# USA Artistic Swimming
# Senior National Team Program Criteria
# 2025 – 2028

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## I. Program Guiding Principles & Overview

The USA Artistic Swimming (USAAS) High Performance Department is responsible for supporting athletes who have the combination of overall body strength and agility, grace and beauty, split-second timing, musical interpretation, stamina and dramatic flair and who are capable of winning Olympic Games medals. The USAAS High Performance Department is also tasked with identifying, supporting & developing future Olympic athletes.

To help achieve this objective, USAAS has developed and supports a Senior National Team Program. The USAAS Senior National Training Program (the "Program") and any financial support associated is designed specifically to assist athletes in their pathway to achieving podium performances at the Olympic Games.

## II. Athlete Eligibility Criteria

1. Senior National Team athletes must meet the following minimum criteria to be eligible for the Program:
   - Athlete must be a member in good standing of USAAS.
     - USAAS defines good standing as – a registered member of the organization that has no outstanding payments, is not suspended and has completed all membership requirements (i.e. SafeSport training).
   - Athlete must meet the requirements of the Senior National Team Agreement found at https://www.usaartisticswim.org/trials-openings-and-judges.
   - Any athlete age 18 or older must undergo a background screen in accordance with the current USAAS Background Check Policy.
   - Any athlete age 18 or older must remain current with the U.S. Center for SafeSport's education and training requirements in accordance with the USAAS Athlete Safety Policy (App Q).

2. In addition to the eligibility criteria specific to each competition (as outlined in the standalone athlete selection procedures), to compete in events as a member of the Senior National Team, athletes must also meet the following minimum criteria:
   - Athletes must be fifteen (15) years of age or older (on or prior to December 31st in the year of the competition) in accordance with World Aquatics (AQUA) Artistic Swimming Rules (https://www.worldaquatics.com/artistic-swimming/rules).
     - With the exception that to be eligible for Phase 7, Phase 8 and phases beyond, athletes must turn fourteen (14) years old or older on or before December 31, 2028. Please note that this change is being made due to a rule change announced by World Aquatics in December of 2025.
   - Only athletes who are eligible to participate at the official AQUA competitions, in accordance with the AQUA Rules, are entitled to participate in World Championship events, the Pan American Games and the Olympic Games.

## III. Anticipated Team Size

The maximum number of athletes allowable for entry for each competition is dependent upon the qualification system for each particular competition, as well as which events (e.g., Team, Duet) the U.S. qualifies to participate. Typically, the maximum number of athletes for the Pan American Games is nine (9) and the Olympic Games is eight (8) athletes plus one (1) alternate, while AQUA World Championships may be as many as twelve (12) athletes (not including Mixed Duet; for Mixed Duet procedures, see Appendix E of the USAAS Rulebook found at https://www.usaartisticswim.org/rule-book). Typically, the Duet consists of two (2) athletes plus one (1) alternate athlete and all three (3) athletes count toward the maximum Team size.

Each of the sixteen (16) phases outlined below falls into one of the following two categories:

1.) Team or Duet; and
2.) Selection or Nomination

## IV. Athlete Selection

"Selection" is determined through a trial format that is evaluated by a designated panel of "Evaluators" for each Selection Phase. Each Selection Phase is conducted over one (1) or two (2) days and may contain physical and technical skill testing, interview/observation, Technical and/or Free routine evaluations. The "Tryout Content" is provided below in Section V and further defined in the Selection Nomination Criteria found at https://www.usaartisticswim.org/trials-openings-and-judges.

For the Selection Phases (Phases 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 14), athletes are evaluated on specific tryout content by the following panel of Evaluators:

- Two (2) Senior National Team coaches (which includes the Senior Head Coach and a Senior Assistant Coach designated by the Chief of Sport)
- The Chief of Sport (or designee)
- Two (2) additional panelists consisting of PAQ, AQUA Judge(s) and/or AQUA Evaluator(s)

Scores for each criterion included in the tryout content are recorded by each Evaluator which are then submitted and tallied by the Chief of Sport, the Vice President Olympic International (or designee) and a 10 Year athlete representative (as designated by the USAAS Athlete Executive Council). The Vice President Olympic International (or designee) and athlete representative will be present at the event to ensure compliance but will not serve as evaluators.

