

# U.S. Paralympics Nordic Skiing (USPN) Athlete Selection Procedures 2026 Paralympic Winter Games

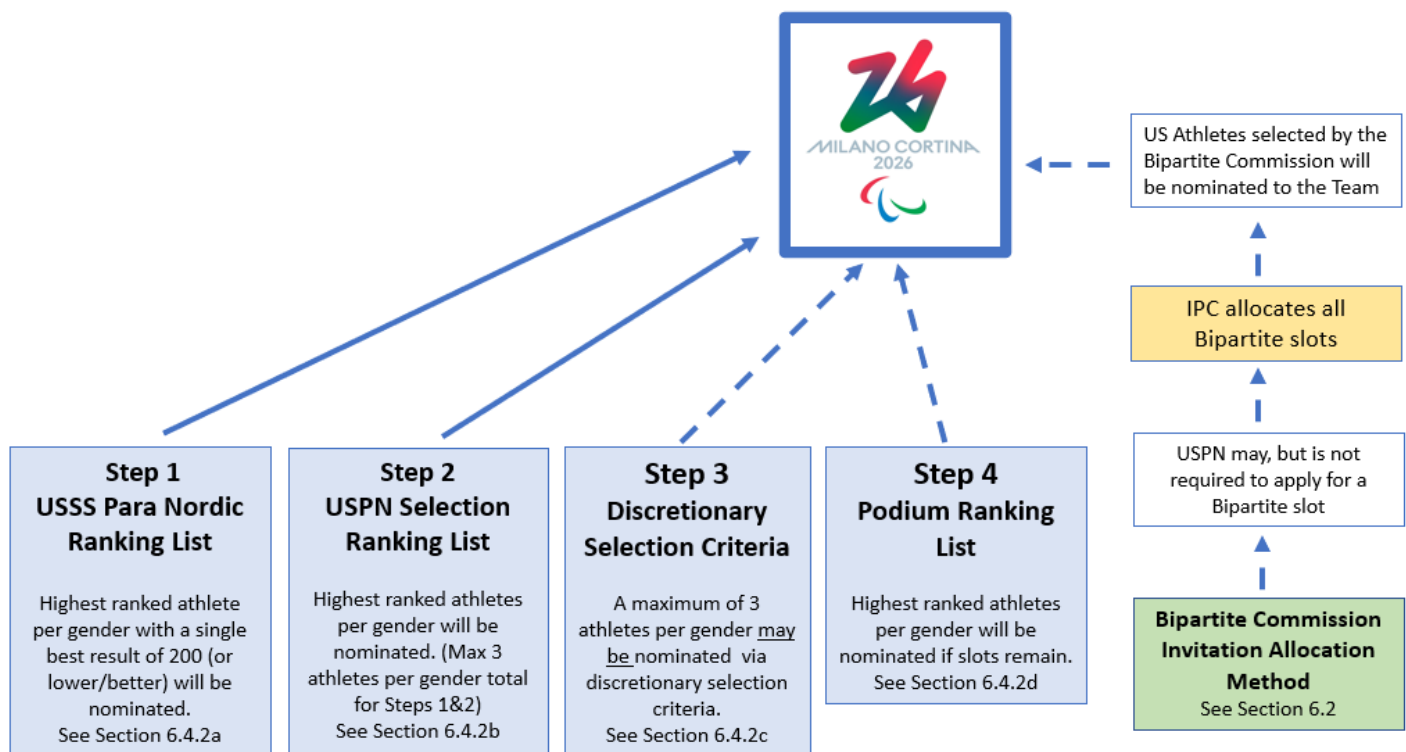
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## SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

These procedures outline the pathway for nomination to the Milano-Cortina 2026 Paralympic Winter Games for U.S. Paralympics Nordic Skiing (USPN). The maximum Team size of 12 athletes (6 men and 6 women) was determined by earned International Ski and Snowboard Federation (FIS) and International Biathlon Union (IBU) quota on July 1, 2025. FIS/IBU quotas are awarded to the National Paralympic Committee (NPC).

## SECTION 2: SELECTION PROCESS DIAGRAM

The following provides a high-level overview of how athletes will be nominated to the Team:



\*All quota and ranking lists are divided by gender. Men's and women's teams are nominated separately for all steps outlined above.

**Note: This diagram is for informational purposes only. In the event of a conflict between the diagram and any written section herein, the written sections will take precedent.**

## SECTION 3: ATHLETE REQUIREMENTS

1. Nationality/Passports Requirements:
  - Have a valid United States passport at the time of nomination that does not expire for six months after the conclusion of the 2026 Paralympic Winter Games (Games).
2. Minimum International Paralympic Committee (IPC) Requirements:
  - Abide by the rules in the Paralympic Handbook, including nationality/citizenship requirements.

