

2026-27 USABS Para Sliding Sports Selection Criteria

The goal of the USA Bobsled & Skeleton (USABS) Para Sliding Sports athlete selection process and criteria is to field the most competitive teams in domestic and international competition leading to future World Cup, World Championship competition and Paralympic Games.

Athletes may be selected to two different teams: The **Para World Cup** team is for seated bobsled and para skeleton athletes who qualify to compete in IBSF sanctioned races. The **Para Sliding Development** team is comprised of development athletes training and racing in para bobsled and para skeleton competitions open to novice and intermediate athletes. Other events such as training camps, Para Skeleton Legacy Tour events, and national championship races are included in these criteria.

Contents

1. USABS Athlete Participant Eligibility	2
2. Para Sliding Sport Athlete Eligibility	2
3. National Team(s) Qualification	3
4. Participation, Waivers, Removal, and Replacement of Athletes	5
5. Committees	6
Team Selection Committee	6
Waiver Committee	7
Judicial Committee	7
Ethics Committee	7
6. Other	8
Athletes' Right to Compete	8
Saving Clause	8
Criteria Distribution	8

1. USABS Athlete Participant Eligibility

To participate in a USABS program, an athlete must meet the following requirements:

- a. be a USABS Athlete Member in good standing.
- b. abide by the USADA, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), and International Bobsleigh and Skeleton Federation (IBSF) anti-doping requirements.
- c. meet all United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC), IBSF, and USABS eligibility requirements for representing the USA in international competition.
- d. complete and return the USABS physical/waiver, U.S. Center for SafeSport training, background check, and Athlete Handbook prior to participation in any USABS event.

2. Para Sliding Sport Athlete Eligibility

The Para Sliding Program is comprised of one National team and one Development team.

a. Para National Team

- 1) The Seated Bobsled and Para Skeleton disciplines make up the team that, if an athlete is eligible for and named to, competes in IBSF Para Bobsleigh and Para Skeleton World Cup & World Championships (bobsled only in 2027) competitions.

b. Development Team

- 1) Athletes who have yet to earn spots on the World Cup teams but are in the progression pipeline, training and competing in Para Sliding Sport Development camps and races.

Athletes on both teams and disciplines:

- a. must meet the USABS/IBSF minimum classification criteria for Para Seated Bobsled or Para Skeleton and be placed in the discipline in accordance with their classification.
- b. are expected to meet the commitment of travel and participation in all races in both North America and Europe. If athletes cannot commit to attending all scheduled events/races for a given season then the athletes spot may be replaced per selection committee decision.
- c. are expected to financially support all costs associated to compete in the events for which they are qualified.
- d. must be able to compete without disqualification regarding rules stated in the IBSF International Para Bobsleigh Rules and International Para Skeleton Rules including weight limits. <https://www.ibsf.org/en/inside-ibsf/downloads>

- e. meet all United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC), IBSF, and USABS eligibility requirements for representing the USA in international competition.
- f. complete and return the USABS physical/waiver, U.S. Center for SafeSport training, background check, and Athlete Handbook prior to participation in any USABS event.

In addition to the criteria mentioned above, athletes that did not compete in previous seasons must meet the following criteria:

- a. Athletes that competed in the 2024/25 season but did not compete in any 2025/26 competitions representing USABS (essentially missing the previous season), must compete in the National Team Selection Races official training and safely make a minimum of 10 track descents, under the supervision of a USABS-approved coach.
- b. Athletes that competed in the 2023/24 season or earlier but did not compete in any 2024/25 or 2025/26 competitions representing USABS (essentially missing the previous two seasons), are required to complete a para training camp before being invited to participate in National Team selections.

3. National Team(s) Qualification

The U.S. National Team is defined as athletes in the bobsled or skeleton disciplines that are named to the Para World Cup Team for seated bobsled or skeleton competition in the IBSF World Cup Circuit. Qualification for both U.S. National Team(s) require attendance in mandatory events as defined by USABS to earn roster spots on the U.S. team. All races will be conducted according to the same rules outlined in the IBSF International Para Bobsleigh Rules and International Para Skeleton Rules. Dates and other details will be provided at least 30 days prior to the race date.

The required events are:

- a. **National and International USABS Events**– Top performers chosen by the selection committee, classified by the IBSF and USABS classification process and who meet other minimum requirements as listed in this document, may be invited to participate in the US Para National Championships, the IBSF Para World Cup training and race schedules, and/or the Para Skeleton Legacy Tour.
- b. **National Team Selection** – National Team selection races will be held prior to the start of the 2026-2027 IBSF Para World Cup for qualified para seated bobsled. There is no quota for para skeleton for the 26-27 season.
 - 1) Race results will provide athlete ranking for the Para Bobsled National Team(s) going into the first IBSF Para World Cup.
 - 2) Specific race protocols, dates, and times will be announced 30 days prior to the start of the team selections.