Athletes are then ranked based on their tallied scores to determine the order of athletes for selection to the training squad*. Rankings will be communicated within 7 days of the Selection Event via email to the participating athletes of each Selection Phase after the Chief of Sport, Vice President Olympic International (or designee) and Team USA AC Representative (or 10 Year athlete representative designee) provide final approval of selections to the training squad.

*The Duet Squad is selected using the same selection process. Athletes selected to compete for a spot on the duet squad must also be selected to the team squad.

## V. Tryout Content for Selection Phases

Tryout content for each Selection Phase is described below.

### A) Selection Phases 1, 5, 7, 8

- Technical and Physical Skill Testing as determined by the Chief of Sport (or designee) and the Senior Head Coach. This may include speed swimming, ballet, artistic swimming-specific land training, flexibility, gymnastics, acrobatics, strength & conditioning, and artistic and technical skills.

- Interview/Observation as determined by the Chief of Sport (or designee) and the Senior Head Coach. This will include an individual interview to the trial and observation of the athlete during the tryout event.

- Technical routine evaluation as determined by the Chief of Sport (or designee) and the Senior Head Coach. This may include any parts or run-throughs of the routines individually, in pairs or in groups, in pattern or not. Athletes must learn the routine prior to the start of the tryout event.

  Throughout the tryout event, the Evaluators (see Section IV) will evaluate the athletes according to AQUA rules and the Selection Nomination Criteria . Any changes to the Selection Nomination Criteria will be made at least 45 days prior to the start of the Selection Event.

**B) Selection Phases 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 14**

- Technical and Physical Skill Testing as determined by the Chief of Sport (or designee) and the Senior Head Coach. This may include speed swimming, ballet, artistic swimming-specific land training, flexibility, gymnastics, acrobatics, strength & conditioning, and artistic and technical skills.

- Technical routine evaluation as determined by the Chief of Sport (or designee) and the Senior Head Coach. This may include any parts or run-throughs of the routines individually, in pairs or in groups, in pattern or not. Athletes must learn the routine prior to the start of the tryout event.

  Observation as determined by the Chief of Sport (or designee) and the Senior Head Coach. This will include evaluating each athlete's performance, assessing their compatibility in skill level and style, determining the chemistry between partners, and observing the athletes during the tryout event to ensure effective and cohesive partnerships.

  Throughout the evaluation period, the Evaluators (see Section IV) will evaluate the athletes according to AQUA rules and the Selection Nomination Criteria .

## VI. Athlete Nomination

"Nomination" consists of an assessment of each athlete's performance over the previous months as part of the training squad. The assessment is further defined in the Selection Nomination Criteria found at https://www.usaartisticswim.org/trials-openings-and-judges and will include review of the evaluation content, discussions and finalization of nominees. The evaluation content for Nomination Phases (3, 4, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15 and 16) will be provided within the standalone athlete selection procedures for each competition (e.g., Athlete Selection Procedures for the 2025 World Championships).

## VII. Anticipated phases of events and nomination dates leading to the 2028 Olympic Games

| PHASE | EVENT/DESCRIPTION | DATE(S) | LOCATION |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Senior National Training Squad SELECTION 1 | April 14-15, 2024 | Houston, TX |
| 2 | 2025 Senior National Duet Training Squad SELECTION | January 2025 | Los Angeles, CA |
| 3 | 2025 World Championship Duet Nomination | 2025 - approximately one month prior to competition date | Los Angeles, CA |
| 4 | 2025 World Championship Team Nomination | 2025 - approximately one month prior to competition date | Los Angeles, CA |

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|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | Senior National Training Squad SELECTION 2 | Mid-April 2025, in conjunction with the National Championship | Greensboro, NC |
| 6 | 2026 Senior National Duet Training Squad SELECTION | December 2025 | Los Angeles, CA |
| 7 | Senior National Training Squad SELECTION 3 | Mid-April 2026, in conjunction with the National Championship | TBD |
| 8 | 2026-2028 Senior National Team Final Squad SELECTION | Mid-May, 2026 | Los Angeles, CA |
| 9 | 2027 Senior National Duet Training Squad SELECTION | Late December 2026 | Los Angeles, CA |
| 10 | 2027 World Championship Duet Nomination | 2027 - approximately one month prior to competition date | Los Angeles, CA |
| 11 | 2027 World Championship Team Nomination | 2027 - approximately one month prior to competition date | Los Angeles, CA |
| 12 | 2027 Pan American Games Duet Nomination | 2027 - approximately one month prior to competition date | Los Angeles, CA |
| 13 | 2027 Pan American Games Team Nomination | 2027 - approximately one month prior to competition date | Los Angeles, CA |
| 14 | 2028 Senior National Duet Training Squad SELECTION | Late December 2027 | Los Angeles, CA |
| 15 | 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games Duet Nomination | 2028 - approximately one month prior to competition date | Los Angeles, CA |
| 16 | 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games Team Nomination | 2028 - approximately one month prior to competition date | Los Angeles, CA |

