulations, which include student-athlete eligibility. According to information currently available to the Ministry, the following are women's emerging sports:

- Archery
- Badminton
- Equestrian
- Rugby
- Squash
- Synchronized Swimming
- Team Handball

Please note: These lists are not definitive and could change.

Information provided is for the general assistance of prospective *Quest for Gold* applicants and is based on the information currently available to the Ministry. The NCAA eligibility rules are entirely outside the Ministry's control and could change.

The Ministry makes no representations or warranties regarding the possible impact of a *Quest for Gold* - OAAP funding on an athlete's eligibility or ineligibility for a NCAA scholarship, or on an athlete's eligibility or ineligibility to compete in a non-scholarship NCAA sport.

13. How does the acceptance of *Quest for Gold* – OAAP funding impact on an athlete's eligibility for disability pensions, other social assistance programs or academic scholarships?

The Ministry cannot offer any definitive opinion on how acceptance of OAAP funding will impact on current or future eligibility for any other income programs or scholarships (see Note below). The onus is on the athlete to check the terms and conditions of such programs or scholarships to determine potential impacts. The Ministry makes no representations or warranties regarding the possible impact of *Quest for Gold* - OAAP funding on such programs, pensions or scholarships and accepts no responsibility for any consequences that may follow, or losses that may be sustained in relation to such programs, pensions or scholarships.

Please note: The Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services has determined that all direct financial assistance provided to athletes under the OAAP is not to be included as income and assets for purposes of social assistance effective retroactively to January 11, 2006 when OAAP was first launched. Athletes who may be affected are encouraged to contact the nearest regional office of the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

14. What programs are funded by *Quest for Gold*?

The *Quest for Gold* Program had a budget of \$10.0 million in 2008-2009. In addition to the Ontario Athlete Assistance Program, funding was provided to enhance access to high performance coaching and to provide enhanced competitive opportunities and services for Ontario athletes.

Military Family Residency Exemption

- The minimum one-year Ontario residency requirement for *Quest for Gold* eligibility is waived with respect to a spouse or dependant of a member of the Canadian Forces.
- A “member of the Canadian Forces” means:
 - A regular force member; or
 - A member of the reserve force of the Canadian Forces referred to in subsection 15(3) of the *National Defence Act* (Canada) who falls within the circumstances described in clause 50.2(1) (a) or (b) of the *Employment Standards Act, 2000*.
- This means that eligible military family members now meet *Quest for Gold* - OAAP residency requirements immediately upon becoming residents in Ontario. The athlete must also meet all other program requirements, including the PSO/MSO’s athlete ranking process, as detailed in the PSO/MSO’s Selection Criteria.
- In order to qualify for this exemption, the following documents must be presented to the PSO/MSO Selection Committee, who will forward said documents to MHP for confirmation of eligibility:
 - A. If the Canadian Forces member is present, any one of the following is acceptable:
 - Canadian Forces member’s **Military Identification Card** (e.g. NDI 20)
 - **Special Passport** (for military family members returning from an out-of-country posting)
 - Canadian Forces **Member’s Personnel Record Resumé**
 - Canadian Forces member’s **Posting Message** (with accompanying photo identification)
 - **Letter** from local Ontario Military Family Resource Center on letterhead confirming military family status of applicants (issued at the discretion of the local Military Family Resource Centre)
 - B. If the Canadian Forces member is **NOT** present at the time of application, any one of the following documents is acceptable:
 - **Special Passport** (for military family members returning from an out-of-country posting)
 - Canadian Forces **Member’s Personnel Record Resumé**
 - **Letter** from the local Military Family Resource Center on letterhead confirming military family status of applicants (issued at the discretion of the local Military Family Resource Centre)

The Ministry of Health Promotion reserves the right to request additional documentation to establish eligibility for this exemption. For more information, please contact the Ministry of Health Promotion directly at 416-314-7692.

Athlete Selection Requirements and Process

- [How are athletes selected for Canada Cards and Ontario Cards?](#)
- [How will the selection process work for Ontario Cards?](#)

1. How are athletes selected for Canada Cards and Ontario Cards?

Canada Cards:

All Ontario athletes funded through Sport Canada's Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) and continuing to meet AAP eligibility requirements will automatically qualify for Canada Card status under the OAAP. Each athlete will be required to submit proof of Ontario residency (example: Ontario Driver's License or (photo) Health Card with number blacked out).

Note: MHP staff will administer all aspects of the Canada Card - the PSO/MSO Selection Committee is not responsible for this portion of the program. MHP may seek the PSO/MSO's input in confirming that an athlete competes on behalf of Ontario.

Ontario Cards:

Athletes will be nominated for Ontario Cards by their PSO/MSO using an objective sport specific selection criteria developed by a "Selection Committee" appointed by the PSO/MSO. The sport specific selection criteria will be approved by the PSO/MSO's Board of Directors in advance of the selection process. The selection criteria must be fair, objective, transparent and free from discrimination or conflict of interest.

[Please see TAB 11](#) for more information regarding Conflict of Interest and relevant examples.

Note: In the event of a conflict or inconsistency, the selection criteria established by the Ministry and set out in these Guidelines and duplicated in the Athlete Handbook provided to each nominated athlete shall prevail over the selection criteria established by the PSO/MSO.

2. How will the selection criteria process work for Ontario Cards?



The following is a step-by-step outline of the process to be followed by the PSO/MSO in the nomination of athletes for Ontario Cards. MHP staff are also available to meet with PSO/MSO representatives to provide more detail or assistance with these steps.

Note: Deadline dates for the selection process differ depending on which administrative cycle the PSO/MSO chooses to be in:

Cycle 1 - selections completed October 21, athletes funded in December 2009;

Cycle 2 – selections completed January 8, athletes funded in March 2010.

1) Select Cycle:

PSO/MSO notifies Ministry of Health Promotion (MHP) in which cycle they will be nominating their athletes. When choosing a cycle, PSO/MSOs should consider the timing of when their NSO selects athletes for Sport Canada carding, as this has a significant impact on Ontario Card nominations and upgrading of alternates.

2) Letter of Agreement:

PSO/MSO completes PSO/MSO – Letter of Agreement by signing two copies of the letter agreement prepared by MHP and returning one original signed copy to MHP.

3) Confirmation of eligibility:

MHP staff determines if the PSO/MSO meets the minimum eligibility requirements and responsibilities for PSO/MSOs. This includes the review of the High Performance Questionnaire, if one was not completed in 2008-2009.

4) Selection Committee:

The PSO/MSO forms an Athlete Selection Committee which should include a minimum of three members, including the PSO/MSO's High Performance Coordinator/ Director or a High Performance provincial level coach.

- It is the Ministry's expectation that, wherever possible, PSO/MSO Selection Committees will work directly with or include their NSO's High Performance Director or National Coach or equivalent, in order to be certain that performance standards used for athlete selection match those used by the NSO.
- Those athletes, particularly junior-aged athletes, already identified by the NSO (and not already in receipt of Sport Canada Carding) should receive primary focus by the Selection Committee in the ranking process. These are the athletes already identified by the NSO and Sport Canada within their talent identification process.

5) **Athlete Selection Criteria Template – Guiding Principles:**

Using the MHP-provided “Athlete Selection Criteria Template” found in TAB 4 of this binder, the Athlete Selection Committee will create “sport specific athlete selection criteria” for the selection of athletes.

The following guiding principles should be considered in the creation of sport specific criteria:

- It is recommended that performance standards used in the nomination of athletes be prepared in consultation with the NSO.
- Selection criteria must be fair, objective, transparent and free from discrimination or conflict of interest. [Please see TAB 11](#) for more information on Conflict of Interest and relevant examples.
- The criteria must be based on objective results. The PSO/MSO may choose to use the results from designated provincial and national competitions (which may include National Championships), designated international competitions or a combination of these competitions.
- In addition to using international and domestic results in the development of sport-specific criteria, PSO/MSOs may also use objective measures of technical ability and skill levels. When referring to national/international tables and scores, be very specific about which scores/tables will be used, listing dates wherever possible. Example: The Selection Committee will reference the most recent ‘ABC points list’ available as of the December 1, 2009.
- Team sport selection criteria should normally be linked to the Provincial Team selection criteria and the Provincial Team depth chart.
- The opportunity to meet competitive results required for carding should be consistent with a sport's provincial training or competitive program and be accessible to the majority of the best athletes in Ontario.
- PSO/MSOs have the option of nominating athletes from one or more developmental categories at their discretion. However, cards allotted must be gender equal within total carding allotment where applicable.
- Decisions must not be made in an arbitrary manner. For example, any reference to age in the selection criteria should not be established arbitrarily; The PSO/MSO must be able to demonstrate through statistical evidence and expert opinion that there is a clear link among the reference to age in the criteria and the potential to achieve Canada Card / Sport Canada AAP status.
- No limit shall be placed on the number of years an athlete can be nominated for an Ontario Card, as long as the athlete meets the selection criteria and is still age-eligible to compete on the national team in the year following receipt of Ontario Card funding.

