

**U.S. SPEEDSKATING
SHORT TRACK SPEEDSKATING
2026 WINTER OLYMPIC GAMES
START POSITIONS**

This document outlines the approval and allocation of individual distance start positions for US Short Track Speedskating at the 2026 Winter Olympic Games. The Olympic Selection Procedures and the ISU Qualification system which identify how one is nominated to the team can be found on the US Speedskating Website: [Short Track Rules and Regulations \(teamusa.org\)](https://teamusa.org/ShortTrackRulesandRegulations)

1. IDENTIFICATION OF START POSITIONS

Allocation of start positions for the individual distances at the 2026 Winter Olympic Games are allocated from among the athletes nominated to the Olympic Team.

For each distance, if US Speedskating has:

- i. One (1) start position: the start position will be allocated to the highest ranked skater in the 2025-2026 ISU World Tour Individual Distance Classification.
- ii. Two (2) start positions: the two (2) start positions will be allocated to the two (2) highest ranked skaters in the 2025-2026 ISU World Tour Individual Distance Classification.
- iii. Three (3) start positions:
 - a. the first two (2) start positions will be allocated to the two (2) highest ranked skaters in the 2025-2026 ISU World Tour Individual Distance Classification.
 - b. The third start position will be allocated in consultation with the Olympic Short Track Selection Task Force (OSTSTF). The following criteria, in no particular order, will be taken into consideration:
 - 2025-2026 World Tour Individual Distance Classification
 - Current World Ranking per distance
 - Performance at the 2025 World Championships
 - Performance at the 2026 U.S. Championships

2. APPROVAL COMMITTEE

The OSTSTF will act as the Approval Committee and be responsible for approving the start positions earned.

The OSTSTF is comprised of the following members:

- (1) USS Executive Director
- (1) USS Short Track Program Director
- (1) USS Chief of Sport
- (1) Athlete Representative for USS
- (1) Athlete Representative on the ST Task Force

The OSTSTF will review the complete Olympic Team roster upon nomination. They will evaluate the quota earned in each distance at the 2026 Winter Olympic Games and identify who may be considered for any start positions through the International Performance Selection Criteria procedure and rank skaters for each individual distance so it's clear who the alternate is for each distance.

Should the USS Executive Director, the Program Director or Chief of Sport position(s) be vacant at the time of assembly of the OSTSTF, the vacant position may be filled by the most senior ranking organizational person without a conflict of interest. If the Athlete representative is unable or unavailable to serve, his or her open seat on the committee will be filled by the AAC Alternate, a USS BOD Athlete representative or another USS Task force Athlete representative.

The procedure that will be used to identify and handle any potential conflicts of interest involving a member of the committee will be:

- A. Any member of the OSTSTF that has a possible conflict of interest must either recuse him/herself or disclose it to USS's Ethics Committee prior to the start of the selection procedure. A conflict of interest exists when the committee member has a direct or indirect relationship, connection, or affiliation, past or present, with an athlete in contention for the applicable team selection that could compromise the task force member's ability to participate in the selection procedure in an unbiased manner. If a conflict exists, USS's Ethics Committee shall vet the conflict and make the final determination of whether that committee member must recuse him/herself from participating in discussions and/or voting. The Ethics Committee may determine that a task force member who has relevant and necessary information with respect to athlete performance, for example a national team coach or Chief of Sport, may, if requested by the selection task force, provide such information to the OSTSTF so long as such information is provided in a fair and unbiased manner and the committee member with the conflict of interest does not vote toward the final decision. The task force member should not otherwise influence other members of the OSTSTF in the selection procedure.
- B. Additionally, any person (including any potentially impacted athlete or coach of a potentially impacted athlete) with a good faith belief that a OSTSTF member has a conflict of interest may report the alleged conflict of interest to USS's Ethics Committee. Reports may be made anonymously.
- C. A recused individual shall be replaced in accordance with the USS selection committee appointment procedure.

3. DATE OF ASSIGNING START POSITIONS

The assignment of start positions, and substitutes will be determined and announced to the Olympic Team Athletes no later than December 19, 2025.

4. TEAM RELAY DECISIONS

As written in the Short Track Speed Skating Athlete Selection Procedures – 2026 Olympic Winter Games:

A. Gender Specific Relay

The U.S Olympic Team may have only four (4) skaters by gender nominated to the Olympic Team, in which case all skaters will participate in the 3000m or 5000m relay event. In the event that the U.S Olympic Team has qualified in the 3000m or the 5000m relay event(s) and has five (5) skaters in that gender named to the Olympic Team, the Short Track Olympic Team Leader and the Short Track Olympic Team Coaches will meet at the Olympic Games and make an on-site assessment of each athlete's performance and potential for medal success to determine which four (4) skaters will compete in each round of competition. All U.S. Olympic Team members will be considered for the Team Relay event. In addition, a different combination of skaters may be selected to skate each Team Relay in each round of competition and may be determined the day of the race.

B. Mixed Team Relay

If the U.S Team qualifies for the mixed team relay event, the Short Track Olympic Team Leader and the Short Track Olympic Team Coaches will meet at the Olympic Games and make an on-site assessment of each athlete's performance and potential for medal success to determine which two (2) skaters per gender will compete in each round of competition. A different combination of skaters may be selected to skate each round of competition and may be determined the day of the race. As per ISU rule 295, a maximum of three (3) women and three (3) men may be entered as members of the mixed team relay and can participate in the various rounds. All skaters nominated to the U.S. Olympic Team will be considered for the mixed team relay event. Three (3) women and three (3) men will be identified by December 19, 2025, as the preliminary Olympic Mixed Team relay members.

The Short Track Olympic Team Leader and the Short Track Olympic Team Coaches will consider several factors — listed in no particular order — when selecting relay participants for each round of racing. These factors include international relay experience, team composition, team chemistry and cohesion, top speed capabilities, speed endurance, relay exchange abilities, and competition scheduling.