



# **USA Weightlifting Selection Process**

*Step-by-Step*

*Guide to the Selection System*

*Events occurring May 1, 2020 to  
May 1, 2024*

**APPROVED OCT 7, 2019**

*Note: Youth Olympic Games, Pan American Games and Olympic Games selection procedures will be published separately as Games events require USOPC approval and ownership*

*The USA Weightlifting Board of Directors and USA Weightlifting Athlete Advisory Council approved this Step-by-Step guide in October 2019 for use in 2020-2024 with the understanding that adjustments could be necessary if changes are made to IWF and Olympic qualifications.*

**Author:**

**Phil Andrews**

*Chief Executive Officer*

**Reviewed by:**

*Mike Gattone (USA Weightlifting Snr Dir – Sports Performance & Coaching Education), Lorene Halford (USA Weightlifting High Performance Manager) Pyrrros Dimas (USA Weightlifting Technical Director), Travis Cooper (USOC Athlete Advisory Council Rep for Weightlifting), USA Weightlifting Athlete Advisory Council, USA Weightlifting Board of Directors.*

**Approved by:**

USA Weightlifting Board of Directors.

USA Weightlifting Athlete Advisory Council.

Office Phone: (719) 866-3386  
Cell Phone: (719) 200-6020  
FAX: (719) 866-4741  
Email: [phil.andrews@usaweightlifting.org](mailto:phil.andrews@usaweightlifting.org)

**USA Weightlifting**

Business Hours: Monday through Friday  
8:00 AM – 5:00 PM (MT)

Address: USA Weightlifting, Inc.  
One Olympic Plaza  
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

Website: <http://weightlifting.teamusa.org>  
Email: [usaw@usaweightlifting.org](mailto:usaw@usaweightlifting.org)

***These procedures do not govern the Olympic Games, Youth Olympic Games or Pan American Games. For those procedures, governed by the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee, please see [www.usaweightlifting.org](http://www.usaweightlifting.org)***

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this document is to provide athletes, coaches, and officials a step-by-step outline of qualifications to become a member of USA Weightlifting's International Squad: Team USA.

**Philosophy on Team USA Selection:**

USA Weightlifting has been given the responsibility by the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee to govern the sport of Weightlifting in the United States of America. One of USA Weightlifting's duties is to put forth international teams to represent the USA.

USA Weightlifting takes the view that selection should reflect first and foremost the needs of Olympic qualification, followed by the desire for medals in international competition whilst allowing developing athletes to that level the opportunity for international experience.

**Right to Amend:**

USA Weightlifting may not under any circumstances adjust the selection procedure for a competition for which qualification competition has already commenced, unless a change in the action of the IWF, PAWF, Pan Am Sports, USOPC, IOC or FISU (or other applicable governing body with responsibility for the competition) causes an unavoidable change, agreed upon by a 70% or more super majority of both of the USA Weightlifting Board of Directors and USA Weightlifting Athlete Advisory Council.

USA Weightlifting may amend the selection process by a 70% or more super majority of the USA Weightlifting Board of Directors and USA Weightlifting Athlete Advisory Council, where there is at least two months before the qualification competitions commence for a given competition. Notice must be given, with reasoning, electronically to all potentially affected athletes and coaches in this event.

**Step 1: Minimum Qualifications**

To be considered for an international team you must meet the following minimum requirements:

- You must be a citizen of the United States of America.**  
Athletes must be citizens of the United States to be eligible to compete for Team USA. If dual citizenship is held, your sport nationality must be registered as the United States with the IWF or other applicable body, at the time of the final qualification event.
- You must have a valid United States of America Passport.**  
An Athlete must possess a US passport with an expiration date of a minimum of 6 months after the end of the competition, or the entry requirement of the host nation, whichever is greater. The reason for this is a majority of nations require 6 months after entry.
- You must have been in the United States Anti-Doping (USADA)**

**Random Testing Pool (RTP) for 6 months.**

If you have not made yourself available for USADA's RTP, please do so immediately. USA Weightlifting has taken a stand for a doping free sport and we require all our international athletes to have been available for testing for a minimum 6 months prior to competing in any international competition (*RTP details can be found in **Appendix C***).

