



# **USA Weightlifting 2023-2024 Stipend System**

**Effective April 1, 2023**

**Updated: March 29, 2023**

**Purpose:**

The purpose of the USA Weightlifting Stipend System is to provide funding to athletes for the specific purpose of supporting their training and international competition expenses as an elite athlete. This supports USA Weightlifting's goal to support the training of international level athletes who are likely to represent USA Weightlifting in the Olympic Games.

**Philosophy on USA Weightlifting's Stipend System:**

USA Weightlifting primarily targets its stipend system at those athletes most likely to participate at the 2024 Olympic Games, those athletes most likely to win international medals at major IWF sanctioned international events, and those most likely to participate at key IWF and PAWF Paris 2024 qualifying events.

**Right to Review and Adjust**

To ensure USA Weightlifting operates responsibly within its annual operational budget, expenses associated with this system will be evaluated on a rolling quarterly basis. USA Weightlifting reserves the right to adjust this document (including qualification criteria, and stipend and expense amounts) with immediate effect; provided, however, that USA Weightlifting will provide no less than 90 days' notice of any adjustment to athletes enrolled in the stipend system at the time such adjustments are made.

### **Minimum Qualifications**

To qualify for funding, you must meet the following minimum requirements:

- **Must be a citizen of the United States of America**  
Athletes must be citizens of the United States to be eligible to compete for Team USA and receive a stipend. If dual citizenship is held, your sport nationality must be registered as the United States with the IWF/PAWF.
- **You must have been in the USA Weightlifting Registered Testing Pool (RTP) for six months**  
All athletes who intend to compete internationally or receive a stipend must be in the USA Weightlifting RTP a minimum of six months prior to competition or receiving a stipend (RTP details can be found in Appendix A).
- **Athletes must be a current member of USA Weightlifting and in good standing to receive a stipend.**
- **Athletes must agree to the USA Weightlifting Stipend Agreement and all mandatory requirements listed in the document.**

USA Weightlifting's High Performance team will develop an environment/culture designed to support athlete performance in cooperation with the athlete and their personal coach. This cooperation will include regular communication, personal visits, assistance with questions/concerns and providing performance enhancement assistance via specialists, equipment, and camps.

Stipend athletes and their personal coaches are expected to comply with all requirements in this and related (e.g., USA Weightlifting Stipend Agreement) documents, including (but not limited to) regular communication with the USA Weightlifting High Performance team.

## **Direct Athlete Support Stipend and Athlete Support Funding**

### **Payment Periods**

Monthly Stipend payments will be paid on the first business day of each month except for January, at which time the stipend payment will be paid on the second business day of the month.

### **Qualifying Periods**

Qualification to the stipend system will be evaluated on a quarterly basis. An athlete must have achieved a stipend qualifying international total, within the following periods listed below. If a qualifying competition begins within one period but ends in another, the athlete's total will count for the stipend period in which the event began.

**Payment period start April 1, 2023** – Qualifying total achieved April 1, 2022 - March 31, 2023

**Payment period start July 1, 2023** – Qualifying total achieved July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023

**Payment period start October 1, 2023** – Qualifying total achieved October 1, 2022 - September 30, 2023

2024 payment periods will be posted on October 1, 2023.

If an athlete is no longer eligible for a stipend, USA Weightlifting will use reasonable efforts to provide the athlete with 60 days' notice of removal. For example, if an athlete does not post a qualifying total during the period of July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023 that would qualify them for a stipend they will be informed on July 1, 2023 that they no longer qualify for a stipend and will be removed from the stipend program on August 30. Provided, however, that USA Weightlifting may remove an athlete from the stipend system with immediate effect should the athlete be sanctioned by the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency, the International Testing Agency, or any other applicable anti-doping organization for an anti-doping rule violation (in which case the term of removal from the stipend system will coincide with the term of the anti-doping sanction), or should the athlete willfully violate (as determined by USA Weightlifting) the terms of this document or the USA Weightlifting Stipend Agreement.

### **Definition of Direct Athlete Support Stipend Payments**

The direct athlete support stipend payments are intended to offset expenses related to training, competition preparation and the maintenance of a performance environment commensurate with an elite athlete. The system is designed to support those most likely to go compete in the 2024 Olympic Games.

### **Definition of Athlete Support Funding**

Athlete support funding is designed to reimburse reasonable expenses associated with performance enhancement projects/recovery services and tools for the athlete. For example, massage, sport psychology, sport medicine or other items agreed upon in advance with the USA Weightlifting High Performance team (not all items submitted will be eligible for support funding coverage).

