



# 2021 USAT Olympic National Team Program

GUIDING PRINCIPLES, OVERVIEW, & CRITERIA

SELECTION PERIOD JANUARY 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2020

UPDATED 12.15.2020

## Program Guiding Principles & Overview

USA Triathlon (USAT) High Performance (HP) Department is responsible for supporting athletes who have the vision, goals and capable of winning Olympic & Paralympic Games medals, while identifying, supporting & developing future Games medalists. To help achieve this objective USAT has developed and supports Olympic and Paralympic National Team Programs. The USAT Olympic National Team Program (the “Program”) and any financial support associated is designed specifically to assist athletes in their pathway to achieving podium performances at the Olympic Games. The three-tiered Program provides performance-based support to athletes in the form of administrative assistance, performance advisement and allocation of equipment and financial resources. The Program is comprised of athletes with proven performance capability and is designed with three ascending tiers to support athletes as they advance towards their goal of achieving podium performances at the Olympic Games. Athletes are expected to advance levels during their time in the Program with improving international performances reflective of their ability to execute Olympic podium performances.

In addition to the qualification criteria specific to each tier outlined on Page 3, athletes must meet the following minimum criteria to be eligible for the Program:

- Eligible to represent USA Triathlon in World Triathlon competition, including but not limited to:
  - National Federation (NF) affiliation
  - Current USA Triathlon elite license holder in good standing
  - Current with World Triathlon Pre-Participation Evaluation (PPE) requirements
- Current with SafeSport training & Background Check
- Commitment to the draft-legal format (to be evaluated by USA Triathlon; all non-drafting and non-World Triathlon events must be approved in advance by the High Performance General Manager [hpgm@usatriathlon.org](mailto:hpgm@usatriathlon.org))
- Creation and submission of an annual performance plan
- Submit a signed National Team Program Athlete Agreement for the term

Results achieved on or after January 1, 2021 are eligible to be used as automatic qualification criteria outlined on Page 3. It is the responsibility of each athlete to inform USAT High Performance when they have achieved a result which would earn a change in program status. All Program athletes (who are named at the start of the term) will be subject to renewal on December 31, 2021. Criteria objectively achieved during 2021 guarantees selection to that tier for the 2022 season. Athletes not currently in the Program may be named right away, once all eligibility criteria are confirmed and processed. Existing Program athletes who have achieved objective criteria may advance to a higher Tier starting on the first of the next month.

Any financial support outlined in this document represents expected funding levels based on the three tiers of the Program, though additional funding and support opportunities may become available to Program athletes and will be communicated accordingly. The descriptions below summarize the purpose of each funding mechanism available. After a review of the Annual Performance Plan (APP), a customized support plan will be developed for each athlete depending on resources available. Adjustments to the approved APP must be approved prior to incurring reimbursable expenses.

- USAT stipend: supports basic living and training expenses
- Travel reimbursement: supports athlete’s travel to compete in developmentally appropriate World Triathlon events
- Coaching stipend: compensates USA Triathlon Certified Coaches working with National Team Program athletes.
- USOPC benefits: Elite Athlete Health Insurance & Operation Gold funding will be distributed per the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) criteria

### Performance Progress

Athletes who qualify for Tier 1 (Gold), or Tier 2 (Silver) will be supported at those levels indefinitely through the term of the Program regardless of Program history and term. Athletes who have been part of the National Team Program for 2 years or more (consecutively or not) and who only qualify for Tier 3 (Bronze) will not be automatically eligible for the Program. Requests for special consideration will be subject to discretionary review (as described above) which will review performance results, data analytics, and age performance analytics with an objective of demonstrating continued progress towards Olympic medal capacity in the next Games before being eligible for the Program.

Tier 3 (Bronze) is the entry level of the National Team Program and is designed to capture developing athletes on their way to attain higher levels of National Team status en route to achieving their Olympic Games medal objectives. Therefore, returning National Team Program athletes are not expected to remain on Tier 3 for more than 2 years and athletes who have been on Tier 1 & 2 will not be permitted to drop to Tier 3 without special consideration. Athletes who are not confirmed for repeat National Team Program support, may be eligible for other High Performance support resources at the discretion of USAT.

### Discretionary Consideration

USA Triathlon may use discretion to select athletes who have not met the objective criteria for the Program for several reasons. These include, but are not limited to, injury or illness (via the "Injury or Illness Provision" of the National Team Program Agreement), the occurrence of exceptional circumstances (e.g. earthquakes, cancellation of other World Triathlon events, epidemics, riots), and other unanticipated failure of objective criteria to select an athlete likely to achieve competition results consistent with the program Tiers.

Discretionary nominations, if any, may be based on a variety of factors, including consideration of competition results outside of the selection period and data analytics, to ensure that USA Triathlon is investing in the most qualified athletes with the greatest potential of winning Olympic Games medals. Discretionary nominations for the Program, along with Tier level and term length, will be determined by a panel of three USA Triathlon High Performance Staff (who do not serve in the capacity as a personal coach to program athletes) and one USAT elite athlete representative.

