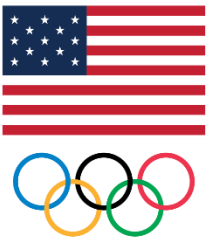


**United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee
Certification Review Group**



**Certification Renewal Recommendation Report for USA Taekwondo
June 19, 2024**



**UNITED STATES
OLYMPIC & PARALYMPIC
COMMITTEE**

USA Taekwondo Certification Renewal Executive Summary

In March 2023, the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) Certification Review Group (CRG), in accordance with the USOPC's NGB Certification Policy, began a certification renewal review of USA Taekwondo.¹ The CRG evaluated USA Taekwondo and, based on input from CRG members, as well as the results of NGB Audit department's 2022 Compliance Audit and 2023 Addendum Report,² and USA Taekwondo's fulfillment of Compliance requirements, recommends a certification status of Renewal in Good Standing.

The CRG's review of USA Taekwondo found that the organization is meeting the USOPC's NGB Compliance Standards in the five core areas of evaluation for certification: Governance and Compliance, Financial Standards and Reporting Practices, Athlete Protections and Rights, Sport Performance, and Operational Performance. As noted in the Compliance Audit reports, USA Taekwondo remediated all NGB Audit findings related to board governance, athlete representation, management of conflicts of interest, financial policies and procedures, financial stability, athlete safety requirements, and grievance procedures.

CRG members agreed that USA Taekwondo is meeting the requirements for NGB certification. In its discussions regarding USA Taekwondo's interactions with the USOPC, the CRG did not identify any operational concerns that would prevent the organization's continued certification.

As a result of this review, the CRG recommends that USA Taekwondo be granted a certification status of Renewal in Good Standing for a four-year certification term ending in 2028.

¹ See Appendix for more information about the certification process, including a link to the NGB Certification Policy.

² [NGB Audit Report](#) and [NGB Audit Addendum Report](#).

Organizational Overview

USA Taekwondo is the USOPC-certified NGB for the sport of taekwondo. The mission of USA Taekwondo is “to enable United States athletes to achieve sustained competitive excellence and promote and grow the sport of taekwondo in the United States.”³ USA Taekwondo is the official United States member of World Taekwondo, the international federation for the sport of taekwondo. USA Taekwondo’s national office is located in Colorado Springs, Colorado.⁴

Certification History

USA Taekwondo was originally certified in January 2021.⁵ This is the first time USA Taekwondo has gone through the certification review process.

Certification Exceptions⁶

USA Taekwondo did not request any exceptions from the NGB Compliance Standards during its certification review.

Athlete Representation Approval and Exceptions⁷

USA Taekwondo has not requested any approvals or exceptions from the Athlete Representation Review Working Group (ARRWG) to date.

Certification Review⁸

Governance and Compliance

The CRG determined that USA Taekwondo is fulfilling the Governance and Compliance-related responsibilities of an NGB, including adopting, and enforcing key ethics and compliance-related policies, making them publicly available on its website; and defining procedures to address violations of these policies.

In 2020 and 2022, USA Taekwondo was the subject of formal Section 9 complaints filed with the USOPC Dispute Resolution Unit (DRU), though both were decided in favor of the NGB. In the first Section 9 complaint, filed in February 2020, was decided in favor of the NGB. The arbitrator concluded that the USA Taekwondo Selection Committee consistently, fairly, and rationally applied the Athlete Selection Procedures to all athletes.⁹ The second Section 9 complaint was filed in August 2022, and it was determined that the Claimant failed to meet their burden to establish a breach of the Selection Procedures. Therefore, the decision the USA Taekwondo Committee made selecting athletes for the protected competitions of Paris Grand Prix and Manchester Grand Prix stood.¹⁰

³ [Board of Directors](#), USA Taekwondo website.

⁴ [Contact Us](#), USA Taekwondo website.

⁵ Refer to the Appendix for details on the initial certification.

⁶ Refer to the Appendix for details on exception requests to the NGB Compliance Standards.