### **International Competition Requirement**

To qualify for the stipend system, an athlete must achieve a qualifying total at an IWF sanctioned event within the given time frame. Qualifying totals will be established according to the IWF OQR, or in the case of developmental athletes, explicitly stated USA Weightlifting sanctioned national events.

### **Injury Clause**

Definition/reporting of injury: For the purposes of this document, an “injury” is any condition (physical or mental) which affects an athlete’s ability to train at a level appropriate for elite international performance. Any physical injury that reportedly limits the ability to train must be reported to the High Performance staff with supporting documentation from a certified medical professional. Any mental health condition that reportedly limits the ability to train must be reported to USA Weightlifting’s designated Sport Psychologist with , supporting documentation from a certified mental health professional.

If an athlete is injured while receiving a stipend, they may continue to earn the stipend under the following circumstances:

- The athlete and personal coach immediately report the injury to the High Performance team, especially in cases where it would affect ability to post readiness videos or alter posted program; and
- The athlete and coach cooperate with the High Performance team in recovery and therapy plans; and,
- If an athlete wishes to request an extension of their stipend during recovery from injury, they must submit a request to the High Performance team, who will consult the USA Weightlifting Medical Committee in determining whether or not to issue such an extension.

### **Pregnancy Clause**

An athlete who meets the USA Weightlifting Stipend System criteria as of the date of notification to USA Weightlifting of her pregnancy will continue to receive the same amount of qualified stipend payment 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 the USA Weightlifting Stipend System at any point during pregnancy or within the year after the end of her pregnancy, USA Weightlifting 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 the USA Weightlifting Stipend System. USA Weightlifting is required to keep this status confidential and will not discriminate or retaliate against the athlete for being pregnant.

**Maximum Number of Athletes**

A maximum of two athletes per bodyweight category will be funded at any one time in the highest levels of funding, except for athletes who currently rank in the top 10 in their Olympic body weight class according to the Olympic Qualification Ranking (OQR), in this case, up to three may be funded. Youth and junior categories are grouped separately according to the Development Level Funding explanation and are limited to three athletes per category, when they do not qualify for Paris A or Paris B level stipend.

### **Payment of Personal Coaches**

If a Paris A or Paris B stipend level athlete wishes to pay their personal coach 1 of record (who is listed as their Coach 1 of record in their USA Weightlifting membership profile and has been the Coach 1 of record for at least 12 months) they can do so from their support funding. The monthly coach payment cannot exceed \$150 per month. Coach payments will be deducted from the athlete's support funding and is contingent to coaches meeting the requirements below:

- The coach must be a current member of USA Weightlifting and in good standing to receive payment. The coach must also have a current background screen, SafeSport certification, USADA Coach Advantage certification and current USA Weightlifting Coach certification of any level.
- Coaches are required to meet with the Senior Director of Sport Performance (and other High Performance team members as needed) monthly to discuss overall training plan and goals.

### **Personal Coach Competition/Camp Funding**

Paris A level personal coaches will be funded to any camp where their athlete is invited. Paris B level personal coaches will be funded only to mandatory camps. All personal coaches of Paris A/B level athletes will be funded to any Olympic Qualification event where their athlete competes.

## **Paris A**

<b>Monthly Stipend Payment</b>	\$3,500 per month
<b>Competition Funding (Excluding FISU)</b>	Unlimited
<b>Athlete Support Funding</b>	\$10,000 per year

### **Definition**

Paris A is designed to specifically support athletes who are most likely to be selected and/or medal at the 2024 Olympic Games and/or medal at the 2023 IWF World Championships (Snr) in an Olympic bodyweight category.

### **Qualification Criteria**

Athletes can achieve Paris A stipend through any one or more of the following criteria:

- A total medal at the IWF World Championships (Snr) in an Olympic bodyweight category.
- Be the number one ranked U.S. athlete in the 2024 OQR and in the top ten of an Olympic bodyweight category in the OQR, considering one per nation.
- Achieve a qualifying total that would rank in the top ten of the 2024 OQR in an Olympic bodyweight category but does not appear in the top ten due to the one per nation clause.
- Achieve a total which is the highest in an Olympic bodyweight category in the Pan American region but does not place the athlete in the top 10 of the OQR.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *Athletes receiving this level of funding must continue to be eligible to represent the U.S. in the upcoming Olympic Games, including any IWF, USADA, USOPC or USA Weightlifting requirements to continue eligibility. USA Weightlifting cannot be held responsible for any move of an international event on which an individual may have been relying on for selection, qualification, or funding.*



## **Paris B**

<b>Monthly Stipend Payment</b>	\$1,750 per month
<b>Competition Funding</b>	Olympic Qualification Events Only
<b>Athlete Support Funding</b>	\$5,000 per year

### **Definition**

Paris B is designed to specifically support athletes who are most likely to qualify for the Olympic Games and the qualifying events leading up to them.