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- For additional information regarding an athlete who is a national of two or more countries, has changed his or her nationality or acquired a new nationality, refer to the [IPC Handbook \(see Nationality Regulations\)](#).
- Abide by the IPC Eligibility of Conditions Form/Conditions of Participation Form
- 3. Organizing Committee Olympic Games Requirements (OCOG) Requirements:
  - Comply with all rules and policies implemented by the OCOG for Milano-Cortina 2026.
- 4. International Federation (IF) Requirements:
  - Comply with all International Ski Federation (FIS) and International Biathlon Union (IBU) eligibility requirements found here:
    - [FIS](#) (see Milano Cortina 2026 qualification regulations)
    - [IBU](#)
  - International Ski Federation (FIS) is the IF for Para Cross-Country Skiing. International Biathlon Union (IBU) is the IF for Paralympic Nordic Skiing.
  - At the time of nomination, an athlete be internationally classified in an eligible Sport Class with Sport Class Status of either (i) Confirmed or (ii) Review with a Fixed Review Date after the 2025/2026 season (e.g., R-2026); Current athlete sport class status can be found at <https://www.fis-ski.com/para-nordic/classification-master-list>
  - Be born in the year 2010 or earlier.
  - Additional requirements for IBU Para Biathlon
    - Hold an active IBU athlete license for competing in Para biathlon events for the 2025/2026 season;
    - Have participated in at least one IBU sanctioned competition in the 2024/2025 season or in at least one IBU sanctioned competition in the 2025/2026 season (exceptions to this requirement may be granted through the Bipartite Commission Invitation allocation method); and
    - Be ranked and have at least one (1) race of 240 points or less on the IBU Para Biathlon Ranking Points List as of 15 February 2026. Exceptions may be granted through the Bipartite Commission Invitation Allocation method.
  - Additional requirements for FIS Para Cross-Country Skiing
    - Hold an active FIS athlete license for competing in Para cross-country events for the 2025/2026 season;
    - Have participated in at least one FIS sanctioned competition in the 2024/2025 season or in at least one FIS sanctioned competition in the 2025/2026 season (exceptions to this requirement may be granted through the Bipartite Commission Invitation allocation method); and
    - Be ranked and have at least one (1) race of 240 points or less on the FIS Para Cross Country Ranking Points Lists as of 15 February 2026. Exceptions may be granted through the Bipartite Commission Invitation Allocation method.

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#### 5. USOPC Requirements:

- Comply with all USOPC rules applicable to the Games (e.g., Demonstrations).
- Complete all USOPC Games Registration requirements by the stated deadline.
- Comply with the USOPC Delegation Terms, including the Behavior Requirements, which will be made available here: <https://www.usopc.org/games-and-qualification>
- Comply with the [USOPC Athlete Safety Policy](#) and the [U.S. Center for SafeSport Code](#) including education and training requirements.
- Comply with the current [USOPC Background Check Policy](#)

#### 6. USPN Requirements:

- Comply with the [Athlete Code of Conduct for Internally Managed Sport \(IMS\) Programs](#)
- Comply with the [U.S. Center for Safesport Code](#)
- Comply with the USPN National Team or Development Team Athlete Agreement
- Athlete must successfully complete all Games Registration requirements.
- Athlete does not have an active suspension from the U.S. Center for SafeSport that would make the Athlete ineligible to participate in the Games.
- Athlete does not have an active sanction for an anti-doping rule/policy violation that would make the Athlete ineligible to participate in the Games.

## SECTION 4: OTHER MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE TEAM

- Agree to be bound by and adhere to all IPC, WADA, FIS, IBU, USADA and USOPC anti-doping protocols, policies and procedures, as applicable. This includes participation in Out-of-Competition Testing and an agreement to be bound to the results management authority of the IPC, WADA, FIS, IBU, USADA, or other Anti-Doping Organization as applicable.
- Meet all health and safety protocols, to include vaccine requirements and/or testing requirements set forth by the government, local laws, USOPC, FIS, IBU, and/or the OCOG.

## SECTION 5: EVALUATIVE EVENTS

Event names, dates and locations of all Trials, competitions, and camps to be used as part of the nomination process:

DATE(S)	DESCRIPTION/EVENT NAME
1 November 2025 - 2 February 2026	All FIS Para World Cup events
1 November 2025 - 2 February 2026	All FIS Para Nordic sanctioned events
1 November 2025 - 2 February 2026	All IBU Para Biathlon World Cup events
1 November 2025 - 2 February 2026	All IBU Para Biathlon sanctioned events
1 November 2025 - 2 February 2026	For standing and visually impaired athletes: All USSS sanctioned and scored races

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1 November 2025 - 2 February 2026

USPN 2.5 km Time Trials held at USPN Training Camps

*\*Time Trials will not occur if weather conditions are unfavorable during the training camp.*

## SECTION 6: SELECTION PROCESS

Provide a step-by-step description of the selection process including an overview of the FIS Para Nordic and IBU Para Biathlon Qualification System.

### 6.1 TEAM SIZE AND GENERAL PROVISIONS:

The maximum Team size of 12 athletes (6 men and 6 women) was determined by earned FIS and IBU quota on July 1, 2025. FIS/IBU quotas are awarded to the NPC.

Men's and women's quota slots will be allocated separately; therefore, for the purposes of these Procedures, the men's and women's components of the Team shall be considered separately. Please note that Guide athletes are not included in the maximum Team size noted above.

General provisions as outlined in the 2026 Paralympic Games Qualification Guide:

- A full outline Team allocations can be found on the [FIS website](#)
- An NPC can enter a maximum of seven (7) eligible athletes per medal event and gender, and a maximum of four (4) per sport class in each medal event.
- An NPC may enter a maximum of one (1) team per relay event comprised of athletes who have each been entered in at least one (1) individual event.
- Exceptions may be made via the Bipartite Commission Invitation Allocation method.

### 6.2 BIPARTITE COMMISSION INVITATION ALLOCATION METHOD:

The IPC/FIS/IBU may award Bipartite slots for the 2026 Milano-Cortina Paralympic Games using the Bipartite Commission Invitation Allocation Method. Each Bipartite Commission invitation is granted to an individual athlete by name.

Bipartite slots are allocated by the IPC/FIS/IBU at their sole discretion and are typically allocated based on the following principles:

- To allow the participation of top athletes who may not have had the opportunity to qualify through other methods due to extraordinary circumstances;
- To ensure the representation of athletes with high support needs;
- To enable greater representation by gender; and/or
- To ensure medal events will have sufficient representation for event viability purposes.

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Prior to awarding Bipartite slots, the IPC may invite each NPC to submit an application requesting that an athlete or athletes be considered for a Bipartite slot. USPN may, but is not required to, submit an application for a Bipartite slot depending on whether there are athlete candidates who meet the above principles and eligibility criteria for Bipartite Commission Invitations as outlined in the [2026 Milano-Cortina Paralympic Games Qualification Regulations](#).