- 3) Every effort will be made to conduct a fair selection race. If weather, track conditions, track availability, or other unforeseen circumstances prohibit a successful completion of the National Team Selection race series, then the Para World Cup Team will be selected based on the previous year's National Championship results.
- 4) To be eligible to compete in the USABS Para National Team selection official training, athletes must meet the following requirements:
 - a) Athletes must have safely made a minimum of 10 track descents from an upper start (3 or 1 at Lake Placid) in the previous season, under the supervision of a USABS-approved coach or IBSF- certified coach.
 - b) All athletes that did not compete in the 2025-2026 season but did compete in the 2024-25 season, must attend the 2026-2027 National Team selections official training and safely make a minimum of 9 track descents under the supervision of a USABS-approved or IBSF-certified coach prior to competing in the team selection races.
 - c) New athletes and athletes that have not competed in the previous two seasons are required to complete a para training camp and meet all standards before being invited to participate in National Team selections.

c. US National Championships

National Championships will be held upon completion of the racing season. These races will be open to all athletes who have participated in training camps and sanctioned races during the 2026-2027 season and have safely made two runs down the host track from the top. Athletes must meet the minimum classification criteria per their discipline.

If unforeseen circumstances occur (i.e. crash, runner damage, sled damage, push athlete falls) by no fault of the athletes, an extra run may be granted by the head coach with input from the jury and track officials to substitute for a previous run. Ties will be broken with the single fastest heat.

d. Competition entries – Para World Cup National Team (Seated and Skeleton) Selection

- 1) The Selection Committee will select National Team athletes in accordance with the USABS selection process for World Cup pilots and based on national selection race results.
- 2) Any US athlete(s) who finished in the top 3 in the previous season's World Cup series will earn a bye and be selected to compete in the 2026-2027 IBSF Para World Cup season as long as they meet all eligibility requirements as listed in section 2.
- 3) The top finisher of each gender from the 2026 National Championships race will earn a bye and be selected to compete in the 2026-2027 IBSF Para World Cup season as long as they meet all eligibility requirements as listed in section 2.

- 4) The next top finishers in order of finish from each gender from the National Team Selection Races will be selected to fill the remaining quota spots allocated by the IBSF for each Para World Cup competition. There will be no quota limit for Para Skeleton for the 2026-2027 season.
- 5) If a waiver is granted by the Waiver Committee, the Selection Committee may select that athlete, replacing the lowest ranked athlete from the National Team selection races.
- 6) The Selection Committee may choose one alternate pilot of each gender to travel and participate in training at each World Cup event.
- 7) National Team(s) Review – To ensure the U.S. is submitting the best performing team possible, the Selection Committee will review the team to determine if there is a need for substitution after the mid-point of the IBSF season.

e. Competition Entries – IBSF World Championship Seated Pilot Selection

Per IBSF rules, Para World Championship seated pilots are qualified based on individual ranking in Para World Cup races. Para Skeleton will not be competing in the World Championships in 2027.

4. Participation, Waivers, Removal, and Replacement of Athletes

- a. Participation - Athletes are required to participate in mandatory events defined by USABS. Any athlete who does not attend a race for which they have qualified will be subject to removal from the National Team(s) prior to the next competition. The Selection Committee will determine, on a case-by-case basis, if that athlete's circumstance merits reinstatement to their race opportunities. Failure to participate in a mandatory event and/or to follow the waiver procedures may result in a hearing regarding the athletes' participation in further events.

USABS and Selection Committee reserve the right to not fill domestic and/or international quotas should the available athletes not meet the requirements and qualifications for the competition.

- b. Waivers – A Waiver Committee will consider all waivers and seek input from relevant personnel. For medical waivers, relevant personnel may include medical personnel involved with the athlete's injury, rehab/recovery, diagnosis, etc. An athlete must complete the waiver form in the policy found on the USABS website.

<https://www.usabs.com/criteria>

Waivers may only be *granted* by the waiver committee. A granted waiver does not ensure selection. If a waiver is granted, the Selection Committee will proceed with selection considering the granted waiver. The Waiver Committee will consider waivers in these areas:

- 1) Injury/Illness Waiver: Injury/illness waivers may be given to athletes that have suffered an injury or illness and said injury/illness has been verified by a medical professional.
 - 2) Extreme Circumstance Waiver: Constitute unforeseen circumstances that include, but are not limited to: a crash, runner or sled damage, extraordinary personal situations, etc. The waiver will only be used for an extreme circumstance that will be determined by the Selection Committee.
- c. Removal of Athletes – Athletes may be removed from the National Team(s) or USABS program for the following reasons:
- 1) Voluntary withdrawal – Athletes must submit in writing to the Head Coach/Team Program Manager stating the reasons for requesting a withdrawal. In the event of illness or injury, the athlete must be examined by a USABS-approved physician or caregiver.
 - 2) Track medical staff and /or US team medical personnel at any track at which an athlete is competing may, in the interest of safety, prevent an injured athlete from competing at that event.
 - 3) Code of Conduct – In the event of an excessive or serious violation of the USABS Athlete Code of Conduct, an athlete could be removed from a race series. An athlete that is removed from the team pursuant to this provision has the right to a hearing per USABS Bylaws. The athlete also has the right to appeal to the USABS Judicial Committee.
 - 4) Anti-Doping – An athlete may be removed from any team at any time for violation of IOC, IPC, WADA, IBSF, USADA and USOPC anti-doping protocol, policies, and procedures. In such instances, the adjudication process will be managed through the USADA.
 - 5) An athlete that is removed from a National Team will forfeit all rights and privileges that come with National Team selection.
- d. Replacement of Athletes – If an athlete is removed or a quota spot is vacant, the Selection Committee may select replacement athletes to the National Team(s) per the Selection Criteria. All replacement athletes must meet all eligibility and qualification requirements for that position. An athlete who replaces another athlete does not automatically assume the rank of the replaced athlete.

5. Committees

a. Team Selection Committee

The Team Selection Committee will meet either in person or remotely prior to the National Team selection at the beginning of the season to determine athlete selection to the Para Seated and Para Skeleton teams. For each selection, the committee will seek input from all relevant USABS coaches to ensure that these criteria are applied with

fairness and transparency.

Team Selection Committee:

- 1) Curt Tomasevicz, USABS Director of Sport Performance
- 2) DJ Skelton, Para Sport Coach
- 3) Kim Seevers, USABS Para Program Manager
- 4) Aaron Lanningham, Para Bobsled Athlete Representative
- 5) TBD, Para Skeleton Athlete Representative

b. Waiver Committee

The Waiver Committee will meet either in person or remotely to review any waiver submitted by an athlete seeking to waive an eligibility requirement for National Team selection. Note that a granted waiver does not guarantee selection. If granted, a waiver only waives the requirement. The Selection Committee would still need to select the athlete to the National Team. The waiver committee will seek input from all relevant coaches and medical professionals associated with the situation.

Waiver Committee:

- 1) Curt Tomasevicz, USABS Director of Sport Performance
- 2) DJ Skelton, Para Sport Coach
- 3) Aaron Lanningham, Athlete Representative

c. Judicial Committee

There is a standing Judicial Committee to oversee any grievances of these criteria. The USABS Board of Directors will appoint members of the committee. If an athlete has a reasonable and articulable concern regarding any grievance with the criteria, an athlete is encouraged to notify the judicial committee. The contest must be made in writing and emailed to the Judicial Committee Chairperson at:

judicialcommitteechair@usabs.com.

d. Ethics Committee

There is a standing Ethics Committee to oversee any ethical violations of these criteria. The USABS Board of Directors will appoint members of the committee. If an athlete believes there is any impartiality or potential conflict of interest, an athlete is encouraged to notify the ethics committee. Concerns must be sent via email to the Ethics Committee Chairperson at: ethicscommitteechair@usabs.com.

Any individuals, including athlete representatives, who have a possible conflict of interest must disclose it to the USABS's Ethics Committee for review. Additionally, any person (including any potentially impacted athlete or coach of a potentially impacted athlete) with good faith, believe that an individual involved in the selection process has a conflict of interest may report the alleged conflict of interest to USABS's Ethics Committee for review. Reports may be made anonymously. The Ethics Committee may take any measures necessary to create a fair process for athletes, including restrictions or removal of the conflicted individual.

If an individual is recused and a vacancy on a committee exists, USABS shall use its best reasonable efforts to fill that vacancy as soon as possible. If an athlete representative is recused, another athlete representative who meets the qualifications for that committee shall be appointed by USABS and approved by an unaffected representative group of athletes as soon as possible.

6. Other

a. Athletes' Right to Compete

An athlete's right to compete is defined and protected by USOPC Bylaws. Should an athlete feel his/her right to compete has been withheld, the USABS bylaws provides for a grievance procedure for him/her to seek a fair hearing and relief.

All questions regarding an athlete's opportunity to compete that are not answered by the USABS, may be directed to the USOPC Athlete Ombudsman by telephone at (888) ATHLETE, or by email ombudsman@usathlete.org.

b. Saving Clause

The procedures above are based on IPC, IBSF and USOPC rules and regulations as presently published. Any change in the selection procedures caused by a change in IPC, IBSF or USOPC rules and regulations will be distributed to all athletes as soon as possible. The desire to field the most competitive teams for international competition presently and in the future are the guiding principles and will determine the administration of the selection criteria. The Para World Cup and National/Development teams selection criteria are based on the latest information available to the USABS.

USABS reserves the right to change the selection criteria prior to the start of each competition season based on schedules, coaching, logistics, finances, and other limiting factors. The rules in these criteria will be interpreted by the USABS coaching staff along with the CEO and Director of Sport Performance in the way in which they were intended.

c. Criteria Distribution

This document shall be distributed and made available to all athletes via the USABS website at <https://www.usabs.com/criteria>