



# USAW Selection Procedure Policy

*Applicable for events starting*

*August 30, 2024 to December 31, 2025*

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*Note: Youth Olympic Games, Pan American Games, Junior Pan American Games and Olympic Games selection procedures are published separately as such selection procedures require United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) approval and ownership.*

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**Philosophy**

USAW has been given the responsibility by the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC) to govern the sport of weightlifting in the United States of America. One of USAW's duties is to put forth international teams to represent the USA.

USAW prioritizes selection procedures based on: (1) Olympic qualification, (2) selecting teams of athletes that can compete with the best in the world in their respective weight class, (3) earning medals in international competition, and (4) providing developing competitive athletes opportunities for international competition experience.

**Right to Amend**

USAW may amend these selection procedures at any time, including in response to actions or decisions (e.g., event schedule releases or changes, qualification procedures, etc.) of the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF), Pan American Weightlifting Federation (PAWF), Panam Sports, USOPC, International Olympic Committee (IOC), International University Sports Federation (FISU), or other applicable governing body with responsibility for an international weightlifting competition. This includes the possibility of amendment if the IWF announces 2028 Olympic Games qualification procedures before December 31, 2025. Notice and rationale will be published electronically at [usawweightlifting.org](http://usawweightlifting.org).

Amendments to the Qualification Calendar (Appendix A) may be made by USAW in its sole discretion and without approval of the USAW AAC or USAW Board of Directors.

The A and B standards (published [here](#) on the USAW website) will be set once per year following initial publication of this document, in January of that year. Any amendments to such standards after they are initially set for the year must be approved, by simple majority vote, by both the USAW AAC and USAW Board of Directors.

Any other material amendments to these procedures must be approved, by simple majority vote, by both the USAW AAC and the USAW Board of Directors.

## Minimum Selection Qualifications

To be considered for an international team, athletes must meet the following minimum requirements:

**You must be a citizen of the United States of America**

If dual citizenship is held, your sport nationality must be registered as the United States with the IWF/PAWF.

**You must have a valid United States of America Passport**

You must possess a U.S. passport with an expiration date of a minimum of six months after the end of competition, or the entry requirement of the host nation, whichever is greater.

**You must be the correct age for the competition**

Youth: 13-17 years of age

Junior: 15-20 years of age

Senior: 15+ years of age

An athlete's age is calculated based on their age on December 31 of the calendar year in which the competition takes place.

**You must comply with all requirements of the applicable governing body**

Olympics: for the Olympic Games and Youth Olympic Games, the relevant IOC, USOPC and IWF rules apply.

Pan American Games: for the Pan American Games or Junior Pan American Games, USOPC, Panam Sports and IWF rules apply.

International Weightlifting: For IWF operated events, IWF rules apply.

**Background Screen & SafeSport Training Requirements**

All athletes 18 years and older must complete, upon selection to an international team, a USAW background screen via USAW's membership system and hold a current U.S. Center for SafeSport certification.

Red-light Background Screens: In the event of a red-light background screen result, the athlete will be given the opportunity for a hearing before the USAW Background Screen Hearing Panel to respond to the background screen result.

The Background Screen Hearing Panel, by unanimous vote, may remove an athlete from a team if they believe that selection may put at risk the health (physical or mental) of a member of the delegation or if they believe there is a risk of a sexual offense.

**USADA Athlete Advantage Certification**

You must be current with USADA's Athlete Advantage training.

**USAW Membership**

You must be a current member of USAW and in good standing.

## **International Competition Qualification**

### **USAW will select teams for the following competitions**

- IWF World Championships (youth, junior, and senior)
- Pan American Championships (youth, junior, and senior)
- Any international event listed as an Olympic Qualification event

NOTE: USAW (in its sole discretion) may decide, whether before or after team selection, not to send a team to any of the above competitions (or other international competitions not listed) based on factors including, but not limited to, concerns for the safety of our delegation, natural disasters, civil unrest, and travel challenges or restrictions.

Any other IWF-sanctioned event will only be eligible to athletes on Developmental level stipend or other specific purposes as defined by USAW staff.

