

Quest for Gold



2007/2008



Ministry of Health Promotion

Quest for Gold

Ontario Athlete Assistance Program

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Program Overview – *Quest for Gold* Ontario Athlete Assistance Program

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1. What are the goals and objectives of the *Quest for Gold* - Ontario Athlete Assistance Program?

The Ontario Athlete Assistance Program (OAAP) is one of three funding streams offered under the 2007-08 *Quest for Gold* Program. In addition to the OAAP the *Quest for Gold* Program will also provide funding to enhance access to high performance coaching and to provide enhanced competitive opportunities and services for Ontario athletes. Funding for the *Quest for Gold* Program is obtained from net revenues generated in 2007-08 by the *Quest for Gold* lottery game that is administered by the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG).

The overarching goal of the *Quest for Gold* – OAAP is directly related to the Enhanced Excellence goals of both *ACTIVE2010* and the *Canadian Sport Policy* – i.e. to improve the performance and number of Ontario athletes performing at the national and international level; thereby contributing to the improved performance of Canada at international competitions. Specific objectives of the program are:

- a) To help athletes continue their pursuit of athletic excellence at the highest levels of national and international competition;
- b) To encourage athletes to stay in Ontario to live and train;
- c) To compensate athletes for earnings lost while training;
- d) To enable athletes to successfully pursue excellence in sport while fulfilling their educational goals;
- e) To increase athlete access to improved high performance coaching; and
- f) To enhance training and competitive opportunities available to athletes.

2. How will the *Quest for Gold* - OAAP achieve its Objectives?

The *Quest for Gold* - OAAP achieves its objectives by:

- Providing additional direct financial assistance (Canada Card designation) to Ontario athletes who are carded at the national level by Sport Canada;

- Providing standards for the identification and support of eligible sports and eligible junior aged Ontario athletes to be carded at the Provincial level (Ontario Card);
- Ensuring that Provincial Sport and Multi-Sport Organizations (PSO/MSO's) have appropriate selection procedures and criteria in place, for the nomination of Ontario athletes to be carded at the Provincial level (Ontario Card);
- Providing OAAP carding support in a consistent and timely manner to athletes who meet their sport-specific carding criteria in those sports that meet OAAP eligibility requirements;
- Focusing support on junior aged athletes to assist in their transition from junior to senior national and international competition;
- Providing a living and training allowance to help offset some of the costs athletes incur as a result of their involvement in high-performance sport;
- Allowing financial assistance provided to be used to offset tuition costs to allow athletes to attain academic goals;
- Ensuring, in conjunction with the PSO/MSO, that appropriate training and competitive opportunities are in place and providing annual, ongoing and long-term evaluation of athlete performance and potential.

3. How will direct financial assistance be provided to Ontario athletes?

Direct financial assistance will be provided to eligible Ontario athletes in the form of a living and training allowance. Assistance will be provided through two carding designations – Canada Card and Ontario Card.

Canada Card - Eligibility is limited to Ontario athletes who are carded by Sport Canada. Canada Card will provide up to an additional 33% in funding over and above the full value of the carding designation the athlete is receiving from Sport Canada – the actual amount is dependant on funding available.

Ontario Card - Ontario Card will provide direct financial assistance to Ontario junior aged athletes identified by PSO/MSOs. The Ministry will also consider Ontario Card designation for some senior aged Paralympic and able bodied athletes in certain circumstances – See Tab 2.

Note: “Junior aged athlete” is defined as those athletes who fall within the eligible age range for the Canada Games - 11 to 22 years of age. (consideration will be given to older junior aged athletes if a PSO/MSO's NSO approved Long Term Athlete Development model (LTAD) identifies older athletes in the “Train to Train” and “Train to Compete” categories).

By way of example, these junior aged athletes would ordinarily compete in one of the following developmental categories:

- a) National junior team/ National Jr. Development Team or Training pool
- b) Canada Games level
- c) Provincial age group/ Elite club/ Ontario Games level

An Athlete With a Disability (AWAD) is defined as an athlete nominated by a PSO / MSO that is recognized by the Ministry of Health Promotion as being responsible for governance of a particular Paralympic sport.

Both the sport and athlete eligibility criteria must be met before financial assistance can be awarded to any athlete.

4. What are the eligible expenses that a carded athlete can spend funding on obtained through the Quest for Gold - Ontario Athlete Assistance Program?

Carded athletes receiving funding under the Ontario Athlete Assistance Program can spend funding obtained only on the following items:

- Normal living costs
- Costs directly associated with training (e.g. coaching, facility fees, other athlete services)
- Costs associated with attending training camps and competitions (e.g. entry fees, travel costs)
- Sport specific equipment
- Tuition and education related expenses (e.g. books, fees, commuting costs)

Are Quest for Gold - Ontario Athlete Assistance Program grants considered "income" under the Federal *Income Tax Act*?

The Government of Ontario was required to issue OAAP-funded athletes a T4A form for any grants paid in 2006, but subsequently obtained an interpretation from the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) on how the financial assistance in the T4As and the related athlete expenses were to be reported.

The CRA has advised that, upon review of the program, the benefits received from the Quest for Gold - OAAP Program will generally be received by recipients tax free within the meaning of the *Federal Income Tax Act*.

OAAP-funded athletes may contact Marc Seguin at the Ministry of Health Promotion, (416) 314-7187, if they wish to obtain a copy of the April 2, 2007 CRA letter that provides an interpretation of the *Income Tax Act* as it relates to OAAP grants. If OAAP-funded athletes have any questions regarding their personal tax situation, they should contact the CRA at 1-800-267-6999 or online at www.cra-arc.gc.ca.

Athletes who receive an OAAP grant in 2007 will not be issued a T4A form for grants received in the 2007 calendar year.

5. Payments for the 2007-2008 Quest for Gold - OAAP

For 2007-2008, eligible athletes will receive carding status for one carding year starting from April 1, 2007 – March 31, 2008. All payments will be processed before March 31, 2008. The amount of total payment to eligible athletes will be determined at a later date.

Minimum Sport and Athlete Eligibility Requirements – Ontario Cards

- What are the Minimum Eligibility Requirements and Responsibilities for Provincial Sport and Multi-Sport Organizations?
- What are the Minimum Eligibility Requirements for Athletes?

1. What are the minimum eligibility requirements and responsibilities for Provincial Sport and Multi-Sport organizations?

General Sport Eligibility Criteria

- Sport must have a Provincial Sport Organization/ Multi-Sport Organization (PSO/ MSO) that is formally recognized by the Ministry of Health Promotion as per the Ministry's *Sport Recognition Policy*.
- Sport and sport discipline must have been, or must be a participant in the regular program of:
 - i. 2006 Olympic/ Paralympic Winter Games, 2008 Olympic/ Paralympic Summer Games, 2010 Olympic/ Paralympic Winter Games.
 - ii. 2007 Canada Winter Games or 2009 Canada Summer Games
 - iii. Ontario Games (youth) – eligible sports in this category may fluctuate depending on eligibility in a particular Games event.
- The sport must have a sanctioned provincial and national championship that is held at least biennially;
- The PSO/ MSO must demonstrate that they have a clearly articulated junior aged provincial team program with appropriate training and competitive opportunities for each of the proposed carded athletes;
- The PSO/ MSO junior aged provincial team program must be based on ongoing training principles that include significant daily training activities;
- The PSO/ MSO must demonstrate how they formally monitor and evaluate the training of athletes and competitive programs;

Note: Organizations will be required to complete the PSO/ MSO Provincial High Performance Program Questionnaire to demonstrate compliance with the above criteria.

- The PSO/ MSO must conduct a formal process for nominating athletes for Ontario Cards. Rules and procedures must be published and made known to all concerned, along with procedures for appealing decisions. These procedures are provided to PSO/ MSOs in TAB 6 of these guidelines.