**You must be the correct age for the competition.**

The IWF recognizes four (4) age groups:

- Youth: 13-17 years of age
- Junior: 15-20 years of age
- Senior: 15+ years of age
- Masters: 35+ years of age

*All groups are calculated based on a participant's age on December 31 of the year the competition takes place.*

**You must also comply with all requirements of the applicable governing body.**

Note: USA Weightlifting Masters Committee, under the jurisdiction of the IWF Masters Committee guide selections for Masters will apply.

For Olympic Games and Youth Olympic Games, the relevant International Olympic Committee, US Olympic & Paralympic Committee and International Weightlifting Federation rules will apply.

For International University Sports Federation (FISU) governed events, the relevant FISU rules will apply.

For Pan American Games, US Olympic & Paralympic Committee, Pan Am Sports and International Weightlifting Federation rules will apply.

For International Weightlifting Federation governed events, International Weightlifting Federation rules will apply.

**Background Check & SafeSport Training Requirement**

All Athletes must Complete, upon selection to an international team, a USA Weightlifting background check via USA Weightlifting's membership system. All athletes must also complete the latest version of US Center for SafeSport Training.

In the event if a red-light background check (generally a felony), the athlete will be called for a hearing before the USA Weightlifting Performance Oversight Committee to address issues the criminal offence may have on their participation.

The Performance Oversight Committee, *voting unanimously only*, has the right to remove an athlete from a team in the event of a

red light background check if the committee, in its unanimous opinion, believes that selection may put at risk health, physical or mental, of a member of the delegation or if there is a risk of a sexual offence.

The committee may take professional advice from, but not exclusive to, the USA Weightlifting CEO, USA Weightlifting outside counsel, USOC Athlete Ombudsman and/or US Center for SafeSport in reaching its conclusion.

**□ Minimum Standard Requirements**

Athletes must reach a minimum of 81% of the Bronze medal in the bodyweight category of the previous IWF World Championship in their age group. Such a total must be their ranking total for the competition.

**Minimum Standard - Elite Athlete Injury Waiver**

A senior elite athlete is able to apply for an injury waiver for the purposes of Olympic qualification to appear in a Bronze Olympic Qualification event only. A waiver should be applied by contacting the CEO of USA Weightlifting, and be supported by medical documents. A waiver will be granted by USA Weightlifting if two MD qualified doctors who are participants in USA Weightlifting's Sports Medicine program with a specialism in Sports Medicine agree that the athlete was unable to participate in the qualification competitions for the Bronze competition. In this instance the last total made by the athlete will be used for the purposes of ranking, even if that is made outside of the qualification window.

**Olympic Games Eligibility**

After the first Period of Olympic Qualification, the Olympic Qualification events will only be available to those who retain Olympic eligibility, except for Junior & Youth events and where the individual exceeds 100% of the NRS.

**□ Other Requirements**

Athletes must be current members of USA Weightlifting and in good standing to compete.

Individuals who compete in Self-Funded events are liable for financial amounts spent on them, USA Weightlifting will give the benefit of any recoupable funds spent on the individual.

In the event an individual fails to pay, or agree and stick to a payment plan, before the commencement of an event, USA Weightlifting will require a deposit of at least 75% of anticipated costs before costs are incurred. In the event this is not received, USA Weightlifting will withdraw the individual from the Final

Entry of the USA.

An athlete must have a current USADA Athlete Advantage training, and a coach must have a current USADA Coaches Advantage training.

**Step 2: Make a total for qualifying competitions.**

Each international competition has designated *qualifying competition* and specific *qualification periods* to be used to determine qualification. Please check Appendix A or [www.usaweightlifting.org](http://www.usaweightlifting.org) for that specific information.

Each *qualifying competition* has a *qualifying total* that must be obtained in a USAW sanctioned event for an athlete to be eligible to compete. The certified official results must be on file with USAW. If you have met the *qualifying total* for the *qualifying competition* and meet all eligibility requirements, then you may enter to compete (Please see [www.usaweightlifting.org](http://www.usaweightlifting.org) for up-to-date *qualifying totals* for competitions). See **Appendix B** for minimum qualifications totals for self-funded competitions.

