



2026 USAT Elite Triathlon National Team Program

GUIDING PRINCIPLES, OVERVIEW, & CRITERIA SELECTION PERIOD JANUARY 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2026

Program Guiding Principles & Overview

USA Triathlon (“USAT”) High Performance (“HP”) Department is responsible for supporting athletes who have the vision, goals and are capable of winning Olympic & Paralympic Games medals, while identifying, supporting & developing future Games medalists. To help achieve this objective USAT has developed and supports Elite Triathlon and Elite Paratriathlon National Team Programs. The USAT Elite Triathlon National Team Program (the “Program”) and any financial support associated is designed specifically to assist athletes in their pathway to achieving podium performances at the Olympic Games. The four-tiered Program provides performance-based support to athletes in the form of administrative assistance, performance advisement and allocation of equipment and financial resources. The Program is comprised of athletes with proven performance capability and is designed with four (as well as interim national team status) ascending tiers to support athletes as they advance towards their goal of achieving podium performances at the Olympic Games. Athletes are expected to advance levels during their time in the Program with improving international performances reflective of their ability to execute Olympic podium performances.

In addition to the qualification criteria specific to each tier outlined at the end of this document, athletes must meet the following minimum criteria to be eligible for the Program:

- Eligible to represent USA Triathlon in World Triathlon competition, including but not limited to:
 - National Federation (NF) affiliation
 - Current USA Triathlon elite license holder in good standing
 - Current with World Triathlon Pre-Participation Evaluation (PPE) requirements
- Current with SafeSport training & Background Check
- Commitment to the draft-legal format (to be evaluated by USA Triathlon; all non-drafting and non-World Triathlon events must be approved in advance by the HP General Manager)
- Creation, submission, & adherence to an Annual Performance Plan
- Signed National Team Program Athlete Agreement for the term

Results achieved on or after January 1, 2026, are eligible to be used as automatic qualification criteria outlined below. It is the responsibility of each athlete to inform USAT High Performance when they have achieved a result which would earn a change in program status. All Program athletes (who are named at the start of the term) will be subject to renewal on December 31, 2026. Criteria objectively achieved by program athletes during 2026 guarantees selection to that tier for the remainder of 2026 and the full 2027 season. Athletes not currently in the Program may be named the month after they hit the complete criteria, once all eligibility criteria are confirmed and processed, and will retain selection for the 2027 season assuming they remain eligible, in good standing, and have a signed 2027 National Team Program Athlete Agreement. Existing Program athletes who have achieved objective criteria may advance to a higher Tier starting on the first of the next month.

Any financial support outlined in this document represents expected funding levels based on the four tiers of the Program, though additional funding and support opportunities may become available to Program athletes and will be communicated accordingly. The descriptions below summarize the purpose of each funding mechanism available. After a review of the Annual Performance Plan (“APP”), a customized support plan will be developed for each athlete depending on resources available. Adjustments to the approved APP must be approved prior to incurring reimbursable expenses.

- USAT stipend: supports basic living and training expenses
- Travel reimbursement: supports athlete’s travel to compete in developmentally appropriate World Triathlon events
- Coaching stipend: compensates USA Triathlon Certified Coaches working with National Team Program athletes
- USOPC benefits: Elite Athlete Health Insurance & Operation Gold funding will be distributed per the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (“USOPC”) criteria

Discretionary Consideration

USA Triathlon may use discretion to select athletes who have not met the objective criteria for the Program for several reasons. These include, but are not limited to, injury or illness, pregnancy, the occurrence of exceptional circumstances, and other unanticipated failure of objective criteria to select an athlete likely to achieve competition results consistent with the program Tiers.

Discretionary nominations will be determined by a panel of one USA Triathlon HP Staff (who does not serve in the capacity as a personal coach to program athletes) and two elite athlete representatives (also known as the International competition panel ("ICP")).

Elite Athlete Health Insurance (EAHI)

The USOPC allocates EAHI slots to National Governing Bodies (NGBs) on a basis of objective performance. This program provides an affordable insurance option to athletes. This benefit is provided through the USOPC and is made available to USA Triathlon Elite Triathlon National Team Program athletes at Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3, and Tier 4 Team levels.

Athletes must remain in good standing to receive EAHI benefits for the duration of their Elite Triathlon National Team Program term. Athletes who break their agreement or are no longer committed to the draft-legal format will be removed. Athletes who are removed from the program by USAT (by choice, by actions, or by contract expiration) may have the option to remain on the insurance program at their own cost for up to one year.

EAHI Criteria:

- 2026 EAHI allocations will be awarded and offered in Q1 2026 to [Team USA Eligible Athletes](#). The order will begin with the highest National Team Tier (Tier 1) and proceed through Tier 4.
 - In the event that multiple athletes fall within the same tier and available allocations are limited, selection will then be based on World Triathlon Championship Series Rankings as of December 31, 2026.