- The PSO/MSO must have in place an Athlete - PSO/ MSO Agreement signed by each individual athlete who is being nominated for an Ontario Card. The Athlete-PSO/ MSO agreement must contain in writing the rights, responsibilities and obligations of the athlete and the PSO/ MSO.

2. What are the minimum eligibility requirements for athletes?

- Athlete must be a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant
- Athlete must be a resident of Ontario for one year prior to his/her nomination for carding status
- Athletes must be training and continuing to train in Ontario. Exceptions will be made providing that the athlete can substantiate that:
 - He/She cannot receive the required level of training in Ontario and is out of the province **temporarily** during the year (i.e. due to lack of facilities, coaching, competitions);
 - The onus is on the athlete to demonstrate that he/she needs to be out of province. The Ministry may require that the athlete provide supporting documentation from the athlete's PSO/ NSO, National Sport Organization (NSO) or other sources to verify reasons for athlete's absence from the Province of Ontario
 - He/She must attend a post-secondary institution out-of-province because the course of study is not available to him/her in Ontario;
 - It is more financially feasible to attend a post-secondary institution out-of-province, or other extenuating circumstances that require the athlete to be out of the province.
- Athlete must be a member in good standing with PSO/ MSO and NSO where applicable.
- Athlete must demonstrate a commitment and dedication to a proper training and competitive program.
- Athlete must be instructed by a coach who has been trained and certified in the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) Level 2 or equivalent.
- Athlete must not be under sanction as per the Canadian Anti-Doping Policy.
- Athlete must be attending an educational institution full-time (i.e. primary and secondary schools)
 - Exceptions will be made providing that the athlete can substantiate that his/her training will not allow for full-time attendance or if an athlete requires special needs that preclude full or part-time attendance (e.g. Athlete with a disability (AWAD) athlete)
- Athletes who have completed their area of study at the secondary level (i.e. high school) and who continue to train towards participation in major national or international competitions will also be given consideration.

- If eligible, the athlete must compete, and continue to compete for Ontario for one year from the date of the Minister’s letter informing the athlete of acceptance into OAAP program, at Canada Games and other national competitions involving provincial team competitions. Athletes who have achieved Canada Card status are not eligible for Ontario Cards
- Eligibility will be limited to Ontario junior aged athletes (only exception is for PSO/MSOs using 30% of Ontario Card allotment for Sr. level athletes not funded by Sport Canada – see below) who have been identified as a next generation national team athlete as demonstrated by:
 - Identification within the NSO pool of identified next generation national team athletes for the last two competitive seasons; OR
 - Results at regional championships, national championships (junior and/or senior) or other recognized national/international competitions over the last two competitive seasons; OR
 - Representation on a Canadian National Team (developmental and/or junior). Athletes training for Canada Games or provincial teams may also be considered.

Age of athletes:

The primary purpose of the Ontario Card designation is to provide direct financial assistance to “junior aged” high performance athletes. Age criterion is different for able bodied athletes and **AWAD** athletes.

Able Bodied Athletes:

A minimum of 70% of a PSO/ MSO’s Ontario Card allotment must be distributed to junior aged athletes (11 to 22 years of age) in able bodied sports (consideration will be given to older junior aged athletes if a PSO/ MSO’s NSO approved LTAD model identifies older athletes in the “Train to Train” and “Train to Compete” categories). The onus will be on the PSO/MSO to demonstrate that the athlete in question is still competing and training at the “junior” level.

The Ministry recognizes that athletes who have graduated from the junior level but have not yet received funding support from Sport Canada are also in need of funding support. Therefore, the Ministry will allow PSO/ MSOs to provide a maximum of 30% of its Ontario carding allotment to able bodied athletes no longer eligible for “junior athlete” status. This is contingent on the following:

- The athlete must be identified by the sport’s NSO as a national team athlete or potential next generation national team athlete.

The onus is on the PSO/ MSO to provide supporting documentation from the NSO to demonstrate that the athlete has been identified as per above. Documentation to be provided could include:

- Letter from NSO documenting/ identifying athlete as being on national development team or pool.

Athletes With A Disability (AWAD):

The Ministry recognizes that junior/ developmental level athletes in Paralympic sports are generally older than those in able bodied sports. This recognition is supported by detailed study of AWAD development models. Therefore, the age guidelines for Ontario Cards for AWAD are different from able bodied athletes. In 2007-2008 the following guidelines will apply for the nomination of eligible AWAD for Ontario Cards:

- Paralympic sports in Canada Games - Must use Canada Games technical package guidelines (maximum age of 24 years old)
- Non-Canada Games Paralympic sports – no specific age limit but the PSO/ MSO must demonstrate that the athlete being nominated has been identified as having real potential to get to the national team level (i.e. the athlete must be identified by NSO or through the PSO High Performance identification process).

What if Athletes are under 18?

All athletes under the age of 18 must have their parent or legal guardian sign their OAAP application form. Cheques will be processed in the name of the eligible athlete.

What about professional / semi-professional athletes or athletes who have normal living and training costs covered?

Athletes who receive or who have received funding in excess of normal living and training costs through exercising their skills as a professional or semi-professional athlete, or have these costs covered by virtue of involvement on a team through a formal agreement, within the same sport as the one for which they wish to receive OAAP funding, will not be eligible for OAAP support. The onus is on the athlete to prove that he/ she meets the eligibility requirements.

Can an athlete be nominated for Ontario Card status in two sports? (i.e. receive two cards)?

No. If an athlete is nominated in two separate sports the athlete will have to decide which sport he / she wishes to receive carding support from.

Does the Ministry of Health Promotion require receipts from the carded athletes?

The terms and conditions of the *Quest for Gold* program (contained within athlete application) require athlete recipients to retain all records and documents related to the grant (e.g. receipts) for a three year period and must make them available for inspection by the Ministry of Health Promotion when requested. However, the Ministry will not be requesting receipts from carded athletes on an ongoing basis. The PSO/MSO can request receipts on an ongoing basis if this requirement is stipulated in the PSO/ MSO – Athlete Agreement.

Carded athletes receiving funding under the *Quest for Gold* – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program can spend funding obtained on the following items:

- a. Normal living costs
- b. Costs directly associated with training (e.g. coaching, facility fees, other athlete services)
- c. Costs associated with attending training camps and competitions (e.g. entry fees, travel costs)
- d. Sport specific equipment
- e. Tuition and education related expenses (e.g. books, fees, commuting costs)

My sport has a number of disciplines that meet the general sport eligibility criteria. Is the Ministry of Health Promotion designating cards towards each discipline within my sport?

No, the Ministry of Health Promotion will not be designating cards towards each discipline within a sport.

For those PSO/MSOs that have a number of disciplines that meet the general sport eligibility criteria, it is up to the individual PSO/MSO to develop the Sport Specific Athlete Selection Criteria (see Tab 4) and nominate their athletes within their various disciplines and distribute their allotment of cards accordingly.

My sport doesn't have enough high performance athletes to fill our carding allotment. Do I have to use all the cards that were allotted to me? What happens to the cards if I don't use them?

Sport organizations should only be carding athletes that are in a high performance program and that have been identified as next generation senior team national athletes (see minimum eligibility requirements for athletes – Tab 2). If a PSO/MSO does not have enough high performance calibre athletes to use its total allotment of Ontario Cards it should not award them to athletes who are not participating in the sport's high performance program.

Unused Ontario Cards will not be allotted to other sports. The number of Ontario Cards distributed will decrease, thereby increasing the value of the Ontario Cards awarded to all other eligible athletes.

Does my Ontario Card allotment include the cards for our Sport Canada carded athletes?

No. If an athlete is listed on the Sport Canada list, is a resident of Ontario and their sport meets our general sport eligibility criteria, they will be eligible to apply for a Canada Card. It is a completely separate allotment from the Ontario Card.

What about Athletes Attending Foreign Post-Secondary Educational Institutions?