If a previously unidentified IWF sanctioned event arises (i.e. IWF Grand Prix) or the date of a specified competition changes to take place during the *qualification period* (6 months to the final qualification event set by USA Weightlifting), USAW will include verified results for making an international team if approved in advance by USA Weightlifting. If the event takes place during the *qualification period* for the specified international competition for the age group concerned, then the results will be considered.

**Step 3: Achieving Ranking, and Selection to a Team.**

USA Weightlifting will select by name at the end of the qualifying window for any event, the maximum number of athletes per gender permitted by the Organizing Committee, generally limited by the IWF rules to ten (10) athletes per gender.

USA Weightlifting will select by name at the end of the qualifying window for any event, the ten (10) athletes with the highest % of the NRS will be named to the team, to a maximum of two (2) per IWF bodyweight category.

A further 2 athletes who have the highest NRS scores not yet selected will be named as reserve athletes, regardless of bodyweight category.

If invites are declined, USA Weightlifting will proceed down in order of NRS score until either 10 athletes (or the maximum permitted for the competition, whichever is the greater) have been named, or alternatively

a total equivalent to the 81% total for the preceding year of the World Championship, per the IWF website on the final day of qualification, has been reached.

NRS is the Average of the Top 3 for Pan American and FISU events, and the Top 5 for IWF World level events for as many championships as is available at the time of selection (e.g. the 2021 World Championship will consider the 2018 and 2019 World Championship events). For the data score, please see the appendices.

There is a minimum standard for the (Snr) Pan Ams and (Snr) World Championship, which is calculated by using the 25<sup>th</sup> ranked individual in the Olympic Ranking for the bodyweight category (or bodyweight category above in a non-Olympic category), and the total that would generate that ROBI. This will be updated at the end of the Olympic Qualification, duplicate nations are not removed for this calculation.

For ad-hoc events, or events which do not have a history with new bodyweight categories or which are not regularly in the calendar, the World average will be used for the appropriate age group.

For youth and junior events, USA Weightlifting will proceed down as far as the 12<sup>th</sup> ranked individual at the start of the ranking list and no further, inclusive of the 3<sup>rd</sup> or lower in a given category, plus the reserves.

In the event an athlete scores in more than one bodyweight category, the highest individual NRS score will be considered.

A further 2 athletes who have the highest NRS scores not yet selected will be named as reserve athletes, regardless of bodyweight category.

In the event that NRS scores are tied, the next highest NRS scores for the athletes are considered, with the athlete with the highest second NRS score in the qualifying period having the advantage.

A ranking list will be made available after each qualifying event at [www.usaweighting.org](http://www.usaweighting.org).

For funding details, please see separate documentation.

In November of the preceding year, USA Weightlifting will publish a calendar of events the organization plans to attend in the following year based upon the IWF Calendar as at 1 November of the year. The calendar will be published together with qualifying events by a latest of 30 November of the year.

#### **Step 4: Preparing for Competition**

In preparation for competition, the athlete and the personal coach have an obligation to collaborate and cooperate with the Team USA high performance team, specifically including video of the athlete at least once per week on their heaviest training day of the week, on weight management, and on competition attempt management.

USA Weightlifting explicitly wish to work collaboratively, in a culture of trust, with both athletes and personal coaches.

Specifically, it is expected for those athletes who are expecting to require cutting weight to compete keep USA Weightlifting, particularly the medical doctor assigned to the competition, informed of their weight cut progression in order that USA Weightlifting can be aware of any medical support needs in this circumstance.

A Competition Readiness Plan ought to be agreed upon by the USA Weightlifting sport performance staff, the personal coach and the athlete for the interim period prior to the international competition. The Competition Readiness Plan will include the training plan and readiness markers for competition. This plan is always an option for any athlete.

Where an athlete has previously competed and performed at under the performance that ranked them for the team, there is an **obligation** to complete a formal competition readiness plan in writing.