The nomination of a particular athlete for submission to the IPC/FIS/IBU for a Bipartite slot will be based on the factors below and on the discretionary selection criteria set forth in Section 7.

- Athletes who achieved a top three (podium) result in World Cup or World Championship competition since the Beijing Paralympic Winter Games (PWG).
- Athletes who are considered to be on track to produce a top three (podium) result in the near future based on their performance trajectory at FIS Para Nordic or IBU Para Biathlon World Cup competitions between 1 November 2025 – 2 February 2026.
- Athletes who may help preserve a medal event due to their FIS Para Nordic International sport class, classification and/or gender.
- Athletes who have hit the FIS & IBU Games minimum criteria who were unable to compete in an Evaluative Event (Section 5) due to a documented injury or illness between 1 November 2025 - 2 February 2026.

The USPN Discretionary Selection Committee (see Section 7.3) shall be responsible for making any such nomination. **Any athlete who meets this criteria and wishes to be considered for Bipartite submission must email the Sr. Director, USOPC Internally Managed Sports, [Matt.R.Cramer@usopc.org](mailto:Matt.R.Cramer@usopc.org), by 2 February 2026.**

USPN will disclose any athlete selected for a Bipartite slot by the IPC on its website (<https://www.usparanordic.org/selection-criteria>). Any athlete who is awarded a Bipartite slot by the IPC/FIS/IBU will be nominated to the Team provided they meet all eligibility provisions and other requirements set forth in these Procedures. Any athlete nominated through this method would not apply to the maximum Team quota allocated via the FIS/IBU quota slot allocation.

#### 6.3 EVALUATION EVENT QUALIFICATION PATHWAY:

Evaluation Period: 1 November 2025 - 2 February 2026

- Qualification for entry into FIS and IBU Para World Cup and World Championship competitions is specific to each event, and will be published on the USPN website by 1 October 2025: (<https://www.usparanordic.org/selection-criteria>)
  - Please note all dates are based on long range calendars and are subject to change. It is the responsibility of each athlete to regularly check the calendars to ensure they are aware of all schedule changes.

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- Entry into FIS Para sanctioned events requires a current FIS Para competition license and athletes must meet all published entry deadlines and requirements. Events will be published on <https://www.fis-ski.com/DB/para-snowsports/para-nordic/calendar-results.html?noselection=true>
- Entry into IBU Para sanctioned events requires a current IBU Para competition license and athletes must meet all published entry deadlines and requirements. Events will be published on [www.biathlonworld.com/calendar](http://www.biathlonworld.com/calendar)
- Additional information for the Time Trial Races held at USPN Training Camps between November 1, 2025 and February 2, 2026 will be distributed to National Team athletes a minimum of two (2) weeks in advance of the event.
  - All athletes who meet the International Federation eligibility requirements listed in Section 3 above will be invited to these USPN Training Camps.

#### 6.4 **NOMINATION TO THE TEAM:**

##### 6.4.1 **Objective Selection Criteria**

All athletes who achieve a ranking standard of 240 points or lower on either the IBU Para Biathlon World Ranking List or the FIS Para Nordic World Ranking List during the Evaluation Period will be eligible to be ranked on the following Ranking Lists:

- The **USPN Selection Ranking List** by gender and according to single best result (lowest point race) during the Evaluation Period regardless of discipline or sport class in a FIS/IBU sanctioned race.
- Athletes who compete in World Cup competition during the Evaluation Period will also be ranked on a **Podium Ranking List** by gender and according to single best points result compared in a World Cup, with 3rd place in that event. All sport classes will be combined on this list.
  - Athletes who achieve first (1<sup>st</sup>) or second (2<sup>nd</sup>) place results will have negative points on the **Podium Ranking List** based on the difference between their points and third (3<sup>rd</sup>) place as defined as the largest gap they had to third (3<sup>rd</sup> place).
  - A third (3<sup>rd</sup>) place result will earn 0 points.
  - Any place beyond 3<sup>rd</sup> will have positive points, and those athletes will be ranked on the list after those with negative points or zero (0) points.
- Standing & visually impaired athletes who compete in USSS sanctioned race(s) during the Evaluation Period, will be tracked on a **USSS Para Nordic Selection Ranking List** by gender and according to single best calculated result (lowest point race) in any race during Evaluation Period. Results will be calculated using the FIS Para Nordic class % on the most current FIS Para Nordic percentage list that can be found at: <https://www.fis-ski.com/para-nordic/documents#Race%20Documents>
- All ranking lists will be published on <https://www.usparanordic.org/>

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#### 6.4.2 Team Nomination Pathway:

##### a. Step 1

Team nomination will begin by nominating up to one (1) female and up to one (1) male who have a single best result of 200 (or lower/better) calculated USSS points on the **USSS Para Nordic Selection Ranking List**.

- i. If more than one (1) athlete per gender have achieved that standard, the athlete with the best result per gender on the **USSS Para Nordic Selection Ranking List** will be nominated through this step.
- ii. Maximum of one (1) male and one (1) female will be nominated through this step.

##### b. Step 2

Team nomination will continue by utilizing the **USPN Selection Ranking List**, with athletes nominated in rank order until three (3) total slots have been filled for each gender through Step 1 and Step 2 (6.4.2 (a-b)).

- i. Maximum of three (3) males and three (3) females will be nominated to the Team through this step.
- ii. If at any point in this process only three (3) slots remain for either male or female athletes, nomination will continue for that gender with 6.4.2(d).

##### c. Step 3

Any of the final three (3) slots per gender may, but are not required, to be nominated by the USPN Discretionary Selection Committee if the Committee determines that objective selection methods will not nominate the athletes most capable of winning individual medals or contributing to a medal winning relay team in either the Mixed or Open Relay.

