



Policy Name CARDING POLICY & PROCESS FOR THE ATHLETE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM		Policy Category ATHLETE POLICIES
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1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

The goal of the Sport Canada Athlete Assistance program (AAP) is to contribute towards improved Canadian performances at major international sporting events such as the Olympic/Paralympic Games and World Championships. More information on the AAP policy supporting the Field Hockey Canada (FHC) carding policy and process can be found at the following link:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/athlete-assistance/policies-procedures.html>

The AAP has three levels of cards, which provide a monthly living and training allowance to carded athletes as follows:

Card Type	Monthly Allowance	Annual Value
Senior International Card (SR1/SR2)	\$2,175.00	\$26,100.00
Senior National Card (SR)	\$2,175.00	\$26,100.00
Development Card	\$1,305.00	\$15,660.00

Chart 1: Monthly AAP Card Value

Additional to the monthly allowance, carded athletes can take advantage of tuition support. The maximum amount payable is \$5,500 per carding cycle up to a lifetime maximum of \$27,500. Details of eligibility, including special needs support, can also found under the above AAP link.

Athletes who are nominated for funding, and who are approved by Sport Canada for AAP financial support are referred to as ‘carded’ athletes & AAP funding is referred to as ‘carding’.

NOTE: Field Hockey Canada does not approve AAP funding for athletes and instead submits its nominations to Sport Canada, who has final approval of all AAP matters.



2.0 CARDING CYCLE & ALLOCATION

The annual FHC men's program carding cycle runs from January 1st to December 31st. The annual FHC women's carding cycle runs from May 1st to April 30th. FHC reserves the right to change dates for its carding cycle and will notify athletes or affected parties if such a change occurs.

For the 2026 cycle, Sport Canada has allocated the equivalent of eighteen (18) Senior Cards, or the equivalent of \$469,800.00 to FHC for its men's program and sixteen (16) Senior Cards, or the equivalent of \$417,600.00 to FHC for its women's program. Note allocations from Sport Canada to Field Hockey Canada can change based on national team performance.

Under the guidance of the AAP policy, FHC has the ability to apply the total carding funding envelope in the context of its strategic performance objectives and may allocate varying numbers of Development (D) or Senior (SR) Cards. FHC does not have to allocate 18 individual SR Cards or a full 12-month card for a given cycle and may divide certain cards to provide partial support. As such, the distribution or prioritization of SR and D Card months may vary depending on the strategic objective and direction of the program or where the carding cycle lies in an Olympic or World Cup quadrennial. At the start of each carding cycle, the FHC High-Performance management team and National Team Head Coach (HC) will provide an indication of how cards will be allocated.

3.0 STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE

FHC's performance objective is to create sustainable podium potential at the Olympic Games and World Cup level. Athlete nominations or selections and program investments will be made in accordance with this stated objective. The achievement of the objective is not automatically aligned to or measured within a current, immediate Olympic or World Cup competition cycle, but instead may be aligned to subsequent, longer-term cycles.

4.0 DECISION MAKING AUTHORITY

Athlete nominations to Sport Canada for carding and AAP support will be made each year or at times throughout the year as stipulated by this policy. The Head Coach (HC), in collaboration with the High-Performance Director (HPD), is responsible for nominating athletes for Sport Canada's AAP.



The final decision-making authority for carding nominations lies with the Head Coach (HC) and HPD.

NOTE: If an HPD or HC is not assigned, the final decision-making authority lies with the CEO or a designated individual.

5.0 AAP ELIGIBILITY

To be considered for carding, an athlete must meet all the requirements listed by Sport Canada's AAP found under the link provided in section 1.0 above, including:

General:

- Be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident at the beginning of the carding cycle.
- Have been a resident in Canada (student status, refugee status, work visa, or permanent resident) for one year prior to the beginning of the carding cycle.
- Be eligible to represent Canada under the rules of the International Federation (FIH)
- Compete in an event in the Olympic games recognized by Sport Canada for AAP support.
- Be a registered member in good standing with FHC
- Be a registered PSO & FHC recognized club member in good standing
- Not be under suspension or sanction by Field Hockey Canada or Sport Canada for any doping or doping-related offence
- Sign and adhere to the FHC Athlete Agreement, which includes additional terms pursuant to athletes who are carded.