If an international event is postponed by more than one month after the selection of the team, the invite process will be re-commenced.

### **Step 1: Achieving Ranking and Minimum Qualification - A Standard and B Standard**

USAW publishes an A and B Standard, which are used to qualify and rank athletes for international competitions. A and B standards are specific to each age group, gender, and weight category. The standards will be updated yearly for all international competitions regardless of competition level (outside of Olympic Qualifiers).

### **Establishing A and B Standard Qualification Totals**

#### **Senior Level**

No later than January 31 of each year, USAW sets A Standard qualification based on the average of twelfth place of the IWF rankings for the past 3 years (each ranking is pulled as of December 31 of that year, using one athlete per nation) for each weight category and gender. The B standard is 95% of the A Standard for each weight category.

#### **Junior Level**

The A Standard for junior level competitions is 90% of the senior A Standard for each weight category and gender. The junior level B Standard is 85% of the senior A Standard. The junior level A and B standards are applied to any FISU level competition.

#### **Youth Level**

The A Standard for youth level competitions is 80% of the senior A Standard for each weight category and gender. The B Standard is 75% of the senior A Standard.

#### **Minimum Total**

For all international competitions, athletes must achieve the B Standard for the appropriate age group, gender, and weight category to be eligible to be ranked.

A ranking list is made available after each qualifying competition at [www.usaweightinglifting.org](http://www.usaweightinglifting.org) under the “International Team Rankings” section for each international competition. Only the top 20 athletes are listed for each team.

### **Step 2: Ranking**

To comply with IWF/ITA anti-doping requirements regarding athletes’ entry into the registered testing pool (RTP), all competition qualification periods must end 3 months prior to the listed start date of the specific competition, unless otherwise specified by USA Weightlifting. Qualification periods for international events begin 9 months prior to the 3-month IWF/ITA RTP window. Qualification events are all USAW national events (including Masters National Championships), and any IWF-sanctioned event in which USAW officially enters athletes. In the event a USAW national event or IWF-sanctioned event falls within 30 days of the start date of the qualification period, the qualification period will be adjusted to include such event(s).

Eligible athletes (note: eligibility includes achieving the Minimum Total requirement noted above) are ranked for each team according to the total they achieved at a qualification event during the qualification period, and that total’s comparison to the appropriate A Standard. For a list of the A Standards per weight class and age group, please see [USAW’s website](#). Athletes are ranked in descending order of A Standard percentage. In case of a tie, within weight category or across weight categories, the athlete that achieves the total first (using equivalent Greenwich Mean Time) is ranked first. Percentages are listed to the hundredths place.

If an athlete scores in more than one bodyweight category, the highest individual A Standard percentage is applied unless the athlete declares, at time of selection, that they wish to compete in the bodyweight category where the lower Standard was scored.

Example: if the A Standard for youth 81kg men is 279kg, and one athlete totals 279 kg (100% of the A Standard), and another totals 281kg (100.01% of the A Standard), the lifter that totaled 281kg is ranked higher. If, for the same youth age group, the men’s 96kg A Standard is 299kg and an athlete in the 96kg weight category totals 300 kg (100.03%), they are ranked above the 81kg athlete that totaled 279kg.

### **Step 3: Team Selection**

At the end of the qualifying period for any event, USAW selects (by name) only qualified athletes up to the maximum number per gender permitted by the organizing committee (typically ten athletes per gender and two per weight category). The athletes are named to the team in descending ranking order starting with the highest ranked athlete. All athletes have a choice to either accept or decline their invite to an international team. If invites are declined, USAW proceeds down in order of ranking until either the maximum number of athletes permitted for the competition has been named or the end of the ranking list is reached.

### **Three Athletes Ranked per Weight Class**

In some instances, there are three or more athletes ranked per weight class where two athletes in the weight class have already been selected. If there is an athlete who is third in their weight class but ranks as the first/second in another heavier weight category, they will be placed on the team as the next weight class up if they achieve the B Standard of the higher category.

