



U.S. OLYMPIC & PARALYMPIC TRIALS

PARTICIPANT RULES – COMMERCIAL MARKINGS

SECTION 1. OVERVIEW

To ensure the priority of sport remains the central look of the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Trials (Trials) and to retain the crucial brand connection with United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC) sponsors and the Trials they support, no form of publicity, advertising, branding or promotion may appear on a person's body, clothing or equipment used by competitors, officials and all other participants in the Trials, except for the manufacturer identification and sports club logo on an Athlete's clothing and equipment as expressly permitted under these Rules.

Although these Rules provide that the Trials venue must remain free of commercial markings, the USOPC supports participants expressing their connection to personal sponsors through other avenues, such as social media.

SECTION 2. KEY TERMS USED IN THESE RULES

- a) **Athlete:** The individual, who may be part of a team of individuals, who compete in the Trials events.
- b) **Athlete Clothing:** The warm-ups and competition uniform worn by an Athlete immediately prior to competing and while competing.
- c) **Commercial Marking:** Any mark, logo or other brand indicator affiliated with a commercial entity.
- d) **Commercial Use:** Use in connection with the promotion of any commercial entity and/or its relationship with a National Governing Body (NGB) or athlete.
- e) **Manufacturer Identification:** The identification of a manufacturer principally used in the business of manufacturing, providing, distributing, and selling clothing or sporting goods (as applicable to the particular item), which is not confusingly similar or identical to an identification used in another line of business not related to clothing or sporting goods (as applicable to the particular item).
- f) **NGB:** The National Governing Body of the sport for the respective Trials, or the USOPC when a National Governing Body is not recognized and the USOPC assumes management responsibility over that sport.
- g) **Non-USOPC Sponsors:** Commercial entities that have no official relationship with the USOPC, but may sponsor NGBs or individual athletes.
- h) **Participants:** All athletes, coaches, team personnel, officials, volunteers and other individuals at the Trials Venue.
- i) **Specialized Equipment:** Items of apparel and equipment, approved by the USOPC, used by an athlete in the course of participation in a competition, which have a material effect on the performance of the athlete due to the specialized characteristics of the item. Also known as "personal performance gear."
- j) **Trials:** A competition that leads directly to the selection of athletes for a Delegation Event by the USOPC. Under a contractual agreement with the USOPC, the NGB manages the event under the designation of a U.S. Olympic or Paralympic Trials.



- k) **Rules Application Panel:** The panel that reviews incidents of misconduct and makes determinations whether a participant at trials has violated a USOPC rule in force during a trials event, as described further in USOPC Dispute Resolution Policy.
- l) **Trials Venue:** On the field of play or other restricted area at a competition designated by the USOPC as an Olympic or Paralympic Trials.
- m) **USOPC Marks:** Olympic and Paralympic trademarks and/or imagery.
- n) **USOPC Sponsors:** Official sponsors of the USOPC.

SECTION 3. APPLICABILITY

These USOPC Rules regarding the use or display of commercial marks at the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Trials applies to all Participants. The use of non-commercial marks, symbols or words for demonstration purposes is governed by the USOPC Trials and Delegation Rules for Athlete Expression and Demonstrations.

SECTION 4. STATEMENT OF COMMERCIAL MARKINGS RULES

A. Requirement

No form of publicity, advertising, branding or promotion may appear on a person's body, clothing or equipment used by Participants in the entire Trials Venue.

B. Exceptions

- (a) Manufacturer Identification. Athletes' Clothing, footwear* and sports equipment* may bear up to 1 standard Manufacturer Identification as originally imprinted by the Manufacturer per piece of Athlete Clothing.

No item will be marked conspicuously or for advertising purposes. The USOPC will be the sole authority to determine whether the use of a Manufacturer Identification complies with these Rules and reserves the right to interpret these Rules on a case-by-case basis. Any further exception to these Rules must be approved by the USOPC in writing and in advance.

**All footwear and equipment may carry the identification as generally used on products sold through retail in the six-month period prior to the Trials.*

- (b) Sport Club Logo. Unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the USOPC, an Athlete's Clothing may bear up to 1 logo placement of their sport club ("Sport Club Logo") across each article of Athlete Clothing (i.e., up to 1 logo on Athlete's top, up to 1 logo on Athlete's bottom, and up to 1 logo on a hat, if part of Athlete Clothing). Only one sport logo may be displayed across all Athlete Clothing and the use of the Sport Club Logo will be permitted, provided that the club is in good standing with the NGB for at least the six (6) months prior to the Trials. Athletes may coordinate approval of the Sport Club Logo with the NGB. The use of the Sport Club Logo may then be submitted by the NGB to the USOPC for approval in advance of the Trials.

Under no circumstances can an Athlete exceed the number of logos permitted under these Participant Rules. If a Participant elects to include a Sport Club Logo on their Athlete Clothing and a corporate name



is associated with the name of a club, the name must be in text form, and not represented in logo form. The USOPC reserves the right to withhold approval of a Club Logo if the club name is deemed to be used conspicuously for advertising purposes.

