

Athletes**CAN**

SUPPORTING CANADIAN ATHLETES • APPUYONS LES ATHLÈTES CANADIENS

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AthletesCAN****

LEADERSHIP HANDBOOK

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Athletes**CAN**

AthletesCAN Overview



Who is AthletesCAN?

AthletesCAN, the association of Canada's national team athletes, is the only fully independent and most inclusive athlete organization in the country and the first organization of its kind in the world. As the collective voice of Canadian national team athletes, AthletesCAN ensures an athlete centered sport system by developing athlete leaders who influence sport policy and, as role models, inspire a strong sport culture.

AthletesCAN is a multi-sport service organization representing all national team athletes including Aboriginal, Paralympic, Pan American Games, Olympic Games and Commonwealth Games athletes, among others.

Athletes who are members of Canada's national teams, or athletes who have retired from a se-

nior national team within the past eight years are considered members of AthletesCAN.

MISSION

As the collective voice for Canada's national team athletes, we strive to:

- ensure a fair, responsive and supportive sport system
- provide valued programs and services to our members
- develop effective athlete leaders

VISION

A Canadian sport system that empowers our athletes to achieve their full potential on the field of play and beyond.

VALUES

In contributing to a strong and vibrant Canadian sport system, AthletesCAN is committed to being an accountable and effective organization by promoting and living the following values in our work and through our actions:

Leadership: We develop athlete leaders, who lead by example, inspire others to excel and contribute to meaningful change where they live, work and play.

Community: We encourage athlete social responsibility by providing athletes with opportunities to give back and strengthen their community.

Excellence: We support our members' quest for excellence on the field of play and beyond by working in collaboration with our partners.

Advocacy: We strive to ensure that the voices of our members are represented and rights respected.





Programs and Services



CIBC

In partnership with AthletesCAN and Canadian Sport Institute Ontario, the CIBC Team Next program provides amateur athletes with financial support, invaluable opportunities to develop important career and life skills, along with mentorship from world class Canadian athletes.



TEAM INVESTORS GROUP AMATEUR ATHLETES FUND

In keeping with their commitment to amateur sport in Canada, Investors Group established an Amateur Athlete Bursary Fund for Canada's top amateur athletes in 2000. Working in partnership with AthletesCAN, the fund awards twenty bursaries of \$5,000 to Canadian amateur athletes each year.



DALE CARNEGIE SPEAKER'S TRAINING

The Dale Carnegie Course – Effective Communications and Human Relations is a 9-week course valued at \$1,775 and is offered free to current and former national team athletes through AthletesCAN.



SPORT SOLUTION

Sport Solution is committed to helping athletes find solutions to a wide range of sport related issues. Managed by law students at the University of Western Ontario, Sport Solution offers access to free information, assistance and guidance on sport issues that may require legal counsel, such as selection, carding and discipline.



NATIONAL CAR RENTAL & ENTERPRISE RENT-A-CAR PROGRAM

Through a strategic partnership with official suppliers National Car Rental and Enterprise Rent-A-Car of Enterprise Holdings, AthletesCAN members and sport partners can now benefit from reduced rates for car rentals across the globe.



PUROLATOR INC. SHIPPING PROGRAM

Purolator Inc. and AthletesCAN understand that as high performance athletes, you have high priority shipping needs. Through a new strategic partnership with official supplier Purolator Inc., AthletesCAN members will now benefit from reduced rates on a wide variety of courier services both nationally and internationally.



HEALTH & DENTAL BENEFITS PLAN

With our partners Etherington Generations and BBD, AthletesCAN is excited to present you, our valued members, with a Health & Dental benefit opportunity. Our goal is to provide you and your family an easy to use, affordable and competitive benefit program that will serve your needs as an athlete.



SPORT INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTRE (SIRC)

SIRC and AthletesCAN have joined forces to help our Canadian high performance athletes. This partnership provides our athletes with easy access to the most comprehensive competitive and training resources; a sport librarian to help answer any questions; and the latest opportunities related to careers in sport.



SKINETEX

Skinetex is a professional grade kinesiology tape. AthletesCAN members will receive 35% off all products. Members will also receive one (1) free roll with their initial purchase. (Limit of one (1) free roll for the first 1000 members.)

[Click on the logo to get more information about the program.](#)



Sport Solution

Sport Solution is committed to helping national team athletes find solutions to a wide range of sport related issues. The program offers access to free information, as well as assistance and guidance on sport issues that may require legal council, such as selection, carding and discipline disputes.

MISSION

Sport Solution is committed to supporting an athlete centered sport system and strives to achieve this objective by counseling and advocating on behalf of Canada's high performance athletes so their voices are well represented when resolving sport related issues that affect them.

HISTORY

In April 1996, AthletesCAN joined forces with the Sports Law Centre, the Faculty of Law at the University of Western Ontario, and the Dispute Resolution Centre to create an AthletesCAN program that would help Canada's national team athletes resolve and prevent legal conflicts in sport. Together, they named this program the Sport Solution. It is the only program of its kind in North America and is available free of charge to all members of AthletesCAN.

SERVICES OFFERED

Sport Solution provides assistance to national team athletes in resolving sports related legal is-

sues and offers support throughout the dispute resolution process. The program also offers athletes guidance on how to prevent conflict and understand the fair administration of sport. Sport Solution responds to the legal needs of athletes on a full range of issues and can provide information about:

- General Inquiries and Concerns
- NSO Procedures
- How to Prepare for NSO Appeals and Arbitration at the SDRCC
- Your Athlete Agreement
- Corresponding With Your NSO

Types of Issues We Handle

- Team Selection
- AAP Funding / Carding
- Discipline
- Anti-Doping Violations
- Athlete Trusts
- Harassment
- Other Sports Related Legal Concerns

[Click to learn more about Sports Solutions about the program.](#)





AthletesCAN Forum

The annual AthletesCAN Forum is the largest and most inclusive gathering of Canada's national team athlete representatives outside of competition. It brings together Canada's high performance athletes and sport leaders to learn about the sport system, develop leadership skills, share ideas and network through interactive workshops, seminars and presentations.

[Click to learn more about AthletesCAN Forum.](#)





KidsCAN School Day

KidsCAN School Day is an opportunity for school children in the Forum's host community to meet with national team athletes, try a variety of sports and learn about the importance of physical activity and healthy lifestyles. Since its inception in 2006, AthletesCAN's KidsCAN School Day events have enabled over 200 national team athletes including Olympians and Paralympians, to reach over 19,000 school children from Whitehorse, Yukon to Fredericton, New Brunswick with messages of inspiration and determination.

[Click to learn more about KidsCAN School Day.](#)





Athletes**CAN**

Sports System 101





Sport Canada **and Funding**

SPORT CANADA

Sport Canada's mission is to enhance opportunities for Canadians to participate and excel in sport by enhancing both the capacity and coordination of the Canadian Sport System.

Financial assistance is available to National Sport Organizations (NSO's) through Sport Canada's Sport Support Program (SSP), based on the Sport Funding and Accountability Framework (SFAF).

