



# U.S. OLYMPIC & PARALYMPIC TRIALS

## PARTICIPANT RULES – COMMERCIAL MARKINGS

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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#### General Inquiries

**Q: What is the purpose of the USOPC's Trials Participant Rules – Commercial Markings?**

These rules outline the use or display of commercial marks at the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Trials to:

- Ensure that the priority of sport remains central to the Trials events,
- Uphold the important connection between USOPC sponsors and the athlete opportunities they support.

**Q: How were the USOPC's Trials Commercial Rules developed?**

The rules were developed in collaboration with NGB and athlete representatives.

**Q: To whom does the USOPC's Trials Commercial Rules apply?**

Any athletes, staff, coaches, team personnel, officials, volunteers or other participants at the Trials venue.

**Q: Will these same guidelines also apply to the Olympic or Paralympic Games?**

The International Olympic Committee regulates commercial markings at the Olympic Games under Rule 50. Similarly, the International Paralympic Committee regulates commercial markings at the Paralympic Games under Rule 2.2. The Trials Commercial Rules are based on both Rule 50 and Rule 2.2 so that athletes have a similar experience and obligation to these events, but not all rules are the same between Trials and the Games.

**Q: This is my first time at the Trials. What can I expect regarding commercial rules?**

USOPC and NGB representatives will be on site reviewing uniforms and equipment for commercial rules compliance. If you have a commercial mark that does not adhere to the policy, you will be asked to cover the mark up with tape or otherwise conceal it during the competition. You will still be able to compete.

**Q: Where can I find my International Federation's guidelines on manufacturer logos and placement?**

Please reach out to your NGB to get further guidance on the International Federation (IF) guidelines and any other uniform policies that apply to the Trials.

#### Markings Inquiries

**Q: Can I have a logo on my uniform that has my own company's name on it?**

No, your uniform may not display any personal company branding.

**Q: What happens if my equipment or uniform has a commercial logo that does not comply with the commercial guidelines?**

You will still be allowed to participate, as long as the commercial marking is covered up. Athlete results may be disqualified if the commercial marking is not covered up.



**Q: What if I have a tattoo or other body marking that contains commercial marks?**

Body markings with commercial marks must be covered with apparel or other concealment.

**Q: I have a personal commercial sponsor who supported my training to get to Trials. Can I wear their clothing or represent their brand?**

No item of a participant's clothing, footwear, accessories and sports equipment at the Trials may be marked conspicuously or for advertising purposes.

**Q: What about an organization that I am trying to raise money for? Can I wear its logo?**

No, your uniform and/or equipment may not display messaging aimed at generating revenue or raising funds for another company, organization or cause.

### Approval and Submission Inquiries

**Q: My uniform was not approved before the Trials. Can I still compete?**

Yes, but your uniform and equipment may be subject to mark concealment at the Trials (e.g., having the mark covered by tape).

**Q: What if I don't get my uniform/equipment pre-approved?**

Any logo that is not pre-approved by the USOPC may be subject to mark concealment at the Trials, but an athlete will still be permitted to use the item. The USOPC reserves the right to withhold approving a club logo if the club name is deemed to be used conspicuously for advertising purposes.

**Q: When is the timeline to submit my uniform for approval?**

Uniforms should be submitted to your NGB as soon as possible for approval and each NGB may have different timelines, so please check with your NGB representative. If a uniform was submitted last minute, or on the day of the Trials, and has not been approved, it may be subject to concealment at the event (such as tape).

**Q: Who do I submit it to?**

You must submit your uniform and/or sport logo to your NGB. Contact your NGB to find the appropriate representative.

### Sport Club Logo Inquiries

**Q: What about my school? Can I wear its logo?**

Your school may only be displayed if it is approved as a sport club logo.

**Q: Can my sport club logo be on my equipment and my uniform?**

Yes, an athlete can have one logo on their uniform and one logo on their equipment (e.g. a boat).

**Q: Where can I send my sport club logo to be approved?**

Coordinate with your NGB to get your sport club logo approved.

### Zone Inquiries

**Q: Do these commercial rules apply on the podium?**

Yes, commercial rules must be followed while on the podium and at all locations within the Trials venue.

**Q: Does this apply in media zones or interviews?**

Yes, commercial rules must be followed in media zones or interviews and at all locations within the Trials venue.



**Q: Are face masks exempt from the commercial rules?**

No, face masks must also adhere to the Trials commercial markings participant rules.

**Q: What are the commercial rules for face masks?**

Face masks may not display any Manufacturer Identification or branding. They may include a standard NGB emblem or logo that is no larger than 10 square centimeters. The emblem can appear only once and not in the center of the mask. Masks must also adhere to medical and other technical specifications at the time ([see the COVID-19 Trials rules for more information](#)). The USOPC has the discretion to approve exceptions to the mask commercial markings rule.

## Equipment Inquiries

**Q: What is considered “Specialized Equipment”?**

Items of apparel and equipment, approved by the USOPC, used by the athlete in the competition that may have a material effect on the performance of the athlete due to the specialized characteristics of the item are considered Specialized Equipment. A list of approved Specialized Equipment can be found in the [Personal Performance Gear](#) section at TeamUSA.org.