Performance:

- Follow the National Training and Competition Program and be available to represent Canada in international competitions and training camps as laid out by the HC.
- Be available to reside and train under the supervision of the HC in the British Columbia National Team training environment for a minimum of 8 months of the carding cycle, unless a written exemption from the HC is granted to train at another approved Training Centre or to train and compete in leagues outside of Canada.
- Agree to follow the Strength & Condition and general fitness programs as defined by the program leadership (HC & HPD), and provide weekly compliance reporting including, but not limited to,



fitness reporting, wellness reporting, and other reporting as required by the program leadership.

- Meet & maintain any performance standards as set out in this policy, the Athlete Agreement, as defined by the HC for individual athletes, and as per section 6.0 (Maintaining Carding Status & Eligibility)

NOTE: It is acknowledged that an athlete may be selected to represent Canada in international competition but may not be nominated for carding.

6.0 MAINTAINING CARDING STATUS & ELIGIBILITY

Carding nomination, selection and the continuation of carding is dependent upon the athlete's acceptance and adherence to the obligations as outlined in FHC's carding policy and Athlete Agreement. The athlete must agree to adhere to the training, competitive and administrative/governance policies and codes of FHC. The athlete must also adhere to pursuing specific performance goals, fitness targets, or technical adjustments as identified by the program leadership.

By the start of the athlete's carding period, or at a time defined by the HC, each carded athlete must commit and adhere to an Individual Performance Plan (IPP). This plan will be developed by the HC and endorsed by the HPD or designated lead. An IPP must be approved by the HC and athletes are to follow the approved IPP, unless adjusted by the HC. Athletes are required to provide regular progress reporting, including specific formats and frequencies, as defined by the HC (also see 11.0, Performance Monitoring).

Carded athletes must take part in all competitions, training, camps, testing, or medical examinations to which they are selected. Should extenuating circumstances arise that prevent participation in any of these events, carded athletes must submit a written request for exemption to the HC, who may grant an exemption depending on individual circumstances.

Should an athlete fail to participate in a scheduled event as required, or fail to meet their IPP objectives, or fail to adhere to the athlete agreement or any other policies and codes related to maintaining carding status, the Program Leadership, may apply a sanction or fine according to FHC's discipline procedures.



Any sanctions may include the application of a progressive discipline process and could include a withdrawal of carding.

7.0 ATHLETE PERFORMANCE QUALIFICATION PERIOD

To be eligible for nomination, an athlete must meet certain criteria or any required performance standards as set out in section 8.0 (Carding Criteria) or in Schedule A in the year prior to the current carding cycle.

8.0 CARDING CRITERIA

In combination with Schedule A, this section provides an overview of the criteria for the three (3) types of carding levels (SR 1&2, SR, D) available through the AAP:

8.1 SENIOR INTERNATIONAL CARD (SR1&2) CRITERIA

SR 1 Carding Criteria:

For athletes to obtain an SR1 card, they need to participate on a team that achieves a Top 8 finish at an Olympic Games or Senior World Cup.

SR2 Carding Criteria:

SR2 Card's will be allocated based on an athletes ranking within a depth chart (see section: Schedule A) and must meet a number of criteria as follows:

- Maintains a training and competitive program approved by the NSO, and the annual performance standards as set by FHC's Head Coach.
- On being re-nominated by the NSO, signs an Athlete/NSO Agreement, and completes an AAP Application Form for that year.
- The expectation is that all standards are maintained throughout the carding cycle, and failure to do so could result in an athlete being placed on probation and potentially de-carded.
- Demonstrate through training and international competition the ability, based on the selection criteria for the national team, to play international hockey.
- Participate in National Team programs at the designated National training Center or other identified location as defined in the YTP
- Be available to play in all major events in the carding cycle including Olympic games,



commonwealth games, PanAmerican Games, World Leagues, World cups and qualification tournaments, as applicable.