[Click here to see if your NSO is eligible for funding.](#)

Sport Canada also offers funding directly to high performance athletes through the Athlete Assistance Program (AAP).

CARDING

Athletes who are approved for funding and are financially supported through the AAP are referred to as CARDED ATHLETES. AAP support is referred to as CARDING.

Carding Process

- Sport Canada approves eligible NSOs for funding.
- Sport Canada allocates cards to eligible NSOs.
- NSOs develop sport-specific carding criteria athletes must meet to be nominated for AAP support.
- NSOs nominate or re-nominate eligible athlete for AAP support at a given level.
- Sport Canada reviews and approves nominations based on the sport-specific carding criteria.

ria and AAP policies.

- Athletes complete the AAP Application Form provided by their NSO and sign an Athlete/NSO Agreement.
- Athletes approved for carding receive financial benefits.

Carding Levels

There are three kinds of cards in the AAP:

- Senior International Cards (SR1 and SR2 cards)
- Senior National Cards (SR and C1 cards)
- Development Cards

General Carding Criteria

- Senior Cards are awarded on the basis of 1) international criteria and 2) national criteria.
- Development Cards are awarded on the basis of 1) sport-specific criteria and 2) training centre criteria.
- There are special considerations for team sports.
- Carding cycles are *usually* 12 months long.

INDIVIDUAL CARDING MATERIAL

Carding Level	Targets Athletes who....	Criteria	Length of Carded Status
SR1 & SR2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Athletes meeting international criteria or based on maintenance criteria (NSO specific). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International (top 8 at Olympic / Paralympic / Worlds - 1 entry, top 12 - 2 entries, top 16 - 3 entries, and finish in top half of field. • International - in sports where there's no major event each year, criteria will be based on performance (one year basis ONLY). 	<p>International:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 years (contingent upon re-nomination by NSO). • Can be retroactive if SR performance achieved within 6 months of the beginning of carding cycle. <p>National:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 year (based on involvement with National Team) • Reviewed annually towards progression to International criteria.
C-1 Probationary Card	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Athletes meeting national criteria for the first time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International (top 8 at Olympic / Paralympic / Worlds - 1 entry, top 12 - 2 entries, top 16 - 3 entries, and finish in top half of field. • International - in sports where there's no major event each year, criteria will be based on performance (one year basis ONLY). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 year or less • Foreign scholarship athletes: status waived if athlete returns to Canada (returning to SR status)

Carding Level	Targets Athletes who....	Criteria	Length of Carded Status
Development Cards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly demonstrate potential to achieve Senior Carded status • Needs are not met by club / provincial programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International (top 8, top third of the field at Jr. Worlds, record international / national success, dominant domestic results or national champion) • Sport Specific (NSO negotiated) • Commitment to Sport Canada / NSO approved Training Centre • Identified by National coach or NSO • Have annual training and competitive program designed, monitored and supervised by National coach / NSO • Must be a long term commitment from NSO and athlete. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good for one year or less, then up to 3 years once initial criteria is met and based on progress (physical / technical) and international and national results.

CARDING CRITERIA — INDIVIDUAL SPORTS

Sport Canada and the NSO set the criteria for athletes playing team sports.

International team sports criteria are based when athletes are paired with other Canadian athletes.

Carding Level	National Senior Team	Below National Senior Team
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • based on team and individual performance • SR based on national criteria, given to National team members who have not yet reached international criteria (C-1 given as well) • partial funding is given to both SR and C-1 levels if full commitment is not possible OR funded when athlete is with team (if athlete plays outside of Canada which is case-by-case and monitored by the NSO) • De-centralized (case-by-case monitored by the NSO) athletes eligible for the Development Card must commit to approved training appearances at major events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of the National A training squad, Sport Canada supported Universiade, National B team, or Junior National Team (making a significant contribution to the sport program). • Development cards are given assuming the NSO supervises training and delivers quality programming, with high intensity programs within the performance system.
Requirements	Athlete is involved in significant periods of training and competition in the summer (duration and intensity determine monthly stipends or monthly stipends and tuition support along with the number of months supported).	
Minimum Standards	Minimum Standards Full funding for 12 months (living / training allowance + tuition): athlete must participate in the summer program with the National Team; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimum 60 days (there is reduced support with a minimum of 30 days) • minimum of 4 hour practices daily • minimum of 1 tournament or 4 matches in international competition Training programs must be year round and supervised by the NSO with a monitoring plan.	
Centralization	Athlete may be eligible on a year round agreement to centralize at a training centre provided training centre criteria are met.	

De-Carding

De-carding is the loss or refusal of a carded status. There are three methods of de-carding:

- Illness, Injury or Pregnancy,
- Voluntary Withdrawal by athlete,
- Non-renewal / Withdrawal by Sport Canada.

Illness, Injury or Pregnancy

The AAP has been carefully designed to handle exceptions to the 'normal' training and competition. AAP policy covers the following special situations related to illness, injury, or pregnancy.

- Short-term curtailment of training and competition for health-related reasons;
- Long-term curtailment of training and competition for health-related reasons;
- Failure to meet renewal criteria for health-related reasons;
- Voluntary withdrawal from carded-athlete training and competition for health-related reasons.

Short-Term

- Any amount of time away from training due to health related reasons for less than 4 months remains between athlete and the NSO as it does not fall under AAP policy.

Long-Term

- An athlete who is unable to maintain full training and competition commitments for longer than 4 months will continue to receive 100% of the AAP financial support given they meet the following conditions:
 1. Athlete agrees to in writing to train or rehabilitate or both, under supervision of the NSO
 - 1) for the time the athlete is unable to fulfill the commitments of the athlete / NSO agreement.
 - 2) at a level of minimal risk to the athlete.
 2. Athlete indicates intention in writing to return to high performance training and competition at the earliest possible date.

3. Athlete must provide a positive prognosis from an NSO team physician for their return to training and competition at the carded-athlete level in their sport within 8 to 12 months.

At the end of a carding cycle during which an athlete has, for strictly health-related reasons, not achieved the standards required for the renewal of carded status, he or she may be considered for renomination for the upcoming carding period under the following conditions, provided the NSO has a method to rank and card injured, ill, or pregnant athletes.

- Athlete has fulfilled all reasonable training and rehabilitation requirements,
- NSO believes they were not able to attain standards due to injury, illness or pregnancy,
- NSO team physician has indicated that the athlete will achieve minimum standards for the upcoming carding cycle,
- Athlete demonstrates a long-term commitment to high performance training and competition goals as well as the intention to pursue high performance training and competition throughout the carding cycle.

Voluntary Withdrawal

Athletes may withdraw voluntarily from the AAP. This may involve retiring permanently or temporarily, relinquishing the commitments of carding. Those wishing to withdraw voluntarily should express their wish to do so to their NSO.

Athletes who retire permanently in mid-season will be allowed two months of transitional AAP support past the date of their actual retirement to help them adjust to their post-athletic situation. This does not preclude the athlete applying for or receiving special-needs assistance or deferred tuition support.