Athletes who are attending any foreign post-secondary educational institution (including NCAA institutions) and are receiving an athletic scholarship in any sport are *not* eligible to receive OAAP support.

How does receipt of *Quest for Gold* OAAP funding impact on an athlete's current or future eligibility for a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) scholarship or their eligibility to compete in a non-scholarship NCAA sport?

The onus is entirely on the athlete to determine the impact of accepting OAAP funding on current or future NCAA eligibility to decide whether or not to accept OAAP funding. The athlete will be required to acknowledge this onus and responsibility when signing the OAAP Ontario Card application form and agreeing to the related terms and conditions of the program. The Ministry accepts no responsibility for any consequences that may follow, or losses that may be sustained in connection with an athlete's eligibility or ineligibility for a NCAA scholarship, or in connection with an athlete's eligibility or ineligibility to compete in a non-scholarship NCAA sport.

The Ministry strongly urges the PSO/ MSO and individual athletes to contact the NCAA Clearinghouse to determine the impact of *Quest for Gold* OAAP funding on current or future eligibility for a NCAA scholarship or on eligibility to compete in a non-scholarship NCAA sport.

National Collegiate Athletic Association

www.ncaa.org

Clearinghouse mailing address:

NCAA Clearinghouse

301 ACT Drive

Box 4043

Iowa City, IA 52243-4043

Clearinghouse customer service hours:

8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Central Time Monday through Friday

Phone numbers (international callers):

Customer Service Line - 319/337-1492

Fax Number: 319/337-1556

It is the Ministry's general understanding that the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) stipulates that any athlete who accepts direct funding from a provincial or state government run program will likely forfeit their eligibility for an NCAA scholarship and their eligibility to participate in that sport or to participate in a non scholarship NCAA sport. This understanding is based on the information currently available to the Ministry, which could change. The NCAA eligibility rules are entirely outside the Ministry's control.

As far as the Ministry can determine there are twenty sports that currently qualify for OAAP that are also full NCAA scholarship sports. These sports are:

Baseball (M)	Fencing (M/W)
Lacrosse (M/W)	Golf (M/W)
Rowing (W/M)	Gymnastics (M/W)
Softball (W)	Ice Hockey (M/W)
Tennis (M/W)	Rifle (M/W)
Athletics (M/W - including cross country M/W)	Skiing (M/W)
Volleyball (M/W)	Swimming (M/W)
Water Polo (M/W)	Diving (M/W)
Basketball (M/W)	Wrestling (M)
	Field Hockey (W)
	Soccer (M/W)

The NCAA has also recognized designated “emerging sports” intended to provide additional athletics opportunities to female student-athletes. While athletic scholarship opportunities in these sports are limited in comparison to full NCAA sports, if competing at the varsity level these sports must also abide by all NCAA regulations, which include student-athlete eligibility. According to information currently available to the Ministry, the following are women's emerging sports:

- Archery
- Badminton
- Equestrian
- Rugby
- Squash
- Synchronized Swimming
- Team Handball

Please note: These lists are not definitive and could change.

Information provided is for the general assistance of prospective *Quest for Gold* applicants and is based on the information currently available to the Ministry. The NCAA eligibility rules are entirely outside the Ministry's control and could change.

The Ministry makes no representations or warranties regarding the possible impact of a *Quest for Gold* OAAP funding on an athlete's eligibility or ineligibility for a NCAA scholarship, or on an athlete's eligibility or ineligibility to compete in a non-scholarship NCAA sport.

How does the acceptance of *Quest for Gold* –OAAP funding impact on an athlete's eligibility for disability pensions, other social assistance programs or academic scholarships?

The Ministry cannot offer any definitive opinion on how acceptance of OAAP funding will impact on current or future eligibility for any other income programs or scholarships (see Note below). The onus is on the athlete to check the terms and conditions of such programs or scholarships to determine potential impacts. The Ministry makes no representations or warranties regarding the possible impact of *Quest for Gold* OAAP funding on such programs, pensions or scholarships and accepts no responsibility for any consequences that may follow, or losses that may be sustained in relation to such programs, pensions or scholarships.

Please Note: The Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services has determined that all direct financial assistance provided to athletes under the OAAP is not to be included as income and assets for purposes of social assistance effective retroactively to January 11, 2006 when OAAP was first launched. If one of your athletes is impacted please have them contact the nearest regional office of the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

***Quest for Gold* – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program will be funded by a approximately 70% of total funding available to the Program. Where will the remaining 30% of net funding be distributed?**

The Ontario Athlete Assistance Program (OAAP) is one of three funding streams being implemented in 2007-08 under the *Quest for Gold* Program. In addition to the OAAP the *Quest for Gold* Program will also provide funding to enhance access to high performance coaching and to provide enhanced competitive opportunities and services for Ontario athletes.

Athlete Selection Requirements and Process

- [How are athletes selected for Canada Cards and Ontario Cards?](#)
- [How will the selection process work for Ontario Cards?](#)

1. How are athletes selected for Canada Cards and Ontario Cards?

Canada Cards:

All Ontario athletes funded through Sport Canada's Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) and continuing to meet AAP eligibility requirements will automatically qualify for Canada Card status under the OAAP.

Note: Athlete will be required to submit proof of Ontario residency.

Ontario Cards:

Athletes will be nominated for Ontario Cards by their PSO/ MSO using an objective sport specific selection criteria developed by a "Selection Committee" appointed by the PSO/ MSO. The sport specific selection criteria will be approved by the PSO/MSO's Board of Directors in advance of the selection process. The selection criteria must be fair, objective, transparent and free from discrimination or conflict of interest.

[Please see TAB 11](#) for more information regarding Conflict of Interest and relevant examples.

How will the selection criteria process work for Ontario Cards?

Ontario Cards:

Step by step process – [Deadline dates for selection process differ depending on selection cycle chosen by PSO/MSO \(Cycle 1 or 2\):](#)

- 1) PSO / MSO notifies Ministry of Health Promotion (MHP) in which cycle they will be nominating their athletes.
- 2) PSO/ MSO completes PSO/MSO – Ministry Letter of Agreement.
- 3) MHP staff determines if PSO/ MSO high performance program meets minimum sport eligibility requirements.
- 4) MHP meet with PSO/ MSO to review Program criteria and requirements (optional for PSO/MSO).

5) Selection Committee

- The Athlete Selection Committee should include a minimum of three members, including the High Performance Coordinator/ Director or a High Performance provincial level coach.

Athlete Selection Committee establishes “sport specific athlete selection criteria” for Ontario Card allotment (must be approved by PSO/ MSO Board of Directors). The selection criteria must be fair, objective, transparent and free from discrimination or conflict of interest. [Please see TAB 11](#) for more information on Conflict of Interest and relevant examples.

- PSO/ MSOs are encouraged to consult with the Ministry on their draft athlete selection criteria before it is approved by their board of directors and published.

- 6) PSO/ MSO must publish the selection criteria (see attached template for announcement of selection criteria) so that they are known to athletes and members (i.e. on website, in newsletter or through communications to athletes and members (mailing, e-mail)). PSO/ MSO cannot alter their sport specific athlete selection criteria after it has been approved by the Board of Directors and made known to the athletes and members. Subsequent changes can only be made if approved by MHP.

→ **New for 2007/2008**

PSO/ MSO must also declare and publish its intention to opt for the “card splitting” option, including the number of cards to be “split” (limited to 30% of total allotment) and in which development categories the splitting of cards will be applied. [Please see Tab 8 for further details on card splitting option.](#)

Please see TAB 9 for Program deadlines.

- 7) PSO/ MSO distributes Ontario Card application (see TAB 10) to athletes who are nominated or who are in the PSO/ MSOs high performance pool of possible eligible athletes.
- 8) Athlete Selection Committee applies criteria and nominates athletes for Ontario Cards.

Note: PSO/ MSOs can determine order of steps 7 and 8.