The notice and details for these phases can be found at https://www.usaartisticswim.org/trials-openings-and-judges) under the header 'Senior Squad.'

For Phases 2-16, the exact dates and locations will be announced on the website (https://www.usaartisticswim.org/trials-openings-and-judges) at least 45 days prior to commencement of the event and will not, in and of itself, necessitate an amendment to these selection procedures.

**A) Phase 1 - Senior National Training Squad SELECTION 1 - (April 2024)**

Objective: Event will increase the Senior National Training Squad to a maximum of 20 athletes (Exact number to be determined by the Chief of Sport or designee; including remote athletes – see Section XII).

Eligibility: All members in good standing who will be 15 years of age or older by December 31, 2028, are eligible to participate in Phase 1.

Tryout Content: See Section V(A)

Selection: Following the process outlined in Section IV, up to twenty (20) athletes will be selected to the 2025-2026 Senior National Training Squad. 2024 Senior National Team athletes are pre-selected onto the 2025-2027 Senior National Training Squad. They will not be required to compete in Phases 1, 5 or 7 if their Senior National Team Agreement is signed for the 2024 season by stated deadline.

Selected athletes will be required to report to the National Training Center (NTC) for full-time training by September 1, 2024. Another option for selected athletes is to defer full-time training at the NTC to a later date if

they choose to participate in a collegiate artistic swimming program. However, depending on length of deferment, these athletes may forego eligibility to Phase 2 (Duet) and possibly other phases as described below.

All athletes advancing from Phase 1 will be required to attend a one-week evaluation/training camp in May 2026 (see details in Section XII below). Athletes selected in Phase 1 continue through to Phase 8 and are eligible for Phases 2, 6 and 9. Selected athletes will not need to compete in Phases 5 and 7.

To ensure that the training squad has a minimum of 1 male and not more than 2 males, the Chief of Sport (or Designee) may select the top male athlete(s) ranked registered Trials in order to replace the last ranked athlete(s) with up to 2 males, if necessary, to finalize the selection.

**B) Phase 2 - 2025 Senior National Duet Training Squad SELECTION – (January 2025)**

Objective: Event will increase the size of the duet squad (Exact number to be determined by the Chief of Sport or designee).

Eligibility: Open only to Senior National Training Squad athletes who have signed full-time training agreements to train at the National Training Center and advanced from Phase 1. The 2024 Senior National Duet and alternate(s) are pre-selected onto the 2025 Duet Squad. They will not be required to compete in Phase 2 if their Senior National Team Agreement is signed for the 2025 season by stated deadline.

Tryout Content: See Section V(B)

Selection: Following the process outlined in Section IV, athletes (not including petitioners; see Section VIII) will be selected to the 2024 Senior Duet Squad in addition to the 2024 Senior National Duet and alternate(s) (who are pre-selected). Athletes selected in Phase 2 continue through to Phase 3.

**C) Phase 3 - 2025 World Championship Duet Nomination – (approximately one month prior to competition)**

A minimum of two (2) athletes and a maximum of four (4) athletes will be nominated as the World Championship Duet. Once completed, athlete selection procedures will be posted on the USAAS website.

**D) Phase 4 - 2025 World Championship Team Nomination – (approximately one month prior to competition)**

Twelve (12) athletes (not including Mixed Duet athletes) will be nominated for the Team event at the 2025 World Championship. Once completed, athlete selection procedures will be posted on the USAAS website.

**E) Phase 5 - Senior National Training Squad SELECTION 2 - (April 2025)**

Objective: Phase 5 will increase the squad to a maximum of 25 athletes (Exact number to be determined by the Chief of Sport or designee; including remote athletes – see Section XII).

