



2025 Able-Bodied Athlete Support Criteria

Below you will find information about financial and other support offered by both USA Fencing and the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC). You are always welcome to reach out to USA Fencing with questions at any time. The best way to reach us is at international@usafencing.org.

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Athlete Stipends

Monthly stipends are paid by the USOPC or USA Fencing (depending on eligibility) to senior athletes who meet the criteria. There are two types of stipends:

1. Base Stipend (\$500/month)
2. FIE Ranking Stipend

The rankings as of the first Wednesday of every month are used to determine eligibility. The criteria is effective January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025.

Eligibility to receive the *\$500 base stipend + FIE ranking stipend* is determined upon the athlete meeting a minimum of **two out of five criteria listed below**. This stipend is paid directly by the USOPC.

- *Fencers who finished in the Top 8 in Team or Individual competitions at the most recent Olympic Games (includes athletes who qualified or were selected for team competition)*
- *Fencers who finished in the Top 8 in Team or Individual competitions at the most recent World Championships (includes athletes who qualified or were selected for team competition)*
- *Top 10 FIE Team Ranking, as of the 1st Wednesday of the month (any athlete who has competed in the Team Competition in an FIE Senior Team event in 2023, 2024 or 2025 will be eligible)*
- *Top 24 FIE Individual Ranking as of the 1st Wednesday of the month*
- *Top 6 athletes according to USAF Senior Points Listing, as of the 1st Wednesday of the month, using Rolling or Team points (whichever are used for selections at that time)*

Important Note – The top 6 athletes according to USAF Senior Points Listing, as of the 1st Wednesday of the month, using Rolling or Team points (whichever are used for selections at that time) who do not meet another criteria listed above will receive the base stipend directly from USA Fencing (not from the USOPC).

FIE Individual and Team Rankings: <https://fie.org/athletes>

USA Fencing Senior Points List: <https://www.usafencing.org/current-point-standings>



Additional monthly stipend based on Individual FIE Rankings:

- Athletes ranked 1-4 receive \$3,450 per month
- Athletes ranked 5-8 receive \$2,200 per month
- Athletes ranked 9-12 receive \$1,700 per month
- Athletes ranked 13-16 receive \$1,300 per month
- Athletes ranked 17-20 receive \$700 per month
- Athletes ranked 21-24 receive \$450 per month

(Stipend example: if you are ranked 3rd on the USA Fencing points standings and 7th on the FIE world ranking list, your stipend will be \$500 (base stipend) + \$2,200 (FIE ranking stipend) for a total stipend of \$2,700.)

World Cup Team Performance Incentives

In addition to earning monthly stipends, athletes who earn a team medal (1st, 2nd or 3rd place) at a 2025 Senior Team World Cup will earn a World Cup Team Performance Incentive. The following awards will be divided equally among the fencers registered for the Team Event (regardless if athlete competed or not):

- 1st place = \$ 5,000
- 2nd place = \$ 4,000
- 3rd place = \$ 3,000

Elite Athlete Health Insurance (EAHI)

EAHI is general medical insurance provided by the USOPC. More information about EAHI can be found [HERE](#).

Eligibility to receive EAHI is determined upon the athlete meeting a minimum of **two out of five criteria listed below**:

1. Fencers who finished in the Top 8 in Team or Individual competitions at the most recent Olympic Games (includes athletes who qualified or were selected for team competition)
2. Fencers who finished in the Top 8 in Team or Individual competitions at the most recent World Championships (includes athletes who qualified or were selected for team competition)
3. Top 10 FIE Team Ranking, as of the evaluation date (any athlete who has competed in the Team Competition in an FIE Senior Team event in 2023, 2024, or 2025 will be eligible)
4. Top 24 FIE Individual Ranking as of the evaluation date



5. Top 4 athletes according to USAF Senior Points Listing, as of the evaluation date, using Rolling or Team points (whichever are used for selections at that time)

Athletes enrolled in EAHI as of January 1, 2025, may remain on EAHI through June 4, 2025. EAHI eligibility will be re-evaluated on **June 4, 2025**.

Operation Gold Payments

Operation Gold Payments are paid by the USOPC for top performances at the most important Senior event of the year.

The Olympic Operation Gold qualifying event for 2025 is the World Championships, July 20-30, 2025, Tbilisi, Georgia.

In an Olympic Games year, teams and individuals must place in the top three at the Olympic Games to qualify for an Operation Gold Event Award; multiple Operation Gold Event Awards can be received if an athlete has multiple top three finishes at the Olympic Games.

In non-Olympic Games years, Operation Gold Awards are limited to one award per athlete; athletes who qualify for more than one award automatically receive the higher award. Individuals must finish in one of the top eight places, while teams must finish in one of the top six places at the qualifying event in a discipline on the program of the Olympic or Paralympic Games to qualify for an Operation Gold Award in a non-Olympic or non-Paralympic Games year. For the purposes of Operation Gold, a team is defined as three or more athletes.

The payment amounts for the 2025 Operation Gold Event athlete results are as follows:

- 1st place - \$6,250
- 2nd place - \$5,000
- 3rd place - \$4,375
- 4th place - \$3,750
- 5th & 6th place - \$3,125
- 7th & 8th place (individual event only) - \$2,500

USOPC Notes Regarding Support

- *USA Fencing/Athlete Relationship*. Each athlete recipient will be required to execute an



agreement with the USOPC and may be required to also sign an agreement with USA Fencing. USA Fencing understands that the USOPC (i) is not a party to any agreement entered into between the USA Fencing and athlete, (ii) has no obligations thereunder, and (iii) nor can it be held liable under any such agreement. Athletes receiving Athlete Stipends or EAHI are not intended third party beneficiaries of this Funding Schedule.