- 9) PSO/ MSO ensures that Ontario Card application is completed and signed by the PSO/ MSO and athlete. PSO/ MSO also signs with the selected

athlete a “PSO/ MSO – Athlete Agreement” (See Tab 5 for further explanation and template agreement/ example).

- 10) MHP meets with PSO/ MSO to review list of nominated athletes to ensure eligibility for program, receive completed applications and confirm that PSO/ MSO – Athlete Agreements have been signed. Once the review is completed MHP will provide the PSO/ MSO with their login and password for the online submission database.
- 11) PSO/ MSO inputs their nominated athlete’s information into the *Quest for Gold* - OAAP online submission database.
www.questforgold.ca
- 12) MHP verifies PSO/ MSO nominated athlete list and sends an email confirmation to PSO/ MSO.
- 13) PSO/ MSO publish or otherwise make known to members the nominated list of athletes and appeals procedures and timelines. See TAB 6 for further details on appeal procedure and template for announcement of nominated athletes and appeal information.

→ **New for 2007/2008**

- PSO/ MSOs are permitted the option of nominating alternates to those athletes nominated for Ontario Card status
 - Alternates must be those athletes who are ranked directly behind those athletes nominated for the allotment of Ontario Cards in a particular category
 - The names of alternates must be published along with the names of nominated athletes
 - PSO/MSO who identify alternates will be permitted to substitute an alternate for an Ontario Carded athlete who drops out or is removed from the OAAP provided that:
 - Alternate is substituted within 2007-2008 fiscal year
 - Funding for athlete being substituted is still available within fiscal year (e.g. full funding for card has not already been paid out to athlete no longer in program)
- 14) Appeals – must be submitted by athletes directly to the Appeals Committee by November 23rd, 2007 for Cycle 1 and February 8th, 2008 for Cycle 2. See TAB 6 for further details.

15) MHP enters athlete's name on to Ontario carded list and processes payment.

Note: Funding levels for Ontario Cards will not be known until the total funding available and the number of athletes eligible for carding is determined.

Note: See [TAB 9](#) for deadlines related to Ontario Card selection process for both Cycle 1 and Cycle 2.

SAMPLE TEMPLATE – Announcement of Sport Specific Athlete
Selection Criteria for Ontario Card

Quest for Gold – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program 2007/2008

The *Quest for Gold* – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program 2007/2008 (OAAP) is funded by the Provincial Government of Ontario, through the Ministry of Health Promotion. The Program will provide direct financial assistance to Ontario athletes through an “Ontario Card” designation. The intent of the OAAP is to provide funding to individual athletes based on their demonstrated commitment to high performance sport, allowing them to pursue athletic excellence at the highest levels of national and international competition.

How does it work?

In 2007-2008, the Sport and Recreation Branch, Ministry of Health Promotion, allocated a certain amount of OAAP Ontario Cards to each eligible Provincial Sport/ Multi-Sport Organization (PSO/ MSO). In 2007-2008 the <<name of PSO/ MSO>> has been allotted a total of _____ Ontario cards.

- **If choosing card splitting option PSO/MSO should also insert following sentence:**

The <<name of PSO/ MSO>> has also decided to exercise the option available in 2007-2008 to split up to 30% of its carding allotment (i.e. issue ½ cards in designated developmental categories). See selection criteria below for details.

In accordance with the OAAP guidelines the <<name of PSO/ MSO>> is responsible for forming a Selection Committee and sport specific selection criteria to nominate the athletes for Ontario carding status in 2007/2008. This selection criteria has been approved by the <<name of PSO/ MSO>> board of directors.

How much funding is available?

The exact level of funding for the 2007/2008 carding year will be determined by the Ministry after the total number of athletes nominated for Ontario Card status has been determined.

How will (the) <<name of PSO/ MSO>> Selection Committee decide who receives funding?

(The) <<name of PSO/ MSO>> Selection Committee will use the following selection criteria to determine which athletes will be nominated by the <<name of PSO/ MSO>> for Ontario Card status in 2007/2008:

PSO/ MSO inserts sport specific selection criteria here, including names & positions of Athlete Selection Committee members

(The) <<name of PSO/ MSO>> will publish or make known the athletes nominated for Ontario Card status by no later than <<insert applicable deadline date depending on

cycle chosen>>.

Sport Specific Athlete Selection Criteria

The sport specific athlete selection criteria will be utilized in the identification, ranking and selection of athletes for Ontario Cards.

- Sport specific athlete selection criteria must include the minimum athlete eligibility criteria for an Ontario Card.
- The criteria must be based on objective results. The PSO/ MSO may choose to use the results from designated provincial and national competitions (which may include National Championships), designated international competitions or a combination of these competitions.
- In addition to using international and domestic results in the development of sport-specific criteria, PSO/ MSOs may also use objective measures of technical ability and skill levels.
- Team sport selection criteria should normally be linked to the Provincial Team selection criteria and the Provincial Team depth chart.
- The opportunity to meet competitive results required for carding should be consistent with a sport's provincial training or competitive program and be accessible to the majority of the best athletes in Ontario.

Any reference to age in the selection criteria should not be established arbitrarily; The PSO/ MSO must be able to demonstrate through statistical evidence and expert opinion that there is a clear link among the reference to age in the criteria and the potential to achieve Canada Card/ Sport Canada AAP status.

PSO/MSOs have the option of nominating athletes from one or more developmental categories at their discretion. However, cards allotted must be gender equal within total carding allotment where applicable.

What is meant by “maintaining gender equality” when nominating athletes?

The intent of the gender equality rule is to ensure that PSO/MSOs are nominating their best male and female high performance athletes in equal proportion in any given developmental category that the PSO/MSO selects for nominating purposes. Please note that the intent is not to nominate a PSO/MSO's best high performance athletes. The intent is to nominate an equal number of high performance male and female athletes, regardless of proportion relative to overall membership or any other factor.

PSO/ MSOs must ensure “gender equity” within the total allotment of Ontario Cards. For example, if a particular PSO/MSO has an allotment of 10 Ontario Cards then 5 cards must be allotted to males and 5 cards must be allotted to females. If there is a disproportionate amount of males vs. females in a particular developmental category chosen the PSO/MSO must go to another developmental category to balance out the carding allotment between males and females.

The gender equity rule does not apply to PSOs that have been allotted cards for one gender only (e.g. synchro/ ringette or PSOs that have been allotted an uneven number of Ontario Cards by gender (e.g. boxing). See TAB 8 for more details.

In the case of unisex Paralympic sports the gender equality rule still applies.

Gender Equity Rule when PSO/ MSO Opts for “Card Splitting”

The gender equity rule also applies to PSO/MSOs exercising the “card splitting” option. In addition, full cards and cards that are split must be issued equally to both genders. The Ministry will not allow a disproportionate number of full cards or split cards to be issued to one gender over the other.

Example:

Not Permitted:

- Sport X has an allotment of 10 Ontario cards
- Sport X splits 3 cards for a total of:
 - 7 full cards
 - 6 half cards
- Sport X issues
 - 7 full cards to males
 - 6 half cards to a females
- Sport X claims gender equity given relative equality in total cards issued to each gender (7 to 6)

Permitted:

- Sport X has an allotment of 10 Ontario cards
- Sport X splits 2 cards for a total of:
 - 8 full cards
 - 4 half cards
- Sport X issues
 - 4 full cards to males
 - 4 full cards to females
 - 2 half cards to a males
 - 2 half cards to females
- Sport X is in compliance with gender equity rule

PSO/ MSO’s cannot split more than 30% of their Ontario card allotment.

Please see Tab 8 for further details on card splitting option.