- Participate in the domestic national competition as specified by the NC unless exempted by the National Coach
- Be available for all projects (with a minimum 1-month notice), in addition to major events as listed above as defined by the Head Coach

8.2 SENIOR NATIONAL CARD (SR) CRITERIA

Senior Cards will be allocated based on an athlete's ranking within a depth chart (see section: Schedule A) and must meet a number of criteria as follows:

- Maintains a training and competitive program approved by the NSO, and the annual performance standards as set by HPD and HC
- On being re-nominated by the NSO, signs an Athlete / NSO Agreement, and completes an AAP Application Form for that year
- The expectation is that all standards are maintained throughout the carding cycle and failure to do so could result in an athlete being placed on probation and potentially de-carded
- Demonstrate through training and international competition the ability, based on the selection criteria for the National team, to play international hockey.
- Participate in National team Programs at the designated National training center or other identified locations as defined in the YTP.
- Be available to play in all major events in the carding cycle including Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games, PanAmerican Games, World Leagues and qualification tournaments as applicable.
- Participate in the National Championships or equivalent national competition as specified by the HC unless exempted by the National Coach
- Be available for all projects (with a minimum 1-month notice), in addition to major events as listed above as defined by the Head Coach

8.3 DEVELOPMENT CARD (D) CRITERIA

Development Cards will be allocated based on an athlete's ranking within a depth chart (see section: Schedule A) and must meet a number of criteria as follows:



- Have been identified by the National Head Coach or national coaching staff as having demonstrated development potential through performance at the following events:
 - National Development Program
 - National Championships
 - Field Hockey Canada domestic competitions
 - National squad camps
 - Ongoing training sessions
- Have been identified and recommended to the National Coach by Provincial Associations / or Clubs
- The expectation is that all standards are maintained throughout the carding cycle and failure to do so could result in an athlete being placed on probation and potentially de-carded
- Be available to participate in National Team Programs at the designated National Training Center or other identified location as defined in the YTP
- Participate in year-round training programs and in periodic testing and monitoring as directed by the Head Coach

9.0 CARDING PRIORITIZATION

Athletes eligible for nomination will be recommended to Sport Canada for AAP support as identified in Chart 2 below, carding prioritization.

Priority	Type of Card
1	Athletes who meet the SR1 and SR2 card criteria
2	Athletes who meet the SR card criteria
3	Athletes who meet the D card criteria
4	Athletes with an existing card who meet the health criteria

Chart 2: Carding Prioritization

10.0 MAXIMUM NUMBER OF YEARS AT CARDING LEVELS

10.1 SENIOR CARDS

An athlete is expected to demonstrate performance progression in order to maintain SR Card status. Once an athlete has been carded for twelve (12) years at the Senior card levels (SR1, SR2, SR, SR injury, C1)



without having achieved an SR1/2 card, in order to be recommended for an additional year of SR carding support (up to a maximum of fifteen (15) years) the athlete must either:

- a) Meet the International Senior Card criteria; or
- b) Clearly demonstrate performance evidence and progression toward supporting FHC's Strategic Performance Objective by being the top (rank 1) ranked athlete at their position on the depth chart.

NOTE: Performance progression is measured by assessing testing, training and competition performance throughout the athlete's carding history in comparison to the athlete's current performance

10.2 DEVELOPMENT CARDS

An athlete is expected to demonstrate performance progression toward obtaining a SR Card in order to maintain D Card status. Once an athlete has been carded for six (6) cycles (regardless of the number of months within each cycle) at the D Card level and has not reached the SR Card level, the athlete may still be eligible for a further 24 months of continued D Card support only under the following conditions:

- a) Clearly demonstrate ongoing performance progression and potential, in line with achieving SR Card level within 24 months
- b) Meet clearly documented performance benchmarks during the carding cycle to retain eligibility.