Should an NSO fail to notify Sport Canada in a timely manner of an athlete's voluntary withdraw-



al and should this result in overpayment of AAP funds to that athlete, the NSO must facilitate the return of the overpaid funds to Sport Canada.

Procedure

When the NSO becomes aware or is informed that an athlete wishes to voluntarily withdraw from the AAP, the following must occur:

- The NSO must advise its Sport Canada Program Officer and the AAP Manager in writing of the effective date of withdrawal.
- Any allowances previously paid to the athlete beyond the period of transitional support must be refunded by the athlete to Canada's Receiver

General. It is the responsibility of the NSO to facilitate the return of these funds.

Before Sport Canada withdraws an athlete's AAP support because of an athlete's decision to voluntarily withdraw from the AAP, the following shall apply:

- The AAP Manager will request that the NSO provide written confirmation that the athlete concerned has voluntarily withdrawn from the AAP.
- Once this request is sent from the AAP Manager to the NSO, AAP financial benefits may be withheld pending final confirmation of the athlete's status.



- The AAP Manager will notify the athlete by registered mail that AAP support is being withdrawn following written notice from the NSO that the athlete has voluntarily withdrawn from the AAP. This letter gives the athlete 30 days from its receipt to make representations regarding why his or her carded status should not be withdrawn.

After this 30-day period is over and due consideration has been given to any representations made by or on behalf of the athlete, Sport Canada may withdraw the athlete's carded status or continue AAP support if it is determined that the athlete

has not voluntarily withdrawn from the AAP.

Non-Renewal or Withdrawal by Sport Canada

Athletes may have their carded status withdrawn under certain conditions, including the following:

- Failure to meet training or competitive commitments;
- Violation of the Athlete/NSO Agreement;
- The athlete's failure to meet responsibilities outlined in AAP policies;
- Gross breach of discipline;
- Investigation for cause; and
- Violations of anti-doping rules.

Failure to meet agreed-to training or competitive commitments may include:

- A decision by the athlete to live in an environment not conducive to high performance achievement;
- Any deliberate action by the athlete that significantly risks or limits performance; and
- An inability to meet the training and competition obligations outlined in the athlete's annual training/competitive plan or the Athlete/NSO Agreement for the particular carding cycle.

*Failure to achieve preset performance objectives does not in itself establish failure to meet agreed-to training or competitive commitments.

Note: In many cases, the NSO may recommend that carded status be withdrawn. Sport Canada may also withdraw carded status without a recommendation from the NSO.

Process

If an NSO wishes to recommend withdrawal of carded status for an alleged failure to meet agreed-to training and competitive commitments, the NSO must first comply with the following:

- Provide a verbal warning to the athlete, including the steps and timelines to remedy the situation and the consequences of a failure to heed the warning; and
- Where applicable, follow-up with a written warning to the athlete.

If the above steps are not successful in resolving the matter and the NSO still wishes to recommend withdrawal of carded status, the NSO must do the following:

- Provide written notification to the NSO's Sport Canada Program Officer and the AAP Manager, with a copy to the athlete, recommending withdrawal of the athlete's carded status. This written notification must:

- Indicate the grounds on which the recommendation is being made;
- Indicate the steps already taken to address the issue (verbal warning followed by formal letter of warning); and
- Notify the athlete of his or her right to contest the NSO's recommendation to withdraw carded status through the NSO's internal appeal process within the prescribed time.

Following receipt of a written notification from an NSO recommending withdrawal of an athlete's carded status, the AAP Manager will:

- Advise the athlete by registered mail of receipt of the recommendation from the NSO;
- Enclose a copy of the recommendation in the letter to the athlete; and
- Advise the athlete to contact the NSO if the athlete wishes to appeal the NSO's recommendation for the withdrawal of his or her carded status.

Once the period for initiating an appeal has expired and the athlete has not filed an appeal, the NSO must advise the NSO's Sport Canada Program Officer and the AAP Manager of the following in writing, with a copy to the athlete:

- The athlete has not appealed the recommendation to withdraw his or her carded status.
- Sport Canada may make a decision on the NSO's recommendation to withdraw the athlete's carded status.

Pending the resolution of any appeal, Sport Canada will continue to provide the athlete with AAP allowances for two months after the NSO's initial notification recommending withdrawal of the athlete's carded status.

If an appeal process continues for more than two months, the athlete may request that Sport Canada continue AAP support on a monthly basis

until the appeal is resolved. Sport Canada will consider representations from the athlete to continue AAP support pending resolution of the appeal, including the following:

- Representations that withdrawal of support could cause financial hardship that would prevent an athlete from training;
- Representations that there have been significant delays in the appeal process that were not caused by the athlete; or
- Any other matter that Sport Canada deems relevant to its determination.

Sport Canada may approve continued AAP funding subject to conditions.

The NSO will notify Sport Canada of the outcome of the appeal process and make a recommendation to Sport Canada that conforms to the final appeal decision. Sport Canada will then decide whether to accept or reject the NSO recommendation.

When Sport Canada considers the recommendation made by the NSO, it may:

- Accept its recommendation and withdraw carded status from the athlete for the remainder of the carding cycle. The effective date of withdrawal of carded status will be two (2) months following the original letter from the NSO recommending withdrawal of the athlete's carded status.
- Reject its recommendation altogether.
- Dismiss the recommendation but impose some lesser penalty.
- Make additional recommendations to either party if it believes some useful purpose might be served by doing so.

If Sport Canada decides to withdraw the athlete's carded status, the AAP Manager must notify the athlete of the decision and the reasons for it by registered mail.

The athlete may request a review of a Sport Canada decision to withdraw carded status by following appeal procedures.





What is an NSO?

A National Sport Organization (NSO) sometimes referred to as a National Sport Federation, NSF, is the national governing body for a given sport in Canada. Its members include Provincial Sport Organizations and high performance athletes within their programs.

[For a list of the Canadian National Sport Organization and their website, click.](#)

The NSO manages the high performance program for their respective sports. This program revolves around the National Teams and includes all aspects of management, coaching, hiring, and team selection.

[Click here for activities within the High performance Program managed by National Sport Organizations.](#)

ATHLETE AGREEMENTS

Athlete/NSO Agreement

National Sport Organizations require their high performance athletes to enter into an Athlete Agreement between the NSO and the athlete. The Agreement outlines the obligations of both parties and the procedure to be followed if those obligations are not met (while specifying the time period during which the agreement is in effect).

Athlete Agreement Content

Optimally, the agreement will be a collaboration between the athletes and the NSO. The Athletes' Council or a group of experienced athletes should review the content before it is finalized and

nually. The agreement exists to protect both the athletes and the sport organization, and it must be fair, unbiased and reasonable for both parties. Every athlete should read the agreement before signing it and understand their own obligations and the responsibilities and obligations of the NSO.