Eligibility: All members in good standing who will be 15 years of age or older by December 31, 2028, are eligible to participate in Phase 5.

Tryout Content: See Section V(A)

Selection: Following the process outlined in Section IV, up to twenty-five (25) athletes total (not including petitioners; see Section VIII) will be selected to the 2025-2026 Senior National Training Squad. The 2024 Senior National Team athletes are pre-selected onto the 2025-2026 Senior National Training Squad and will not be

required to compete in Phase 5 or 7 if their Senior National Team Agreement is signed for the 2025 season by stated deadline.

Athletes selected in Phase 5 continue through to Phase 8 and are eligible for Phase 4 & 6. Selected athletes will not need to compete in Phase 7 and can enter full-time training immediately following or report to full-time training in September 2025 or defer to a later date if they choose to participate in a collegiate artistic swimming program. All athletes selected from Phase 5 will be required to attend a one-week evaluation/training camp to be held in May 2026 (see Section XII).

To ensure that the training squad has a minimum of 1 male and not more than 2 males, the Chief of Sport (or Designee) may select the top male athlete(s) ranked registered Trials in order to replace the last ranked athlete(s) with up to 2 males, if necessary, to finalize the selection.

**F) Phase 6 - 2026 Senior National Duet Training Squad SELECTION - (Nov. 2025)**

Objective: Event may increase the duet squad (Exact number to be determined by the Chief of Sport or designee).

Eligibility: Open only to Senior National Training Squad members training full-time selected in Phase 1, 4 and/or 5.

Tryout Content: See Section V(B)

Selection: Following the process outlined in Section IV, athletes (not including petitioners; see Section VIII) will be selected as the 2026 Senior Duet squad. The 2025 Senior National Duet and alternate(s) are pre-selected onto the 2026 Duet squad. They will not be required to compete in Phase 6 if their Senior National Team Agreement is signed for the 2026 season by stated deadline.

Athletes selected in Phase 6 continue through to Phase 8.

**G) Phase 7 – Senior National Training Squad SELECTION 3 – (April 2026)**

Objective: Event will increase the squad to a maximum of thirty (30) athletes (Exact number to be determined by the Chief of Sport or designee; including remote athletes – see Section XII).

Eligibility: All members in good standing who will be 14 years of age or older by December 31, 2028, are eligible to participate in Phase 7.

Tryout Content: See Section V(A)

Selection: Following the process outlined in Section IV, up to thirty (30) athletes total (not including petitioners; see Section VIII) will be selected to the 2026 Senior National Training Squad. The 2025 Senior National Team athletes are pre-selected onto the 2025-2026 Senior National Training Squad and will not be required to compete in Phase 7 if their Senior National Team Agreement is signed for the 2026 season by stated deadline.

Athletes selected in Phase 7 continue through to Phase 8. All athletes selected from Phase 7 will be required to attend a one-week evaluation/training camp to be held in May 2026 (see Section XII).

To ensure that the training squad has a minimum of 1 male and not more than 2 males, the Chief of Sport (or Designee) may select the top male athlete(s) ranked registered Trials in order to replace the last ranked athlete(s) with up to 2 males, if necessary, to finalize the selection.

**H) Phase 8 – 2026-2028 Senior National Team Final Squad SELECTION – (May 2026)**

Objective: Event will select the top 12 to 16 athletes (Exact number to be determined by the Chief of Sport or designee) from the Squad of as many as 30.

Eligibility: Open only to Senior National Training Squad members who advanced from Phases 1, 5 and/or 7.

Tryout Content: See Section V(B)

Selection: Following the process outlined in Section IV, as few as twelve (12) and no more than sixteen (16) athletes will be selected (not including petitioners; see Section VIII) to the 2026-2028 Senior National Team. Exact number to be decided by the Chief of Sport (or designee).
Athletes selected from Phase 8 are required to enter full-time training immediately following and are eligible for Phases 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 , 15 and 16.

**I) Phase 9 – 2027 Senior National Duet Training Squad SELECTION – (Nov. 2026)**

Objective: Event may increase the duet squad (Exact number to be determined by the Chief of Sport or designee).

Eligibility: Open only to Senior National Training Squad members training full-time and remote athletes selected in Phase 8.