NOTE: Performance progression is measured by assessing testing, training and competition performance throughout the athlete's carding history in comparison to the athlete's current performance

11.0 HEALTH RELATED CIRCUMSTANCES (INJURY, ILLNESS, PREGNANCY)

Athletes who are carded at any level and are unable to meet the carding criteria strictly due to health-related reasons may be considered for re-nomination by the Program Leadership for the upcoming carding cycle if they apply for consideration and meet the conditions outlined in the AAP "Health Related Circumstances" (<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/athlete-assistance/policies-procedures.html#a11>).



Any application must include a medical certificate outlining the health concern, the anticipated return to play timelines, and their anticipated training and competitive schedule (national and international) upon return to training and competition. FHC may request a physician of their choosing to review and qualify the documentation with the athlete's physician.

NOTE: FHC permits a maximum of 2 health-related cards due to injury, illness, or up to 3 for pregnancy in a career.

12.0 PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Athletes are responsible for proactively communicating with their HC throughout the carding cycle based on an agreed upon interval. The updates may include specifically requested information related to technical, fitness, health, and general progress in meeting their plans and objectives as laid out within the athlete's IPP objectives. The HC may determine their preferred contact frequency at their discretion. The athlete is required to proactively record any training detail, training logs and comply with any general monitoring process such as daily Wellness data gathering as defined by the Program Leadership.

Athletes are expected to demonstrate progress upon the objectives set by the HC at the beginning of the carding cycle and through their IPP.

Any expectations from the HC will be provided to the athlete and their personal coach in writing, along with an explanation of what measures will be used to evaluate athlete progression toward meeting any such expectations and objectives. Objectives may be adjusted throughout the carding cycle at the HC's discretion.

13.0 CHALLENGES OR APPEALS

Appeals of FHC's AAP nomination/re-nomination decision or of FHC's recommendation to withdraw carding may be pursued only through FHC's Appeal Policy (see: [FHC Appeal Policy](#)), which may include an application to the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC).



Further information may be found in the AAP section 6 (Application For and Approval of Cards) policy document here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/athlete-assistance/policies-procedures.html#a7>

SCHEDULE A (Field Hockey Canada Depth Chart)

A) INTRODUCTION

FHC's Program Leadership applies an evaluation methodology to evaluate and rank its athletes within a Depth Chart. This Depth Chart is continually updated and maintained by coaches and staff. The Depth Chart rates athletes against the identified and approved Gold Medal Profile (GMP). This Gold Medal Profile sets out the performance standards and will be published at the start of each carding cycle. The program leadership is comprised of a group of the Head Coach & High-Performance Director and supported by an extended staff including Sport Science staff (medical, physiologist, physiotherapist) Assistant Coaches, Junior National Coach, and additional experts as required by the program leadership.

For the purposes of nominating athletes to Sport Canada for AAP support and carding, the program leadership will utilize the depth chart. The depth chart is utilized by all high-performance staff in the Women's National Program (WNP) and Men's National Program (MNP) to evaluate and rank its athletes according to the following four (4) Depth Chart Dimensions:

- 1. Current Performance** (50% weighting)
- 2. Physical Performance** (20% weighting)
- 3. Future Potential** (20% weighting)
- 4. Team Dynamics** (10% weighting)

B) OVERVIEW: DEPTH CHART SCORING

All criteria will be scored on a scale of 1-5, with the following descriptions for each of the 5 assessment scales as described in the below Chart 3 below:



Scale	Score
Global Podium Standard	4-5
Global Top 10 Standard	3-4
Pan Am Podium Equivalent	2-3
Junior National Team	1-2
Domestic League	0-1

Chart 3: Depth Chart Scoring

NOTE: Scoring can be provided up to decimal place – for example, a score of 4.3 equates to Global Podium Standard

C) ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The program leadership applies depth chart evaluations throughout the year. In doing so, the assessments are led by the HC with the support of the HPD, and in collaboration with other program staff within the NTC environment.

Carded athletes, and athletes with the potential to be carded, may contact the HC or HPD to schedule a review opportunity to understand their current depth chart status. All carded athletes may request input and insight in terms of their performance throughout the year.

For purposes of nominating athletes for a new carding cycle, final depth chart evaluations will be completed at least 4 weeks prior to nominations to Sport Canada.