

USA Boxing Professional Pathway Tournament FAQ

USA Boxing Member and Media Information



This FAQ is intended to answer common questions from USA Boxing members, families, coaches, officials, and media regarding the Professional Pathway Tournament. Final eligibility and selection decisions will be governed by USA Boxing's published selection procedures, USA Boxing rules, and any applicable United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee requirements.

At a Glance

Topic	Summary
Structure	Two separate pathways: the traditional USA Boxing athlete pathway and a separate Professional Pathway Tournament.
Competition separation	Professional Pathway boxers will compete only against other Professional Pathway boxers, not traditional USA Boxing athlete members.
Selection camp	The tournament winner in an Olympic weight category may advance to High Performance selection camp under the published procedures.
Compensation	USA Boxing will not pay professional boxers to compete in the tournament; any later HP stipend is governed by the same team policies and contracts.
Rules	Olympic-style boxing; administered under USA Boxing rules and procedures.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is this pathway permissible under the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC) and Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act framework?

USA Boxing is creating this pathway as part of its athlete-selection and high-performance structure. The pathway is intended to provide an additional opportunity for eligible athletes to pursue the ability to represent the United States while operating through USA Boxing selection procedures, USA Boxing rules, and applicable USOPC requirements. Full selection-procedure details are available at usaboxing.org under Rulebook, Forms and Documents, Athlete Selection Procedures.

Why is USA Boxing creating this pathway?

USA Boxing is creating this pathway to provide additional opportunity for the United States to compete for medals at the international level while following the general competition pathway procedures of World Boxing, the International Federation (IF) of Olympic-style boxing, and the International Olympic Committee (IOC). This approach supports USA



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Boxing's mission to promote and grow Olympic-style boxing in the United States, inspire the pursuit of Olympic gold, and consistently place American boxers at the highest level of the podium. Increasing the pool of eligible boxers strengthens Team USA's international medal pathway while maintaining a structured, rule-based process.

Will professional boxers be paid to compete in the Professional Pathway Tournament?

No. USA Boxing will not pay professional boxers to compete in Professional Pathway Tournaments. Traditional USA Boxing athlete members are not paid to participate in National Championships, and Professional Pathway boxers will not be compensated for tournament participation. If a boxer later earns Elite Team or Elite Team Squad status, that athlete must follow the same USA Boxing High Performance policies, procedures, contracts, competition requirements, and stipend rules that apply to traditional USA Boxing athletes selected to those teams.

What does this mean for current USA Boxing athlete members?

The Professional Pathway Tournament creates a separate pathway for qualified professional boxers. It does not replace the traditional USA Boxing pathway. Current USA Boxing athlete members will continue to pursue High Performance Team and Squad consideration through the traditional pathway, including National Championships, selection camp procedures, and other approved selection criteria that USA Boxing has historically used for High Performance Team and Squad selection.

Will traditional USA Boxing athlete members compete against Professional Pathway boxers in USA Boxing-sanctioned events?

No. Professional Pathway boxers will compete only against other Professional Pathway boxers in the Professional Pathway Tournament. Traditional USA Boxing athlete members will continue to compete against traditional USA Boxing athlete members in USA Boxing-sanctioned events. This separation is intended to respect USA Boxing's obligations, maintain athlete-safety and event-administration clarity, and preserve separation from state boxing commission authority, rules, policies, and laws regarding professional boxing.

Eligibility and Tournament Criteria

What minimum eligibility requirements apply?

To be considered for this pathway, an athlete must satisfy applicable eligibility requirements, including proof of United States citizenship, a valid and current United States passport at the time of selection, eligibility under USA Boxing rules, membership in good standing with USA Boxing, age eligibility, and applicable USOPC Olympic & Paralympic Training Center requirements. These requirements include SafeSport training and background screening at the stage required by the selection procedures. Athletes must also meet any applicable World Boxing requirements, such as but not limited to sex eligibility testing and medical tests, at the time of selection.



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What performance criteria must current professional boxers meet to be eligible for the Professional Pathway Tournament?

The performance criteria are used to determine whether a current professional boxer is eligible to enter the Professional Pathway Tournament. They do not, by themselves, place the boxer on a USA Boxing team. To be eligible for the tournament, the boxer must meet the published criteria, including a minimum number of sanctioned professional boxing bouts, required scheduled-round length, minimum winning percentage, and recent professional boxing activity, or the alternative Olympic-style bout-history criteria set out in the selection procedures. The winner of the Professional Pathway Tournament in an Olympic weight category may then be invited to the High Performance selection camp, where that boxer will be evaluated under the same applicable selection camp procedures against the traditional USA Boxing athletes who qualified through the traditional selection pathway.

How does a traditional USA Boxing athlete pursue the High Performance pathway?

Traditional USA Boxing athlete members continue through the established pathway, including National Championships, applicable performance exemptions, medical exemptions, and other criteria listed in the USOPC-approved USA Boxing selection procedures. Full details are available at usaboxing.org under Rulebook, Forms and Documents, Athlete Selection Procedures.

How does a current professional boxer become eligible to participate?

A current professional boxer must become a USA Boxing member through the applicable Professional Pathway membership process and must satisfy all eligibility, medical, citizenship, age, and performance criteria before entering the Professional Pathway Tournament. Entry into the tournament does not guarantee High Performance Team, High Performance Squad, Pan American Games, Olympic qualification, or LA28 Olympic Team selection.

What is the age limit for current professional boxers pursuing this pathway?

An athlete must be at least 18 years old by the first day of competition and must meet the maximum age requirement stated in the applicable selection procedures.

Can a professional MMA athlete or a professional athlete from another combat sport pursue this opportunity?

Only athletes who satisfy the published professional boxing or Olympic-style boxing performance criteria may pursue this pathway. A professional background in MMA, kickboxing, or another combat sport does not, by itself, satisfy the Professional Pathway Tournament criteria unless the athlete also meets the required boxing-specific criteria.



Tournament Operations

How will USA Boxing operate this pathway in the United States?

USA Boxing will operate the Professional Pathway Tournament as a separate pathway and separate competition group. Professional Pathway boxers will compete only against other Professional Pathway boxers, not traditional USA Boxing athlete members in USA Boxing-sanctioned events. This structure keeps the pathways separate, respects state boxing commission authority, rules, policies, and laws, and preserves a clear Olympic-style boxing framework for USA Boxing event administration.

When does this take effect?

The Professional Pathway Tournament will be conducted during the 2026 USA Boxing National Championships as a separate tournament. The tournament will be held alongside the National Championships, in the same venue, but administered as a separate Professional Pathway competition by USA Boxing officials. The National Championships remain the traditional pathway for USA Boxing athlete members, while the Professional Pathway Tournament is the separate pathway for eligible Professional Pathway boxers.

What rules will apply during the Professional Pathway Tournament?

The tournament will follow USA Boxing Olympic-style boxing rules and event procedures, including but not limited to scoring criteria, equipment requirements, headgear requirements, medical and weight-control procedures, and no weight allowance. Boxers must make weight on each day they compete, and USA Boxing officials will administer the tournament consistent with applicable USA Boxing rules, event procedures, and selection procedures.

Where can members and media ask questions?

Media requests, interview requests, and member questions regarding this FAQ may be submitted by email to media@USABoxing.org.

How can members sign up for the Pro Pathway Tournament?

To register for the Pro Pathway Tournament, please visit the event page on usaboxing.org and review the event fact sheet for registration information and instructions. The fact sheet includes important details regarding the registration process and event requirements. For any additional questions, please contact events@usaboxing.org.



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