- (c) ***Specialized Equipment.*** Each athlete has the right to select his or her own Specialized Equipment (also known as “Personal Performance Gear”) for use in the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Trials. The USOPC has the sole authority to determine what Athlete Clothing and equipment constitutes Specialized Equipment for each sport. The list of USOPC-approved clothing and equipment is located in Section E “Specialized Equipment” of the Guidelines found [here](#).

SECTION 5. SUBMISSION PROCESS

Athletes may submit images of their uniforms and equipment that they anticipate using at the Trials to the NGB in advance of the Trials pursuant to deadlines set by the NGB. The NGB will then submit the images to the USOPC for final pre-approval. A notice of approval will be sent back to the Athlete as soon as practicable, identifying any item that is not approved and the reasons for such rejection. The Athlete will have the opportunity to cure any identified deficiencies. Any item that is not pre-approved by the USOPC may be subject to mark concealment at the Trials (e.g., having the mark covered by tape), but an Athlete will still be permitted to use the item.

SECTION 6. NGB OBLIGATIONS TO ASSIST IN RULES IMPLEMENTATION

- A. Pre-Event Notice of Rules.** Each NGB hosting a Trials must reference this U.S. Olympics & Paralympics Trials Participant Rules – Commercial Markings in its Trials registration process for all Trials Participants. Each NGB must have all Participants agree to abide by and be bound by these Rules, including the dispute resolution process, at the Trials.
- B. Communication.** Each NGB will provide education in advance to all Participants expected to attend the Trials regarding the requirements of these Rules and the potential sanctions for failure to abide by them. The NGB will jointly work with its Team USA Athlete’s Commission representative to develop communication plans to outreach to Athletes with information about the commercial restrictions at the Trials. Communication about the requirements in these Rules should be widely disseminated.
- C. Trials Enforcement.** At the Trials, the NGB will work with the USOPC to identify any potential violations of these Rules and will assist in enforcing the requirements at the Trials Venue.

SECTION 7. USOPC ENFORCEMENT

- A. On-site Enforcement.** USOPC staff will be on-site at each Trials to help enforce the requirements set forth in these Rules for all Participants and to proactively mitigate any violations. This includes conducting an examination and regular monitoring of all clothing, footwear, accessories of all Participants and the sport equipment used by Athletes for competition. For any marking that does not comply with these Rules, the USOPC will have items (such as tape) on-hand to conceal the markings.



B. First Warning Notice of Rules Violation: USOPC staff will provide a clear and concise warning notice orally to a Participant who appears to be in violation of these Rules at Trials.¹ The warning notice will be delivered in front of a witness and the warning will be made, if possible, during a break in the competition, where applicable. This first warning notice should:

- 1) Confirm to the Participant that these Rules for Trials are applicable and any Participant who chooses not to comply with the Rules may face a possible sanction.
- 2) Where the Participant is an Athlete, inform the Athlete that they will be allowed to participate in their event, but that they may face a possible sanction (including but not limited to their results being disqualified) if they continue to fail to comply with these Rules.
- 3) Indicate that any violation of these Rules will be handled in accordance with the USOPC Dispute Resolution Policy which can be found [here](#).

SECTION 8. REPORTING VIOLATION

Any individual may report an alleged violation of these Rules to a USOPC representative on-site at the Trials. The USOPC may also pursue a possible violation based on first-hand knowledge or information received otherwise.

SECTION 9. AVAILABLE SANCTIONS FOR VIOLATION OF THESE RULES

If there is a potential violation of the USOPC Rules, the USOPC Rules Application Panel will review the matter and propose a sanction, as described in the Dispute Resolution Policy. Possible consequences of violating these Rules include, but are not limited to:

All Participants:

- (a) Expulsion from Trials;
- (b) Recommendation to the NGB and the USOPC of the loss of the privilege to participate in future Olympic, Paralympic, Pan American, Parapan American, and Youth Olympic Games, as well as other USOPC-sponsored events; or
- (c) Performance of a specified task or tasks, such as a formal written and/or oral apology.

Specific to Athletes:

- (d) Disqualification of results at Trials, which may impact selection to the Olympic, Paralympic, Pan American, Parapan American, and Youth Olympic Games, as well as other USOPC-sponsored events; or
- (e) Denial of funding from the USOPC Athlete Support Programs or other USOPC-sponsored programs for which Athlete may be eligible.

SECTION 10. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

If a Participant disputes the sanction proposed by the USOPC Rules Application Panel, and is unable to informally resolve it with the USOPC (as described in the Dispute Resolution Policy), then the individual may request a hearing in front of the Trials Hearing Panel in accordance with the [USOPC Dispute Resolution Hearing Procedures](#).

¹ With respect to Athletes, the USOPC acknowledges that, in certain circumstances, the tape or other items used to conceal commercial markings on Athlete Clothing may become displaced unintentionally during competition. This warning will be delivered without regard to the intent of the Athlete to ensure that all Athletes are provided the same warnings and the same opportunity to comply with these Rules.



The Office of the Athlete Ombuds is available to provide cost-free, confidential, and independent advice to Athletes regarding their rights, resources, and options under this process and to assist athletes in resolving disputes or concerns. Athletes may contact the Athlete Ombuds at ombudsman@usathlete.org or 719-866-5000.