Tryout Content: See Section V(B)

Selection: Following the process outlined in Section IV, athletes (not including petitioners; see Section VIII) will be selected as the 2027 Senior Duet squad.

**J) Phase 10 - 2027 World Championship Duet Nomination – (approximately one month prior to competition)**

A minimum of two (2) athletes and a maximum of four (4) athletes will be nominated as the World Championship Duet. Once completed, athlete selection procedures will be posted on the USAAS website.

**K) Phase 11 - 2027 World Championship Team Nomination – (approximately one month prior to competition)**

Twelve (12) athletes (not including Mixed Duet athletes) will be nominated for the Team event at the 2027 World Championship. Once completed, athlete selection procedures will be posted on the USAAS website.

**L) Phase 12 – 2027 Pan American Games Duet Nomination - (approximately one month prior to competition)**

Two (2) athletes and one (1) alternate athlete will be nominated for the Duet event at the 2027 Pan American Games. Once completed, athlete selection procedures will be posted on the USAAS website.

**M) Phase 13 – 2027 Pan American Games Team Nomination - (approximately one month prior to competition)**

Nomination will select the maximum number of athletes allowable for entry for the 2027 Pan American Games. Once completed, athlete selection procedures will be posted on the USAAS website.

**N) Phase 14 – 2028 Senior National Duet Training Squad SELECTION – (Nov 2027)**

Objective: Event may increase the duet squad (Exact number to be determined by the Chief of Sport or designee).

Eligibility: Open only to Senior National Training Squad members training full-time at the National Training Center who advanced from Phase 8.

Tryout Content: See Section V(B)

Selection: Following the process outlined in Section IV, athletes (not including petitioners; see Section VIII) may be selected as the 2028 Senior Duet Squad and will maintain their eligibility through Phase 17. 2027 Senior National Team Nominated Duet and alternate(s) are pre-selected onto the 2028 Duet squad.

Athletes selected continue through to Phase 15.

**O) Phase 15 – 2028 Olympic Games Duet Nomination – (approximately one month prior to competition)**

Two (2) athletes and one (1) alternate athlete will be nominated for the Duet event at the 2028 Olympic Games. Once completed, athlete selection procedures will be posted on the USAAS website.

**P) Phase 16 – 2028 Olympic Games Team Nomination – (approximately one month prior to competition)**

Nomination will select the maximum number of athletes allowable for entry for the competition (8 athletes, 1 alternate athlete). Once completed, athlete selection procedures will be posted on the USAAS website.

## VIII. USAAS Petition Procedures

1. Notwithstanding the process identified in the preceding sections of this document, USAAS recognizes that extraordinary and unforeseen circumstances may occur which would cause an athlete to be unable to participate in one or more steps of the process because of illness, injury or other unforeseen circumstances.

2. In order to be considered by the National Team Review Subcommittee (see Section X), petitions must be submitted via email to the Chief of Sport as soon as practical after the athlete becomes aware of their inability to participate. Petitions are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and subject to approval by the National Team Review Subcommittee based on the circumstances surrounding the athlete's inability to participate or newly discovered eligibility based on rule changes. Details regarding the status of the petition will be provided in writing to the petitioner as soon as practical, but no more than seven (7) days after receipt of the petition.

3. Successful petitioners will be required to execute their trial as soon as possible after being medically cleared and/or ahead of the nearest event nomination deadline.

4. Petition Rights: Eligible Athletes may petition to USAAS for the right to:
   - Be evaluated at a later date for Selection Phases
   - Be assessed at a later date for Nomination Phases (for an athlete to petition a nomination phase, the athlete must have been selected in a phase that makes them eligible for that nomination phase).

All petitions must state the specific injury, illness or unusual circumstance, which prohibited the athlete from participating in the competitive process.

In the case of a petition based upon an injury or illness, the petition must be accompanied by a physician's statement, and the nature and extent of that injury or illness is subject to verification by a physician approved by USAAS.