- i. The Discretionary Selection committee will consider the factors described in Section 7.
- ii. Zero (0) to three (3) males and zero (0) to three (3) females may be nominated through this step.
- iii. If there are any slots remaining after this step, Team nomination will continue to step 6.4.2(e).

##### d. Step 4

If there are slots remaining, Team nomination will conclude by utilizing the **Podium Ranking List**, with athletes nominated in rank order until all remaining slots have been filled.

#### 6.4.3 Tie Breaker Procedure:

1. If two (2) or more athletes have the same standard on the points list being used to potentially nominate them to the Team, which results in a tie, then the best Podium Ranking



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List result will be used as a tie-breaker.

2. If a tie still exists, each athlete's next best result on the Podium Ranking List will be used as a tie breaker.
3. If a tie still exists, each athlete's best result on the FIS and IBU Selection Ranking List will be used to break the tie.
4. If a tie still exists, each athlete's next best result on the FIS and IBU Selection Ranking List will be used to break the tie.
5. This tie-break procedure will continue on the FIS and IBU Selection Ranking List until the tie is broken.

#### 6.4.4 Start Rights:

- Nomination to the Team does not guarantee entry starts in any particular race, regardless of which nomination method was used to nominate the athlete to the Team. Every athlete nominated to the Team will be given the opportunity to start a minimum of one (1) event per sport discipline for which they qualified (biathlon and/or cross-country).
- The USPN Director and USPN coaches, in consultation with each athlete, may assign additional start rights, taking into consideration the following factors (in no particular order):
  1. The athlete's results in FIS or IBU Para competition in the event at any point since the 2022 PWG;
  2. The athlete's number and schedule of events at the Games
  3. The likelihood of the athlete winning a medal in the event, based on percent back from the podium in World Cup or World Championships competitions since the 2022 PWG;
  4. The desire of the athlete to enter the event

#### 6.4.5 Guide Athletes:

Guide athletes for the NS1-3 sport classes (visually impaired) will be nominated based on the discretionary selection process outlined in Section 7.2.2. Guide athletes are not included in the maximum Team size as determined based on the IPC/FIS/IBU quota slot allocation.

A guide athlete will typically work with one (1) athlete during practice, competition, and day-to-day activities; therefore, accreditation allocation is typically provided for one (1) athlete guide per qualified athlete. However, accreditation allocation is not guaranteed, and the number of guide athletes will be based on final USOPC accreditation allocation and the guide needs of qualified NS1-3 athletes.

Guide athletes will be nominated to the Team based on the discretionary selection criteria set forth in Section 7.



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#### 6.4.6 Relay Events:

The assignment of athletes to start rights in all relay events shall be determined by the USPN Director and USPN coaches, with consultation from USPN medical staff if needed, considering the following factors (in no particular order):

1. The athlete must have already been nominated to the Team and be entered in at least one (1) individual event.
2. The athlete's physical readiness on the day of Relay entry.
3. Participation/performance in relay training sessions.
4. Building a Team that is most likely to medal in the event, based on analysis of multiple team possibilities.

Items that will be considered, in no particular order are:

- Analysis of possible team composition from other nations in each relay.
- Analysis on possible team composition from U.S. in each relay.
- Comparison analysis between potential U.S. teams and potential teams from other nations.
- Athlete performances, considering:
  - Results in skate races for standing and visually impaired athletes from December 1, 2024 until the deadline for relay entry at the Games.
  - Likely snow conditions on Relay Day and athlete performances in similar conditions
  - Results in 2026 PWG individual events
  - Recency of results during the Evaluation Period
  - Trajectory of World Cup results during Evaluation Period shows performance is on track to win a medal at the 2026 PWG.
  - Past performance in World Championship or PWG relays between the 2022 - 2026 PWG.
  - Speed double poling of standing and visually impaired athletes, for consideration of skiing legs 1 or 3.
  - Course profile and historical results in similar courses between the 2022 - 2026 PWG.
  - Real lap times of U.S. and other team's potential athletes in cross-country middle-distance event at the 2026 PWG.
  - Real times in qualification of U.S. and other team's potential athletes in cross-country sprint at the 2026 PWG.
  - Real lap times in cross-country skate races 2.5-10km of the U.S. and other team's potential athletes from December 1, 2024 until the deadline for relay entry at the Games. Distances closer to 2.5km will be considered more heavily.
  - Real times in cross-country skate sprints of the U.S. and other team's potential athletes from December 1, 2024-until the deadline for relay entry at the Games.

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- The number and schedule of other events in which the athlete will be entered at the Games compared to their experience in performing with a similar schedule.
- Real times for 2.5km Time Trials lead by USPN staff throughout the 2025-26 season.

**In the event of a conflict between this overview and the IPC/FIS/IBU Qualification System, the IPC/FIS/IBU Qualification System will take precedent.**

For more details, please refer to the IPC/FIS/IBU Qualification System directly here: [2026 Milano-Cortina Paralympic Games Qualification Regulations](#)

## SECTION 7: DISCRETIONARY CRITERIA TO NOMINATE ATHLETES

### 7.1 RATIONALE FOR UTILIZING DISCRETIONARY SELECTION:

The purpose of discretionary selection is to allow USPN to nominate athletes and guide athletes who have the best chance to win the maximum number of medals at the 2026 Milano-Cortina Paralympic Games.