- *Advance Notice.* USA Fencing must provide athletes with advance notice of any material changes in eligibility and performance criteria to Athlete Stipends and EAHI. Additionally, USA Fencing must provide notice to athletes that changes to eligibility and performance criteria in Athlete Stipends and EAHI can be subject to change at any time. USA Fencing understands that athletes are not third-party beneficiaries of this Funding Schedule and any dispute between USA Fencing and an athlete regarding changes to Athlete Stipends or EAHI, which may be contained in a USA Fencing's athlete agreement or other USA Fencing notification, will solely be resolved between the USA Fencing and athlete.
- *Pregnancy.* An athlete who meets her USA Fencing's and/or Athlete Stipend eligibility criteria in effect as of the date of notification to the USOPC of her pregnancy will continue to receive EAHI and/or the same amount of qualified USOPC Athlete Stipends for the duration of the pregnancy plus an additional one-year period from the date of birth of the child or end of pregnancy, provided the athlete agrees that it is her intent to return to competition at an elite level and has fully complied with the Pregnancy Support Terms and Conditions. If the athlete re-qualifies for Athlete Stipends at any point during pregnancy or within the year after the end of her pregnancy, the USOPC will honor the higher amount for which she qualified. Receipt of these benefits shall not be conditioned upon any agreement that the athlete must continue to train during pregnancy or for the one-year period subsequent to pregnancy. Upon the conclusion of the one-year period, the athlete will then have to re-qualify for EAHI and/or Athlete Stipends. USA Fencing will be required to keep this status confidential and cannot discriminate or retaliate against the athlete for being pregnant.
- *U.S. Center for SafeSport.* USA Fencing will ensure that all applicable individuals receiving these funds/benefits are in compliance with the mandatory training requirements of the U.S. Center for SafeSport, and the requirements of the USOPC's Responsible Sport Organization Background Check Policy. In accordance with the USOPC's NGB Athlete Safety Policy, USA Fencing will notify the USOPC's Security and Athlete Safety Office via email at athlete.safety@usopc.org as soon as possible, and in any case within 24 hours of imposing its own or being notified of Center-imposed sanction(s) and/or temporary measure(s), affecting any of the individuals receiving these funds/benefits



- *NCAA.* When applicable, USA Fencing must notify NCAA student-athletes and prospective NCAA student-athletes that they should consult with their school’s NCAA compliance administrator to ensure compliance with NCAA regulations related to accepting Athlete Support to include monthly stipends, incentive/bonus payments or other grants without jeopardizing their eligibility. Similarly, USA Fencing should encourage Grade, Middle and High School students to consult with their respective state’s High School Federation to determine whether accepting Athlete Support affects their High School sport eligibility. It is the athlete’s responsibility to ensure compliance with NCAA and/or State High School Federation rules and regulations as applicable.
- *Athlete Stipends.* If the full athlete stipend amount will not be disbursed by the end of the calendar year, the USOPC may reallocate at its discretion.
- *Operation Gold.* Any supplementary funds for the USOPC Operation Gold Event will be distributed by USA Fencing to qualified athletes. Details will be outlined and communicated to athletes through USA Fencing’s athlete agreement, to include payment criteria, award amounts and athlete eligibility terms.

Funding for Travel

USA Fencing provides financial support to top senior athletes to travel to international competitions and training camps. Money for travel is provided by both the USOPC and USA Fencing. The amount available for each weapon is dependent primarily on the weapon’s success the previous season.

Please note the following regarding funding for travel:

- *The support described below is only for January 1, 2025-July 31, 2025.*
- *Rankings are based on the point standings at the time of selections (not based on the athletes registered).*

Senior International Competitions (World Cup and Grand Prix)

- Athletes ranked #1-6* on the point standings at the time of selection (using rolling or team points, whichever points are used for selections) will be fully funded for each competition. This includes airfare, hotel (up to half the price of a twin room), per diem, ground transport and visa fees.
 - **For Men’s Epee, athletes ranked #1-5 will be fully funded.*
- If selected for a Senior World Cup team event, athletes ranked outside of the top 6 (top 5 for men’s epee) are eligible to receive the following support:



- Athletes ranked #7-8 - \$1,500 travel grant (6-8 for men's epee)
- Athletes ranked #9-12 - \$1,000 travel grant
- Athletes outside of the top 6 (top 5 for men's epee) who are selected as a reserve fencer for the team event will receive a \$750 travel grant.

Senior Training Camps

- Athletes ranked #1-4 on the point standings at the time of selection (using rolling or team points, whichever points are used for selections) will be fully funded for each camp. This includes airfare, hotel (up to half the price of a twin room), per diem, ground transport and visa fees.
- Athletes ranked #5-8 on the point standings at the time of selection (using rolling or team points, whichever points are used for selections) will receive a \$500 travel grant for international camps and a \$250 travel grant for domestic camps.

Division I NAC Events

- Senior athletes who competed at the most recent World Championships or Olympic Games will receive two free NAC registrations.
 - Athletes must register and pay for the NAC themselves. Refunds will be issued following the event.

Personal Coaches

- Coaches of athletes ranked in the Senior FIE top 16 at any time during the season will receive a travel grant of \$3,000 to be used toward trips throughout the season.

Junior & Cadet World Championships

- All athletes selected for the Junior & Cadet World Championships will be fully funded by USA Fencing to attend the event.

Junior Team Events

- Athletes who fence in a Junior World Cup or Zonal TEAM event are eligible to receive a \$500 travel grant for each event.