6) Athlete Selection Criteria Template – Requirements and Process:

The 'black text' found within the template is MHP-mandatory information and shall not be modified. PSO/MSOs will revise all 'red text' and optional 'blue text' with sport-specific information and requirements.

The following must also be included:

- Process for application – Do athletes apply? To who? By what date? Or are all eligible athletes automatically considered and ranked by the Selection Committee?
- The exact process by which athletes will be ranked/scored/evaluated (whether by accumulated points, rankings, selections, etc.)
- A clearly stated mechanism for breaking ties in rankings.
- Eligible age ranges, which must be identified and not established arbitrarily.
- Dates of all competitions that will be used in the ranking process, including any alternate competitions, or competitions that can be considered as equivalents, should the athlete not be able to attend a certain event or be given the option of choosing between multiple events.
- Be sure to clearly define the exact dates of eligible competitions and exact dates of the PSO/MSO's competitive year.
- State that each athlete must enter into an Athlete Agreement with the PSO/MSO (Agreement to be supplied by the PSO/MSO to the athlete).
- Any other information that will be considered when nominating athletes. Indicate where/when to submit any "Residency Exception" information.
- The final application deadline and process for applying must be clearly articulated to the PSO/MSO membership. The selection criteria must indicate whether all eligible athletes are automatically ranked for nomination by the Selection Committee, or whether athletes must submit a formal application to be considered. If the latter option is used, it is recommended that PSO/MSO Selection Committees send a confirmation email by a pre-announced date confirming receipt of any athlete applications.
- Appeals information as included in the Selection Criteria Template.
- The "Athlete Selection Criteria Document" must be approved by the PSO/MSO Board of Directors prior to being submitted to MHP for review. A copy of the minutes documenting this approval must be submitted to MHP.

- In the event of a conflict or inconsistency, the selection criteria established by the Ministry and set out these Guidelines and duplicated in the Athlete Handbook provided to each nominated athlete shall prevail over the selection criteria established by the PSO/MSO.

Important notes on Selection Criteria:

- If the Athlete Selection Criteria includes mandatory PSO/MSO-sanctioned competitions an athlete must attend as part of the ranking process, the PSO/MSO shall guarantee that athlete entry into the event, assuming the athlete meets all event registration/entry requirements and deadlines. If a mandatory provincial level event is open to non-Ontario athletes, for purposes of *Quest for Gold* ranking, the PSO/MSO should prepare a separate ranking list which only includes Ontario athletes, for the use of the PSO/MSO Selection Committee.
- It is the PSO/MSO's responsibility, through its Selection Committee, to ensure that all athletes nominated for carding status are eligible under the Ministry's eligibility criteria and the PSO/MSOs criteria.

For example: If an athlete is living or training outside Ontario and is being considered on a "Residency Exception", as stipulated within the Athlete Eligibility Criteria (see Tab 4) it is the responsibility of the PSO/MSO to determine if that athlete is eligible under one of the allowable exceptions. It is the PSO/MSO's further responsibility to complete whatever inquiries / information gathering is necessary to make such a determination before making a decision related to the eligibility of that athlete. The PSO/MSO agrees that they will only nominate athletes who meet all eligibility criteria as set out in the OAAP Guidelines.

7) Card Splitting:

- PSO/MSOs may choose to "split" up to 30% of their Ontario Card allotment so that they can issue "half cards" to athletes nominated in predetermined developmental categories. Please refer to the PSO/MSO Letter of Agreement for the exact carding allocation and maximum quantity that may be split.
- If 'half cards' are to be issued, this information, including the number of cards to be "split" and to which category they will be issued must be detailed in the Athlete Selection Criteria document.
- Cards can only be split by categories/disciplines. Athletes within the same category/discipline must receive the same level of carding.

8) Program Deadlines:

Please refer to TAB 9 of this binder for Program deadlines that must be inserted within the Athlete Selection Criteria document.

9) Review by MHP:

The Selection Committee shall submit the “Athlete Selection Criteria” and a copy of the Board of Directors Meeting Minutes where the Athlete Selection Criteria was approved. MHP will review the document for errors and omissions and may suggest revisions to the PSO/MSO. Substantive changes to a PSO/MSO’s Athlete Selection Criteria require further Board approval.

NOTE: In order to facilitate the review of PSO/MSO revisions by MHP, please keep all PSO/MSO revisions in the red/blue fonts. The document can be switched to one uniform colour following the review by MHP.

10) Communicating Selection Criteria:

The PSO/MSO must publish the selection criteria (see attached template in TAB 6 for announcement of selection criteria) so that they are known to athletes and members (i.e. on website, in newsletter or through communications to athletes and members (mailing, e-mail)). The final application deadline and process for applying must be clearly articulated to the PSO/MSO membership. The selection criteria must indicate whether all eligible athletes are automatically ranked for nomination by the Selection Committee, or whether athletes must submit a formal application to be considered. If the latter option is used, it is recommended that PSO/MSO Selection Committees send a confirmation email by a pre-announced date confirming receipt of any athlete applications.

The PSO/MSO cannot alter their sport specific athlete selection criteria after it has been approved by the Board of Directors and made known to the athletes and members. The selection criteria shall require athletes living/training outside of Ontario to submit written documentation to the Selection Committee clearly identifying how they meet the exceptions identified in the Ministry’s General Eligibility Criteria.

11) Selection of Athletes:

The Athlete Selection Committee applies the General and Sport-specific Athlete Eligibility criteria, reviews any documentation received from athletes living/training out of province and applying under the exceptions to the general eligibility criteria and nominates athletes for Ontario Cards.

NOTE: In the event of a conflict or inconsistency, the selection criteria established by the Ministry and set out in these Guidelines and duplicated in the Athlete Handbook provided to each nominated athlete shall prevail over the selection criteria established by the PSO/MSO.

12) Selection of Alternates:

- PSO/MSOs are encouraged to nominate alternates to those athletes nominated for Ontario Card status (unless alternates are announced, there is no opportunity to replace an athlete that drops out or declines the nomination).
- Alternates must be those athletes who are ranked directly behind those athletes nominated for the allotment of Ontario Cards in a particular category.
- The names of alternates must be published along with the names of nominated athletes.
- PSO/MSOs who identify alternates will be permitted to substitute an alternate for an Ontario Carded athlete who drops out or is removed from the OAAP provided that:
 - Alternate is substituted within 2009-2010 fiscal year;
 - An alternate is available from the same category/discipline/card level (full/half);
 - Funding for athlete being substituted is still available within fiscal year (e.g. full funding for card has not already been paid out to athlete no longer in program).
- PSO/MSOs must submit the name of the alternate and the name of the athlete to be removed to MHP using the Athlete Submission Template provided by MHP.

13) Submitting list of athletes to MHP:

The PSO/MSO submits to MHP their list of nominated athletes to verify compliance with administrative requirements of the program. Only the MHP-provided Athlete Submission Template will be accepted for this process. The PSO/MSO will confirm that all athletes have signed and are in compliance with the Sport Organization – Athlete Agreement and have met the General Athlete Eligibility criteria.

14) MHP Review:

MHP verifies PSO/MSO's nominated athlete list for compliance (as above) and sends an email confirmation to PSO/MSO which also includes a letter and Athlete Handbook for the PSO/MSO to forward to each athlete. The Athlete Handbook contains important details about the OAAP as well as detailed instructions for the online application.

15) On-line Athlete Applications:

The PSO/MSO instructs their nominated athletes to apply for a *Quest for Gold* 'Ontario Card' online at www.questforgold.ca NOTE: Only nominated athletes should register online. Alternates should only submit an online application once they are officially substituted.

16) Announcement of Athletes:

The PSO/MSO publishes or otherwise makes known to members the nominated list of athletes and appeals procedures and timelines. See TAB 6 for further details on appeal procedure and template for announcement of nominated athletes and appeal information.

17) Appeals:

Appeals must be submitted using the MHP-provided Appeals Template by athletes directly to the Appeals Committee by October 26, 2009 for Cycle 1 and February 1, 2010 for Cycle 2. See TAB 6 for further details.

18) Confirm receipt of all Sports Organization – Athlete Agreements:

Using the template in TAB 12, PSO/MSO will send written confirmation to MHP that all nominated athletes have returned their signed Athlete Agreement to the PSO/MSO.

19) MHP processes online entries for payment:

MHP processes online entries for payment. Payments are made after all Appeals have been completed and after PSO/MSO confirmation that all Sports Organizations – Athlete Agreements have been received. Cycle 1 payments are targeted for December 31, 2009; Cycle 2 for March 31, 2010.