### **Qualification Criteria**

Athletes can achieve Paris B stipend through any one or more of the following criteria:

- Achieve a total which is the highest by an American in an Olympic bodyweight category but does not place in the top ten of the 2024 OQR and is no lower than fifteenth place on the 2024 OQR.
- Achieve a total which is the second highest by an American in an Olympic bodyweight category and is also no lower than fifteenth place on the 2024 OQR only when there is no other American in the top ten.
- Achieve a total which is the second highest by an American in an Olympic bodyweight category where there is already another American in the top ten of the OQR but is no lower than 95% of the first American's total.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *Athletes receiving this level of funding must continue to be eligible to represent the U.S. in the upcoming Olympic Games, including any IWF, USADA, USOPC or USA Weightlifting requirements to continue eligibility. USA Weightlifting cannot be held responsible for any move of an international event on which an individual may have been relying on for selection, qualification, or funding.*

## **Developmental**

### **Definition**

Developmental funding is designed to specifically support youth, junior and 23U athletes transitioning out of the junior level. This level of funding is designed specifically to support athletes with prospects of competing at future Olympic Games and the IWF World Championships (Snr) for Team USA, especially those events following Paris 2024. Any athlete that qualifies for Paris A or Paris B is ineligible for this program. Qualification must take place at an IWF sanctioned international or USAW National Championships (University/23 & Under/25 & Under/Youth/Junior/Senior).

### **Qualification Criteria**

#### ***Youth (limit 3 per bodyweight category)***

- IWF Youth World Champion
- Actual top two finish (total) at IWF Youth World Championships.
- Achieve 90% of average total from the top eight IWF senior rankings (using rankings as of December 31 of the previous year) in the IWF bodyweight category in which the qualifying athlete competed (table below).

#### ***Junior (limit 3 per bodyweight category)***

- IWF Junior World Champion
- Finish top three finish (total) at the IWF Junior World Championships
- Achieve 90% of average total from the top eight IWF senior rankings (using rankings as of December 31 of the previous year) in the IWF bodyweight category in which the qualifying athlete competed (table below).

#### ***23 & Under (limit 3 per bodyweight category)***

- This age group enables athletes to earn Developmental support status beginning with the years in which they turn 21, 22 and/or 23.
- Achieve 90% of average total from the top eight IWF senior rankings (using rankings as of December 31 of the previous year) in the IWF bodyweight category in which the qualifying athlete competed (table below).
- 23U Developmental athletes will be reevaluated annually from the date they first qualify for support and, in order to re-qualify, must have posted a total at an eligible competition that is at least 3% higher than the total which last qualified them for this level of funding one year prior. If they successfully re-qualify, the athlete's highest total in that year will be used as the new benchmark for showing 3% improvement in the following year.
- If an athlete moves up a bodyweight category while in this support level, they must show the ability to do 90% of top eight for the new category by the end of the qualifying period.

### **Benefits for all developmental categories:**

- \$2,000 per year in Athlete Support Funding

- Access to all then-offered USA Weightlifting service providers: nutrition, biomechanics, performance psychology, medical, etc.
- Priority first round invites to USA Weightlifting developmental camps with 100% USA Weightlifting funding to these camps. This applies to the athlete's personal Coach 1 of record as well.
- Competition funding for two IWF sanctioned competitions per year for the athlete and their personal coach (youth and junior levels only).
- Competition funding for one specially selected IWF sanctioned competition per year for athletes and their personal coach (U23 level only).
- One set of USA Weightlifting supplied gear (separate from normal competition outfitting).

### **U23/Developmental Level 90% standards**

**NOTE:** Numbers rounded to the nearest kilogram, where the number for the higher bodyweight category does not exceed the lower category, 1kg is added.

Women Totals		Men Totals	
45	154	55	235
49	177	61	267
55	188	67	287
59	204	73	308
64	206	81	324
71	223	89	344
76	224	96	345
81	235	102	351
87	236	109	356
+87	258	+109	406