[Click here to view an Athlete Agreement template.](#)

An Athlete Agreement should include (but is not limited to) the following:

NSO Obligations

- Team Selection
 - Notifying athletes about selection criteria in a timely manner
 - Withdrawal of selection privilege
- Athlete Development
- Athlete Eligibility
- Funding Assistance
 - AAP – Carding Nominations
 - Other funding support outlined in the agreement
- Athlete/Team Uniforms
- Athlete Representative(s)
- Communication with Athletes

Athlete Obligations

- Training program submission and adherence
- Participation in monitoring programs, designated training camps, competitions and special events
- Adherence to national and international anti-doping policies and codes, including consent to drug control testing
- Adherence to NSO Bylaws and policies, including Codes of Conduct
- Payment of any national team fees or charges
- Communication with coaches and NSO re: injuries, illness or other problems or conflicts that prevent or limit training, competition or participation

Joint Obligations

- Marketing, fundraising and sponsorship
- Disciplinary Policies and Procedures
 - Expectations of behavior
 - Definition of minor and major infractions and penalty options for same
- Breach of Agreement by Either party
 - Appeal procedure
- Reference to Other Policies Pertinent for Both



Parties

- Harassment Policy

Please note: If specific criteria or expectations are not in the body of the athlete agreement or attached in the appendices, then the agreement must reference the specific applicable document, source and distribution (i.e. Code of Conduct, Selection Criteria for pertinent camps and/or competitions).

Additional Mandatory Content: Sport Canada

The agreement's duration (not to exceed one carding year). Specific Sport Canada and NSO policies the carded athlete must abide by, including the following;

- The Canadian Policy Against Doping in Sport;
- The Canadian Anti-Doping Program;
- The NSO's anti-doping policy;
- AAP policies and procedures; and



- Federal government sport policy regarding competitions where participation is not permitted.
- Details, if applicable, of the carded athlete's trust fund
- Lead time for the publication of selection criteria (i.e. how far ahead of the next carding cycle the selection criteria will be published)

How does this effect Sport Canada's AAP funding?

To receive AAP funding, the agreement must be signed at least two months after the start of each carding cycle. If an athlete and NSO cannot

agree on terms, their funding will not be withheld if athlete agrees with all of the Sport Canada terms. Sport Canada will work with the NSO in order to create an acceptable agreement that is suitable for both athlete and NSO.

[For more information, visit your NSO website.](#)

[To learn more about the Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Program, click here.](#)

[For more information on Athlete Agreements, click here.](#)





What is an **MSO**?

A Multi-Sport Service Organization (MSO) is responsible for many different sports and while not responsible for the governance of these sports, MSOs usually oversee the implementation of athlete development, support and/or a multi-sport Games event.

[Click here for information on the multi-sport organizations that exist in Canada.](#)

[Click here for information on the services provided by each organization.](#)

Other multi-sport organizations that impact athletes include: A number of organizations have

been created over the years that are not directly connected to any specific set of games or sport, the government or sport organizations. These organizations have been developed to fill a perceived gap in communication, advocacy, fundraising or athlete training programs.

Canadian Sport Centers

The Canadian Sport Centers (CSCs) are designed to give athletes a physical, psychological and competitive edge. There are eight CSCs at the present time, located in Victoria, Vancouver, Calgary, Regina, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax. The centres partner with sports and other

service providers to provide additional support to the high performance sport system.

[Click here for CSC websites and the services that they provide.](#)

Provincial/Territorial Sport Organizations

Each of the ten Provincial and three Territorial Governments play an important role in the development of the Canadian sport system. Provincial/Territorial Sport Organizations (P/TSO) provide support, direction and leadership to member organizations. Their goal is to promote sport and its' benefits, encouraging the public to get involved in organized sport. Member organizations are called Provincial/Territorial Sport Governing Bodies (P/TSGB). Provincial/Territorial Sport Organizations receive their funding through corporate sponsors, funding partners, and grants. There are financial assistance programs available to athletes, which are listed on each of the P/TSO's websites.

[Click to find a list of P/TSGBs visit your P/TSO's website.](#)

Government Sport Links

The Government sport links provide a broad base of information ranging from health and sport to provincial programming. It is targeted for all provincial residents, not just athletes. These links serve as a great tool for athletes who may be planning for their career after retiring from sport.

[Click here for a list of Government sport links.](#)

International Federations

Your NSO is a member of an International Sport Federation (ISF). The ISF governs the sport and/or multi-disciplines internationally, including the development of competitive rules and regulations for the sport. They are also involved in the management of sport-specific events during multi-sport Games; manage the organization of sport-specific world championships or events; and liaise on behalf of the sport with organizations.

[Click here for information on international sport federations that exists in Canada and the programs and services they offer.](#)

[Click here to find your ISF.](#)





Athletes**CAN**

Athlete Leadership
and Representation



What does it mean to be **an Athletes Rep?**

An Athlete Representative is someone who speaks on behalf of athletes. They can be a current or retired national team athlete who has either been selected or appointed by their teammates to represent the athlete voice within the sport and in many instances, for multiple levels, disciplines and genders.

As an Athlete Representative, you play a critical leadership role as the conduit between the active athletes and the decision-makers in your sport. You help your teammates to become part of that decision-making circle and have an opportunity to identify positive changes, opportunities, and improvements in your sport that can help strengthen your sport and the achievement of the athletes' goals and the NSO's goals.

You may find yourself or teammates who have taken on leadership roles informally, affecting positive change from within their sport or within the broader sport landscape. In addition to these informal roles, each NSO is required by Sport Canada to have a formal athlete representative as part of the decision making framework within each sport.

The role of being an Athlete Representative can be both challenging and rewarding. In some instances, you must put your personal needs behind those of your teammates. At the same time, to best serve your teammates, you need their support, respect and understanding of the position you have accepted.

Whether you are already aware of what an athlete representative does or are new to the idea,

there are many factors to be aware of, we explore some of these key factors below.

Athlete Reps at National Sport Organizations

As an active athlete or a recently retired athlete, you bring a unique perspective to the table – a perspective from the field of play that can help to identify opportunities to improve the delivery of your sport and the experience for both athletes and all those involved in your sport.

Regardless of the individual skill set of the Athlete Representative, gaining buy-in from the NSO and demonstrating a commitment of engagement as the athlete representative will to a certain commitment an environment of support in order to have effective leadership from athletes.

If met, the list below provides an optimal situation for effective athlete representation:

- Your National Sport Organization (NSO) should have a thorough orientation program for all Athlete Representatives. Please see below for NSO orientation contents.
- The Athlete Representative(s) should develop the support of their peers and the NSO. They should be elected / selected by the athletes, not appointed by the organization.
- The NSO should have an approved staff member or volunteer appointed to educate the Athlete Representative(s) and to act as an on-going resource and liaison.
- Effective communication and engagement between the Athlete Representatives and active athletes with a budget to facilitate that process. (E.g. conference calls, face to face meetings, etc.) The Athlete Representative role must be clearly defined and communicated to all parties, including NSO support staff and coaches. [Click here for a sample job description.](#)
- The Athlete Representative(s) brings a unique perspective and by being prepared and engaged will develop confidence, skill and knowledge to effectively fulfill the role. It is

the on-the-field perspective and relationships with the active athletes that puts the athlete representative in a unique position to make a meaningful contribution within his or her sport.