### 7.2 DEFINE THE DISCRETIONARY CRITERIA TO BE USED:

#### 7.2.1 Athletes:

The USPN Discretionary Selection Committee (See Section 7.3) will consider a range of performance factors that include the following factors, in no particular order:

- a. Athlete experienced an injury or illness that impeded maximal performance during the Evaluation Period.
  - If this method is considered, athlete must also fulfill either 7.2.1(c, d, or e).
- b. Athlete experienced equipment failure, weather, interference, or other external factors, either natural or caused by others, at one or more of the selection events that impeded what otherwise likely would have been a qualifying result.
  - If this method is considered, athlete must also fulfill either 7.2.1(c) or 7.2.1(d).
- c. Athlete earned a medal at the 2022 PWG, 2024 or 2025 IBU Para Biathlon World Championships or 2025 FIS Para Nordic World Championships.
- d. Trajectory of World Cup results during Evaluation Period shows performance is on track to win a medal at the 2026 PWG.
- e. Athlete is eligible and is needed to complete a relay team due to specific sport class requirements and format elements for the Mixed and/or Open Relay.
  - If this method is considered, the following factors listed in no particular order will be considered:
    1. Relay percentage of athletes who have already been nominated to the Team, which impacts the remaining possible relay percentages needed to form a medal winning Mixed or Open relay team.

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- Relay percentage is defined by the most current FIS Para Nordic International Competition Rules at the time of Team nomination.
- 2. Relay percentage of athletes yet to be nominated to the Team, as defined by the most current FIS Para Nordic International Competition Rules at the time of Team nomination.
- 3. Real time of athletes in the 2.5k Time Trials organized by USPN staff during the Evaluation Period. Skate races will be considered more heavily than classic races.
- 4. Real time in FIS Para Nordic World Cup cross country sprint and 5k events during the Evaluation Period. Skate races will be considered more heavily than classic races.
- 5. Real time in USSS sanctioned competitions from 1 kilometer to 5 kilometer in distance during Evaluation Period. Skate races will be considered more heavily than classic races.
- 6. The athlete's general performance trajectory based on results from international competition since the 2022 Paralympic Winter Games.

#### 7.2.2 Guides:

The USPN Discretionary Selection Committee (See Section 7.3) will nominate guide athletes to the Team for the NS1-3 sport classes (visually impaired).

The factors below will be considered in the nomination of a guide athlete (in no priority order):

- a. The speed of the guide athlete in relation to the athlete or athletes being guided. The guide athlete must be faster than the athlete.
- b. The capacity of the guide athlete to be a back-up guide for another podium potential athlete, even if the guide will primarily guide another athlete.
- c. Voice command and positioning experience.
- d. Preference of the qualified athlete.
- e. Demonstrated expertise of the guide athlete
  - The guide must have expertise and experience in the assigned athlete's specific event(s).
- f. Knowledge and understanding of the FIS Para Nordic International Competition Rules pertaining to guide athletes.
- g. Experience as a guide in guiding any athlete to a medal in an international competition.

#### 7.2.3 Athletes and Guides:

The USPN Discretionary Selection Committee may also consider input from licensed medical professionals, personal coaches and/or USPN Skiing Staff.

### 7.3 SELECTION COMMITTEE

The committee that will be responsible for making discretionary selections or other decisions and

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recommendations directly impacting athletes in the selection process.

## U.S. Paralympics Nordic Skiing Discretionary Selection Committee

- Coach, Para Nordic – National Team Development
- Coach, Para Nordic Skiing
- 10 Year Athlete Representative, U.S. Paralympics Nordic Skiing

## **SECTION 8: MANDATORY TRAINING AND/OR COMPETITION**

Specify the location, schedule, and duration of all mandatory training and/or competition for athletes who are nominated to the Team.

The location, schedule and duration of any mandatory training will be announced and posted on the USPN website at least two (2) weeks prior to the start of the mandatory training and/or competitions.

<https://www.usparanordic.org/>

While waivers for mandatory training will not be unreasonably withheld, all athletes nominated to the Team should arrange for appropriate time off from school, work or other obligations in advance. Waivers will primarily be granted for injury or other similar incapacity or for a personal/family emergency. Requests for a waiver must be submitted in writing to the Director, U.S. Paralympics Nordic Skiing as far in advance as possible. A written response to all requests will be issued to the athlete within 72 hours of the request.

## **SECTION 9: DATE OF TEAM NOMINATION**

USPN will nominate the Team, including any replacements/alternates to the USOPC on or before February 16, 2026.

## **SECTION 10: REMOVAL OF ATHLETES FROM THE TEAM**

### **10.1 USPN JURISDICTION**

USPN has jurisdiction over athlete nominees until athlete entries have been submitted by the USOPC to the OCOG.

- a. An athlete who is nominated to the Team by USPN may be removed for any of the following reasons, as determined by USPN:
  - i. Voluntary withdrawal. Athlete submits a written letter to the Sr. Director, USOPC Internally Managed Sports requesting to voluntarily withdraw from the Team.
  - ii. Injury or illness. A physician (or medical staff) approved by USPN provides certification that the Athlete has a debilitating condition. If Athlete refuses to provide verification of their illness or injury by a physician (or medical staff), their injury will be assumed to be

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- debilitating, and they may be removed from the Team.
- iii. Failure to participate. Athlete does not participate in all Mandatory Training and/or Competition as defined in these procedures.
  - iv. Code of Conduct Violation. Athlete violates [Athlete Code of Conduct for Internally Managed Sport Programs](#)
  - v. Athlete Agreement. Athlete violates a term in their signed USPN Athlete Agreement.
  - vi. Non-compliance. Athlete does not meet the athlete eligibility requirements listed in Section 3 and Section 4 of these selection procedures.
- b. An Athlete may be removed as a nominee to the Team or from the Team if found to have violated IPC, WADA, FIS, IBU, USADA and/or USOPC anti-doping protocol, policies and procedures, the U.S. Center for SafeSport Code, the USOPC Athlete Safety Policy and USPN SafeSport policies, as applicable.
- c. Additional factors for Paralympic Athletes:
- i. IPC removes the event in which the athlete qualified for the Team from the medal event program.
  - ii. A change in the athlete's sport class(es) following Team selection such that the athlete's qualifying performance would not have qualified them for the Team and/or the athlete is deemed Not Eligible (NE) by the IPC or FIS/IBU.