5. Petition Procedures and Requirements
   Whether petitioning for a selection phase or a nomination phase, the approved petitioner is required to undergo the same process as outlined for the particular phase.

   i. An athlete who successfully petitions a selection phase and subsequently achieves a score during evaluation that is equal to or higher than any one athlete selected to the squad in the selection event will be added to the squad and/or duet thereby increasing that particular training squad by one. All previously selected athletes will remain on the squad.

   ii. An athlete who successfully petitions a nomination phase and subsequently achieves an evaluation that is higher than any one athlete will replace a member of the team or duet who was previously nominated. The lowest scoring athlete nominated at the nomination event will move to the alternate position and the alternate, if named, will no longer hold that position. In the event of a tie between the petitioner and the lowest scoring nominated athlete, the assessors will make the final recommendation and the 3-member approval panel will make the final determination in accordance with the athlete selection procedures for the specific competition.

## IX. Discretionary Selection

1. The sport of artistic swimming is a subjectively judged event. In the selection of athletes who will compete together as a team or duet, it may not always be possible to make decisions based solely on objective criteria. To be competitive in the team and duet events, certain skillsets must be exhibited by one or more team/duet members. In addition, it is crucial that the athletes demonstrate the ability to complement each other, to work cohesively and to make and retain corrections consistently.

2. The Selection Nomination Criteria , which is found at https://www.usaartisticswim.org/trials-openings-and-judges, is used throughout the selection and nomination processes as defined in Phases 1-16.

## X. Discretionary Selection Committee

1. For Selection Phases:
   The panel of Evaluators (see Section IV) submit their scores for each criterion included in the tryout content (see Section V) for final approval of selections by the 3-member panel listed below.

2. Three (3) member approval panel for Selection Phases:
   - One (1) 10-Year athlete representative as designated by the USAAS Athlete Executive Council
   - Vice President Olympic International (or designee)
   - Chief of Sport (or designee)

3. For Petitions (see Section VIII) and Waivers (see Section XII):
   The National Team Review Subcommittee will receive and determine the status of all petitions and waivers submitted through the process. This National Team Review Subcommittee consists of the following individuals:
   - National Team Review Subcommittee Chair
   - Vice President Olympic International
   - Chief of Sport Two (2) Athlete Representatives as designated by the Chief of Sport who are unaffiliated with any of the athletes in contention, who meet the requirements of Section 7.06 A of the USAAS Code, and shall be retired from competition.
     - One (1) Athlete Representative must be a 10-Year Athlete.
   - One (1) person, selected by the Vice President Olympic International, who exhibits knowledge of the sport, knowledge of the international scene in elite artistic swimming, and demonstrates a fair and unbiased disposition.

4. For Nomination Phases:
   Please reference the athlete selection procedures for the specific event. Once complete, procedures will be posted on the USAAS website.

5. Conflict of Interest
   All individuals involved in the selection process are required to sign and are subject to the USAAS Conflict of Interest Policy, Appendix U of the USAAS Rulebook.

## XI. Replacement of Athletes for Selection Phases

1. 2025-2026 Senior National Training Squad (Phases 1, 5 and 7) – If an athlete declines, resigns their position or is removed for any reason, the next highest ranked athlete who was not selected from the most recent Selection Phase may be invited to join the squad. The Chief of Sport (or designee) will have the final decision to fill the position or not.

   If at any time, there are fewer than twelve (12) athletes in full-time training due to any of the following reasons, long-term injury or sickness, deferral due to participation in a collegiate artistic swimming program or any other unforeseen circumstance, the Chief of Sport (or designee) will have the ability to invite the next highest ranked athlete from the most recent Selection Phase. Athletes may be invited in rank order until a squad of twelve (12) is present for full-time training. The addition of any athlete(s) to the National Team Training Squad through this replacement process will not change the total number of athletes selected at the completion of Phases 1, 5 or 7.

2. 2025, 2026, 2027 and 2028 Duet Training Squad (Phases 2, 6, 9 and 14) – If at any time a duet training squad is fewer than three (3) athletes in full-time training for any reason, the next highest ranked athlete who was not selected from the most recent duet Selection Phase may be invited to join the squad. The Chief of Sport (or designee) will make the final decision regarding whether to fill the position.

3. Athlete replacement procedures for the 2025 and 2027 World Championships, 2027 Pan American Games, and 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games will be included in the athlete selection procedures for the specific competition. Once complete, athlete selection procedures will be posted on the USAAS website.

## XII. Mandatory Training and Waivers

All athletes selected to the Senior National Training Squad must train full-time at the National Training Center or postpone full-time training to compete for a collegiate artistic swimming program.