- To build the most effective leadership framework and skillsets athletes can access leadership development opportunities by becoming familiar with the AthletesCAN leadership handbook, through the Dale Carnegie training program, by participating in sport conferences, by accessing life skills training sessions offered by the Canadian Sport Centers.
- An Annual Athletes Report is a key deliverable that the athlete representative should submit to the board of directors and executive director of his or her sport. This report should take into consideration feedback from teammates and outline key opportunities to improve the sport delivery and a review of the prior year's recommendations. [Click here for an outline and example of an Annual Athletes Report.](#)
- The Annual General Meeting (AGM) is an event that the athlete representative should attend in order to be familiar with the initiatives of the organization, to build relationships with board members and the other leaders within his or her sport, and to present the key points of the Athletes Report. The costs of attending the AGM should be covered by the NSO and the meeting should be scheduled at a time that does not conflict with the athlete's training or competition schedule.
- Ongoing, multi-directional communication is essential for the Athlete Representative(s), as it is with all committee or Board positions. An Athlete Representative succession plan should exist so that potential reps targeted for future responsibilities can work with past representatives (mentors) before being asked to step into the role.

[Click here for a sample recruitment template for future reps.](#)

NSO Orientation

Your NSO should have a thorough orientation program for all athlete representatives.

This should include:

- An overview of “who is who” and an outline of the responsibilities of various committees and governance levels within the organization.
- A job description or document including roles and responsibilities of the Athlete Representative.

[Click here for sample job descriptions](#)

- A schematic or organizational chart showing reporting and supervision responsibilities and connections between all positions. A copy of applicable committee and Board minutes, and meeting reports for at least the past 2 to 3 years. These will help to put current issues into context.

- A copy of the applicable Sport Development Model. What programs and opportunities should be in place for athletes at different stages of their technical and competitive development?
- A copy of the NSO’s current strategic plan. You need to learn what the strategic priorities, goals and objectives are for the organization. The audited financial statements for the past 2 to 3 years, plus current fiscal year financial information including the budget.
- The opportunity for the Athlete Representative(s) to speak to a number of people in the organization and within the board to help develop a historical and current perspective. How are decisions made today? Why were particular decisions made in the past? What are the issues of the day? What are the plans for the future?





Athlete Reps and Structure

There are a number of opportunities at the national and international levels to be an Athlete Representative.

If you are interested in becoming involved as an Athlete Representative at any level, the following steps are encouraged:

- Let people know that you are interested in getting involved
- Find out what the eligibility criteria or requirements are for the various positions
- If you are not yet qualified for a position in which you are interested, then work to fill the gaps in your experience. (Ask the organization what it is looking for in terms of experience and commitment.)
- Speak to past athletes who have fulfilled these roles and ask for their candid feedback on what to expect

Opportunities within a NSO

Within the sport organization structure, representation from athletes should be included in a number of key areas.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors or equivalent is the legitimate governing authority of the organization. It is a required element in an incorporated non-profit organization. Members of the Board are elected by the membership of the organization or appointed by a specific arm of the organization or

an outside body. This is determined by the Bylaws of the association. As an Athlete Representative, you were probably elected or appointed by the high performance athletes, not by the membership as a whole.

[Click here to learn more about Athletes on Boards.](#)

Committees

There are usually two types of committees in an organization. A Standing Committee, which is included in the Bylaws along with specific information about how people are elected or appointed and duties of these types of committee members. For example, high performance or national team committees are usually Standing Committees. The Board may also create “ad hoc” committees from time to time which are short-term committees pulled together to perform a specific function or take on a particular task. Examples of ad hoc committees planning for the development of facilities, marketing of national teams, major fund development or hiring committees for coaches and staff.

Those who may sit on standing committees include coaches, technical staff members, a VP or Chair of High Performance and possibly other “members-at-large”. This is probably a committee of great interest to the Board as the national team provides influence to the profile of the sport, and a good portion of the association’s financial resources are usually allocated to the high performance program. The decision-making authority of the committee will depend on its terms of reference. It may only be able to make recommendations to the Board, or it may have sweeping powers to determine programs and budget. Be sure to find out how the committee functions and what it can and can’t do.

Athletes’ Councils

Some sports have implemented a combination of representation structures where multiple reps (genders, disciplines, abilities, etc.) are available

and responsible for various meetings, initiatives and duties to share the load and provide a better snapshot of the athlete membership and voice for any one sport.

Every sport has issues that are pertinent to high performance athletes. These may include team selection, competitive schedules, training conditions and expectations, assistance with time off work to travel, carding, team coaches or support personnel, the Athlete Representative at the table, conduct issues, communication, and more. Athletes need to be part of the development of these policies and practices, as well as the decision-making bodies that ratify or approve them.

Unless athletes are at the table, you may not be heard. Athletes need to ensure that the decisions made take athletes’ interests into account. The Athlete Representative should have a structure in place for communication and knowledge sharing among all athletes. Some sports have established an internal Athletes’ Council where a “team” of Athlete Representatives can discuss issues within a supportive environment. Sharing the load also means that a single Athlete Representative does not have to be the athlete expert on every issue. However, it is critical that information be shared and consensus reached on key issues. This committee or council could include representation from a variety of interest groups including, the “A” and “B” team, Male/Female, East/West and others depending on the sport. The committee or council will also be the training ground for the athlete leaders of tomorrow.

Formation and on-going meetings of an Athletes’ Council has been the answer to more effective communication and representation for many sports.

How to create an Athletes’ Council

[Click here to view How to create an Athletes’ Council](#)



Tools and templates

Athlete Rep Communication

One of the keys to, but most difficult issues in being an effective Athlete Representative is making sure that you represent all athletes. Communication between Athlete Representatives and back to the constituents is crucial.

How can you be effective as an athlete rep?

- Determine your mandate -- who do you represent? What do those people want you to do? Understand how to be an effective advocate for these issues.
- Establish strong and continuous lines of communication between you and those you represent, other board and/or committee members and with association staff.
- Learn and understand how your organization

works — which are the committees where decisions are made, how do athletes become a part of the decision-making?

[Click here to learn more about being effective as an athlete rep.](#)

Communication with your athletes and/or within your Council

To communicate effectively, we need to understand why we want to communicate. What are we trying to achieve through communication? What do we want our members and others to know?

Important information could include:

- The purposes and goals of the council - Why does it exist?
- Why would an athlete want to become involved?

- What does the council do day-to-day, month-to-month?
 - events
 - meetings
 - services

[Click here to learn more about communication and the role it plays in athlete representation](#)

Communication Plan

When creating or revising your communications plan, there are several components to take into consideration and include the following:

1. Effective Contact Management
2. How can we communicate?
3. Important Dates & Events
4. How will we know we are communicating effectively?

[Click here to learn more about each component of the Communication Plan.](#)

As an Athlete Leader and/or Representative for your sport, you have an opportunity to be a leader for a critical group (high performance athletes) within your national sport organization. By virtue of your position as an Athlete Representative, there is an expectation from other athletes that you will represent their needs, protect their interests and keep them informed about what they need to know.