### **Alternate Selection**

In the case where more than 10 athletes have achieved the qualifying standard for an event, a further two athletes may be named as alternates for a team. If an athlete is third in their weight category (and not in the top ten) they may be invited as an alternate if USAW can use them in the weight class above and they have achieved the B Standard of the heavier weight category. If an athlete is third (or greater) in their current weight class and cannot be utilized in the next weight class, then the next highest ranked athlete with an available weight class may be selected as an alternate.

### **Weight Category Changes**

After the final team is selected, an athlete who is selected who wishes to change their bodyweight category may do so provided there are not already two athletes selected in the new category, or there is not an athlete that was not selected to the team that had a higher total in the desired weight category. Additionally, they must achieve the B Standard of the desired weight category through verified results of a USAW National or IWF-sanctioned competition within the qualifying window, time stamped videos or virtual/live performance in training.

Due to the 9-month qualifying window, youth and junior qualified team members may be allowed to move up a weight category once a team is named if they can hit at least 95% of the next category's B Standard and there are no other qualified athletes in the heavier weight category that did not make the team. USAW may also change an athlete's weight category at the Verification of Final Entries (VFE) for the specific opportunity to medal or for qualification purposes, at the discretion of the Senior Director of Sport Performance if final entries have already been submitted.

### **Competition Funding**

For funding information for international competitions, please refer to the USA Weightlifting Competition Funding document found at [www.usaweightlifting.org](http://www.usaweightlifting.org).

### **Personal Coach Travel**

Personal coaches may travel with their athletes to the competition (this may be at the coach's own expense, per the USA Weightlifting Competition Funding document), provided they meet the necessary deadlines and requirements to join the delegation. Such personal coach must be listed as the athlete's Coach 1 or Coach 2 no later than the deadline for final entries to the competition. Only one personal coach per athlete may attend and have access to the warm-up room.

### **Step 4: Competition Preparation**

Upon being named to a team, the athlete and their personal coach must promptly work with the USAW High Performance team to communicate regarding the athlete's preparation. Such communications include, but are not limited to, submitting readiness videos of the athlete at least once per week, weight management, reporting illness/injuries and competition attempt management.

## **Readiness to Compete: Requirements of the Athlete and Personal Coach**

The following are minimum requirements. Failure to comply with one or more of these may result in removal from the team by USAW.

1. A Competition Readiness Plan must be submitted to and approved by USAW. The Competition Readiness Plan will include the training plan and readiness markers for competition. Approval of this plan by USAW is a requirement for all athletes (including alternates). Must be submitted no later than 2 weeks after being named to a team.
2. No later than two weeks after being named to a team, athletes must post weekly training videos in the athlete management system provided by USAW. These videos must be of the athlete's heaviest snatch, clean and jerk and squat related performances.
3. Four weeks prior to the competition, every team member (including alternates), must post videos (with proof of date) of snatch and clean and jerk. The snatch and clean and jerk must total at least 90% of the qualifying total made for the competition. Athletes must post a photo (with proof of date) showing their current bodyweight. During Olympic qualification periods, athletes may request, and USAW may approve, an exception to one or both requirements.
4. During the preparation period, any illness or injury that impacts training must be promptly reported to USAW. If such an injury or illness is not reported, it may not be used as a reason to not achieve 90% later in the preparation period. If such an injury or illness is reported, the athlete must promptly consult a medical professional from one of the following categories: MD, DO, DPT, ATC. If requested, USAW will make best efforts to help the athlete identify a qualified provider. If the reported injury or illness affects the ability to demonstrate 90%, it may be permissible if a medical professional submits in writing that the injury/illness is improving to allow the athlete to hit 90% in the next seven days. During Olympic qualification periods, athletes may request, and USAW may approve, an exception to this requirement.
5. The final heavy workout of the preparation must be posted to the athlete management system. The weights hit and timing of the final heavy workout must be documented in the Competition Readiness Plan and used to inform the decision on competition opening attempts. During Olympic qualification periods, athletes may request, and USAW may approve, an exception to this requirement.
6. One week before departure for competition or a pre-competition camp, bodyweight must be shown via video with a time stamp and approved by USAW. An athlete's weight must be no more than 5% above their competition weight class. If an athlete and USAW staff member or designee are together during this period, the bodyweight may also be proven in person; specifically, athletes who are cutting weight to compete must keep USAW informed of their weight cut progression so USAW is aware of any medical support or sports nutrition needs. In consultation with a USAW registered dietician and/or sports medicine provider, USAW may inform an athlete/coach when those professionals believe it is not safe for health reasons for that athlete to cut weight. During Olympic qualification periods, athletes may request, and USAW may approve, an exception to this requirement.