⁷ Refer to the Appendix for details on athlete representation exception requests.

⁸ Refer to the Appendix for details on the review standards and process for information related to the Compliance Audit.

⁹ [Rahimi v. USA Taekwondo](#). February 13, 2020.

¹⁰ [Dillon v. USA Taekwondo](#). August 17, 2022.

As a result of the 2022 Compliance Audit, USA Taekwondo updated its bylaws to include required elements of the NGB Compliance Standards. USA Taekwondo also updated its gifts and entertainment policy, conflict of interest policy, and submitted all 2023 annual reports by the deadline. USA Taekwondo has standardized its board's practices and updated its code of conduct as well. Finally, the NGB's board of directors and all Designated Committees now have 33.3% athlete representation and expanded the list of eligible voters for athlete elections to include all eligible 10-Year Athletes.

The CRG received positive athlete feedback regarding USA Taekwondo's governance. Athletes reported an increase in staff support related to athlete affairs but noted a desire for improved communication from the NGB regarding changes in competitions and pathways.

Financial Standards and Reporting Practices

USA Taekwondo meets the requirements for an NGB's Financial Standards and Reporting Practices. The organization demonstrates financial operational capability to administer its sport and is financially and operationally transparent with its membership by publishing its audited financial statements and tax forms.

As a result of the 2022 Compliance Audit, USA Taekwondo updated its financial policies and procedures, made significant improvements in financial stability, and submitted USOPC funding grant reporting on time with the matching general ledgers.

Athlete Protection and Rights

USA Taekwondo maintains and enforces an athlete safety program consistent with the requirements of relevant federal law, as well as with the policies and standards of the USOPC and the U.S. Center for SafeSport (the Center). The NGB maintains an anti-doping program consistent with the requirements of the USOPC and the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency.

As a result of the 2022 Compliance Audit, USA Taekwondo updated its athlete agreements to be consistent with its current practices. USA Taekwondo also updated its SafeSport strategy to include reporting requirements and its background check policy. Since the Compliance Audit report was published, the NGB improved its background check processes and successfully completed the NGB Audit team's validation testing.

The USOPC is not aware of any cases it has received in the past four years concerning USA Taekwondo that should have been reported to the Center but were not reported in accordance with the Center's reporting requirements. For its part, the USOPC has reported all matters to the Center relating to USA Taekwondo that the USOPC was required to report.

On November 17, 2022, the Center conducted its most recent Administrative Audit¹¹ of USA Taekwondo's implementation of policies required by the SafeSport Code and the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies, which resulted in no findings or directions for corrective actions.

The Center conducted an Event Audit¹² of USA Taekwondo on July 6-7, 2023, hosted at the Prime F. Osborn III Convention Center for the 2023 USA Taekwondo National Championships. The event audit resulted in several findings which have been corrected. USA Taekwondo was able to show proof that all board members have current SafeSport training. As a result of the audit, USA

¹¹ [US Center for SafeSport Administrative Audit Report](#) – USA Taekwondo, November 17, 2022.

¹² [US Center for SafeSport Event Audit Report](#) – USA Taekwondo, February 17-20, 2023.

Taekwondo updated all communication templates to direct users to specific MAAPP and reporting protocol documents and websites. USA Taekwondo also updated its State Association Manual to ensure links direct users to specific policies listed on USA Taekwondo's SafeSport website. USA Taekwondo submitted updated language in their quality control system so the policy aligns with the Center's guidance and USA Taekwondo's current protocol for coach registration. Finally, USA Taekwondo updated its Response & Resolution policies as required by the U.S. Center for SafeSport, which validated USA Taekwondo's corrective actions resolved all outstanding findings.¹³

Sport Performance

USA Taekwondo is fulfilling its obligations in Sport Performance. The organization maintains and executes a strategic plan that supports athletes in achieving sustained competitive excellence and grows the sport. USA Taekwondo established selection procedures and executed them effectively to name and train Team USA athletes for Delegation Events.