Being a leader is not about “being in charge”. It is the ability to influence, to be visionary and to communicate that vision to others. Your leadership “style” will develop as you implement effective practices and ways to communicate. While leadership traits and behaviors are important, ultimately your leadership style will be situational.

TOOLS AND TEMPLATES

Athlete-Centered Sport

- [Athlete-Centered Sport](#)

Athlete Representation

- [Athlete Representative Checklist](#)

- [Athlete Representative Job Descriptions & Selection Process](#)
- [Communications Timeline](#)
- [Succession Planning Matrix](#)
- [How to Create an Athletes’ Council](#)
- [Canadian Divers Athletes’ Council Terms of Reference](#)
- [Athletes’ Council Report Guidelines – Diving Plongeon Canada](#)
- [Athletes’ Committee Report 2008 – Diving Plongeon Canada](#)
- [Canadian Sport Centres](#)
- [Canadian ISF Websites](#)

Communication

- [Introductory Athlete Rep Email Template](#)
- [Social Media Guidebook](#)
- [Athlete Representative Job Descriptions & Selection Process](#)
- [Sample Recruitment Template](#)
- [Athlete Rep-Council Meeting Evaluation Form Template](#)
- [Dale Carnegie Training: Speaking More Effectively](#)

Advocacy

- [Issue Identification, Assessment and Evaluation Process](#)
- [Athlete Agreement](#)
- [Athlete Rights – Netball America](#)
- [Athlete Funding Opportunities](#)
- [Athletes’ Rights and Responsibilities](#)

Additional Resources

- [IOC Athlete’s Handbook](#)

Other Important Links

- [Other Important Links](#)
- [Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada](#)
- [Sport Law & Strategy Group](#)
- [Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport](#)







Athletes**CAN**

Athletes on Boards



What are **Boards**?

The word “board” describes the group of people who supervise, manage or govern an organization. All incorporated non-profit organizations, like the NSO you represent, must have a board of volunteers to oversee operations.

What do Boards do?

Whether big or small, national or local, most boards have the same main role: to provide purpose, leadership, direction and overall strategy for the organization they are presiding over. The overriding objective of NSO boards is to develop high-performance; athlete-focused programs based on both the international competitive environment and needs of athletes

What do Board Members do?

In large, well-funded organizations board members focus on high-level issues while leaving operational issues to staff. In contrast, there are many smaller NSOs that operate with no paid staff at all. In this case, board members will often take on many or all staff responsibilities as well as their own.

[Click here for more information regarding responsibilities of the board.](#)

Who can be a Board Member?

As an athlete representative, you were probably elected or appointed by the national team athletes not by the general membership as a whole. Some sports have found that a revolving athlete

representative pool can be a very effective way to ensure board representation. Generally speaking, the number of members on each NSO board is related to the size of the organization they represent. [Click here for specific information regarding NSO board size and memberships.](#)

Who's Who on the Board?

[Click here for to learn about the members the board.](#)

Board Meetings

As an athlete representative, you will be invited to attend board and committee meetings and possibly to chair or lead other meetings such as the athletes' council.

Preparing for a Board Meeting

It is important to do your homework before you attend a meeting; being prepared will reflect well on your personal credibility as an athlete representative. Make sure that before the meeting you read the agenda, the previous meeting's minutes, any meeting reports and the financial information. Understand that the board has many areas of responsibility in addition to the high performance program.

[Click here for information on how to prepare before you first meeting.](#)

Being Heard

You may be quite a bit younger than other board or committee members. You might be on a board where many of the members have "been around forever" and the athlete representative position has been a revolving door.

[Click here for steps that you can take to ensure that your views are communicated at meetings.](#)

Dealing with Conflict

As an athlete representative, you may feel or be perceived to be in a vulnerable position if there

is conflict between yourself and another board member, athlete, volunteer, staff member or coach.

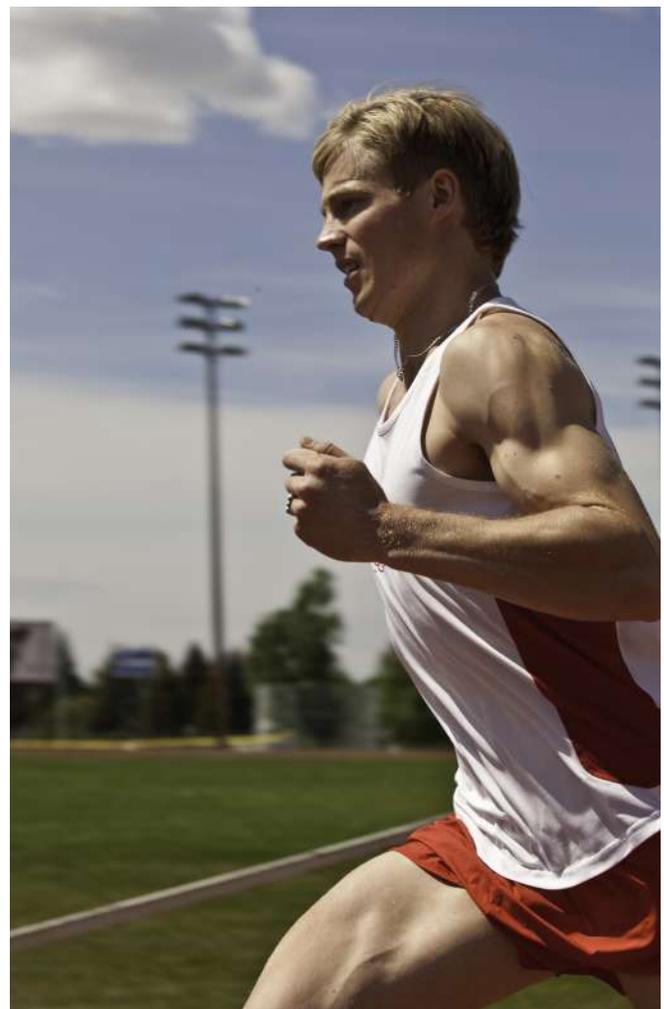
[Click here on what should keep in mind if you find yourself in conflict with others in the organizations.](#)

[Click here for the steps that should be taken if the conflict takes place in a meeting or in an information setting.](#)

Between Meetings

You should: review the minutes, fulfill your commitments, and communicate and liaison with necessary individuals.

[Click here for more information on responsibilities between meetings.](#)





How do boards work?

PURPOSE

The primary reason for holding meetings is to allow the board to make decisions. All major decisions are made at board meetings so it is impossible to be an effective member if you are not a regular attendee.

Meetings also serve other important functions, providing a forum where:

- Board members are regularly brought together to focus on their roles and responsibilities, identify problems and plan for the future.
- Ideas are shared and discussed and then discarded, improved or implemented.
- Tasks are allocated and reported on.
- Regular updates about relevant issues are provided.

- Members are encouraged and motivated and can get to know each other.

