2026/2027 USABS Direct Athlete Support (DAS) Policy

This policy sets Direct Athlete Support (DAS) and Elite Athlete Health Insurance (EAHI) for the July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027 period. Criteria and stipend levels will be reset each year through mutual agreement by USABS and the USOPC.

Athletes that are currently receiving EAHI based on the 2025/26 policy will continue to receive EAHI through June 30, 2026.

The USABS has established this equivalent and nondiscriminatory criteria for athletes of equivalent disciplines and levels of competition to qualify for DAS regardless of gender.

DAS is granted to athletes with proven success in Olympic Games, World Championships, or who have demonstrated potential to medal in these events. DAS will only be provided to athletes with the intention of helping offset training and competition expenses as they train for the upcoming Olympic Games. The policy outlined below looks to meet that intention with a basis on both past performance (Olympic Games/World Championship and World Cup results) as well as current status within the Skeleton/Bobsled Athlete Progression Pathway (SAPP/BAPP).

Athletes may be eligible to receive EAHI and/or a base stipend if they:

- Are a USABS member in good standing.
- Have signed and are abiding by the USABS Code of Conduct.
- Intend to compete for the USABS for the full Olympic quadrennial through the 2029/2030 season.
- Meet the minimum phase level in the Skeleton/Bobsled Athlete Progression Pathway (SAPP/BAPP).

Additional expectations are included in the USABS Athlete Handbook.

Elite Athlete Health Insurance (EAHI)

USABS has established this equivalent and nondiscriminatory criteria for male and female athletes to qualify for USOPC-funded EAHI.

First and foremost, only athletes that meet the USOPC definition of ***Team USA Athlete*** will be eligible to receive EAHI. For USABS athletes, this includes having met at least one of the following criteria:

- Team USA Athlete – Tier A.
    - 2026 Olympian, including Ap credentialed athlete. (An athlete that meets this criterion will be a Team USA Athlete through at least the 2027-28 season.)
- Team USA Athlete – Tier B.
    - Selected to compete in the previous season's IBSF World Championships. (This criterion does not apply to post-Olympic seasons in which no World Championships took place in the previous season.)
    - Finished the previous season (2025-26 season) with a World Cup rank in the top 20 in any Olympic discipline. (This criterion applies only to skeleton athletes in the individual discipline and bobsled pilots in any discipline.)
    - Bobsled push athletes selected to the current or previous season World Cup team and finished in the top 6/4 (men/women) at 2025 Push Championships. (This criterion only applies to bobsled push athletes since the rank criterion above can only be applied to skeleton athletes and bobsled pilots.)

USABS will be able to award up to twenty-one (21) EAHI allocations, the same number athletes that qualified for the 2026 Olympics including Ap credentialed athletes. Those EAHI allocations will be awarded to USABS athletes in the following order. (Note that the allocations are not restricted by discipline despite how they were earned at the 2026 Olympics.)

1. Athletes that have qualified for Tier 1 DAS.
    a. Medalist (top-3) at the 2026 Olympics, or
    b. Achieved top-3 finishes in at least 40% of the World Cup races* in one discipline in the 2025/2026 season.
2. Athletes that have qualified for Tier 2 DAS.
    a. Achieved a top-6 finish at 2026 Olympics, or
    b. Achieved top-6 finishes in at least 40% of the World Cup races* in one discipline in the 2025/2026 season.
3. SAPP/BAPP phase level (NT2, NT1, and DP2)
    a. If necessary, EAHI allocations will be distributed equally among the six gender and discipline categories for a SAPP/BAPP phase level. Within those categories, athletes will be ranked based on Push Championship results by time.

        For example, if 8 allocations remain after all NT2 and NT1 athletes receive EAHI, each of the 6 gender and discipline categories will receive 1 allocation and will go to the highest finisher from push champs within each category. The remaining 2 allocations would go to 2026 Olympians and any remaining spots would go to the athletes that have the most consecutive years racing on the World Cup circuit.

All EAHI will be awarded to athletes starting July 1, 2026 and will continue through June 30, 2027. Athletes that meet the Team USA Athlete definition at a later date during the season will not be eligible to be enrolled at that time.

Direct Athlete Support (DAS) Base Stipend

Athletes who qualify for Tier 1 or Tier 2 (described on the table below) based on the results of 2025/2026 World Cup competitions or 2026 Olympics will receive the corresponding funding listed from July 1st, 2025 to June 30th, 2026 as long as they have intention of competing through the 2030 Olympics. These amounts reflect a 3% increase across all tiers from 2025/26.

Athletes who qualified for Tier 1 or Tier 2 for the 2025/2026 season but failed to qualify for Tier 1 or Tier 2 for the 2026/2027 season will qualify for Tier 3 starting July 1, 2026 (with the step-down additional stipend) until the naming of the National Team/Development Team.

All Athletes who ended the 2025/2026 season as qualified for Tier 3 (described in the 2025/2026 DAS Policy) will receive the Tier 3 funding listed below from July 1, 2026 until the naming of the 2026/2027 SAPP/BAPP phase levels at the start of the season (approximately November 1st). Tier 3 status will then be reviewed at the naming of the SAPP/BAPP phase levels. Athletes who then qualify for Tier 3 at the naming of the SAPP/BAPP phase levels will receive their stipend from then through June 30, 2027 or until they fail to meet the Tier 3 criteria.