PSO/ MSO – Athlete Agreement

The PSO/ MSO – Athlete Agreement must clearly specify the following:

- Eligible expenses as outlined in [Tab 1](#).
- The PSO/ MSO's obligations under the Agreement.
- The athlete's obligations, including a commitment to follow an agreed-upon training and competitive program.
- Athlete reporting requirements (i.e. training logs)
- Any other commitments to the PSO/ MSO that the carded athlete is required to make (for instance, time, promotional activities).
- The Agreement's duration, the terms and conditions of which can extend to up one carding year from the commencement of the Agreement.
- Specific MHP and PSO/ MSO policies the carded athlete must abide by, which must include the following:
 - OAAP eligibility requirements
 - the NSO's anti-doping policy;
 - the Canadian Policy on Doping in Sport;
 - PSO/ MSO Codes of Conduct;
 - The dispute mechanism that will be used in any dispute between the carded athlete and the PSO/ MSO. This procedure must conform with natural justice and procedural fairness.

Note: The Agreement must be in plain, understandable English language (French where requested), not legal jargon. Basic rights such as freedom of speech and confidentiality of medical records must be respected.

All minimum OAAP eligibility criteria for athletes within the *Quest for Gold* program guidelines must also apply within the PSO/ MSO – Athlete Agreement. This includes a provision to be added to the Agreement which stipulates that the athlete must compete for Ontario while enrolled in the OAAP.

To facilitate the development of fair and comprehensive PSO/ MSO - Athlete Agreements, MHP has attached a sample template agreement. It should be noted that this sample agreement goes beyond MHP requirements for the specific purposes of carding. Some items in the sample agreement are not applicable to all sports, and some items important to specific sports may be missing. PSO/ MSO - Athlete Agreements should be modified as needed to reflect the individual sport's characteristics and the individual athlete's needs.

It is the PSO/ MSO's responsibility to ensure that all carded athletes sign their PSO/ MSO – Athlete Agreement and that the Agreement is also signed by the designated PSO/ MSO authority. Payment of the grant to carded athletes is contingent on having a signed agreement.

QUEST FOR GOLD

Ontario Athlete Assistance Program (OAAP)

The Athlete - PSO/ MSO Agreement

In order to be eligible for athlete assistance from the Province of Ontario each provincial level athlete must return a signed copy of their Provincial or Multi Sport Organization (PSO/MSO) / Athlete Agreement to their PSO/MSO along with the completed Ontario Athlete Assistance Program application.

It is the responsibility of the PSO/MSO to develop and provide copies of their PSO/MSO / Athlete Agreement to athletes who are being nominated for OAAP funding.

It is the responsibility of the PSO/MSO to notify the Ministry when an athlete has violated the terms of the Agreement and has been removed from the OAAP by the PSO/MSO.

Section 1: Policies

The purpose of the Athlete/PSO/MSO Agreement is to set down in writing the rights, responsibilities and obligations of the athlete and the PSO/ MSO.

The Agreement must clearly specify the following:

- Benefits available to the Ontario carded athlete through his or her PSO/MSO.
- The PSO/ MSOs obligations.
- The athlete's obligations, including a commitment to follow an agreed-upon training and competitive program.
- Any other commitments to the PSO/MSO that the Ontario carded athlete is required to make (for instance, time, promotional activities or financial commitments).
- The Agreement's duration (not to exceed one carding year).
- Specific PSO/MSO policies the carded athlete must abide by, including the following:
 - ✓ the PSO/MSOs anti-doping policy;
 - ✓ the Canadian Policy on Doping in Sport;
 - ✓ Ontario OAAP eligibility criteria; and
- The dispute mechanism and related procedures/ processes that will be used in any dispute between the carded athlete and the PSO/MSO relating to or arising out of the PSO/MSO Agreement. This procedure must conform to natural justice and procedural fairness.

Notes:

- Ontario carding is contingent upon an athlete agreeing to all conditions in his or her Athlete/PSO/MSO Agreement. In other words, athletes must negotiate any changes to the Athlete / PSO/MSO Agreement directly with his or her Provincial /Multi-Sport Organization.
- All clauses in the Agreement must clearly define the athlete's expected conduct.
- The Agreement must be in plain, understandable language, not legal jargon. Basic rights such as freedom of speech and confidentiality of medical records must be respected.

Section 2: Procedures

- 1) The Athlete/PSO/MSO Agreement is approved by the PSO/MSO.
- 2) The Agreement is modified as required. For example, individual athletes may need to modify or negotiate specific clauses to fit their situation.

It is the PSO/MSOs responsibility to ensure that all Ontario carded athletes sign their Athlete/PSO/MSO Agreement. The PSO/MSO must indicate in the space provided within the Ontario Carding Application that they have received a signed copy of the Athlete / PSO/MSO agreement. Athletes for whom the PSO/MSO has not received the signed agreement will not be eligible for Ontario Athlete Assistance under the *Quest For Gold* Program until such time as the signed agreement is received by the PSO/MSO.

All PSO / MSO / Athlete Agreements must include the following statement:

“All minimum OAAP eligibility criteria for athletes within the *Quest for Gold* program apply to this agreement”.

SAMPLE Agreement

This agreement is a sample only. Each PSO/ MSO is responsible for creating their own sport specific PSO/ MSO Athlete Agreement.

Athlete - PSO/MSO Agreement

AGREEMENT made this _____ day of _____, 200__

BETWEEN

<<name of PSO/ MSO>>, having its provincial office at _____ (hereinafter referred to as "the PSO/ MSO")

AND

_____, residing at _____ (hereinafter referred to as "the Athlete").

WHEREAS the Athlete wishes to be an active competitor in PSO/ MSO sanctioned events with his or her rights and obligations clearly defined;

WHEREAS the PSO/ MSO is recognized by _____ (the PSO/ MSOs National Federation) and The Ministry of Health Promotion Ontario as the sole Provincial Federation governing the sport of _____ in Ontario;

WHEREAS the PSO/ MSO and _____ recognize the need to clarify the relationship between the PSO/ MSO and the Athlete by establishing their respective rights and obligations;

AND WHEREAS the *Quest for Gold* – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program (hereinafter referred to as "the Ontario AAP") requires these rights and obligations to be stated in a written agreement to be signed by the PSO/ MSO and the Athlete who applies for assistance under the Ontario AAP;

AND WHEREAS the National Federation requires that the PSO/ MSO certify the eligibility of the Athlete to compete as a member in good standing;

NOW THEREFORE the parties agree to the following:

PSO/ MSO's Obligations

1. The PSO/ MSO shall:

- a. organize, select and operate teams of athletes, coaches and other necessary support staff (a Provincial Team) to represent Ontario in the sport of _____ at Provincial and National competitions;

- b. publish criteria for the selection of athletes to the Ontario AAP before the selection process begins for the particular sport;
- c. nominate all athletes who meet Ontario AAP criteria;
- d. organize programs and provide funding for the development and provision of coaching expertise, officials and event training centres in Ontario in the sport of _____ in accordance with the budget of the PSO/ MSO;
- e. assist the Athlete in obtaining quality medical care and advice;
- f. regularly provide Provincial Team and OAAP information (training and competition) to the Athlete in the form of mailed correspondence;
- g. provide a formal review of the Athlete's annual training program;
- h. provide funding for the Athlete for training camps and competitions in accordance with the budget of the PSO/ MSO;
- i. provide and include in Agreement a dispute mechanism and related procedures/process that is in conformity with the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness, which shall include access to an independent arbitration process with respect to any dispute the carded athlete may have with the PSO/MSO related to or arising out of this Agreement. Athlete's Obligations

2. The Athlete shall:

- a. recognize the responsibilities of the coaches in coaching-related decisions and follow the training and competitive program mutually agreed to by the following:
 - o the PSO/ MSO representative responsible for developing and monitoring Provincial Team training and competitive programs (the Provincial Coach or High Performance Director, for example);
 - o the Athlete's personal coach; and
 - o the Athlete;
- b. avoid living in an environment not conducive to high-performance achievements or taking any deliberate action that puts his or her ability to perform at risk or limits performance;
- c. provide the Provincial Coach or his or her designate, by mail sent to the PSO / MSO, with an annual training chart and monthly updates of changes to the chart or any other appropriate information that the PSO/ MSO may request;
- d. participate in all mandatory training camps and competitions as described in **Appendix A** of this Agreement (**Appendix A is sport specific and is to be created and attached by the PSO / MSO. Appendix A is not included within this sample agreement**);