Note: Funding levels for Ontario Cards will not be known until the total funding available and the number of athletes eligible for carding is determined.

3. What is meant by “maintaining gender equality” when nominating athletes?

The intent of the gender equality rule is to ensure that PSO/MSOs are nominating their best male and female high performance athletes in equal proportion in any given developmental category that the PSO/MSO selects for nominating purposes. Please note that the intent is not to nominate a PSO/MSO’s best high performance athletes. The intent is to nominate an equal number of high performance male and female athletes, regardless of proportion relative to overall membership or any other factor.

PSO/MSOs must ensure “gender equity” within the total allotment of Ontario Cards. For example, if a particular PSO/MSO has an allotment of 10 Ontario Cards then 5 cards must be allotted to males and 5 cards must be allotted to females. If there is a disproportionate amount of males vs. females in a particular developmental category chosen the PSO/MSO must go to another developmental category to balance out the carding allotment between males and females.

The gender equity rule does not apply to PSOs that have been allotted cards for one gender only (e.g. synchro/ringette or PSOs that have been allotted an uneven number of Ontario Cards by gender (e.g. boxing). See TAB 8 for more details.

In the case of unisex Paralympic sports the gender equality rule still applies.

4. Gender Equity Rule when PSO/MSO Opts for “Card Splitting”

The gender equity rule also applies to PSO/MSOs exercising the “card splitting” option. In addition, full cards and cards that are split must be issued equally to both genders. The Ministry will not allow a disproportionate number of full cards or split cards to be issued to one gender over the other.

Example:

Not Permitted:

- Sport X has an allotment of 10 Ontario cards
- Sport X splits 3 cards for a total of:
 - 7 full cards
 - 6 half cards
- Sport X issues
 - 7 full cards to males
 - 6 half cards to a females
- Sport X claims gender equity given relative equality in total cards issued to each gender (7 to 6)

Permitted:

- Sport X has an allotment of 10 Ontario cards
- Sport X splits 2 cards for a total of:
 - 8 full cards
 - 4 half cards
- Sport X issues
 - 4 full cards to males
 - 4 full cards to females
 - 2 half cards to a males
 - 2 half cards to females
- Sport X is in compliance with gender equity rule

PSO/MSO’s cannot split more than 30% of their Ontario card allotment.

Please see Tab 8 for further details on card splitting option.

The following template shall be used by all PSO/MSOs for the posting of Sport-Specific Athlete Selection Criteria for Ontario Cards. An electronic copy can be found on the enclosed CD to allow each PSO/MSO to insert the PSO name/logo throughout and update those PSO/MSO-specific areas in red and/or blue below.

Black = mandatory information

Red = PSO/MSO information to insert/modify

Blue = optional PSO/MSO information

Please maintain these colours when template is sent to MHP for review. Document can be made all one colour after MHP review/input. Thanks!



PSO LOGO HERE

PSO NAME HERE

Quest for Gold – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program 2009-2010 ATHLETE SELECTION CRITERIA TEMPLATE

Quest for Gold – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program 2009-2010 (OAAP) is funded by the Government of Ontario, through the Ministry of Health Promotion (MHP), and operated through the Sport and Recreation Branch. The overarching goal of the Quest for Gold – OAAP is directly related to the Enhanced Excellence goals of both ACTIVE2010 and the Canadian Sport Policy – to improve the performance and number of Ontario athletes performing at the national and international level; thereby contributing to the improved performance of Canada at international competitions. Specific objectives of the program are:

- a) To help athletes continue their pursuit of athletic excellence at the highest levels of national and international competition;
- b) To encourage athletes to stay in Ontario to live and train;
- c) To compensate athletes for earnings lost while training;
- d) To enable athletes to successfully pursue excellence in sport while fulfilling their educational goals;
- e) To increase athlete access to improved high performance coaching; and
- f) To enhance training and competitive opportunities available to athletes.

The program will provide direct financial assistance to Ontario junior-aged athletes through an "Ontario Card" designation. "Junior-aged athlete" is defined as those athletes who fall within the eligible age range for the Canada Games - 11 to 22 years of age. (Consideration will be given to older junior-aged athletes if a PSO/MSO's NSO-approved Long Term Athlete Development model (LTAD) identifies older athletes in the "Train to Train" and "Train to Compete" categories). The intent of the OAAP is to provide funding to individual athletes based on their demonstrated commitment to high performance sport, allowing them to pursue athletic excellence at the highest levels of national and international competition.

How does it work?

In accordance with the OAAP guidelines, the PSO NAME HERE is responsible for developing sport specific selection criteria and forming a Selection Committee that will apply the criteria to select those athletes who will be awarded Ontario Card status in 2009-2010. The Selection

Criteria is approved by the Board of Directors and reviewed by MHP staff. Nominated athletes will be required to sign and comply with an Athlete Agreement between the athlete and **PSO NAME HERE**. Carding status will be for one year starting April 1, 2009 ending March 31, 2010.

In 2009-2010, the Ministry of Health Promotion allocated a certain amount of OAAP Ontario Cards to each eligible Provincial Sport / Multi-Sport Organization (PSO/MSO). **PSO NAME HERE** has been allotted a total of **XX** Ontario cards (split evenly as **X** male and **X** Female Cards).

OPTIONAL: **PSO NAME HERE** has also decided to exercise the option made available by MHP to split up to 30% of its carding allotment (i.e. issue ½ cards in designated categories).

A minimum of 70% of the Ontario cards will be allocated to what the Ministry of Health Promotion defines as junior-aged athletes (11 to 22 years of age). A maximum of 30% of the Ontario cards may be allocated to athletes no longer eligible for "junior athlete" status, (athletes 23 and over).

As a result, the **22** cards issued to **PSO NAME HERE** will be allocated as follows:

	Male	Female
Full Cards – 14	7	7
Half Cards – 8 full cards = 16 half cards	8	8

OPTIONAL – IF YOUR PSO HAS MULTIPLE CATEGORIES/DISCIPLINES, THE CHART BELOW **MUST** BE USED TO INDICATE THE QUANTITY OF CARDS TO BE ALLOCATED BY CATEGORY/DISCIPLINE. CARDS CAN ONLY BE SPLIT BY CATEGORIES/DISCIPLINES. ATHLETES WITHIN THE SAME CATEGORY/DISCIPLINE MUST RECEIVE THE SAME LEVEL OF CARDING.

Cards will be specifically allocated to the following categories/disciplines:

Category	Number of cards
J1 level athletes	14 Full Cards (7 male, 7 female)
J2 level athletes	8 Half Cards (4 male, 4 female)
Senior level athletes	8 Half Cards (4 male, 4 female)

In accordance with the OAAP guidelines **PSO NAME HERE** is responsible for forming a Selection Committee and sport specific selection criteria to nominate the athletes for Ontario carding status in 2009-2010. This selection criteria has been approved by the **PSO NAME HERE** Board of Directors.

The Selection Committee is comprised of the following members:

Name, position within PSO/MSO or NSO
Name, position within PSO/MSO or NSO
Name, position within PSO/MSO or NSO

How much funding is available?

The exact level of funding for the 2009-2010 carding year will be determined by the Ministry after the total number of athletes nominated for Ontario Card status has been determined. Funding will be released prior to March 31, 2010.

How will the **PSO NAME HERE** Selection Committee decide who receives funding?

The **PSO NAME HERE** Selection Committee will use both the Ministry of Health Promotion Eligibility Criteria and the Sport Specific Selection Criteria detailed below to determine which athletes will be nominated by the **PSO NAME HERE** for Ontario Card status in 2009-2010:

Ministry of Health Promotion Eligibility Criteria:

All athletes must also meet the Ministry of Health Promotion's minimum athlete eligibility criteria:

- Athlete must be a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant;
- Athlete must be a resident of Ontario for one year prior to his/her nomination for carding status, with the following exception;
The residency requirement will be waived if the athlete is a direct family member of:
 - a regular force member, or
 - a reservist as defined in subsection 1 (1) of the *Employment Standards Act, 2000* who is deployed under a circumstance described in clause 50.2 (1) (a) or (b) of that Act, or who is deployed or in any other way placed on active duty under a circumstance described in regulations made for the purposes of clause 50.2 (1) (c) of that Act.
- Athletes must be training and continuing to train in Ontario. Exceptions (“Residency Exceptions”) will be made on a case specific basis providing that the athlete can substantiate that:
 - He/She cannot receive the required level of training in Ontario and is out of the province **temporarily** during the year (i.e. due to lack of facilities, coaching, competitions);
 - ▶ The onus is on the athlete to demonstrate that he/she needs to be out of province. The athlete will submit written documentation to their PSO/MSO's Selection Committee clearly indicating how they meet these exceptions. The Ministry may require that the athlete provide supporting documentation from the athlete's PSO/ MSO, National Sport Organization (NSO) or other sources to verify reasons for athlete's absence from the Province of Ontario.
 - He/She must attend a post-secondary institution out-of-province because the course of study is not available to him/her in Ontario;
 - It is more financially feasible to attend a post-secondary institution out-of-province, or other extenuating circumstances that require the athlete to be out of the province.
- Athlete must be a member in good standing with PSO/MSO and NSO where applicable.
- Athlete must have entered into a Sports Organization - Athlete Agreement with his or her PSO/MSO and must be in full compliance with the terms and conditions of that agreement.
- Athlete must demonstrate a commitment and dedication to a proper training and competitive program.
- Athlete must be instructed by a coach who has been trained and certified in the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) Level 2 or equivalent.
- Athlete must not be under sanction as per the Canadian Anti-Doping Policy.
- Athlete must be attending an educational institution full-time (i.e. primary and secondary schools)
 - Exceptions will be made providing that the athlete can substantiate that his/her training will not allow for full-time attendance or if an athlete requires special needs that preclude full or part-time attendance (e.g. Athlete with a disability (AWAD))
- Athletes who have completed their area of study at the secondary level (i.e. high school) and who continue to train towards participation in major national or international competitions will also be given consideration.
- If eligible, the athlete must compete, and continue to compete for Ontario and/or Canada for one year from the date of the Minister's letter informing the athlete of acceptance into OAAP program, at Canada Games and other national competitions involving provincial team competitions. Athletes who have achieved Canada Card status are not eligible for Ontario Cards.
- Eligibility will be limited to Ontario junior-aged athletes (“junior-aged” refers to chronological age, not a sport's specific age category - only exception is for PSO/MSOs using 30% of Ontario Card allotment for Senior level athletes not funded by Sport Canada – see note below) who have been identified as a next generation national team athlete as demonstrated by:
 - Identification within the NSO pool of identified next generation national team athletes for the last two competitive seasons; OR

- Results at regional championships, national championships (junior and/or senior) or other recognized national/international competitions over the last two competitive seasons; OR
- Representation on a Canadian National Team (developmental and/or junior). Athletes training for Canada Games or provincial teams may also be considered.

Important Notes:

- To be deemed a potential next generation national team athlete, the athlete must be age-eligible to compete on the national team in the year following receipt of Ontario Card funding.
- All athletes under the age of 18 must have their parent or legal guardian sign their OAAP application form. Cheques will be processed in the name of the eligible athlete.
- Athletes who are attending any foreign post-secondary educational institution (including NCAA institutions) and are receiving an athletic scholarship in any sport are not eligible to receive OAAP support.
- An athlete that received Sport Canada Carding between April 1, 2008 and March 31, 2009 and/or April 1, 2009 and March 31, 2010 and is no longer in receipt of Sport Canada Athlete Assistance shall not be eligible to receive *Quest for Gold* funding during fiscal year 2009-2010 (April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010.) The intent of this rule is to prevent athletes whose performance levels and rankings no longer qualify them for Sport Canada carding from taking an Ontario Card from a future national-level athlete. However, exceptions may apply and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Exceptions may include, but may not be limited to logistical or administrative changes, injuries, etc.
- An athlete can only be nominated to receive *Quest for Gold* funding in one sport.
- The onus is entirely on the athlete to determine the impact of accepting OAAP funding on current or future NCAA eligibility and to decide whether or not to accept OAAP funding. The athlete will be required to acknowledge this onus and responsibility when signing the OAAP Ontario Card application form and agreeing to the related terms and conditions of the program. Athletes are strongly encouraged to contact the NCAA Eligibility Center to determine the impact of *Quest for Gold* - OAAP funding on current or future eligibility for a NCAA scholarship or on eligibility to compete in a non-scholarship NCAA sport.
- In the event of a conflict or inconsistency, the selection criteria established by the Ministry and set out the Athlete Handbook provided to each nominated athlete shall prevail over the selection criteria established by the PSO/MSO.

Sport Specific Athlete Selection Criteria:

The following sport specific athlete selection criteria will be utilized in the identification, ranking and selection of athletes for Ontario Cards:

Note to PSO/MSOs – insert sport specific criteria here. Refer to TAB 3 for full details, guiding principles and requirements.

- An athlete who previously received *Quest for Gold* funding and entered into a Sports Organization – Athlete Agreement must have complied with the terms of that agreement to the satisfaction of the PSO/MSO in order to be considered for funding in fiscal 2009-2010.

Residency Exceptions:

Any athlete living/training outside of Ontario is required to **submit written documentation** to the **PSO NAME HERE** Selection Committee clearly identifying how they meet the following residency exceptions, identified in the Ministry of Health Promotion's General Eligibility Criteria:

- Athletes must be living and continuing to train in Ontario. Exceptions will be made on a case specific basis providing that the athlete can substantiate that:
 - He/She cannot receive the required level of training in Ontario and is out of the province **temporarily** during the year (i.e. due to lack of facilities, coaching, competitions);
 - He/She must attend a post-secondary institution out-of-province because the course of study is not available to him/her in Ontario;
 - It is more financially feasible to attend a post-secondary institution out-of-province, or other extenuating circumstances that require the athlete to be out of the province.

This information must be received by the Selection Committee by no later than **insert date here** in order to be considered.

Residency Exemption for Military Families: The one-year Ontario residency requirement is waived for any Ontario Card or Canada Card applicant who is a spouse or dependant of a: Regular Force member of the Canadian Forces; or Reservist currently deployed by the Canadian Forces into active service. This means that eligible military family members now qualify for OAAP funding immediately upon becoming residents of Ontario. Please see the 2009-2010 *Quest for Gold* Athlete Handbook for details of this exemption, including a list of documents needed to verify eligibility for this waiver of the one-year Ontario residency requirement.

OPTIONAL – MAY ONLY BE USED IF THE PSO/MSO HAS A CLEARLY DOCUMENTED POLICY FOR RANKING INJURED ATHLETES – POLICY MUST BE INCLUDED BELOW

Failure to Meet Selection Criteria for Health-related Reasons

Athletes that, for strictly health-related reasons, have not achieved the standards required for nomination of carded status **may** be considered for nomination under the following conditions:

- 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 and, despite making every reasonable effort to attain the applicable carding standards during the year in which the injury, illness or pregnancy occurred, has failed to do so, in the view of the PSO/MSO, for reasons strictly related to the injury, illness or pregnancy.
- The PSO NAME HERE, based on its technical judgement and that of a PSO/MSO team physician or equivalent, indicates in writing 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.

PSO/MSO MUST ADD HERE what process will be used for ranking athletes that meet these criteria. For example – using results from the same events from the previous competitive season.

NOTE TO PSO/MSOs: If criteria is not included within the Selection Criteria, MHP will not allow athletes to be nominated in this category.

Alternates:

PSO NAME HERE will also nominate alternates to those athletes nominated for Ontario Card status. Alternates will be those athletes who are ranked directly behind those athletes nominated for the allotment of Ontario Cards in a particular category/discipline. The names of alternates will be published along with the names of nominated athletes. If an athlete drops out or is removed from the OAAP an alternate will be substituted into that athlete's position, provided that:

- Alternate is substituted within 2009-2010 fiscal year;
- An alternate is available from the same category/discipline/card level (Full/Half);
- Funding for athlete being substituted is still available within fiscal year (e.g. full funding for card has not already been paid out to athlete no longer in program).

To Apply:

All required information (**PSO/MSO – list exact requirements here**) must be submitted to:

Name
Email
Address
Phone number, Fax number

no later than **INSERT DATE HERE**. The athlete agreement will only come into effect if an athlete is selected and accepts carding status through the OAAP program.

Breaking a Tie:

If there is a tie in the final score between 2 athletes, the Selection Committee will

PSO NAME HERE will publish or make known the athletes nominated for Ontario Card status by no later than (**PSO/MSO – select date based on Cycle you are in: October 21, 2009 or January 18, 2010**).

Appeals

Appeals will be allowed in writing from athletes who have not been nominated by a PSO/MSO for Ontario Card status. Appeals will be dealt with by an Appeals Committee comprised of representatives from the sport community and chosen by the Ministry.

Grounds for appeals will be limited strictly to issues related to:

- A) Whether or not the PSO/MSO has completed the selection process in accordance with their own published selection criteria and related procedures;
- B) Whether or not the selection criteria developed and applied by the PSO/MSO were fair, objective, transparent and free from discrimination or conflict of interest.

After hearing an appeal the Appeals Committee will have the authority to:

1. Direct the PSO/MSO to redo the selection process using the correct criteria/process and submit a new list of nominated athletes;
2. Deny the appeal; or

3. Allow the appeal and nominate the appellant for carding status.

The appeals will only be accepted on the MHP-provided template, in writing through regular post, registered mail, courier or delivered in person. Appeals that are delivered personally or by courier shall be deemed to be received on the date of delivery. Appeals that are delivered by regular post or registered mail shall be deemed to be received three days after the date of mailing. Appeals submitted by e-mail or fax will not be accepted. The Appeals Committee will discuss all appeals at once, after PSO/MSOs publish their list of nominated athletes. Appeals received in advance of the PSO/MSO announcing nominees will not be reviewed until after the Appeals deadline.