The plan specifically will include upload of training video to the USA Weightlifting video system (CoachMe Plus) at least once per week.

The athlete has responsibility to achieve these agreed goals ahead of the competition. Failure to do so **will** result in removal from a team, or the removal of funding for that team, in these circumstances.

#### **Step 5: Personal Coach Participation & Coach Selection Policy**

Personal coaches are **always** welcome and encourage to travel with their athletes to the competition (this may be at the coach's own expense), provided they meet the necessary deadlines and requirements to join the delegation and obtain proper credentials. Access to the warm up room is provided for one (1) personal coach **only**, at the choice of the athlete, reflective of the most likely environment in a multi-sport games situation.

The choice of personal coach may not change after selection to the team, except in the instance of the suspension of membership in USA Weightlifting of the chosen personal coach.

Personal coach funding is defined by USA Weightlifting Funding System, elsewhere. In the event a coach self-funds to the IWF World Championships, IWF Junior World Championships, IWF Youth World Championships, Pan American Games or Snr. Pan American Championships, USA Weightlifting will cover the entry cost of the coach.

In the event that a coach self-funds to the IWF World Championship, IWF Junior World Championship, IWF Youth World Championship, Pan American (Snr) Championship or Pan American Games and wins a medal in the total, or wins a Gold Medal at the Pan American Youth or Pan American Junior the coach will be re-funded their self-funded element.

A personal coach must be:



- Sworn to be the coach of the athlete by the athlete, at the time of selection.
- A USA Weightlifting certified coach
- Hold a valid USA Weightlifting background check
- Hold current US Center for SafeSport education training proof
- Hold a current USADA Coaches Advantage certification

USA Weightlifting will provide either one or two independent coaches to the competition. Where this is not the USA Weightlifting staff coaches, a coach will be assigned from those with International and Senior International coach ranking.

Generally, it is expected that such coaches have previously served as funded coaches for USA Weightlifting in competition of similar standing.

If no personal coaches are funded by any other means, the personal coach of the top athlete by NRS score, regardless of gender, will be funded, provided that the event has at least 5 athletes entered for the United States of America.

If a personal coach has more than 3 athletes on a team (aggregated over both genders), USA Weightlifting will fund the coach in full.

Note: Though the Pan American Games is an IWF Silver event, selection and funding for athletes and coaches is a separate system in a separate document.

## **Step 6: Competition**

In preparation for a competition, the Technical Director, National Teams and coaching staff (including the personal coach) will discuss the appropriate lift attempts to maximize placement for Team USA.

**Performance Oversight Committee** – The Performance Oversight Committee will be chaired by the CEO. It will have four additional members:

- (i) Two athlete representatives, one of each gender, who have represented the United States in Weightlifting in the last 10 years at the Pan American Games, the Olympic Games or the IWF World Championships, and who is selected by the USA Weightlifting Nominating & Governance Committee. To avoid the potential for a conflict of interest, it is **strongly** encouraged that the athlete representative to the Team Selection Committee be a retired athlete.
- (ii) Coach, appointed by the USA Weightlifting Coaching Committee from among their membership.
- (iii) The elected USOC Athlete Advisory Council (AAC) representative, or in the event of a conflict of interest (the AAC representative has a material interest in an athlete being selected), the alternate AAC representative.

The role of the Performance Oversight Committee is to be the hearing

and oversight body for any clarifications required or disputes regarding selection. The Performance Oversight Committee is also the body with the jurisdiction to remove an athlete in the case of (i) Background check issues, (ii) Illness, (iii) Injury or (iv) Readiness to compete.

In the event that any member of the Performance Oversight Committee has a direct interest (same club, a coach of, an athlete of) a particular matter, they must recuse themselves from that discussion. A member of the POC must also recuse themselves in the event of being in the same bodyweight category (defined as having competed at a national event or higher within the last 12 months) as the individual being discussed, or the individual who may benefit from the exclusion of the athlete

**Provisions for substitutions:**

Injury: An athlete may be replaced if a physician appointed by the Performance Oversight Committee in consultation with the USA Weightlifting Sports Medicine Committee determines that he/she is unable to perform to his or her full potential, and where their performance would mean an alternate or if prior to the final entry deadline, another ranked athlete, would perform better or if competing risks injury complication. Refusal to be examined by the appointed doctor is grounds for replacement on the team.