## **Step 5: Competition**

### **Lift attempt planning**

USAW's head coach for the competition is the final decision-maker for all Team USA athletes' competition strategy and attempts. In preparation for a competition, USAW's head coach for the competition will discuss with the athlete and their personal coach the appropriate lift attempts to maximize placement for Team USA or achieve an agreed upon total for Olympic or world qualification. If there is any disagreement between the personal coach and USAW coach(es) regarding the lift attempt(s) in competition, the USAW coach(es) is the final decision-maker. Competition attempts, including opening attempts, are informed by official competition results, and posted readiness videos.

### **Provisions for substitutions**

**Injury:** An athlete may be replaced if USAW, in consultation with its Director of Sports Medicine and/or an appropriate sports medicine specialist, determines that an injured athlete:

- Is unable to achieve a total within 90% of their qualification total; or
- By competing while injured is unlikely to perform as well as another ranked athlete; or,
- Risks injury complication by competing.

**Illness:** An ill athlete may be replaced if USAW, in consultation with its Director of Sports Medicine and/or a medical professional trained in the relevant illness, determines that they are unable to perform to a minimum of 90% of their qualification total due to an illness.

**Medical Examination:** Refusal to be examined by the appointed medical professional for injury or illness is grounds for replacement on the team.

**Lack of Readiness:** An athlete may be replaced if they have not satisfied the terms of their Competition Readiness Plan, such that the High Performance team determines that another athlete will likely outperform the athlete in competition.

### **Removal from Team**

USAW reserves the right to remove, at any time before or during competition, any athlete that violates the USAW Code of Conduct, International Team Code of Conduct, Code of Ethics, SafeSport policy, or commits a violation of applicable anti-doping rules.

### **International Qualification Calendar Policy**

Each qualification period is 9 months in length (except for international university events), and the final qualifier must be at least three months from the start of the competition. If a USAW sanctioned national event falls within 30 days of the start of the qualification period, USAW will include that event for qualification. Qualification events are any USAW owned or operated national level event and any in-person international IWF-sanctioned event that appears on the IWF calendar.

### **Calendar Adjustments**

If the IWF, PAWF or other applicable governing body changes an international competition date, then USAW will make any necessary changes to the qualification period.



**Appendix A**  
**Qualification Calendar**

**Important Note:** USAW is not responsible for any move of an international event on which an individual may have been relying on for selection, qualification, or funding. Calendar updates which do not otherwise affect the method of selection will be automatically made when the IWF, PAWF or other applicable governing body informs USAW or publishes the revised dates. Please see the International Qualification Calendar Policy for more information.

\*Dates, event quotas and locations are subject to change.

Competition	Qualification Period	Qualification Events	Qual. Event Dates
2025 Pan American Junior Championships  Date: March 9-16, 2025  Location: Havana, Cuba	March 9, 2024- December 9, 2024  <b>**Note 2024 A/B Standards apply**</b>	2024 IWF World Cup  2024 IWF Youth World Championships  2024 Nationals Week 2024 Pan American Junior Championships  2024 Olympic Games  2024 Pan American Youth Championships  2024 North American Open Series II  2024 IWF Junior World Championships  2024 North American Open Finals <b>FINAL QUALIFICATION EVENT</b>	March 31-April 11, 2024  May 22-26, 2024  June 15-26, 2024 June 19-25, 2024  July 26-August 11, 2024  August 26-September 2, 2024  August 29-September 2, 2024  September 19-27, 2024  December 5-8, 2024
2025 IWF Youth & Junior World Championships	April 30, 2024- January 30, 2025	2024 IWF Youth World Championships	May 22-26, 2024