The deadline for athletes to submit appeals to the Appeals Committee is

Cycle One: **October 26, 2009.**

Cycle Two: **February 1, 2010.**

Appeals must be completed on the template below and will be directed to:

Quest for Gold Ontario Athlete Assistance Program Appeals Committee
c/o Sport and Recreation Branch
Ministry of Health Promotion,
18th floor, 393 University Avenue
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2S1

2009/2010 Quest for Gold – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program Appeal Template

The deadline for athletes to submit appeals to the Appeals Committee is October 26, 2009 for Cycle 1 and February 1, 2010 for Cycle 2. Appeals will only be accepted on the MHP-provided template, in writing through regular post, registered mail, courier or delivered in person. **Please refer to the appeals section of your PSO/MSO's Athlete Selection Criteria document prior to completing this form.**

Full Name: _____
Address: _____ City: _____
Postal Code: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____
Sport / PSO: _____

Reason for Appeal (Check one only):

- Whether or not the PSO/MSO has completed the selection process in accordance with their own published selection criteria and related procedures;
- Whether or not the selection criteria developed and applied by the PSO/MSO were fair, objective, transparent and free from discrimination or conflict of interest.

Provide a two-line summary of the reason for the appeal:

In the space below (continue on to next page as needed), provide a detailed account of the situation to allow the Appeals Committee to understand the basis of the appeal (please submit additional pages/supporting documentation if necessary):

Print Name of Appellant

Signature of Appellant

Date

Any/all information provided to the Appeals Committee may be shared with the athlete's PSO by the Appeals Committee.

SPORTS ORGANIZATION – Athlete Agreement

It is the responsibility of the PSO/MSO to prepare a SPORTS ORGANIZATION – Athlete Agreement and provide two copies of this Agreement to nominated athletes for signature by the athlete or their parent or legal guardian. Both copies of the Agreement must also be signed by the designated PSO/MSO authority. One copy shall be kept on file by the PSO/MSO, the second retained by the athlete or their parent or legal guardian. Payment of the grant to carded athletes is contingent on the Ministry receiving this Agreement for all athletes.

It is the responsibility of the PSO/MSO to notify the Ministry when an athlete has violated the terms of the Agreement and has been removed from the OAAP by the PSO/MSO.

To facilitate the development of fair and comprehensive Sports Organization - Athlete Agreements, MHP has attached a sample template agreement. It should be noted that this sample agreement goes beyond MHP requirements for the specific purposes of carding. Some items in the sample agreement are not applicable to all sports, and some items important to specific sports may be missing. Sports Organization - Athlete Agreements should be modified as needed to reflect the individual sport's characteristics and the individual athlete's needs.



NEW FOR 2009-2010: The PSO/MSO will send written confirmation to MHP that all nominated athletes have entered into a Sports Organization – Athlete Agreement with the PSO/MSO and are in full compliance with the terms and conditions of that agreement. This confirmation must be received by MHP by the deadline posted in TAB 9 of the MHP binder.

Section 1: Policies

The purpose of the Sports Organization - Athlete Agreement is to set down in writing the rights, responsibilities and obligations of the athlete and the PSO/MSO.

The Agreement must clearly specify the following:

- Eligible expenses, as outlined in the Athlete Handbook;
- Benefits available to the Ontario carded athlete through his or her PSO/MSO;
- The PSO/MSO's obligations;
- Athlete reporting requirements, as defined by the PSO/MSO (e.g. training logs);
- The athlete's obligations, including a commitment to follow an agreed-upon training and competitive program and competitive opportunities to be attended;
- Any other commitments to the PSO/MSO that the Ontario carded athlete is required to make (for instance, time, promotional activities or financial commitments);
- The Agreement's duration (not to exceed one carding year);

- Specific PSO/MSO policies the carded athlete must abide by, including the following:
 - ✓ the PSO/MSO's and/or NSO's Anti-Doping policy;
 - ✓ the PSO/MSO's Codes of Conduct
 - ✓ the Canadian Policy on Doping in Sport;
 - ✓ Ontario OAAP eligibility criteria; and
- The dispute mechanism and related procedures/processes that will be used in any dispute between the carded athlete and the PSO/MSO relating to or arising out of the Sports Organization - Athlete Agreement. This procedure must conform to natural justice and procedural fairness.

Notes:

- Ontario carding is contingent upon an athlete agreeing to all conditions in his or her Sports Organization - Athlete Agreement. In other words, athletes must negotiate any changes to the Sports Organization - Athlete Agreement directly with his or her Provincial / Multi-Sport Organization.
- All clauses in the Agreement must clearly define the athlete's expected conduct.
- The Agreement must be in plain, understandable language, not legal jargon. Basic rights such as freedom of speech and confidentiality of medical records must be respected.
- The Sports Organization – Athlete Agreement must also comply with all minimum OAAP Eligibility Criteria for athletes, as detailed in the Athlete Handbook, and include a provision which stipulates that the athlete must compete for Ontario and/or Canada while enrolled in the OAAP.

Section 2: Procedures

- 1) The Sports Organization - Athlete Agreement is approved by the PSO/MSO.
- 2) The Sports Organization - Athlete Agreement is modified as required. For example, individual athletes may need to modify or negotiate specific clauses to fit their situation.

It is the PSO/MSO's responsibility to ensure that all Ontario carded athletes sign their Sports Organization - Athlete Agreement. Athletes for whom the PSO/MSO has not received the signed agreement will not be eligible for Ontario Athlete Assistance until such time as the signed agreement is received by the PSO/MSO and the PSO/MSO informs MHP of this compliance.

All PSO/MSO - Athlete Agreements must include the following statements:

- **“All minimum OAAP eligibility criteria for athletes within the *Quest for Gold* Program apply to this agreement”.**
- **“This agreement shall be in effect from the date of the Minister of Health Promotion’s Approval Letter for a period of one year, unless terminated earlier.**

SAMPLE Agreement

This agreement is a sample only. Each PSO/MSO is responsible for creating their own sport specific PSO/MSO Athlete Agreement. PSO/MSOs should note Article 2d. below which refers to "Appendix A", which must be attached by the PSO/MSO for this Article to be valid.

Sports Organization - Athlete Agreement

AGREEMENT made this _____ day of _____, 20__

BETWEEN

<<name of PSO/MSO>>, having its provincial office

at _____ (hereinafter referred to as "the PSO/MSO")

AND

_____, residing at

_____ (hereinafter referred to as "the Athlete").

WHEREAS the Athlete wishes to be an active competitor in PSO/MSO sanctioned events with his or her rights and obligations clearly defined;

WHEREAS the PSO/MSO is recognized by _____ (the PSO/MSO's National Federation) and The Ministry of Health Promotion as the sole Provincial Federation governing the sport of _____ in Ontario;

WHEREAS the PSO/MSO and _____ recognize the need to clarify the relationship between the PSO/MSO and the Athlete by establishing their respective rights and obligations;

AND WHEREAS the *Quest for Gold* – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program (hereinafter referred to as "the Ontario AAP") requires these rights and obligations to be stated in a written agreement to be signed by the PSO/MSO and the Athlete who applies for assistance under the Ontario AAP;

AND WHEREAS the National Federation requires that the PSO/MSO certify the eligibility of the Athlete to compete as a member in good standing;

NOW THEREFORE the parties agree to the following:

PSO/MSO's Obligations

1. The PSO/MSO shall:

- a. organize, select and operate teams of athletes, coaches and other necessary support staff (a Provincial Team) to represent Ontario in the sport of _____ at Provincial and National competitions;
- b. publish criteria for the selection of athletes to the Ontario AAP before the selection process begins for the particular sport;
- c. nominate all athletes who meet Ontario AAP criteria;
- d. organize programs and provide funding for the development and provision of coaching expertise, officials and event training centres in Ontario in the sport of _____ in accordance with the budget of the PSO/MSO;
- e. assist the Athlete in obtaining quality medical care and advice;
- f. regularly provide Provincial Team and OAAP information (training and competition) to the Athlete in the form of mailed correspondence;
- g. provide a formal review of the Athlete's annual training program;
- h. provide funding for the Athlete for training camps and competitions in accordance with the budget of the PSO/MSO;
- i. provide and include in Agreement a dispute mechanism and related procedures/process that is in conformity with the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness, which shall include access to an independent arbitration process with respect to any dispute the carded athlete may have with the PSO/MSO related to or arising out of this Agreement.