Since the 2022 Compliance Audit, USA Taekwondo has submitted its Paralympic delegation list and the Paralympic high performance plans on time, which had been a finding for previous year's submissions. USA Taekwondo also adopted the U.S. Paralympics National Classification Policies and Procedures and posted the document on its website.

Operational Performance

The CRG determined that USA Taekwondo is meeting all the Operational Performance standards. The organization demonstrates managerial capability to administer its sport, keeps current insurance policies, and demonstrates financial sustainability. USA Taekwondo updated its grievance policy and whistleblower and anti-retaliation policy during the audit remediation period to meet NGB Compliance Standards. To address findings of the 2022 Compliance Audit, USA Taekwondo published the criteria for athletes to qualify for USOPC-funded stipends and Elite Athlete Health Insurance online and in its athlete handbook.

USA Taekwondo developed a 2021-2024 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) Strategic Plan to reflect the NGB's vision for a diverse, equitable, inclusive, and accessible organization. USA Taekwondo submitted its action plan to the USOPC with sufficient detail to meet the NGB Compliance Standards. The action plan includes three objectives, initiatives, and success measures. Objectives include growing its Paralympic program, increasing minority and gender equality opportunities on the national team, and increasing minority and gender equality opportunities in coaching.

Conclusion

The CRG concluded that USA Taekwondo is performing satisfactorily based on input from the CRG members, the results of the NGB Audit team's 2022 Compliance Audit, the 2023 Compliance Audit Addendum report, and the organization's remediation of audit findings. There are no outstanding areas of significant concern affecting the NGB's certification status at this time.

Accordingly, the CRG recommends that USA Taekwondo's certification as a member organization of the USOPC be renewed with a rating of Renewal in Good Standing.

¹³ [US Center for SafeSport Corrective Actions Update](#) – USA Taekwondo, November 22, 2023.

Appendix

Certification Renewal Process

The USOPC believes in a culture of strong governance, ethics, and compliance among the NGBs that, as member organizations of the USOPC, make up the Olympic and Paralympic movement. Recent amendments to the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act, which became effective in late 2020, require the USOPC to certify NGBs.¹⁴ The USOPC determined that as of January 1, 2021, all member organizations would be certified, and their certifications would be reviewed for renewal on a rolling basis every four years.¹⁵

Governed by the USOPC's [NGB Certification Policy](#), the NGB certification review process is supported by a cross-functional body of professionals at the USOPC, the Certification Review Group (CRG), who interact with NGBs in their day-to-day work. These professionals evaluate an NGB's operations across multiple functional areas to provide a holistic review of an NGB's performance and culture.¹⁶ In addition to enumerated standards for NGB performance described in the Act, the Bylaws, and the USOPC's [NGB Compliance Standards](#), the CRG considers departmental observations about an NGB's operations that may not be identified in a formal audit scenario but are relevant to consider when evaluating an NGB's overall performance.

Certification Standards, Exceptions, and Review Components

As described in Section 8.4.1 of the [USOPC Bylaws](#), NGBs must satisfy certification requirements in five core areas: Governance and Compliance, Financial Standards and Reporting Practices, Athlete Safety, Sport Performance, and Operational Performance. The USOPC Implementation Guide for NGB Compliance Standards provides NGBs with specific guidance for how they will be evaluated in each of these core areas.

Section 8.4.2 of the USOPC Bylaws permits an NGB to submit a request for limited exceptions to any of the NGB Compliance Standards which, as a result of its overall structure or other extenuating circumstances, cannot or need not be reasonably met. The CRG evaluates all requests received and grants or denies such limited exceptions.

Various provisions of Section 8.5 of the USOPC Bylaws permit NGBs to seek exceptions related to minimum athlete representation requirements on boards and designated committees as well as exceptions or additions to which of its committees are considered designated committees. The Athlete Representation Review Working Group evaluates and approves or denies all requests made under Section 8.5.

¹⁴ See §220521(a) of the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act.

¹⁵ NGB Certification Policy, Section 1.

¹⁶ The CRG uses a four-year lookback period during this review process.