Typically, the board will likely meet two or more times per year. The ways in which they can meet (face-to-face, teleconference, electronically) must be outlined in the bylaws (board rules). Meetings vary from board to board in terms of their formality. If you are traveling with the team at the time of a meeting, you may be able to join in through a speakerphone or videoconference.

TYPE

Board members will be involved in a variety of meetings during their term, including:

- **Annual General Meetings** (used to recap the year's progress, chart a direction for the future)

and elect new members or office holders).

- **Extraordinary Meetings** (held between ordinary meetings when urgent decisions need to be made).
- **Committee Meetings** (held regularly or as the need arises to consider particular issues, depending on the focus of the committee).
- **Retreats** (held away from the boardroom, often for a full day or weekend, and designed to allow board members to take part in deeper discussions about directions and future plans).

STRUCTURE

Meeting Structure

The best meetings are those that flow logically, keep members engaged and energized, elicit a range of useful ideas and information and leave members feeling they have made a valued contribution.

Meetings can vary markedly from board to board. Some are quite formal, following strictly defined rules and ensuring that all members are addressed by their correct titles; others are far less formal.

Meetings can be held in a boardroom or in a more social setting such as a member's house or at a restaurant. Meetings can also be held through web conferencing, by teleconference and by videoconference. In fact, some boards conduct most if not all of their meetings by teleconference.

Some meetings are held behind closed doors and are subject to strict rules of confidentiality; others are fully open to the public. Even open meetings may sometimes move into confidential mode (referred to as "in-camera"), asking observers to leave the room while certain sensitive issues like salary reviews and staff evaluations are discussed.

Decisions may be made in a variety of ways, by formal voting or a more informal show of hands

or verbal agreement. Some boards follow procedures based on Robert's Rules of Order, a guide to running meetings that specifies common rules and procedures for deliberation, debate and decision-making.

A Typical Meeting

Although meetings will vary greatly from board to board, the following is a rough guide to how a typical board meeting might proceed:

- Board members arrive and the chair (leader) declares the meeting open.
- Attendances, absences and apologies are noted (throughout the meeting the minute taker will note when people leave or re-join the meeting).
- The minutes of the last meeting are amended or accepted (it is usually assumed that all members will have read the minutes beforehand).
- Members are asked if there are any matters arising from the minutes – this offers members the opportunity to speak briefly about developments since the last meeting.
- Some boards will receive reports at this point in the meeting. Often, the reports are presented for information only with no action required other than an acknowledgement that they have been read and accepted.
- Committee reports come next, if applicable. As with the chair and executive director's reports, committee reports are generally accepted without the need for lengthy discussions. Issues that require decision-making by the full board will usually appear under a separate item.
- Some boards will have a "consent agenda", which will include routine items, such as to accept committee reports or approve normal expenditures. These items are carried automatically unless someone asks the chair to move any of them to the regular agenda.
- Consideration of the agenda items begins.

Usually, each item will be considered separately in the order in which they appear in the agenda. Board members discuss or debate issues surrounding the item before a motion is put forward and a vote taken. Once the board has made a resolution, the meeting moves on to the next item. Sometimes an item will be deferred until later in the meeting (say, to allow for a particular member to arrive) or until a later meeting (to allow for more information to be prepared, for example). Other items may be delegated to a committee for more detailed investigation and consideration.

- Any urgent or general business that was not included on the circulated agenda is discussed next. Because details about these items have not been circulated earlier, and board members therefore may not be “up to speed” on the issues, decisions may need to be deferred to the next meeting to allow time for more in-depth consideration.
- Confidential business, which is usually subject to a separate, private agenda, is often dealt with last. If it is an open meeting, observers are asked to leave to allow the board to consider these items privately. These sessions are called “in-camera”.
- The meeting is formally closed.

PREPARATION

Preparing for a Board Meeting

Preparation for a meeting or discussion is as important as the way that the information is conveyed. It is important to do your homework before you attend a meeting; being prepared will reflect well on your personal credibility as an athlete representative.

In addition to being familiar with your NSO and its issues, make sure that before the meeting you read the agenda, the previous meeting’s minutes, any meeting reports and the financial

information. Consider asking questions of clarification or information prior to the meeting by contacting staff or other board or committee members. You can then be prepared with discussion points or further questions to ask at the meeting itself without having to re-hash a discussion held previously.

For example, when reading the agenda prior to the meeting, you might see that your board will be discussing a letter from a training facility proposing a change in resource allocations for your organization. Since this might have an impact on the athletes you represent, you should contact the person whose name is on the agenda beside this item and seek further details, so that you will be prepared to discuss at the meeting how the proposal would affect the athletes.

At the 2009 Canada Games, *Benoit Huot*, of Canada’s Paralympic swim team, described the thorough approach he takes when preparing for meetings he attends that will not be conducted in French, his mother tongue. He makes a point of requesting French versions of any pre-meeting background briefing material. After reviewing the material and identifying the issues he wishes to discuss further at the meeting, he prepares speaking notes for himself in French, focusing on the points he wishes to make. Then, he translates his notes to English. Huot feels that this approach helps him to focus on the issues at hand, while enabling him to effectively express his views in his second language.

Finally, understand that the board has many areas of responsibility in addition to the high performance program. Some of the board members at the table will be there with specific areas of responsibility (e.g.: coaching, athlete representative, development, and marketing) but collectively, all members own responsibility for the organization as a whole. Be aware that the meeting will cover the NSO’s business in many areas. Be careful not to look bored, or wonder why you are at the table for



a discussion about marketing a new participation program or hiring a new executive director.

ETIQUETTE

Meeting Etiquette

Meeting etiquette is really just a matter of manners and common sense:

- Arrive on time (or early) and leave only when the meeting is finished.
- Carefully read all items well before the meeting.
- Accept board decisions graciously, even if your view has been overruled. Avoid personal attacks or rehashing things that have already been decided.
- Stick to the agenda. Avoid launching into discussions about irrelevant information.
- Ask questions and insist on answers when you need clarification. Do not agree to decisions or actions you don't understand.
- Take appropriate action to ensure that you and your board are protected from any potential or real conflicts of interest you feel may arise.
- Ensure you give the views of each board member respect and consideration; avoid speaking without listening or interrupting people when they are talking.
- Your contribution is important: make an active contribution to debates and discussions whenever possible.
- Answer any questions meeting participants ask, even if they appear naïve.
- Do not discuss confidential information outside the boardroom.

The Role of the Chair

Board meetings cannot take place without a board chair. The role of the chair is to ensure that the meeting is conducted efficiently and that meeting rules are followed. The chair should facilitate discussions; keep members on track and the



meeting on time. When a topic has been fully discussed, the chair will often summarize the points and put it to the board for a decision or vote.

YOUR FIDUCIARY DUTY

When you join a board you are accepting a “fiduciary” duty, i.e. a duty to act honestly, to act in good faith for the benefit of, and in the best interests of, the board itself and the organization you are overseeing and, to act with loyalty to the organization. [Click here for examples of how you fiduciary duty can be fulfilled.](#)

This fiduciary duty has two main branches:

- [The duty to Act with Care](#) - As a board member you must act competently (or skillfully) and with diligence. As a board member, you may be able to delegate your powers. Similarly, you can rely on the professional advice of others (such as an accountant) if the reliance is in good faith, and you have independently assessed the advice.
- [The duty of loyalty](#) - This means that the board member must act honestly, in good faith and in the best interests of the organization.