Athlete's Obligations

2. The Athlete shall:

- a. recognize the responsibilities of the coaches in coaching-related decisions and follow the training and competitive program mutually agreed to by the following:
 - o the PSO/MSO representative responsible for developing and monitoring Provincial Team training and competitive programs (the Provincial Coach or High Performance Director, for example);
 - o the Athlete's personal coach; and
 - o the Athlete;

- b. avoid living in an environment not conducive to high-performance achievements or taking any deliberate action that puts his or her ability to perform at risk or limits performance;
- c. provide the Provincial Coach or his or her designate, by mail sent to the PSO/MSO, with an annual training chart and monthly updates of changes to the chart or any other appropriate information that the PSO/MSO may request;
- d. participate in all mandatory training camps and competitions as described in **Appendix A** of this Agreement (**NOTE TO PSO/MSOs: Appendix A is sport specific and is to be created and attached by the PSO/MSO. Appendix A is not included within this sample agreement**);
- e. notify the PSO/MSO immediately in writing of any injury or other legitimate reason that will prevent the Athlete from participating in an upcoming event referred to in **Appendix A** of this Agreement and ensure in the case of an injury that a certificate from a medical doctor setting out the specific nature of the injury is forwarded to the PSO/MSO within three weeks of the injury;
- f. agree to compete exclusively for Ontario and/or Canada from one year from being enrolled in Ontario AAP (from date of receipt of Minister's letter informing athlete of enrolment), dress in the Provincial Team uniform and other official clothing, if applicable, while traveling or participating as part of the Provincial Team;
- g. avoid any action or conduct that would reasonably be expected to significantly disrupt or interfere with a competition or the preparation of any Athlete for a competition;
- h. avoid the use of banned substances that contravene the rules of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the rules of the International Federation and the Canadian Policy on Doping in Sport;
- i. submit, without prior warning, to unannounced doping-control tests in addition to other prior-notice tests and submit at other times to doping-control testing when requested by the PSO/MSO, Sport Canada, the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES) or other authorities designated to do so;
- j. avoid the possession of anabolic drugs and neither supply such drugs to others directly or indirectly nor encourage or condone their use by knowingly aiding in any effort to avoid detection of the use of banned substances or banned performance enhancing practices;
- k. participate, if asked by the PSO/MSO to do so, in any Doping Control/Education Program developed by the PSO/MSO in co-operation with Sport Canada and the CCES;
- l. avoid participating in any competitions where federal government sport policy has determined that such participation is not permitted;

- m. participate in sport-related, non-commercial promotional activities on behalf of the Government of Ontario. The PSO/MSO usually makes such requests for participation and arranges the activities. Unless supplementary compensation is arranged, these activities do not normally involve more than two working days per athlete per year;
- n. adhere to and comply with the PSO/MSO's dispute mechanism procedure in the event of a dispute relating to or arising out of this Agreement;
- o. actively participate in all Ontario AAP evaluation activities. Athletes will cooperate fully in any evaluation of the Ontario AAP that may be conducted by the Minister or anyone authorized to act on the Minister's behalf and provide such data as the person conducting the evaluation considers necessary for the proper conduct of the evaluation;
- p. spend the Ontario AAP funding obtained only on the following items:
 - o Normal living costs
 - o Costs directly associated with training (e.g. coaching, facility fees, other athlete services)
 - o Costs associated with attending training camps and competitions (e.g. entry fees, travel costs)
 - o Sport specific equipment
 - o Tuition and education related expenses (e.g. books, fees).

3. Default of Agreement

- a. Where one of the parties to this agreement is of the opinion that the other party has failed to conform with its obligations under this agreement, the following shall occur:
 - i. The one party shall notify the other party in writing of the particulars of the alleged default.
 - ii. If there exists a reasonable opportunity to correct the default and the default is not so fundamental as to amount to a repudiation of this agreement, the notifying party shall indicate in the notice the steps to be taken to remedy the default and a reasonable period of time to complete the remedial steps.
 - iii. The parties agree that the giving of the above referred-to notice by a party will not prevent that party from later asserting that the default was so fundamental as to amount to a repudiation of this agreement.
- b. If the party receiving the notice remedies the breach within the specified time, the dispute shall be considered resolved and neither party shall have any recourse against the other concerning the matter alleged to comprise the default. If the party receiving the notice fails to remedy the breach

within the specified time and either party wishes recourse against the other concerning the matters alleged to comprise the default, that party shall use the dispute settlement mechanism of this agreement to resolve the differences between the parties.

All minimum eligibility criteria for athletes within the *Quest for Gold* Program (OAAP) apply to this agreement.

4. Resolution of Disputes

PSO/MSO and the ATHLETE agree that alleged breaches and disputes relating to this Agreement shall be dealt with as follows:

- a) In dealing with alleged breaches and disputes relating to this Agreement, time shall be of the essence.
- b) Information pertaining to alleged breaches or disputes relating to this Agreement shall be kept confidential. Except for disclosures to the Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion, which the ATHLETE and the PSO/MSO hereby authorise for the purpose of administering the Ontario AAP, such information shall only be disclosed to outside parties with the express permission of PSO/MSO and the ATHLETE, unless such disclosure is required by law, is mandated by the policies of PSO/MSO or the Government of Ontario, or is required by virtue of a contractual commitment PSO/MSO or the ATHLETE may have to another party or parties.
- c) Where the Provincial Coach, in consultation with the VP responsible for the High Performance Program, is of the view that the ATHLETE is in breach of any of the provisions of this Agreement, the ATHLETE shall be notified immediately by e-mail with a copy by regular mail. The VP responsible for High Performance shall be copied on all correspondence pertaining to the alleged breach.
- d) In the event that the Provincial Coach and VP responsible for High Performance cannot remedy the alleged breach within 14 days after the ATHLETE has been notified, the matter shall be referred to the President of PSO/MSO who shall, within 14 days, investigate and decide the dispute.
- e) In deciding the dispute, the President shall have the authority to stipulate specific performance to remedy the breach of the Agreement and/or to discipline the ATHLETE by applying any one or combination of the following disciplinary sanctions:
 - i. a written reprimand;
 - ii. removal of certain High Performance Program privileges;

- iii. suspending the ATHLETE from further participation on the Provincial Teams Program, either for specified events or for a specified period of time;
 - iv. dismissing the ATHLETE from the Provincial Teams Program;
 - v. termination of this Agreement; and/or
 - vi. any other sanction that it considers appropriate in the circumstances.
- f) Where the ATHLETE is of the view that the Provincial Coach, the VP responsible for High Performance, or any other representative of PSO/MSO is in breach of any of the provisions of this Agreement, the ATHLETE shall notify the PSO/MSO President who shall investigate and decide the dispute in a timely manner.
- g) Any decision made with respect to an alleged breach of this Agreement may be referred to PSO/MSO's policies pertaining to the resolution of disputes, including the PSO/MSO Appeals Policy.

Duration of Agreement

This AGREEMENT comes into force on the date that the Ministry of Health issues an Approval Letter announcing the award of Ontario AAP funding to the ATHLETE and shall be in effect for a period of one year from the date of that Approval Letter, unless terminated earlier.

Athlete Declaration

I hereby declare that in return for any financial assistance provided by the *Quest for Gold* – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program, I undertake to fulfil all commitments and responsibilities outlined in the booklet “OAAP Athlete Handbook” and my Athlete/PSO/MSO Agreement. I agree to refund any assistance provided to me, should my eligibility status change or my carded status be withdrawn, effective the withdrawal/change of status date.

_____	_____
Athlete signature	Date
_____	_____
Parent signature (if athlete is under 18)	Date
_____	_____
PSO/MSO representative signature	Date

Announcement and Appeals of Athlete Selections

Appeals will be allowed in writing from athletes who have not been nominated by a PSO/MSO for Ontario Card status. Appeals will be dealt with by an Appeals Committee comprised of representatives from the sport community and chosen by the Ministry.

Grounds for appeals will be limited strictly to issues related to:

- A) Whether or not the PSO/MSO has completed the selection process in accordance with their own published selection criteria and related procedures;
- B) Whether or not the selection criteria developed and applied by the PSO/MSO were fair, objective, transparent and free from discrimination or conflict of interest.

After hearing an appeal the Appeals Committee will have the authority to:

1. Direct the PSO/MSO to redo the selection process using the correct criteria/process and submit a new list of nominated athletes;
2. Deny the appeal; or
3. Allow the appeal and nominate the appellant for carding status.

The deadline for athletes to submit appeals to the Appeals Committee is October 26, 2009 for Cycle 1 and February 1, 2010 for Cycle 2. The appeals will only be accepted on the MHP-provided template, in writing through regular post, registered mail, courier or delivered in person. Appeals that are delivered personally or by courier shall be deemed to be received on the date of delivery. Appeals that are delivered by regular post or registered mail shall be deemed to be received three days after the date of mailing. Appeals submitted by e-mail or fax will not be accepted. The Appeals Committee will discuss all appeals at once, after PSO/MSOs publish their list of nominated athletes. Appeals received in advance of the PSO/MSO announcing nominees will not be reviewed until after the Appeals deadline.