**Q: Is “Specialized Equipment” different than “Personal Performance Gear”?**

No, they are the same in the rules.

**Q: What if I have a personal sponsor that usually has logo placement on my uniform?**

Personal sponsors are not permitted on uniforms at the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Trials.

**Q: Am I permitted to wear non-commercial markings?**

Non-commercial markings, such as ribbons or patches, are not permitted. The only exception to this rule is markings related to a Race and Social Justice Demonstration, which must comply with the USOPC’s Trials Participant Rules – Demonstrations.

## Conduct and Grievance Inquiries

**Q: Who can report a violation?**

Any individual may report an alleged commercial rules violation to a USOPC representative on site at the Trials.

**Q: Who enforces the Commercial Rules at a Trials Event?**

USOPC staff will be on site at each Trials to enforce the requirements set forth in these rules and to proactively mitigate any violations that could result in the disqualification of an athlete’s result and denial of participation. This includes conducting an examination and regular monitoring of all clothing, footwear, accessories and sport equipment that will be used for competition. For any marking that does not comply with these rules, the USOPC will have items (such as tape) on hand to conceal the markings.

**Q: What happens if I do not follow the commercial rules?**

If you have a visible commercial mark that does not comply with the rules, you will be asked to cover up the mark. Should you refuse, you will be given an oral warning. If you continue to refuse to comply, you will be given a written Notice of Disqualification. The written notice informs you that:

- Your result(s) will be disqualified,
- You have the right to request a hearing before the Trials Administrative Board (TAB) to challenge the disqualification,
- The hearing request must be made in writing (electronic permissible) within 90 minutes, and
- You may contact an attorney or the Athlete Ombuds ([ombudsman@usathlete.org](mailto:ombudsman@usathlete.org)) for independent and confidential advice.



**Q: Will I be allowed to compete if I refuse to cover a commercial mark?**

Yes, you will be permitted to compete in your event; however, your result will be disqualified unless a hearing with the Trials Administrative Board rules that the mark was not a violation of the rules.

**Q: What are the consequences for not complying with the commercial rules?**

A participant who violates these Rules may be sanctioned by the USOPC for such violation. Possible consequences of violating these Rules include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Expulsion from Trials;
- (b) Disqualification of results at Trials, which may impact selection to the Olympic or Paralympic Games;
- (c) Recommendation to the NGB and the USOPC of the loss of the privilege to participate in future Olympic, Paralympic, Pan American, Parapan American and Youth Olympic Games, as well as other USOPC-sponsored events;
- (d) Denial of funding from the USOPC athlete support programs or other USOPC-sponsored programs for which the team member may be eligible; or
- (e) Performance of a specified task or tasks, such as a formal written and/or oral apology.

**Q: What happens if I cover my mark as requested but it becomes uncovered while I am competing?**

The USOPC acknowledges that, in certain circumstances, the tape or other items used to conceal commercial markings may become displaced unintentionally during competition. Participants will have to cover the markings as soon as reasonable. Should you not comply, you will receive a Notice of Disqualification.

**Q: What happens if I receive a Notice of Disqualification for failure to follow the commercial rules?**

A Notice of Disqualification is issued to participants who refuse to comply with the Commercial Rules after being asked to conceal a mark and being issued a verbal warning. If you receive a notice, you may request a hearing with the Trials Administrative Board (TAB).

**Q: How do I request a hearing with the Trials Administrative Board (TAB)?**

To request a hearing, please email the Dispute Resolution Unit (DRU) at [DRU@usopc.org](mailto:DRU@usopc.org).

**Q: What is the hearing process with the Trials Administrative Board (TAB)?**

As soon as the USOPC representative is informed of a request for a hearing, they will notify the USOPC's Dispute Resolution Unit (DRU). DRU will expediently convene the TAB to hear evidence from the NGB and the participant related to the violation. The proceeding will be held telephonically or via videoconference. The TAB will render a decision based on the majority. The TAB has the authority to impose any consequence, including the decision to uphold the bar on participation in the Trials. The consequence will be in effect immediately after a decision is made, unless stated otherwise.

**Q: Who is on the Trials Administrative Board (TAB)?**

The TAB is comprised of the following individuals:

- USOPC Board Chair
- USOPC CEO
- National Governing Body Council Chair
- Athletes' Advisory Council Chair
- 10 Year+ Athlete (designated position from the Chef de Mission)

This satisfies USOPC Bylaws to ensure 33% athlete representation.



**Q: What are my rights if I request a hearing with the Trials Administrative Board (TAB)?**

Participants may have the right to have counsel present at any point during the hearing at their own expense. The Office of the Athlete Ombuds is available to provide independent and confidential advice to athletes regarding their rights under these rules, and to assist in the resolution of athlete concerns, grievances and disputes. Athletes may contact the Athlete Ombuds at [ombudsman@usathlete.org](mailto:ombudsman@usathlete.org) and 719-866-5000, or visit [usathlete.org](http://usathlete.org) for more information and resources.