- e. notify the PSO/ MSO immediately in writing of any injury or other legitimate reason that will prevent the Athlete from participating in an upcoming event referred to in **Appendix A** of this Agreement and ensure in the case of an injury that a certificate from a medical doctor setting out the specific nature of the injury is forwarded to the PSO/ MSO within three weeks of the injury;
- f. Agree to compete for Ontario from one year from being enrolled in Program (from date of receipt of Minister's letter informing athlete of enrolment), dress in the Provincial Team uniform and other official clothing, if applicable, while traveling or participating as part of the Provincial Team;
- g. avoid any action or conduct that would reasonably be expected to significantly disrupt or interfere with a competition or the preparation of any Athlete for a competition;
- h. avoid the use of banned substances that contravene the rules of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the rules of the International Federation and the Canadian Policy on Doping in Sport;
- i. submit, without prior warning, to unannounced doping-control tests in addition to other prior-notice tests and submit at other times to doping-control testing when requested by the PSO/ MSO, Sport Canada, the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES) or other authorities designated to do so;
- j. avoid the possession of anabolic drugs and neither supply such drugs to others directly or indirectly nor encourage or condone their use by knowingly aiding in any effort to avoid detection of the use of banned substances or banned performance enhancing practices;
- k. participate, if asked by the PSO/ MSO to do so, in any Doping Control/Education Program developed by the PSO/ MSO in co-operation with Sport Canada and the CCES;
- l. avoid participating in any competitions where federal government sport policy has determined that such participation is not permitted;
- m. participate in sport-related, non-commercial promotional activities on behalf of the Government of Ontario. The PSO/ MSO usually makes such requests for participation and arranges the activities. Unless supplementary compensation is arranged, these activities do not normally involve more than two working days per athlete per year;
- n. adhere to and comply with the PSO/ MSO's dispute mechanism procedure in the event of a dispute relating to or arising out of this Agreement;

- o. actively participate in all Ontario AAP evaluation activities. Athletes will cooperate fully in any evaluation of the Ontario AAP that may be conducted by the Minister or anyone authorized to act on the Minister's behalf and provide such data as the person conducting the evaluation considers necessary for the proper conduct of the evaluation;
- p. spend the OAAP funding obtained only on the following items:
 - o Normal living costs
 - o Costs directly associated with training (e.g. coaching, facility fees, other athlete services)
 - o Costs associated with attending training camps and competitions (e.g. entry fees, travel costs)
 - o Sport specific equipment
 - o Tuition and education related expenses (e.g. books, fees)

3. Default of Agreement

- a. Where one of the parties to this agreement is of the opinion that the other party has failed to conform with its obligations under this agreement, the following shall occur:
 - i. The one party shall notify the other party in writing of the particulars of the alleged default.
 - ii. If there exists a reasonable opportunity to correct the default and the default is not so fundamental as to amount to a repudiation of this agreement, the notifying party shall indicate in the notice the steps to be taken to remedy the default and a reasonable period of time to complete the remedial steps.
 - iii. The parties agree that the giving of the above referred-to notice by a party will not prevent that party from later asserting that the default was so fundamental as to amount to a repudiation of this agreement.
- b. If the party receiving the notice remedies the breach within the specified time, the dispute shall be considered resolved and neither party shall have any recourse against the other concerning the matter alleged to comprise the default. If the party receiving the notice fails to remedy the breach within the specified time and either party wishes recourse against the other concerning the matters alleged to comprise the default, that party shall use the dispute settlement mechanism of this agreement to resolve the differences between the parties.

All minimum eligibility criteria for athletes within the *Quest for Gold* Program (OAAP) apply to this agreement.

4. Resolution of Disputes

PSO/MSO and the ATHLETE agree that alleged breaches and disputes relating to this Agreement shall be dealt with as follows:

- a) In dealing with alleged breaches and disputes relating to this Agreement, time shall be of the essence.
- b) Information pertaining to alleged breaches or disputes relating to this Agreement shall be kept confidential, and such information shall only be disclosed to outside parties with the express permission of PSO/MSO and the ATHLETE, unless such disclosure is required by law, is mandated by the policies of PSO/MSO or the Government of Ontario, or is required by virtue of a contractual commitment PSO/MSO or the ATHLETE may have to another party or parties.
- c) Where the Provincial Coach, in consultation with the VP responsible for the High Performance Program, is of the view that the ATHLETE is in breach of any of the provisions of this Agreement, the ATHLETE shall be notified immediately by e-mail with a copy by regular mail. The VP responsible for High Performance shall be copied on all correspondence pertaining to the alleged breach.
- d) In the event that the Provincial Coach and VP responsible for High Performance cannot remedy the alleged breach within 14 days after the ATHLETE has been notified, the matter shall be referred to the President of PSO/MSO who shall, within 14 days, investigate and decide the dispute.
- e) In deciding the dispute, the President shall have the authority to stipulate specific performance to remedy the breach of the Agreement and/or to discipline the ATHLETE by applying any one or combination of the following disciplinary sanctions:
 - i. a written reprimand;
 - ii. removal of certain High Performance Program privileges;
 - iii. suspending the ATHLETE from further participation on the Provincial Teams Program, either for specified events or for a specified period of time;
 - iv. dismissing the ATHLETE from the Provincial Teams Program;
 - v. termination of this Agreement; and/or
 - vi. any other sanction that it considers appropriate in the circumstances.
- f) Where the ATHLETE is of the view that the Provincial Coach, the VP responsible for High Performance, or any other representative of PSO/MSO is in breach of any of the provisions of this Agreement, the ATHLETE shall notify the PSO/MSO President who shall investigate and decide the dispute in a timely manner.

- g) Any decision made with respect to an alleged breach of this Agreement may be referred to PSO/MSO's policies pertaining to the resolution of disputes, including the PSO/MSO Appeals Policy.

Duration of Agreement

This AGREEMENT comes into force on the _____ day of _____, 200__, and terminates on the _____ day of _____, 200__ .

Athlete Declaration

I hereby declare that in return for any financial assistance provided by the *Quest for Gold* – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program, I undertake to fulfil all commitments and responsibilities outlined in the booklet "OAAP Athlete Handbook" and my Athlete/PSO/MSO Agreement. I agree to refund any assistance provided to me, should my eligibility status change or my carded status be withdrawn, effective the withdrawal/change of status date.

Athlete signature

Date

Parent signature (if athlete is under 18)

Date

PSO/ MSO representative signature

Date

Announcement and Appeals of Athlete Selections

Appeals will be allowed in writing from athletes who have not been nominated by a PSO/ MSO for Ontario Card status. Appeals will be dealt with by an Appeals Committee comprised of representatives from the sport community and chosen by the Ministry.

Grounds for appeals will be limited strictly to issues related to:

A) whether or not the PSO/ MSO has completed the selection process in accordance with their own published selection criteria and related procedures;

B) whether or not the selection criteria developed and applied by the PSO/MSO were fair, objective, transparent and free from discrimination or conflict of interest.

After hearing an appeal the Appeals Committee will have the authority to:

- a) Direct the PSO/MSO to redo the selection process using the correct criteria/process and submit a new list of nominated athletes;
- b) Deny the appeal; or
- c) Allow the appeal and nominate the appellant for carding status.

The deadline for athletes to submit appeals to the Appeals Committee is **November 16, 2007** for Cycle 1 and **February 8, 2008** for Cycle 2. The appeals will only be accepted in writing through regular post, registered mail, courier or delivered in person. Appeals that are delivered personally or by courier shall be deemed to be received on the date of delivery. Appeals that are delivered by regular post or registered mail shall be deemed to be received three days after the date of mailing. Appeals submitted by e-mail or fax will not be accepted.