[See the attached template](#) that PSO/MSOs can use to publish or make known their list of nominated Ontario Card athletes and appeal procedures.

Note:

PSO/MSOs are encouraged to resolve disputes or disagreements informally with athletes who have not been nominated to avoid, wherever possible, formal appeals.

SAMPLE TEMPLATE – Announcement of Ontario Card Nominations and Appeal Procedures

2009-2010 Quest for Gold Athlete Assistance Program

Ontario Card Nominations Announced!

<<Name of PSO/MSO>> would like to thank and congratulate the talented athletes who have been nominated for Ontario Cards under the 2009-2010 *Quest for Gold* Ontario Athlete Assistance Program (OAAP). The athletes nominated were selected using the sport specific selection criteria developed by <<Name of PSO/MSO>>, approved by its Board of Directors and applied by (the) <<Name of PSO/MSO>> Athlete Selection Committee.

(The) <<Name of PSO/MSO>> congratulates these athletes on their successful performances, and their nomination for *Quest for Gold* - OAAP funding.

* [List of Athletes nominated and category\(s\) go here](#)

Appeals

Athletes who have not been nominated and who wish to appeal this decision can do so by filing an appeal *in writing only* with the *Quest for Gold* Ontario Athlete Assistance Program Appeals Committee. Appeals must be submitted through regular post, registered mail, in person or by courier and on the form provided. Appeals that are delivered personally or by courier shall be deemed to be received on the date of delivery. Appeals that are delivered by regular post or registered mail shall be deemed to be received three days after the date of mailing. **Appeals submitted by e-mail or fax will not be accepted.**

Note: Any/all information provided to the Appeals Committee may be shared with the athlete's PSO by the Appeals Committee.

Grounds for appeals will be limited strictly to:

- Whether or not the PSO/MSO has completed the selection process in accordance with their own published selection criteria and related procedures;
- Whether or not the selection criteria developed and applied by the PSO/MSO were fair, objective, transparent and free from discrimination or conflict of interest.

After hearing an appeal the Appeals Committee will have the authority to:

- a) Direct the PSO/MSO to redo the selection process using the correct criteria/process and submit a new list of nominated athletes;
- b) Deny the appeal; or
- c) Allow the appeal and nominate the appellant for carding status.

The deadline for athletes to submit appeals to the Appeals Committee is October 26, 2009 for Cycle 1 and February 1, 2010 for Cycle 2.

Appeals must be completed on the template below and will be directed to:

Quest for Gold Ontario Athlete Assistance Program Appeals Committee
c/o Sport and Recreation Branch
Ministry of Health Promotion,
18th floor, 393 University Avenue, Suite 1802
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2S1

2009/2010 Quest for Gold – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program Appeal Template

The date for athletes to submit appeals to the Appeals Committee is October 26, 2009 for Cycle 1 and February 1, 2010 for Cycle 2. The appeals will only be accepted on the MHP-provided template, in writing through regular post, registered mail, courier or delivered in person. **Please refer to the appeals section of your PSO/MSO's Athlete Selection Criteria document prior to completing this form.**

Full Name: _____
Address: _____ City: _____
Postal Code: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____
Sport / PSO: _____

Reason for Appeal (Check one only):

- Whether or not the PSO/MSO has completed the selection process in accordance with their own published selection criteria and related procedures;
- Whether or not the selection criteria developed and applied by the PSO/MSO were fair, objective, transparent and free from discrimination or conflict of interest.

Provide a two-line summary of the reason for the appeal:

In the space below (continue on to next page as needed) provide a detailed account of the situation to allow the Appeals Committee to understand the basis of the appeal (please submit additional pages/supporting documentation if necessary):

Print Name of Appellant

Signature of Appellant

Date

Any/all information provided to the Appeals Committee may be shared with the athlete's PSO by the Appeals Committee.

Illness, Injury or Pregnancy

The *Quest for Gold* - OAAP guidelines cover the following special situations related to illness, injury or pregnancy and:

- short-term curtailment of training and competition for health-related reasons;
- long-term curtailment of training and competition for health-related reasons; and
- failure to meet selection criteria for health-related reasons.

1. Short-term Curtailment of Training and Competition for Health-related Reasons

Health-related circumstances that limit training and competition for relatively short periods (i.e., less than four months) are a matter strictly between the PSO/MSO and the athlete and should not affect an athlete's Ontario Card status.

2. Long-term Curtailment of Training and Competition for Health-related Reasons

Carded athletes who are unable to maintain full training and competition commitments for periods longer than four months because of injury, illness or pregnancy will continue to receive 100% of the OAAP financial support to which they would otherwise be entitled, provided the following conditions are met:

- The athlete undertakes in writing to train or rehabilitate or both under the supervision of the PSO/MSO:
 - 1) for the period of time for which the athlete is unable to fulfil the training and competition commitments that are part of the normal Sports Organization - Athlete Agreement, and
 - 2) at a level that minimizes risk to the athlete's personal health and ensures optimal return to full training and competition at the earliest possible date.
- The athlete signifies in writing his or her intention to return to full high-performance training and competition at the earliest date possible following the illness, injury or pregnancy.
- In the case of injured or ill athletes, a positive prognosis for the athlete's return to training and competition in the sport within 8 to 12 months is required from a PSO/MSO team physician or equivalent.

3. Failure to Meet Selection Criteria for Health-related Reasons

At the end of an Ontario carding cycle during which an athlete has, for strictly health-related reasons, not achieved the standards required for nomination of carded status, he or she **may** be considered for nomination for the upcoming carding period under the following conditions, provided the PSO/MSO has a

policy included within their selection criteria to prioritize and card injured, ill or pregnant athletes that is clear, consistent and not arbitrary (this policy must be transparent and accessible). Note: The PSO/MSO must be able to demonstrate the probability that the athlete being nominated would have been ranked high enough, if active.

Conditions:

- 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 and, despite making every reasonable effort to attain the applicable carding standards during the year in which the injury, illness or pregnancy occurred, has failed to do so, in the view of the PSO/MSO, for reasons strictly related to the injury, illness or pregnancy.
- The PSO/MSO, based on its technical judgement and that of a PSO/MSO team physician or equivalent, indicates in writing 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.

4. Voluntary Withdrawal from Carded-Athlete Training and Competition for Health-related Reasons

An athlete may want, for reasons related to injury, illness or pregnancy, to voluntarily withdraw temporarily or permanently from normal carded-athlete training and competition requirements. In these circumstances the PSO/MSO must notify the Sport and Recreation Branch, of the Ministry of Health Promotion, so that the athlete can be removed from the Ontario Carded list. The Ministry reserves the right to request the repayment of the whole or any part of the Grant.

Card Allotment

1. How many Ontario Cards will be allotted to each eligible sport?

The number of Ontario Cards allotted to each sport will be based primarily on the following (in priority order):

- 1) The number of athletes (male and female) that a PSO/MSO is eligible to send to the Canada Games as per the most current Canada Games technical package.
- 2) If not represented as a Canada Games sport, MHP has assigned an allotment of cards based on the relative activity levels of the PSO/MSO as compared to other MHP recognized PSO/MSOs that are receiving a carding allotment.

PSO/MSO eligibility for a carding allotment and the number of cards allotted to each eligible PSO/MSO will be confirmed by the Sport and Recreation Branch, MHP, after each organization has submitted the High Performance Questionnaire and signed the PSO/MSO – Letter of Agreement.

2. What about Sports where there are no women's or men's event in one of the three sets of Games designated for sport qualification (i.e. Olympic/ Paralympic Winter Games, Canada Games, Ontario Games)?

Where there is no comparable event for women or men in one of the qualifying Games -- women or men will still be eligible for Ontario Cards at the discretion of the Ministry of Health Promotion. However, these cards will only be awarded if the sport organization can demonstrate that there is a high performance program for the gender in question and high performance competitions available to the athlete throughout the competition continuum (e.g. provincial, national, international competitions).

3. Can a PSO/MSO serving athletes with a disability provide an Ontario Card to an athlete's guide?

Consistent with Sport Canada's Athlete Assistance Program, guides are recognized for the sports of Cross Country Skiing, Alpine, Cycling and Athletics that serve disciplines with athletes with disabilities. These guides are eligible to be nominated for an Ontario Card, however the card must come from within the PSO/MSO's current carding allocation. No additional cards will be provided for this purpose.

Card Splitting

In 2009-2010 the Ministry will allow PSO/MSOs to “split” up to 30% of their Ontario Card allotment so that they can issue “half cards” to athletes nominated in predetermined developmental categories. If 30% is not an even number of athletes, for carding allocations greater than 10 the number of split cards allowed will be rounded down to the previous even number. Refer to your PSO/MSO Letter of Agreement for the exact carding allocation.