## 10.2 USOPC JURISDICTION

- a. Once Athlete entries have been submitted by the USOPC to the OCOG, the USOPC has jurisdiction over the Team.
- b. USOPC's Delegation Conduct Requirements apply in addition to the USPN Code of Conduct. The Delegation Conduct Requirements in the USOPC Games Delegation Terms are specific to each Games and are made available during the Games registration process.
- c. The USOPC's Grievance Procedures and Hearing Process are found within the USOPC Dispute Resolution Policy and Hearing Procedures.
  - i. See [www.usopc.org/governance/dispute-resolution](http://www.usopc.org/governance/dispute-resolution) for more information.

## SECTION 11: SELECTION PROCESS IF ATHLETE VACANCY OCCURS PRIOR TO SUBMISSION OF ENTRIES BY NAME TO THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE OF THE OLYMPIC GAMES

- 11.1. Should a vacancy occur prior to submission of Entries by Name by the USOPC to the OCOG, the U.S. Paralympics Nordic Skiing Discretionary Selection Committee will nominate an athlete of the same gender using the discretionary selection criteria in Section 7 if there is sufficient time for the athlete to be processed by the USOPC and FIS/IBU.

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11.2 All replacement athletes must meet all requirements listed in Sections 3-4.

## SECTION 12: SELECTION PROCESS IF ATHLETE VACANCY OCCURS AFTER SUBMISSION OF ENTRIES BY NAME TO THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE OF THE OLYMPIC GAMES

- 12.1 Should a vacancy occur after submission of Entries by Name by the USOPC to the Organizing Committee of the Olympic Games, if allowed, the U.S. Paralympics Nordic Skiing Discretionary Selection Committee will nominate an athlete of the same gender using the discretionary selection criteria in Section 7 if there is sufficient time for the athlete to be processed by the USOPC and FIS/IBU.
- 12.2 Once USPN is no longer allowed to add a replacement athlete to the Team, if an athlete is unable to compete, the starting position will be reassigned at the Games by the USPN Coaching Staff.
- In this instance, the starting position must be filled by an athlete who is nominated to the Team in another event.
- 12.3 All replacement athletes must meet all requirements listed in Sections 3-4.

## SECTION 13: RIGHT TO A HEARING

An athlete who is removed from the Team pursuant to this provision has the right to a hearing per the [IMS Complaint Procedures](#).

## SECTION 14: REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

In addition to the USOPC Delegation Behavior Requirements, the following documents are required to be signed by an athlete as a condition of nomination to the Paralympic Games:

- USPN Code of Conduct: [Athlete Code of Conduct for Internally Managed Sport Programs](#)
- USPN National Team or Development Team Athlete Agreement

## SECTION 15: DISCLAIMERS

These procedures are based on IPC and FIS and IBU rules and regulations as presently known and understood. Any change in the selection procedures caused by a change in IPC and/or FIS or IBU rules and regulations will be distributed to the affected athletes immediately. The selection criteria are based on the latest information available to USPN.

However, the selection criteria are always subject to unforeseen, intervening circumstances, and realistically may not have accounted for every possible contingency. If any force of nature, pandemic, or force majeure, should cause the alteration or cancellation of any of the selection events listed in this document, these selection procedures may require revisions, pursuant to their resubmission to the USOPC.

# U.S. Paralympics Nordic Skiing (USPN)

## Athlete Selection Procedures

### 2026 Paralympic Winter Games

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#### SECTION 16: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All members of the Selection Committee (section 7.3) and all individuals who developed these selection procedures (Section 21) must comply with the [USOPC Conflict of Interest Policy](#), to include completing and submitting a disclosure form consistent with the USOPC Conflict of Interest Policy before convening the committee.

A conflict of interest exists when a personal, family, financial, professional, club, team or business relationship or interest interferes with, or may be perceived to interfere with a committee member's ability to be impartial and participate in the selection process in a fair and impartial manner. Any member of the Selection Committee who has an actual, possible, or perceived conflict of interest must disclose it prior to the start of the selection process and may be required to recuse him/herself from the Selection Committee's discussions and/or voting.

If a conflict exists, the USOPC Ethics & Compliance Committee shall review the conflict and determine the committee member's level of involvement (e.g., whether that committee member must recuse him/herself from participating in discussions and/or voting) by following the [USOPC Ethics Procedures](#).

The AAG representative will not participate in the Ethics & Compliance Committee's deliberations or decision. Once a decision has been made, the Ethics & Compliance Committee will provide a written decision, including directions to mitigate the conflict, to the affected parties and to USOPC IMS staff. The Ethics & Compliance Committee's decision is final and is not subject to further review.

Additionally, any person with a good faith belief that a committee member has a conflict of interest may report the alleged conflict of interest through the [USOPC's Integrity Portal](#). No committee member shall retaliate in any way against a person who, in good faith, reports an alleged conflict of interest. In addition, the USOPC maintains a strict no retaliation policy that prohibits any employee, contractor, agent, volunteer, or member of the USOPC to take or threaten to take any action against an athlete for reporting information to or seeking assistance from the Office of the Athlete Ombuds.

#### SECTION 17: QUESTIONS REGARDING ATHLETE SELECTION PROCEDURES

Athletes may contact the individuals listed below for information about these selection procedures.