To appeal any determination made by USA Triathlon, please refer to the USA Triathlon [Athlete Appeals Process](#)

### Elite Athlete Health Insurance (EAHI)

The United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) allocates EAHI slots to National Governing Bodies (NGBs) on a basis of objective performance. This program provides an affordable insurance option to athletes. This benefit is provided through the USOPC and in 2021 will be made available to USA Triathlon National Team Program athletes at the Tier 1 (Gold), Tier 2 (Silver) and Tier 3 (Bronze) levels.

Athletes must remain in good standing to receive EAHI benefits for the duration of their National Team Program term. Athletes who choose to break their agreement or no longer remain committed to the draft-legal format will be removed immediately. Athletes who are removed from the program (by choice or contract expiration) may have the option to remain on the insurance program at their own cost for up to one year.

**Projected 2021 Support Levels:** *(subject to change at the start of each selection period depending on USAT & USOPC funding capacity)*

NTP Level	DAS (Direct Athlete Support) stipend	Travel Reimbursement	Coaching Stipend	USOPC Insurance
Tier 1	\$5000/quarter	TBD based on APP	\$2,400/quarter	Eligible for EAHI
Tier 2	\$3750/quarter	TBD based on APP	\$1,800/quarter	Eligible for EAHI
Tier 3	\$2250/quarter	TBD based on APP	\$1200/quarter	Eligible for EAHI

**USAT Olympic National Team Program qualification criteria:** January 1 – December 31, 2021 (Selection Period).

### **Tier 1 (Gold)**

Athletes may achieve Tier 1 status through any **one** of the following criteria:

- Top 5 in the World Triathlon Championship Series Rankings at the end of the Selection Period\*
- Win a World Triathlon Championship Series event
- Podium (Top 3) in the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games individual event
- Member of a Gold medal team at the Olympic Games Mixed Relay (MR) event

Athletes may also achieve Tier 1 status through any **three** of the following criteria:

*(In situations where only individual event results are used, at least one must be contested over the Olympic distance or Super-Sprint distance. A maximum of two Mixed Relay (MR) results may be used, meaning to reach three criteria, one individual result must be achieved as well.)*

- Top 8 finish at Olympic Games individual event
- Top 8 finish at the World Triathlon Championship Final (either Olympic or Sprint)
- Podium (Top 3) finish at a World Triathlon Championship Series event
- Member of a winning team at a World Triathlon Championship Series MR event or World Triathlon MR Championships

### **Tier 2 (Silver)**

Athletes may achieve Tier 2 status through any **one** of the following criteria:

- Top 8 in the World Triathlon Championship Series rankings at the end of the Selection Period\*
- Top 8 in the World Triathlon Rankings at the end of the Selection Period\*
- Podium (Top 3) in a World Triathlon Championship Series individual event
- Top 8 finish at 2020 Olympic Games individual event
- Member of a Silver medal team at the Olympic Games Mixed Relay event

Athletes achieve Silver Level status through any **three** of the following criteria:

*(In situations where only individual event results are used, at least one must be contested over the Olympic-distance or Super Sprint distance. Only two World Cup results may be utilized towards the three criteria.)*

- Top 12 finish at the Olympic Games individual event
- Top 12 finish at the World Triathlon Championship Final (either Olympic or Sprint)
- Top 8 finish and within the top 20% of the starting field in a World Triathlon Championship Series event
- Win a World Triathlon Cup event
- Win 2021 World Triathlon U23 Championships
- Member of top 2 team at a World Triathlon Championship Series MR event or World Triathlon MR Championships

### **Tier 3 (Bronze)\*\***

Athletes may achieve Tier 3 status through any **one** of the following criteria:

- Top 8 World Triathlon Championship Series individual event result
- Win a World Triathlon Cup event
- Win U23 World Triathlon Championships individual event
- Top 15 in the World Triathlon Championship Series Rankings at the end of the Selection Period\*
- Top 15 in the World Triathlon Rankings at the end of the selection period\*
- Top 12 finish at the Olympic Games individual event
- Member of a Bronze medal team at the Olympic Games Mixed Relay event

Athletes may achieve Bronze Level status through any **three** of the following criteria:

*(In situations where only individual event results are used, at least one must be contested over the Olympic-distance or Super Sprint distance)*

- Top 20 finish at the Olympic Games individual event
- Top 20 finish at the World Triathlon Championship Final (either Olympic or Sprint)
- Top 15 finish in a World Triathlon Series event
- Podium (Top 3) finish in a World Triathlon Cup event
- Podium (Top 3) at U23 World Triathlon Championship individual event
- Member of a podium team at a World Triathlon Championship Series Mixed Relay event, World Triathlon Mixed Relay Championships, or the World Triathlon Junior/U23 Mixed Relay Championships

*\*Rankings will not be utilized if the number of combined WTS and WC events are reduced by 30% or more.*

*\*\*Returning athletes with 2 years (or more) of National Team Program status are not automatically eligible for Tier 3. (see page 2).*