<p>Date: April 30-May 6, 2025</p> <p>Location: Lima, Peru</p>	<p><b>**Note 2024 A/B Standards apply**</b></p>	<p>2024 Nationals Week</p> <p>2024 Pan American Junior Championships</p> <p>2024 Olympic Games</p> <p>2024 Pan American Youth Championships</p> <p>2024 North American Open Series II</p> <p>2024 IWF Junior World Championships</p> <p>2024 North American Open Finals</p> <p><b>FINAL QUALIFICATION EVENT</b></p>	<p>June 15-26, 2024</p> <p>June 19-25, 2024</p> <p>July 26-August 11, 2024</p> <p>August 26-September 2, 2024</p> <p>August 29-September 2, 2024</p> <p>September 19-27, 2024</p> <p>December 5-8, 2024</p>
<p>2025 Pan American Senior Championships</p> <p>Date: July 12-18, 2025</p> <p>Location: Cali, Colombia</p>	<p>July 12, 2024-April 12, 2025</p>	<p>2024 Olympic Games</p> <p>2024 Pan American Youth Championships</p> <p>2024 North American Open Series II</p> <p>2024 IWF Junior World Championships</p> <p>2024 North American Open Finals</p> <p>2024 IWF World Championships</p> <p>2025 Virus Weightlifting Series 1</p>	<p>July 26-August 11, 2024</p> <p>August 26-September 2, 2024</p> <p>August 29-September 2, 2024</p> <p>September 19-27, 2024</p> <p>December 5-8, 2024</p> <p>December 6-15, 2024</p> <p>February 27-March 2, 2025</p>

		<p>2025 Pan American Junior Championships</p> <p>2025 Masters National Championships <i>FINAL QUALIFICATION EVENT</i></p>	<p>March 9-16, 2025</p> <p>April 3-6, 2025</p>
<p>2025 Pan American Junior Games</p> <p>Date: August 9-23, 2025</p> <p>Location: Asuncion, Paraguay</p>	<p>August 9, 2024-May 9, 2025</p> <p><b>**Note that 2025 A/B Standards apply**</b></p> <p><b>**Separate procedures to be approved by the USOPC**</b></p>	<p>2025 Pan American Junior Championships</p> <p><b>*Per the qualification standards set forth by the PAWF, this is the only qualification event for the Junior Pan American Games*</b></p>	<p>March 9-16, 2025</p>
<p>2025 IWF Senior World Championships</p> <p>Date: October 3-12, 2025</p> <p>Location: Forde, Norway</p>	<p>October 3, 2024-July 3, 2025</p> <p><b>**Note that 2025 A/B Standards apply**</b></p>	<p>2024 North American Open Finals</p> <p>2024 IWF World Championships</p> <p>2025 Virus Weightlifting Series 1</p> <p>2025 Pan American Junior Championships</p> <p>2025 Masters National Championships</p> <p>2025 IWF Youth &amp; Junior World Championships</p>	<p>December 5-8, 2024</p> <p>December 6-15, 2024</p> <p>February 27-March 2, 2025</p> <p>March 9-16, 2025</p> <p>April 3-6, 2025</p> <p>April 30-May 6, 2025</p>

		2025 National Championships <i>FINAL QUALIFICATION EVENT</i>	June 21-29, 2025
2025 Pan American Youth Championships – U15 & U17  Date: November 10-15, 2025  Location: San Luis de Potosi, Mexico	November 10, 2024-August 10, 2025  <b>**Note that 2025 A/B Standards apply**</b>	2024 North American Open Finals  2024 IWF World Championships  2025 Virus Weightlifting Series 1  2025 Pan American Junior Championships  2025 Masters National Championships  2025 IWF Youth & Junior World Championships  2025 National Championships  2025 Pan American Senior Championships <i>FINAL QUALIFICATION EVENT</i>	December 5-8, 2024  December 6-15, 2024  February 27-March 2, 2025  March 9-16, 2025  April 3-6, 2025  April 30-May 6, 2025  June 21-29, 2025  July 12-18, 2025