- After Phase 1: selected athletes must either be training full-time at the National Training Center from September 1, 2024 until the completion of the event season or postpone for collegiate artistic swimming program.
- After Phase 5: selected athletes must either enter full-time training at the National Training Center immediately following the selection to the squad, be training full-time at the National Training Center from September 1, 2025 until the completion of the event season or postpone for collegiate artistic swimming program.
- After Phase 7: selected athletes must attend a one-week training camp to be held in May 2026.
- After Phase 8: named athletes must be training full-time at the National Training Center immediately following, until the completion of the 2028 event season.
- Remote athletes can transition to full-time training at any time. However, to transition the athlete must graduate from, leave or take an approved leave (i.e., redshirt) from their university).

Full-time training means that the athlete must:

- Live in the National Training Center area for the specified period of time.
- Sign the Senior National Team Agreement and Code of Conduct and the Senior National Team Athlete Handbook (www.teamusa.org/USA-Artistic-Swimming/Team-USA/National-Team-Trials).
- Train six (6) days per week at the National Training Center for the base training for approximately eight (8) hours daily.
- Compete for the USAAS National Team only.
- Additional hours may be required for Duet Squad members, based on daily performance level.

Remote training means that the athlete must:

- Be competing for a collegiate artistic swimming program.
- Attend annual training camps that do not conflict with the academic calendar.
- Maintain consistent communication with the National Team Coaching staff.

All requests for waivers from participation in mandatory events/training camps must be presented to the Chief of Sport (or designee) in writing prior to the event. Following receipt, the National Team Review Subcommittee (see Section X) will review the request and approve or deny. All waivers granted must be in writing and signed by the Chief of Sport (or designee) to be valid.

It is the athlete's sole and exclusive responsibility to provide the Chief of Sport (or designee) with written verification of any emergency, illness, or injury. Illness or injury may require verification by a physician approved by USAAS.

Athletes will be responsible for their living expenses and all expenses related to their academics. USAAS covers expenses related to training including facility rental, coaching, support staff, travel to competitions, outfitting, competition suits and will work to fund additional areas of need.

## XIII. Competitive Readiness

All Senior National Team athletes will be required to maintain competitive readiness. Competitive readiness as defined by USAAS includes:

1. Consistency based on the areas used in the selection criteria are demonstrated by the athlete at the international events and throughout training.
2. World Class presentation – the strength, endurance, technical execution, and artistic components commensurate with World and Olympic level presentation.
3. Physical capability to fulfill the training plan as directed by the National Team Coaches.
4. Demonstrated professional attitude and ability to positively contribute to the team dynamic.

It is the philosophy of USAAS to field the best team possible. A feedback evaluation session and coaching tool (see the Selection Nomination Criteria ) will be used to inform athletes on their progress and identify development areas. That tool will be used in overall evaluation. If it is believed that an athlete is not maintaining competitive readiness this will be shared with that athlete directly and allow coaches to inform athletes if they feel they are not meeting competitive readiness standards. If that athlete fails to make progress in the identified improvement areas over a period of time they can be removed from their position on the team. This measure will not be taken without proper and multiple discussions that include coaches, the Chief of Sport (or designee) and the required athlete representation as approved by the USAAS Athlete Executive Council.

## XIV. Athlete Anti-Doping Requirements

Athletes must adhere to all IOC, Panam Sports, WADA, AQUA, USADA, USAAS, and USOPC anti-doping protocols, policies and procedures, as applicable. This includes participation in Out-of-Competition Testing as required by the IOC, Panam Sports, WADA, AQUA, USADA, USAAS, and USOPC rules, as applicable.

## XV. USAAS Bylaws and Grievance Procedures

The USAAS Bylaws and Grievance Procedures can be found here (see Appendix I and Appendix K): https://www.usaartisticswim.org/rule-book

## XVI. Athlete Ombuds Office

The Team USA Athlete Ombuds serves as a safe, independent, confidential place for Team USA Athletes to seek advice about any sport-related rule, policy, or process; how to navigate raising or responding to concerns; or access legal and mental health resources.

Team USA Athletes may contact the Athlete Ombuds:

PHONE: (719) 866-5000
EMAIL: ombudsman@usathlete.org
WEBSITE: http://www.usathlete.org