Name: Matt Cramer

Position: Senior Director, USOPC Internally Managed Sports

Email: [Matt.R.Cramer@usopc.org](mailto:Matt.R.Cramer@usopc.org)



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### 2026 Paralympic Winter Games

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Name: Drew Shea

Position: USPN 10 Year Athlete Representative

Email: [d.shea1998@gmail.com](mailto:d.shea1998@gmail.com)

#### ATHLETE OMBUDS

The Team USA Athlete Ombuds serves as a safe, independent, confidential place for Team USA Athletes to seek advice about any sport-related rule, policy, or process; how to navigate raising or responding to concerns; or access legal and mental health resources.

Team USA Athletes may contact the Athlete Ombuds:

PHONE: (719) 866-5000

EMAIL: [ombudsman@usathlete.org](mailto:ombudsman@usathlete.org)

WEBSITE: [usathlete.org](http://usathlete.org)

#### SECTION 18: GRIEVANCES

An IMS athlete who alleges that he or she has been denied, or threatened denial, by an IMS the opportunity to participate in a competition or activity (as specified in Section 2.1(D) of the USOPC Dispute Resolution Procedures) may file an “Opportunity to Participate” complaint pursuant to the USOPC Dispute Resolution Procedures, which can be found here: <https://www.usopc.org/governance/dispute-resolution>. The [Internally Managed Sport - Form to file an Opportunity to Participate Complaint](#) must be submitted to initiate an Opportunity to Participate grievance.

#### SECTION 19: NON-RETALIATION

The USOPC and USPN have zero tolerance for retaliation against people who make good faith reports of potential ethical, policy, or legal violations, or who cooperate with investigations of those reports. That means no USOPC or USPN staff, Board or Committee member, or volunteer may threaten, harass, discriminate against, or take any negative employment or related action (e.g., discharge, demotion, suspension, negative review) on that basis.

- Individuals may report concerns to the USOPC confidentially, or anonymously, online using the [USOPC Integrity Portal](#) or individuals may call the USOPC Integrity Hotline at 1-877-404-9935.
- Individuals may report concerns to the USPN by emailing [matt.r.cramer@usopc.org](mailto:matt.r.cramer@usopc.org)
- Additional information can be found in the USOPC’s [Speak Up Policy](#).

#### SECTION 20: SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

USPN will retain the approved Selection Procedures and all supporting documents, including scouting or

# U.S. Paralympics Nordic Skiing (USPN)

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evaluation forms, etc., and data from the selection process as required by USOPC Records Retention Policy or for six months past the date of the Closing Ceremony of the Games, whichever is longer.

## SECTION 21: DEVELOPMENT, APPROVAL & CERTIFICATION OF SELECTION PROCEDURES

The following committee of individuals developed these selection procedures.

NAME	ROLE
Matt Cramer	Sr. Director, USOPC Internally Managed Sports
Bethann Chamberlain	Coach, Para Nordic – National Team Development
Drew Shea	10 Year Athlete Representative

The following individual approved these selection procedures and through their signature, certifies that the procedures comply with the standards and criteria set by FIS/IBU. The following individual further certifies that the information provided herein regarding Athlete Selection Procedures represents the method approved by USPN and that these selection procedures will be posted on the USPN website.

POSITION	NAME	SIGNATURE	DATE
Sr. Director, USOPC Internally Managed Sports	Matt Cramer		8/5/2025

The following individual affirms that they read and understand the selection procedures.

POSITION	NAME	SIGNATURE	DATE
10-Year Athlete Representative*	Drew Shea		Aug 05, 2025

\* If the Team USA Athletes' Commission Representatives have delegated authority to another 10 Year Athlete Representative to sign the Selection Procedures, attach a letter from the Team USA AC Representative indicating the reason they have delegated authority.

\* Signature by the Athlete Representative constitutes that they have read and understand the Selection Procedures. If the Athlete Representative reads and does not agree with the Athlete Selection Procedures being submitted by the NGB, they may submit those reasons in writing to their USOPC Sport Performance Team.

\* If, for some reason, a sport does not have an elected Team USA AC Representative, the NGB must designate a 10 Year Athlete from that sport to review and sign the Selection Procedures.

### Revision History

Date	Revisions
August 1, 2025	Original document published

**Delegation of Authority to sign the Selection Procedures  
for the 2026 Paralympic Winter Games**

July 7, 2025

Delegation of Selection Procedure Authority

I, Nicole Zaino, the Team USA AC Representative for U.S. Paralympics Nordic Skiing, hereby delegate my authority to sign the 2026 Paralympic Winter Games Selection Procedures to Drew Shea (USPN 10 Year Athlete Representative). As a currently competing athlete participating in evaluation events which will be used to nominate the 2026 Paralympic Team, I have a conflict of interest with regard to these selection procedures.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Nicole Zaino  
USPN Team USA AC Representative

7/13/25

Date

# U.S. Paralympics Nordic Skiing (USPN)

## Athlete Selection Procedures

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#### APPENDIX A – COMMONLY USED ACRONYMS

**AAC** – Athletes’ Advisory Council

**AC** – Athlete’s Commission

**Act or TSOASA** – Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act

**APC** – Americas Paralympic Committee

**CAS** – Court of Arbitration for Sport

**Center or CSS** – U.S. Center for SafeSport

**CF** – Continental Federation

**IMS** – Internally Managed Sport (sport managed by the USOPC)

**IOC** – International Olympic Committee

**IPC** – International Paralympic Committee

**IF** – International Federation

**LOC** – Local Organizing Committee

**NGB** – National Governing Body

**NOC** – National Olympic Committee

**NPC** – National Paralympic Committee

**OCOG** – Organizing Committee of Olympic Games. The OCOG refers to the Organizing Committee of the Paralympic Games as well.