Other Relevant Laws

In addition to the duties outlined above, there is a range of generally applied laws that board members and their organizations must uphold as they carry out their roles. Click here for a list areas of the law board members should be familiar with.

Your Financial Obligations

When you join a board you accept the obligation to look after any finances that your board may be required to oversee. Financial stewardship and oversight are among the most important functions of a board. It is extremely important to be very familiar with the organization's bylaws (rules governing the organization).

Financial Competence

As part of your board orientation as an athlete representative, you should make sure you have an appropriate understanding of your board's financial documents. This requires some familiarity with financial reports. Every year, most boards must ensure that a financial report is prepared.

[Click here to learn what the report should include.](#)

TIP AND TRICKS (STRATEGY)

Decision Making Process

Robert's Rules: Decision Making

Rules of Order are in place to help the business of the meeting flow smoothly and efficiently. (Note: remember, many NSOs do not follow a formal meeting process and do not use rules of order at all meetings. However, the rules may be used for some, like the Annual General Meeting). For those that do, rules of order ensure that every member gets the opportunity to speak and that decisions are made democratically.

Understanding these rules will help you get your issues addressed and garner respect from the others in attendance. Knowing when to speak,

how to speak and what to say will guarantee that the others pay attention to you, and more importantly, to your message about athletes. Robert's Rules of Order is a guide used by most NSOs to run meetings. It specifies common rules and procedures for debate and decision-making.)

First Step: Getting Your Ideas on the Agenda

If your idea is short or urgent, you can put it on the agenda during the meeting. When the chair asks the members to approve the agenda, you raise your hand and say "I'd like to add something to the agenda". You can also suggest where your item might fit on the agenda. Note: For more complex issues that need to be thought out by members before discussion in a meeting, you need to ask your chair to put the item on the agenda for the next meeting.

Speaking about your ideas: Motions

Meeting discussions on each topic are organized in terms of "motions". These are statements that the members are asked to accept or reject on each topic and serve to keep discussions on topic and on time.

When the chair gives you your turn to speak, then, according to Robert's Rules, you "have the floor". You indicate that you wish to make a motion by saying, "I move," followed by your proposal to the members at the meeting. To make a motion, write out what you want to say. The clearer the motion, the better. A motion requires another person to "second" the motion or agree with you that your motion is worth discussing.

Discussing the Motion

If you made the motion and gained a "second", then the motion is eligible for discussion. The chair will let you start the discussion. The chair will be keeping a list of the members signaling that they wish to speak to the motion and will call on them in turn. If you didn't make the motion, but

have an opinion, raise your hand at any time during the discussion on the floor until the chair acknowledges you.

When the chair calls on you, say what you think as clearly and as briefly as possible. Remember, you must speak to the motion. It helps to start with, "I want to speak in favour of the motion because..." or "I want to speak against the motion because..."

How to Change the Motion

If you want to make some changes to the motion before you are prepared to support it, then you should amend the motion. Raise your hand, and when it is your turn to speak, say: "I move to amend the motion to read..." and give the wording you want. If someone seconds this motion to amend, then it will be discussed and voted on.

Note: An amendment can add, take away or change parts of the original motion. The amendment, however, cannot go completely against the main motion. If you don't like the motion at all, vote against it. If the motion is defeated, then you can make a new motion.

How to Take Back a Motion

If you made a motion and then during the discussion realize that it is not the right time to make a decision on the issue or it would be better to talk about another motion, say, "I wish to withdraw the main motion."

How to Stop the Discussion

If you think there has been full discussion, or that the discussion is going in circles, then raise your hand and, when the chair calls on you, say: "I call the question". If someone seconds your motion, then the chair will ask members to vote on whether to end the discussion.

To Put Off Discussion to a Future Meeting

Raise your hand and say: "I move to postpone the

question to the next meeting."

To Turn Over the Decision to Another Group

If you want another group or committee to study the issue, say: "I move to refer the question to a committee."

To Set Discussion Aside Indefinitely

If members clearly don't want to deal with this issue in the near future, say: "I vote to table the motion."

When You Can Speak Out of Turn

The only three times you can jump ahead of your turn on the speaker's list are the following:

- If you think the chair is not following the proper meeting procedure, then call out "Point of Order" and explain what you think is wrong.
- If you need clarification on a point already raised, then call out "Point of Information" and then ask your question as briefly as possible. You must go back on the speaker's list if you wish to follow up on that information with an opinion.
- If you can't hear the chair, for example, or you think someone's rights are being ignored, call out "Point of Privilege" and say what you want to be done.

Voting

When the chair calls for the vote, you can:

- Vote yes, when the chair says "All in Favour."
- Vote no, when the chair says "All Against."
- Raise your hand when the chair says "Abstentions" if you don't want to vote.

Sometimes members don't vote because they don't understand the motion. It is better to ask for explanations during the discussion so that you can vote. Don't be afraid to ask questions. If you are confused, then other members probably are too.



Knowing Your **Key Documents**

The information in this section describes what sort of documents a board member may encounter and how to use them.

The Annual Report

The board's annual report outlines the activities that have taken place during the previous year and may also provide an outlook for the future. This is a key document that is an important vehicle for fulfilling a board's duty to be accountable and transparent.

Board Rules/Bylaws/Constitution/Statute

The operations and procedures of all boards are governed by rules or laws of some kind, and it is important for board members to have read and

understood these documents. Understanding the different layers and decision-making roles will help you to understand where particular issues have to be addressed.

Policies

The number and type of policies will differ from board to board, with smaller organizations tending to have a minimal number of policy documents. All board members should have a copy of their board's policies and be familiar with their contents.

Financial Papers

The board's financial documents should allow members to have on hand at any given moment what is owned, how much money is on hand and

what needs to be paid. Board members should become familiar with all financial documents, as financial accountability is one of the board's most important areas of supervision.

Financial Procedures Manual

Most boards will have a financial procedure manual, which outlines financial processes and systems, the responsibilities for administrative tasks, authorization limits and procedures, and descriptions for how functions such as paying bills, depositing cash and transferring money between funds are handled.

Auditor's Report

An auditor produces a financial statement showing income and expenditure and a balance sheet showing the assets and liabilities.

Budget Papers

Budgets usually coincide with financial years and

cover the two main areas of expenditure and income, showing how much money is expected to be coming in and how much will be going out.

Financial Plan / Strategic Plan

A longer-range financial plan is designed to allow boards to plan for the future, anticipating spending and income for the next four years. Typically these long-range plans are created as part of a Strategic Plan.

Insurance documents

There is a range of insurance policies regularly taken out by boards. The board should have on hand details of what insurance it holds for its members, how much coverage is provided and length of coverage. You should read the policies and familiarize yourself with the language they use.

[Click here for more information on the documents a board member may encounter.](#)





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