For example, a PSO/MSO with an allocation of 16 cards shall be split as follows:

$$16 \text{ cards} \times 30\% = 5.3 \text{ cards.}$$

This shall be rounded down to 4 split cards for a total allocation of:

$$\begin{aligned} &12 \text{ full cards} + 4 \text{ full cards split into 8 half cards} \\ &= 12 \text{ full cards} + 8 \text{ half cards} = 20 \text{ athletes overall} \end{aligned}$$

Parameters related to card splitting are as follows:

1. The decision to “split” cards must be approved by the PSO/MSO’s board of directors as part of the approval process for the PSO/MSO’s athlete selection criteria.
2. A card must be “split” by 50% - no more, no less, (e.g. one card must be split into 2 equal half cards)
3. The Ministry will not allow a disproportionate number of full cards or split cards to be issued to one gender over the other (See Tab 3 – Gender Equity Rules, for more information and clarification).
4. PSO/MSOs electing to split cards in a designated developmental category can only issue either all half cards in that category or all full cards in that category. The Ministry will not allow PSO/MSOs to issue any combination of full and half cards in the same developmental category.
5. The PSO/MSO must identify the number of cards to be split and in which developmental categories they will be issued when publishing/posting its athlete selection criteria (See Tab 3 – Athlete Selection Requirements and Process, for more information).

QUEST FOR GOLD

Ontario Athlete Assistance Program

CYCLE 1 - Dates & Deadlines for 2009-2010

DATE	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY
August 5, 2009	Deadline for PSO/MSOs to notify MHP in which cycle they will be nominating their athletes Deadline for PSO/MSOs to submit signed Letter of Agreement to MHP	PSO/MSO
September 8, 2009	Deadline to submit Sport Specific Selection Criteria to MHP	PSO/MSO
September 14, 2009	Deadline for posting PSO/MSO Sport Specific Selection criteria on PSO/MSO website Deadline for submission of Board Minutes indicating approval of Sport Specific Selection Criteria to MHP	PSO/MSO
October 19, 2009	PSO/MSOs send Athlete Nomination Form to MHP for review	MHP / PSO/MSO
October 21, 2009	Deadline for PSO/MSOs to publish list of nominated Ontario Card athletes	PSO/MSOs
October 26, 2009	Deadline for athletes to complete Ontario Card application online at www.questforgold.ca	PSO/MSO and athletes
October 26, 2009	Ontario Card appeal deadline	Athletes
November 4, 2009	Appeals Committee reviews appeals	Appeals Committee
November 12, 2009	Appeals Committee notifies athletes and PSO/MSOs of outcome of appeals	Appeals Committee
November 20, 2009	Deadline for PSO/MSOs to submit confirmation to MHP that all signed Athlete Agreements have been received	PSO/MSO
November 20, 2009	MHP to finalize list of 2009-2010 carded athletes and send to PSO/MSO to confirm accuracy of content	MHP

QUEST FOR GOLD

Ontario Athlete Assistance Program

CYCLE 2 - Dates & Deadlines for 2009-2010

DATE	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY
August 5, 2009	Deadline for PSO/MSOs to notify MHP in which cycle they will be nominating their athletes. Deadline for PSO/MSOs to submit signed Letter of Agreement to MHP	PSO/MSO
October 23, 2009	Deadline to submit Sport Specific Selection Criteria to MHP	PSO/MSO
October 30, 2009	Deadline for posting PSO/MSO Sport Specific Selection criteria on PSO/MSO website Deadline for submission of Board Minutes indicating approval of Sport Specific Selection Criteria to MHP	PSO/MSO
January 8, 2010	PSO/MSOs send Athlete Nomination Form to MHP for review	MHP / PSO/MSO
January 18, 2010	Deadline for PSO/MSOs to publish list of nominated Ontario Card athletes	PSO/MSOs
January 28, 2010	Deadline for athletes to complete Ontario Card application online at www.questforgold.ca	PSO/MSO and athletes
February 1, 2010	Ontario Card appeal deadline	Athletes
February 9, 2010	Appeals Committee reviews appeals	Appeals Committee
February 15, 2010	Appeals Committee notifies athletes and PSO/MSOs of outcome of appeals	Appeals Committee
February 24, 2010	Deadline for PSO/MSOs to submit confirmation to MHP that all signed Athlete Agreements have been received	PSO/MSO
February 24, 2010	MHP to finalize list of 2009-2010 carded athletes and send to PSO/MSO to confirm accuracy of content.	MHP

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Definitions

“**Family Member**” includes a parent, spouse or partner including same-sex spouses or partners, child, sibling, uncle, aunt, niece or nephew, parents-in-law, sister or brother-in-law and includes a step relative of any of the foregoing;

“**Ministry**” means the Ministry of Health Promotion;

“**Sports Organization**” means the Provincial Sports Organization (PSO), Multi-Sports Organization (MSO) or National Sports Organization (NSO) responsible for governing the specific sport in which the Applicant or Recipient competes.

What is the Purpose of a Conflict of Interest prohibition?

It is important for the public and athletes to have confidence that PSO/MSOs are administering the Ontario Card – *Quest for Gold* - Ontario Athlete Assistance Program (OAAP) in an objective manner that is fair to the athlete. Sometimes situations may occur where PSO/MSOs may have a conflict of interest that could damage public and stakeholder confidence in a sports organization’s administration of the Ontario Card - *Quest for Gold* - OAAP.

What is a Conflict of Interest?

Any situation where the PSO/MSO’s interests, or the interests of individual members of a PSO/MSO are in conflict with its responsibilities as delineated in the Letter of Agreement between the Ministry and the Sports Organization.

What is a Perceived Conflict of Interest?

While a PSO/MSO may not be in an actual conflict of interest, the public perception that a conflict of interest exists or may exist can be equally harmful to the integrity of the Ontario Card - *Quest for Gold* – OAAP and its administration. The test question for determining whether or not a perceived conflict of interest exists is as follows:

Would an informed person, having thought the situation through, think it possible that a PSO/MSO might be adversely influenced in its administration of the Ontario Card - Quest for Gold - OAAP under the Letter of Agreement with the Ministry by its other interests?

Examples

(Examples provided for illustration purposes only. Conflict of interest can occur in other scenarios not illustrated in following example)

An example of an actual conflict of interest situation is:

A PSO/MSO has appointed an Athlete Selection Committee to develop its sports specific athlete selection criteria (this criteria is used to nominate athletes for Ontario carding status).

One member of the Athlete Selection Committee is the paid coach of five of the sport's high performance athletes. The coach purposely influenced the development of the sport specific athlete selection criteria so that his or her athletes would be nominated for carding status. As a result, once the sport specific athlete selection criteria were applied, all five of the coaches' athletes were nominated for carding status.

The coach sitting on the Athlete Selection Committee is in a conflict of interest. The coach stands to benefit financially if his or her athletes were awarded carding status because they could use their funding to pay for extra coaching costs.

The coach did not act in the PSO/MSO's best interests when the Committee was developing the sport specific athlete selection criteria. This Committee member should have declared a conflict and removed himself or herself from the process. Athletes who were not nominated for carding status could complain that the conflict on the part of one Committee member might have impacted on the development of the sport specific athlete selection criteria, thereby preventing them from being nominated for Ontario Card status.

An example of a perceived conflict of interest situation is:

A PSO/MSO has appointed an Athlete Selection Committee to develop its sports specific athlete selection criteria (this criteria is used to nominate athletes for Ontario carding status). One of the Committee members is an aunt of one of the sport's female high performance athletes. The aunt was completely objective and did not purposely influence the development of the sport specific athlete selection criteria so as to increase the chances of her niece being nominated for carding status. However, it could be "perceived" or suspected by an outsider or other athlete that the aunt would have exercised some influence over the development of the criteria to favour selection of her niece.

It would be best for the PSO/MSO to avoid even the perception of conflict (or actual conflicts) by not having family members of prospective OAAP recipients sitting on the Selection Committee or taking part in board meetings when the selection criteria is being discussed and approved.

Procedures

Declaration of Interest

If any director or officer of the PSO/MSO, or if any family member of a director or officer of the Sports Organization has a material interest in the Ontario Card - *Quest for Gold* – OAAP, the director or officer shall declare such interest to the board and shall not participate in the discussion or vote on any resolution relating to the matter.

Other PSO/MSO representatives involved in the *Quest for Gold* Program (for example: employees, volunteers, coaches, officials) apart from a director or officer, who has a material interest in the *Quest for Gold* - OAAP shall declare such interest to the PSO/MSO which shall determine whether such interest creates either an actual or perceived conflict of interest situation for the PSO/MSO – then take the appropriate action to rectify the conflict (e.g. remove individual from selection committee).