**PAG** – Pan American Games

**Panam Sports or PASO** – Pan American Sports Organization

**PPAG** – Parapan American Games

**PSO** – Paralympic Sport Organization

**PWG** – Paralympic Winter Games

**TEAM USA AC** – Team USA Athletes’ Commission (formerly USOPC AAC)

**USADA** – United States Anti-Doping Agency

**WADA** – World Anti-Doping Agency

# U.S. Paralympics Nordic Skiing (USPN)

## Athlete Selection Procedures

### 2026 Paralympic Winter Games

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#### APPENDIX B – GLOSSARY

**Contingency** means a future event or circumstance which is possible but cannot be predicted with certainty.

**Delegation Event** means the Olympic Games, the Olympic Winter Games, the Paralympic Games, the Paralympic Winter Games, the Pan American Games, and the Parapan American Games.

**Force Majeure** means an event or effect that cannot be reasonably anticipated or controlled (e.g., hurricane, tornado, etc.).

**Grievance Procedures** means the process that enables an athlete to file a complaint with the NGB/IMS or USOPC.

**Jurisdiction** means the power or authority to make decisions and judgments.

**Nominated** means an athlete, coach or staff member whose name has been submitted to the USOPC by an NGB/IMS for participation in a Delegation Event.

**Protected Competition** means a Delegation Event or a Qualifying Competition.

**Qualifying Competition** means either of the following:

- i. **NGB Qualifying Competition:** Any competition or activity organized or approved by the NGB where the athlete's performance or results are considered in the published selection criteria to represent the United States in a Delegation Event.
- ii. **International Qualifying Competition:** Any international sport competition where (i) athletes represent the United States against athletes representing other nations, (ii) the NGB officially designates entrants, as required by the competition organizers, and (iii) athlete results or performance are included in the published criteria to qualify, or be selected, to represent the United States in a Delegation Event.

**Selected** means an athlete, coach or staff member whose name has been submitted by the USOPC to the OCOG at the final submission date, as determined by the OCOG.

# U.S. Paralympics Nordic Skiing (USPN)

## Athlete Selection Procedures

### 2026 Paralympic Winter Games

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#### APPENDIX C – ATHLETE RESOURCES

##### ATHLETE LEGAL AID

The purpose of the Athlete Legal Aid Program is to assist elite athletes without sufficient financial means to seek aid for fees and costs associated with legal representation or the proceeding itself with respect to claims before an anti-doping organization, NGB, IF, the U.S. Center for SafeSport, USOPC, IOC/IPC, Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), or other sport-related tribunal within the Olympic and Paralympic Movement.

WEBSITE: [www.usopc.org/ombuds/athlete-legal-aid-program](http://www.usopc.org/ombuds/athlete-legal-aid-program)

##### ATHLETE OMBUDS

The Team USA Athlete Ombuds serves as a safe, independent, confidential place for Team USA Athletes to seek advice about any sport-related rule, policy, or process; how to navigate raising or responding to concerns; or access legal and mental health resources.

Team USA Athletes may contact the Athlete Ombuds:

PHONE: (719) 866-5000

EMAIL: [ombudsman@usathlete.org](mailto:ombudsman@usathlete.org)

WEBSITE: [usathlete.org](http://usathlete.org)

##### SAFESPORT HELPLINE

The SafeSport Helpline provides crisis intervention, referrals, and emotional support specifically designed for athletes, staff, and other SafeSport participants affected by sexual violence. Through this service, support specialists provide live, confidential, one-on-one support that is available 24/7. Individuals can call the Helpline at 866-200-0796 or visit [www.safesporthelpline.org](http://www.safesporthelpline.org).

##### TEAM USA ATHLETES' COMMISSION (Team USA AC) (Formerly Athletes' Advisory Council)

The Team USA AC is responsible for broadening communication between the USOPC and active athletes and serves as a source of input and advice to the USOPC Board of Directors.

WEBSITE: [www.usopc.org/teamusa-athletes-commission](http://www.usopc.org/teamusa-athletes-commission)

##### TEAM USA ATHLETE SERVICES

The USOPC helps support Team USA athletes from the start of their career to their retirement and beyond through direct funds, programs and services that help athletes excel in their day-to-day lives, on and off the field of play.

WEBSITE: [www.usopc.org/athlete-benefits-and-resources](http://www.usopc.org/athlete-benefits-and-resources)

# **U.S. Paralympics Nordic Skiing (USPN)**

## **Athlete Selection Procedures**

### **2026 Paralympic Winter Games**

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#### **TEAM USA MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES**

For those in need of mental health support, USOPC Psychological Services is available at [psychservices@usopc.org](mailto:psychservices@usopc.org), or you can connect with a licensed mental health provider 24/7 through the USOPC Psychological Services Support Line at 719-866-2255. You can also visit [www.usopc.org/mental-health](http://www.usopc.org/mental-health) for information about all available resources or complete our referral link at: [go.teamusa.org/referrals](http://go.teamusa.org/referrals) to get connected.

#### **USOPC DISPUTE RESOLUTION UNIT (DRU)**

For Protected Competitions, USOPC's DRU oversees the administration of dispute resolution services to athletes and other members of NGBs for grievances under the USOPC's jurisdiction to ensure the complaints are heard in a timely and fair manner. For more information about this process, please visit the [dispute resolution website](#).

#### **USOPC ETHICS AND COMPLIANCE**

USOPC's Ethics and Compliance team is responsible for ensuring the USOPC and NGBs comply with the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act, their own bylaws and policies, and any other applicable laws or regulations. Any individual may report concerns confidentially, or anonymously, online using the [USOPC Integrity Portal](#) or individuals may call the USOPC Integrity Hotline at 1-877-404-9935 to report their concern over the phone.

#### **USOPC SECURITY AND ATHLETE SAFETY REPORTING PORTAL**

Athletes can report an incident of emotional, physical, or sexual misconduct, a violation of the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP) or a general security incident or concern through the [Safety Reporting Portal](#). Athletes may also report to the USOPC over the phone at 719-866-3869.