[See the attached sample template](#) that PSO/ MSOs can use to publish or make known their list of nominated Ontario Card athletes and appeal procedures.

Note:

PSO/MSOs are encouraged to resolve disputes or disagreements informally with athletes who have not been nominated to avoid, wherever possible, formal appeals.

***SAMPLE TEMPLATE – Announcement of Ontario Card nominations
and Appeal Procedures***

2007-2008 Quest for Gold Athlete Assistance Program

Ontario Card Nominations Announced!

<<Name of PSO/MSO>> would like to thank and congratulate the talented athletes who have been nominated for Ontario Cards under the 2007-2008 *Quest for Gold* Ontario Athlete Assistance Program (OAAP). The athletes nominated were selected using the sport specific selection criteria developed by <<Name of PSO/MSO>>, approved by its Board of Directors and applied by (the) <<Name of PSO/MSO>> Athlete Selection Committee.

(The) <<Name of PSO/MSO>> congratulates these athletes on their successful performances, and their nomination for *Quest for Gold* OAAP funding.

* [List of Athletes nominated and category\(s\) go here](#)

Appeals

Athletes who have not been nominated and who wish to appeal this decision can do so by filing an appeal *in writing only* with the *Quest for Gold* Ontario Athlete Assistance Program Appeals Committee. Appeals must be submitted through regular post, registered mail, in person or by courier. Appeals that are delivered personally or by courier shall be deemed to be received on the date of delivery. Appeals that are delivered by regular post or registered mail shall be deemed to be received three days after the date of mailing. **Appeals submitted by e-mail or fax will not be accepted.**

Grounds for appeals will be limited strictly to:

- whether or not the PSO/MSO has completed the selection process in accordance with their own published selection criteria and related procedures;
- whether or not the selection criteria developed and applied by the PSO/MSO were fair, objective, transparent and free from discrimination or conflict of interest.

After hearing an appeal the Appeals Committee will have the authority to:

- a) Direct the PSO/MSO to redo the selection process using the correct criteria/process and submit new list of nominated athletes;
- b) Deny the appeal; or
- c) Allow the appeal and nominate the appellant for carding status.

The deadline for athletes to submit appeals to the Appeals Committee is << **INSERT DATE BASED ON SELECTED CYCLE. REFER TO TAB 9 FOR APPEAL DEADLINES**>>

Appeals can be directed to:

Quest for Gold Ontario Athlete Assistance Program Appeals Committee
c/o Sport and Recreation Branch
Ministry of Health Promotion,
18th floor, 393 University Avenue, Suite 1802
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2S1

Illness, Injury or Pregnancy

The *Quest for Gold* OAAP guidelines cover the following special situations related to illness, injury or pregnancy and:

- short-term curtailment of training and competition for health-related reasons;
- long-term curtailment of training and competition for health-related reasons; and
- failure to meet selection criteria for health-related reasons.

Short-term Curtailment of Training and Competition for Health-related Reasons

Health-related circumstances that limit training and competition for relatively short periods (i.e., less than four months) are a matter strictly between the PSO/MSO and the athlete and should not affect an athlete's Ontario Card status.

Long-term Curtailment of Training and Competition for Health-related Reasons

Carded athletes who are unable to maintain full training and competition commitments for periods longer than four months because of injury, illness or pregnancy will continue to receive 100% of the OAAP financial support to which they would otherwise be entitled, provided the following conditions are met:

- The athlete undertakes in writing to train or rehabilitate or both under the supervision of the PSO/MSO 1) for the period of time for which the athlete is unable to fulfil the training and competition commitments that are part of the normal PSO/MSO - Athlete Agreement and 2) at a level that minimizes risk to the athlete's personal health and ensures optimal return to full training and competition at the earliest possible date.
- The athlete signifies in writing his or her intention to return to full high-performance training and competition at the earliest date possible following the illness, injury or pregnancy.
- In the case of injured or ill athletes, a positive prognosis for the athlete's return to training and competition in the sport within 8 to 12 months is required from an PSO/MSO team physician or equivalent.

Failure to Meet Selection Criteria for Health-related Reasons

At the end of an Ontario carding cycle during which an athlete has, for strictly health-related reasons, not achieved the standards required for nomination of carded status, he or she may be considered for nomination for the upcoming carding period under the following conditions, provided the PSO/MSO has a policy to prioritize and card injured, ill or pregnant athletes that is clear, consistent and not arbitrary (this policy must be transparent and accessible).

- The athlete has fulfilled all reasonable training and rehabilitation requirements aimed at a speedy return to full high-performance training and competition during the period of his or her injury, illness or pregnancy and, despite making every reasonable effort to attain the applicable carding standards during the year in which the injury, illness or pregnancy occurred, has failed to do so, in the view of the PSO/ MSO, for reasons strictly related to the injury, illness or pregnancy.
- The PSO/ MSO, based on its technical judgement and that of a PSO/ MSO team physician or equivalent, indicates in writing the expectation that the athlete will achieve at least the minimum standards required for carding during the upcoming carding period.
- The athlete has demonstrated and continues to demonstrate his or her long-term commitment to high-performance training and competition goals, as well as his or her intention to pursue full high-performance training and competition throughout the carding period for which he or she wishes to be renewed despite not having met the carding criteria.

Voluntary Withdrawal from Carded-Athlete Training and Competition for Health-related Reasons

An athlete may want, for reasons related to injury, illness or pregnancy, to voluntarily withdraw temporarily or permanently from normal carded-athlete training and competition requirements. In these circumstances the PSO/MSO must notify the Sport and Recreation Branch, of the Ministry of Health Promotion, so that the athlete can be removed from the Ontario Carded list. The Ministry reserves the right to request the repayment of the whole or any part of the Grant.

Card Allotment

- [How many Ontario Cards will be allotted to each eligible sport?](#)

The number of Ontario Cards allotted to each sport will be based primarily on the following (in priority order):

- 1) The number of athletes (male and female) that a PSO/ MSO is eligible to send to the Canada Games as per the most current Canada Games technical package.
- 2) If not represented as a Canada Games sport, MHP has assigned an allotment of cards based on the relative activity levels of the PSO/ MSO as compared to other MHP recognized PSO/ MSOs that are receiving a carding allotment.

PSO/ MSO eligibility for a carding allotment and the number of cards allotted to each eligible PSO/ MSOs will be confirmed by the Sport and Recreation Branch, MHP, after each organization has submitted the High Performance Questionnaire and signed the PSO/MSO – Ministry Agreement.

What about Sports where there are no women's or men's event in one of the three sets of Games designated for sport qualification (i.e. Olympic/ Paralympic Winter Games, Canada Games, Ontario Games)

Where there is no comparable event for women or men in one of the qualifying Games -- women or men will still be eligible for Ontario Cards at the discretion of the Ministry of Health Promotion. However, these cards will only be awarded if the sport organization can demonstrate that there is a high performance program for the gender in question and high performance competitions available to the athlete throughout the competition continuum (e.g. provincial, national, international competitions).

→ **New for this Year – Card Splitting**

In 2007-2008 the Ministry will allow PSO/MSOs to “split” up to 30% of their Ontario Card allotment so that they can issue “half cards” to athletes nominated in predetermined developmental categories. Parameters related to card splitting are as follows:

1. The decision to “split” cards must be approved by the PSO/ MSO’s board of directors as part of the approval process for the PSO/ MSO’s athlete selection criteria.
2. A card must be “split” by 50% - no more, no less, (e.g. one card must be split into 2 equal half cards)
3. The Ministry will not allow a disproportionate number of full cards or split cards to be issued to one gender over the other (See Tab 4 – Gender Equity Rules, for more information and clarification).
4. PSO/ MSOs electing to split cards in a designated developmental category can only issue either all half cards in that category or all full cards in that category. The Ministry will not allow PSO/MSOs to issue any combination of full and half cards in the same developmental category.
5. The PSO/ MSO must identify the number of cards to be split and in which developmental categories they will be issued when publishing/ posting its athlete selection criteria (See Tab 3 – Athlete Selection Requirements and Process, for more information).