Illness: An Athlete may be replaced if the physician appointed by the Performance Oversight Committee determines that he/she is unable to perform to his/her full potential due to an illness. Refusal to be examined by the appointed physician is grounds for replacement on the team.

Lack of Readiness: An athlete may be replaced if he/she has not satisfied the terms and conditions of his/her Competition Readiness Plan, such that the Performance Oversight Committee determines that another athlete will now out perform the athlete. If an individual has not completed a readiness plan, the consensus judgement of the high performance team will be used.

Removal: To remove an athlete, an 80% vote of the Performance Oversight Committee, in addition to the agreement of the USA Weightlifting Performance Staff, and a simple majority vote of the Board of Directors, that the removal is in the best interests of Team USA is required.

**Funding** – IWF World Championships (Senior), Pan American Championships (Senior) are fully funded and are protected, for other event funding see separate funding documentation.

**Reasons for Removal** – USAW reserves the right to remove any athlete that violates the Code of Conduct Policy, International Team Code of Conduct, USAW Code of Ethics, SafeSport, or who commits a violation of the applicable anti-doping rules.

**Choice** – An athlete has the choice to accept the invitation to join the international team or decline.

USAW further reserves the right to change these rules if the IWF or IOC changes any applicable rules. USAW will notify athletes and coaches promptly of any such changes.

**Right of Amendment**

USA Weightlifting has the right to amend these procedures provided the first qualification competition for a particular competition has not yet started. Such an amendment requires a 70% majority of both the USA Weightlifting Board of Directors & USA Weightlifting Athlete Advisory Council.

**Appendix A: International Team Qualification Events and Periods**

**\*Dates, event quotas and locations subject to change by the IWF and PAWF.**

**NOTE: For all silver, bronze and ad-hoc competitions (including those not mentioned below which later appear on the IWF calendar), USA Weightlifting will use a final closest to 2 months outside of the competition and include a further six (6) months of national and international qualification. Ranking will be an invitation to express interest as soon as the regulation is received from the Organizing Committee or IWF. Late entries are not permitted.**

**E.G. For a competition on November 28, the last qualification would be the American Open Series 3 as the final qualification event at least two months outside of the competition.**

Competition	Period	Events	Date of Events
FISU World University Ch.	6 months to American Open Series 2	2020 IWF Roma World Cup 2020 National University Ch./Junior/U25	Jan 27-31, 2020
*Appearance at the Nat Uni compulsory		2020 Australia Open 2020 Malta Open 2020 Manual Suarez T. 2020 IWF Junior Worlds 2020 American Open Series 1 2020 Pan Am Snr Ch. 2020 American Open Series 2 and Any IWF or USAW National competition in the period	Feb 7-9, 2020 Feb 27-Mar 1, 2020 Mar 2-10, 2020 Mar 5-15, 2020 Mar 5-8, 2020 Apr 17-24, 2020 Jul Xx-Xx, 2020
2020 World Yth Ch.	6 months to National Youth Ch.	2020 IWF Roma World Cup 2020 National University Ch./Junior/U25 2020 Australia Open	Jan 27-31, 2020 Feb 7-9, 2020

2020 Malta Open	Feb 27-Mar 1, 2020
2020 Manuel Suarez T.	Mar 2-10, 2020
2020 IWF Junior Worlds	Mar 5-15, 2020
2020 American Open Series 1	Mar 5-8, 2020
2020 Pan Am Snr Ch.	Apr 17-24, 2020
2020 National Youth Ch.	Jul Xx-Xx, 2020
and Any IWF or USAW National competition in the period	

**Appendix B: Minimum qualifications for Self-funded international events. For international events that are self-funded athletes must receive a minimum total that is 81% of third place from the preceding world championships. The numbers for the current minimums are listed below for each age group.**

**Senior:**

**Women**

wtcls	45	49	55	59	64	71	76	81	87	+87
Min Total	134	165	173	189	194	186	198	199	204	211*

\*Bottom placement at the 2019 IWF Senior World.