The National Team and Development Team are defined by the Skeleton Athlete Progression Pathway (SAPP) or the Bobsled Athlete Progression Pathway (BAPP). World Cup, Europe Cup, North America Cup, and Asia Cup status and racing entries do not explicitly define National Team or Development Team status.

If, at any time during the season, an athlete is promoted to the National Team (NT1/NT2) or Development phase 2 (DP2) level through the SAPP/BAPP, that athlete will begin receiving a Tier 3 stipend the following month.

The stipend amount received is dependent on qualification to the tiers described below. Athletes will only receive the highest level of support for which they qualify.

***** If, prior to the first World Cup race of the season, the Director of Sport Performance and the skeleton/bobsled Head Coach determine that a full 8-race World Cup season is not in the best interest of USABS program for optimal results at World Championships or Olympics, or if an IBSF season does not include all eight World Cup races for a typically fully-funded athlete (defined according to the SAPP/BAPP) due to budget reasons, an appropriate number of World Cup races will be determined to define a full World Cup season and the corresponding 40%.

For the 2026/2027 season, eight (8) races defined a full World Cup season. Therefore, >40% of the eight races would be at least four(4) top-3/top-6 results to qualify for Tier 1/Tier 2. Seven(7) skeleton Mixed Team events are scheduled to define a full World Cup season. Therefore, >40% of the seven competitions would be at least three(3) top-3/top-6 results to qualify for Tier 1/Tier 2.

If a bobsled pilot achieves a Tier 1 or Tier 2 stipend by World Cup results and not by World Championships or Olympic results, and no push athlete meets the >40% minimum number of top-3 or top-6 finishes to meet the Tier 1 or Tier 2 criteria, the push athlete that raced with the pilot earning the most IBSF World Cup points (according to the IBSF World Cup Ranking List) will also earn the same Tier 1 or Tier 2 stipend. If a 4-man pilot achieves a Tier 1 or Tier 2 stipend by World Cup results and not by World Championships or Olympic results, then 3 push athletes that competed with the pilot during the season that earned the most IBSF World Cup points will earn the same Tier 1 or Tier 2 stipend as the pilot.

Additional Stipend

1. Athletes who were receiving a Tier 1 or Tier 2 stipend during the 2025/2026 season but have dropped to a lower tier will receive an additional 50% of their new stipend (i.e., Tier 2 will be $1,909.62/month and Tier 3 will be $1,113.95/month).*
2. Athletes that have been named to the World Cup Team continuously for more than four consecutive years (5+ years) will be eligible to receive an additional $250/month (i.e., Tier 1 will be $2,637.03/month, Tier 2 will be $1,523.08/month, Tier 3 will be $992.63/month).*

*Note that, of the two possible additional stipends from above, an athlete can only receive one additional stipend.

3. Athletes receiving Tier 3 stipend or no DAS that were a part of at least two (2) top three ranked pushes/starts in the same discipline at the 2027 World Championships will receive an additional $250/month for March – June, 2027.

Tier Level	Distribution Period	Criteria
Tier 1: $2,387.03 / month	*July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026*	• Medalist (top-3) at the 2026 Olympics, or • Achieved top-3 finishes in at least 40% of the World Cup races* in one discipline from the previous (2025/2026) season.
Tier 2: $1,273.08 / month	*July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026*	• Achieved a top-6 finish at 2026 Olympics, or • Achieved top-6 finishes in at least 40% of the World Cup races* in one discipline from the previous (2025/2026) season.
Tier 3: $742.63/ month	*July 1, 2025 – Naming of National Team/Development Team*	• Finished the 2025/2026 season earning Tier 3 stipend, or • 2025/2026 Tier 1 or Tier 2 Athlete that did not qualify for Tier 1 or Tier 2 for the 2026/2027 season, or • Achieved 2 x top-6 World Cup finishes in one discipline from the previous (2025/2026) season.
	Naming of National Team/Development Team – June 30, 2027	• 2026/2027 Athlete in National Team phase (SAPP/BAPP). (NT push athletes must be selected for and competing in World Cup races), or • 2025/2026 Athlete in Development Phase 2 (SAPP/BAPP). (DP2 push athletes must also be selected for and competing in World Cup races)

Withheld Stipend Until Push Championships

Monthly stipend payments, starting with July 2026 through the end of the 2026 Push Championships and/or Selection Races, will be retroactively paid if the qualified athlete competes in the 2026 Push Championships and Selection Races (or is granted a medical waiver) with the intention of competing in the 2026/2027 season and through the 2030 Olympic season.

Maternity Leave

An athlete that becomes pregnant while receiving a stipend and/or EAHI that intends to return to compete is able to receive support through the USOPC Athlete Pregnancy Support and Resources policy. Time missed from competing due to maternity leave will not be considered when awarding Additional Stipends 1. and 2. listed above.

Medical Hardship

An athlete, having already been named to a stipend tier, that is currently receiving a stipend who must forego a team selection competition (Selection Races or Push Championships) and has been granted a medical waiver (approved by the Waiver Committee) or IBSF competitions for at least a month due to an injury sustained while training or competing will continue to receive their current stipend and current EAHI benefits through June 30, 2027 or until they are able to return to competition and be fairly assessed for SAPP/BAPP level. The athlete must complete a Medical Waiver form signed by the USABS Chief Medical Officer indicating that the injury and subsequent rehabilitation prohibits the athlete from competing. The athlete must provide updates with anticipated timeline for return to the Director of Sport Performance, Chief Medical Officer, and/or head coach when requested.