Projected 2026 Support Levels: *(subject to change at the start of each selection period depending on USAT & USOPC funding capacity)*

NTP Level	DAS (Direct Athlete Support) stipend	Coaching Stipend	USOPC Insurance (If EAHI & Team USA criteria met and slots available)
Tier 1	\$5,500/quarter	\$2,400/quarter	Eligible for EAHI
Tier 2	\$4,125/quarter	\$1,800/quarter	Eligible for EAHI
Tier 3	\$2,475/quarter	\$1,200/quarter	Eligible for EAHI
Tier 4	\$1,200/quarter	\$1,125/quarter	Eligible for EAHI
Interim NT	WTCS funding available for up to three races (or three World Cup races for first-time National Team athletes)	N/A	N/A

USAT Elite Triathlon National Team Program Criteria: January 1 – December 31, 2026 (Selection Period).

- Tier 4 status is only applicable to athletes who have not been part of the Sr. National Team
- For criteria that have 2 results necessary, both results must be within a calendar year or 7 months of each other
- If the race format is modified to a duathlon, the result is ineligible for qualification
- There must be 40+ athletes on the start list. If there are under 40 athletes, it will go down one tier lower. Tier 4 (only applicable for athletes who have never been part of a Sr. National Team) still qualifies for Tier 4 funding. This does not

apply to the Grand Final as athletes will be eligible to qualify for the tier regardless of the number of athletes on the start list.

- For interim national team, if there are below 40 athletes, you will still be eligible to hit interim national team criteria as long as you have not hit national team status before.

Concerns or questions related to discretionary decisions should be communicated to the USA Triathlon High Performance General Manager (Scott.S@usatriathlon.org or 720-936-4278). In addition, athletes are encouraged to contact the Athlete Ombuds Office as a resource for confidential, independent advice and assistance with resolving disputes (contact information below). After the previous steps have occurred, athletes may contact USA Triathlon General Counsel (legal@usatriathlon.org) to administer an executive review to ensure published criteria and process was followed.

Athletes have the right to file a grievance and have a hearing per the [USAT Grievance and Disciplinary Policy](#). Athletes also have the right to report any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest and will not be retaliated against for raising concerns or asking questions of USA Triathlon or the Athlete Ombuds Office. For more information, please see [USA Triathlon's Whistleblower Policy](#).

Athlete Ombuds - The Office of the Athlete Ombuds offers independent, confidential advice to elite athletes regarding their rights and responsibilities in the Olympic and Paralympic Movement, and assists athletes with a broad range of questions, disputes, complaints and concerns.

Phone: 719-866-5000

Email: ombudsman@usathlete.org

Website: usathlete.org

<u>Team</u>	<u>All Ages</u>	<u>U25</u>
Senior National Team		Additional funding to athletes race ages 16-25 found on U25 Mallow National Team Document.
Tier 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top 3 at a WTCS Race • Top 5 at the WTCS grand final • 2x Top 5s WTCS race • Top 5 overall World Triathlon Championship Series ranking at the conclusion of the WTCS season • Top 3 American athletes in the top 10 of the World Triathlon Championship Series ranking at the conclusion of the WTCS season • The top 3 American athletes in the top 10 of the Olympic Points ranking at the end of the first period, and again at the end of the second period • Olympic Games Individual or Mixed Relay Medal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top 5 at a WTCS race • Top 8 at the WTCS grand final • 2x Top 8 at a WTCS race • Top 8 overall World Triathlon Championship Series ranking at the conclusion of the WTCS season
Tier 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top 5 at a WTCS race • Top 8 at the WTCS grand final • 2x Top 8 WTCS race • Top 8 overall World triathlon Championship Series ranking at the conclusion of the WTCS season • Top 3 American athletes in the top 20 of the World Triathlon Championship Series ranking at the conclusion of the WTCS season • The top 3 American athletes in the top 20 of the Olympic Points ranking at the end of the first period, and again at the end of the second period • Mixed Relay Gold at World Championships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top 8 at a WTCS race • Top 10 at the WTCS grand final • 2x Top 10 WTCS Race • Top 10 overall World Triathlon Championship Series ranking at the conclusion of the WTCS season • Win U23 World Championships
Tier 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top 8 at a WTCS race • Top 10 at the WTCS grand final • 2x Top 10 WTCS Race • Top 10 overall World Triathlon Championship Series ranking at the conclusion of the WTCS season • Mixed Relay Bronze or Silver at World Championships • Top 3 American athletes in the top 30 of the World Triathlon Championship Series ranking at the conclusion of the WTCS season. • The top 3 American athletes in the top 30 of the Olympic Points ranking at the end of the first period, and again at the end of the second period. • Medal at any WTCS MTR during the Olympic Qualification Period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top 12 at a WTCS Race • Top 14 at the WTCS grand final • 2x Top 14 WTCS Race • Top 3 U23 World Championships
Tier 4 (Any athlete who has previously been on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top 12 at a WTCS Race • Top 14 at the WTCS grand final 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top 14 at a WTCS Race • Top 3 at a World Cup

the USAT Sr national team will not be eligible for this tier)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2x Top 14 WTCS Race • 2x Top 3 at a World Cup • Olympic Games MTR 4th place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2x Top 5 at a world cup • Top 5 U23 World Championships
Interim National Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x Top 10 at a WTCS race • 1x Top 14 at a WTCS race (only applicable to athletes who have not been on the Sr national team) • Top 3 at a World Cup (only applicable to athletes who have not been on the Sr national team) • Top 3 at a WTCS MTR (outside of an Olympic qualification period). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top 20 at a WTCS Race • Top 5 at a World Cup