**Men**

wtcls	55	61	67	73	81	89	96	102	109	+109
Min Total	215	245	267	280	294	301	319	320	340	354

**Junior:**

**Women**

wtcls	45	49	55	59	64	71	76	81	87	+87
Min Total	122	139	160	158	173	167	172	167	156	198

**Men**

wtcls	55	61	67	73	81	89	96	102	109	+109
Min Total	181	218	243	253	279	280	280	292	309	321

**Youth:**

**Women**

wtcls	40	45	49	55	59	64	71	76	81	+81
Min Total	87	104	125	139	152	154	150	162	158	159

**Men**

wtcls	49	55	61	67	73	81	89	96	102	+102
Min Total	143	176	197	218	220	222	246	252	227	250

## Appendix C: RTP Information

To submit yourself to the USAW RTP, to meet the minimum six (6) month requirement, you must add the “USADA RTP Athlete Certification to your membership profile. To do that follow the steps below:

**Step 1:** log into your USA Weightlifting membership profile

**Step 2:** Select the “RTP Athlete Sign-Up” from the home page (Anti-Doping -> Sign-up)



**Step 3:** Complete the athlete information required and submit the certification

**Step4:** Your application will be processed by the sport department and you will receive an email once it has been completed.

If you have any questions about the certification please contact [Lorene.halford@usaweightlifting.org](mailto:Lorene.halford@usaweightlifting.org).

## Appendix D: NRS (National Ranking Score)

The NRS is the percentage of the following average numbers per level:

### World Senior- Top 5 Average (2018, 2019)

45	49	55	59	64	71	76	81	87	+87
164	199	218	231	242	243	258	259	260	309

55	61	67	73	81	89	96	102	109	+109
264	274	325	346	368	371	397	398	417	448

\*Numbers rounded to the nearest kilogram.

\*\*Where the number for the higher weight category does not exceed the lower category, 1kg is added.

### Pan Am Senior – Top 3 Average (2019)

45	49	55	59	64	71	76	81	87	+87
156	185	204	214	228	234	239	240	248	271

55	61	67	73	81	89	96	102	109	+109
229	278	297	328	355	356	378	379	387	396

\*Numbers rounded to the nearest kilogram.

\*\*Where the number for the higher weight category does not exceed the lower category, 1kg is added.

### Minimum Criteria – Senior Worlds & Senior Pan Ams

45	49	55	59	64	71	76	81	87	+87
170	173	194	200	213	226	227	228	229	240

55	61	67	73	81	89	96	102	109	+109
254	268	292	315	325	330	355	361	367	380

\*Min standard for these competitions is the greater of the 25<sup>th</sup> placed Olympic Ranked total (non-Olympic merged to higher category), or the 81% standard.

### World Junior – Top 5 Average (2019)

45	49	55	59	64	71	76	81	87	+87
153	174	199	199	213	214	215	216	217	253



55	61	67	73	81	89	96	102	109	+109
222	267	300	318	344	344	350	352	374	396

\*Numbers rounded to the nearest kilogram.

\*\*Where the number for the higher weight category does not exceed the lower category, 1kg is added.

**Pan Am Junior – Top 3 Average (2019)**

45	49	55	59	64	71	76	81	87	+87
160	165	185	188	215	216	217	218	219	227

55	61	67	73	81	89	96	102	109	+109
235	269	277	318	319	320	339	340	341	342

**World Youth – Top 5 Average (2019)**

40	45	49	55	59	64	71	76	81	+81
117	131	155	171	186	187	192	207	208	209

49	55	61	67	73	81	89	96	102	+102
184	218	244	272	276	277	295	314	315	316

**Pan American Youth – Top 5 Average (2019)**

\*Typo corrected, 10/28/2019.

40	45	49	55	59	64	71	76	81	+81
120	129	150	157	186	187	199	200	201	210

49	55	61	67	73	81	89	96	102	+102
173	210	233	256	257	258	279	280	287	288