QUEST FOR GOLD

Ontario Athlete Assistance Program

CYCLE 1 - Dates & Deadlines for 2007-2008

DATE	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY
July 23–25, 2007	Meetings with PSO / MSOs	MHP / PSO / MSO
July 27, 2007	Deadline for PSO/ MSOs to notify MHP in which cycle they will be nominating their athletes Deadline to submit Ministry/ PSO/MSO Agreement	PSO / MSO
August 24, 2007	Deadline to consult with MHP Staff re Sport Specific Selection Criteria	PSO / MSO
August 31, 2007	Deadline for posting PSO/MSO athlete selection criteria	PSO / MSO
October 22 – 26, 2007	Meetings with PSO/ MSOs to review applications for nominated athletes	MHP / PSO / MSO
November 2, 2007	Deadline for PSO/ MSOs to publish list of nominated athletes	PSO / MSOs
November 16, 2007	Ontario Card appeal deadline	Athletes
November 20, 2007	Appeals Committee reviews appeals	Appeals Committee
November 26, 2007	Appeals Committee notifies athletes and PSO/MSOs of outcome of appeals	Appeals Committee
December 3, 2007	Deadline for PSO/MSOs to re-submit applications for athletes after appeals process has been completed (where required)	PSO / MSOs
December 7, 2007	MHP to finalize list of 2006-2007 carded athletes	MHP

THE PSO/ MSO MUST SELECT WHICH CYCLE THEY ARE GOING TO NOMINATE THEIR ATHLETES IN BY – **July 27th, 2007**

PLEASE EMAIL MARC.F.SEGUIN@ONTARIO.CA AND INCLUDE YOUR PSO/MSO NAME AND WHICH CYCLE YOU WILL BE NOMINATING YOUR ATHLETES.

QUEST FOR GOLD

Ontario Athlete Assistance Program

CYCLE 2 - Dates & Deadlines for 2007-2008

DATE	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY
July 23–25, 2007	Meetings with PSO / MSOs	MHP / PSO / MSO
July 27th, 2007	Deadline for PSO/ MSOs to notify MHP in which cycle they will be nominating their athletes	PSO/ MSO
September 7, 2007	Deadline to submit Ministry/ PSO/MSO Agreement	PSO / MSO
September 28, 2007	Deadline to consult with MHP Staff re Sport Specific Selection Criteria	PSO / MSO
October 5, 2007	Deadline for posting PSO/MSO athlete selection criteria	PSO / MSO
January 14-18, 2008	Meetings with PSO/ MSOs to review applications for nominated athletes	MHP / PSO / MSO
January 25, 2008	Deadline for PSO/ MSOs to publish list of nominated athletes	PSO / MSOs
February 8, 2008	Ontario Card appeal deadline	Athletes
February 12, 2008	Appeals Committee reviews appeals	Appeals Committee
February 18, 2008	Appeals Committee notifies athletes and PSO/MSOs of outcome of appeals	Appeals Committee
February 25, 2008	Deadline for PSO/MSOs to re-submit applications for athletes after appeals process has been completed (where required)	PSO / MSOs
February 29, 2008	MHP to finalize list of 2006-2007 carded athletes	MHP

THE PSO/ MSO MUST SELECT WHICH CYCLE THEY ARE GOING TO NOMINATE THEIR ATHLETES IN BY **July 27th, 2007**

PLEASE EMAIL MARC.F.SEGUIN@ONTARIO.CA AND INCLUDE YOUR PSO/MSO NAME AND WHICH CYCLE YOU WILL BE NOMINATING YOUR ATHLETES.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Definitions

“**Family Member**” includes a parent, spouse or partner including same-sex spouses or partners, child, sibling, uncle, aunt, niece or nephew, parents-in-law, sister or brother-in-law and includes a step relative of any of the foregoing;

“**Ministry**” means the Ministry of Health Promotion;

“**Sports Organization**” means the Provincial Sports Organization (PSO), Multi-Sports Organization (MSO) or National Sports Organization (NSO) responsible for governing the specific sport in which the Applicant or Recipient competes.

What is the Purpose of a Conflict of Interest?

It is important for the public and athletes to have confidence that PSO/MSOs are administering the Ontario Card – *Quest for Gold* - Ontario Athlete Assistance Program (OAAP) in an objective manner that is fair to the athlete. Sometimes situations may occur where PSO/MSOs may have a conflict of interest that could damage public and stakeholder confidence in a sports organization’s administration of the Ontario Card - *Quest for Gold* - OAAP.

What is a Conflict of Interest?

Any situation where the PSO/MSOs interests, or the interests of individual members of a PSO/MSO are in conflict with its responsibilities as delineated in the Letter of Agreement between the Ministry and the Sports Organization.

What is a Perceived Conflict of Interest?

While a PSO/MSO may not be in an actual conflict of interest, the public perception that a conflict of interest exists or may exist can be equally harmful to the integrity of the Ontario Card - *Quest for Gold* – OAAP and its administration. The test question for determining whether or not a perceived conflict of interest exists is as follows:

Would an informed person, having thought the situation through, think it possible that a PSO/MSO might be adversely influenced in its administration of the Ontario Card - Quest for Gold - OAAP under the Letter of Agreement with the Ministry by its other interests?

Examples

(Examples provided for illustration purposes only. Conflict of interest can occur in other scenarios not illustrated in following example)

An example of an actual conflict of interest situation is:

A PSO has appointed an Athlete Selection Committee to develop its sports specific athlete selection criteria (this criteria is used to nominate athletes for Ontario carding status).

One member of the Athlete Selection Committee is the paid coach of five of the sport's high performance athletes. The coach purposely influenced the development of the sport specific athlete selection criteria so that his or her athletes would be nominated for carding status. As a result, once the sport specific athlete selection criteria were applied, all five of the coaches' athletes were nominated for carding status.

The coach sitting on the Athlete Selection Committee is in a conflict of interest. The coach stands to benefit financially if his or her athletes were awarded carding status because they could use their funding to pay for extra coaching costs.

The coach did not act in the Sports Organization's best interests when the Committee was developing the sport specific athlete selection criteria. This Committee member should have declared a conflict and removed himself or herself from the process. Athletes who were not nominated for carding status could complain that the conflict on the part of one Committee member might have impacted on the development of the sport specific athlete selection criteria, thereby preventing them from being nominated for Ontario Card status.

An example of a perceived conflict of interest situation is:

A PSO has appointed an Athlete Selection Committee to develop its sports specific athlete selection criteria (this criteria is used to nominate athletes for Ontario carding status). One of the Committee members is an aunt of one of the sport's female high performance athletes. The aunt was completely objective and did not purposely influence the development of the sport specific athlete selection criteria so as to increase the chances of her niece being nominated for carding status. However, it could be "perceived" or suspected by an outsider or other athlete that the aunt would have exercised some influence over the development of the criteria to favour selection of her niece.

It would be best for the Sports Organization to avoid even the perception of conflict (or actual conflicts) by not having family members of prospective OAAP recipients sitting on the Selection Committee or taking part in board meetings when the selection criteria is being discussed and approved.

Procedures

Declaration of Interest

If any director or officer of the PSO/MSO, or if any family member of a director or officer of the Sports Organization has a material interest in the Ontario Card - *Quest for Gold* – OAAP, the director or officer shall declare such interest to the board and shall not participate in the discussion or vote on any resolution relating to the matter.

Any Sports Organization member, apart from a director or officer, who has a material interest in the Ontario Card - *Quest for Gold* - OAAP shall declare such interest to the PSO/MSO which shall determine whether such interest creates either an actual or perceived conflict of interest situation for the Sport Organization – then take the appropriate action to rectify the conflict (e.g. remove individual from selection committee).