



UNITED STATES
OLYMPIC COMMITTEE
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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How does an organization receive NGB recognition from the USOC?

The Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act gives the U.S. Olympic Committee the authority to recognize a sport organization as the official National Governing Body for an individual sport on the Olympic, Pan American, Paralympic and Parapan American program.

A sport organization applies for recognition and a formal hearing process is led by the USOC's internal Membership Working Group, which then gives a recommendation to the USOC board of directors. The conditions for membership are spelled-out in the USOC's bylaws.

This process most recently took place regarding the new sports added for the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020, specifically for the sports of surfing, skateboarding and sport climbing.

2. How does an NGB lose its recognition?

If USOC leadership believes that an NGB no longer satisfies the membership requirements outlined in its bylaws, the USOC CEO can file a Section 8 complaint under the USOC bylaws, as in the current case with USA Gymnastics. Other bylaw provisions address complaints brought by athletes and others.

3. What is a Section 8 complaint?

"Section 8" is the area of the USOC bylaws that describes the process for the USOC to revoke recognition of an NGB and sever that organization from the U.S. Olympic Movement. The process begins with the USOC CEO issuing a complaint to the NGB in question. The USOC CEO then appoints an independent hearing panel of three individuals to hear the complaint. The hearing panel must include a member of the USOC board (who will chair the panel), as well as a representative of the Athletes' Advisory Council and a representative of the NGB Council.

4. Why did the USOC initiate a Section 8 complaint against USAG? Why now?

This is a situation in which there are no perfect solutions. Seeking to revoke recognition is not a decision that the USOC came to easily, but we believe it is the right action. We believe that the challenges facing USA Gymnastics are simply more than it is capable of overcoming in its current form. We have worked closely with the new USAG board over recent months to support them, but despite diligent effort, the NGB continues to struggle. And that's not fair to gymnasts around the country. Even weeks ago, the USOC hoped there was a different way forward, but we now believe that is no longer possible.

5. What is the timeframe?

There is not a definitive timeframe spelled out in the USOC Bylaws. The USOC will seek a diligent, prompt, and fair process. We recognize the urgency in providing resolution to the U.S. gymnastics community. Still, we expect it will take several weeks, perhaps a few months.

6. How would revoking USAG's recognition directly affect athletes? What changes?

The U.S. Olympic Committee is actively working to deliver a smooth transition for America's elite athletes and coaches in the event USAG's status is revoked.

If that happens, the USOC will continue to provide U.S. Olympic gymnasts with the same level of support and funding – including but not limited to medical and wellness, financial, training and competition support – through the pre-approved high-performance program to ensure America’s gymnasts have the resources they need to excel on and off the field of play in the lead up to the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 and beyond.

The USOC is aware of USAG’s vast infrastructure and the complexities that come with this kind of transition. A change of this scale is uncharted territory for the U.S. Olympic Movement and we do not have all the details yet; but we are diligently working with athletes and coaches to ensure the right plans are in place to maintain continuity and holistic athlete support during the transition.

7. How will the USOC take over USAG’s high-performance program?

If USAG loses its designation, the USOC would assume immediate oversight on an interim basis of USAG’s high-performance program. That program is spelled out in the existing USAG/USOC high-performance plan and will ensure U.S. gymnasts have the support they need to excel on and off the field of play. As part of that oversight, the USOC would also be responsible for ensuring the fair selection of athletes and teams for “protected competitions” (i.e. major international competitions that serve as qualifying events for the Olympic Games).

The USOC would remain in that role until a new or existing organization has been identified to assume that responsibility. It will be the critically important responsibility of that organization to lead gymnastics in the United States and rebuild a supportive community of athletes and clubs that can carry the sport forward for decades to come. The USOC is prepared to identify and help build such a culture for current and future generations of American gymnasts.

8. How would revoking USAG’s recognition affect the clubs where athletes train?

In the immediate term there are no changes for USAG members or clubs. Should USAG lose recognition, it could continue to operate as a non-NGB membership sports organization, with this decision being made and governed by USAG.

9. How does revoking USAG’s recognition affect elite athletes’ funding?

The USOC is deeply involved in USAG’s high-performance planning and is currently responsible for much of its funding. If USAG loses recognition, the USOC will continue to fund athletes to the full extent as outlined in the high-performance support allocation plan.

10. Do all elite training camps continue?

The USOC would continue to support and fund training camps that have been identified as part of the high-performance plan with the aim of maintaining consistency and continuity in the training environment for America’s athletes in the lead up to the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 and beyond.

11. Who will handle SafeSport matters for the gymnastics community?

If USAG loses its recognition, we propose that USAG agrees to a transition and will voluntarily elect to remain under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Center for Safe Sport for agreed-upon amount of time until a new or existing organization has been identified to assume the responsibilities of the NGB for gymnastics.

12. How can I help?

As we work through this process we are soliciting feedback from a wide variety of sources. To date, that includes many individuals with experience in the sport of gymnastics; athletes, parents, ambassadors, coaches and administrators. If you have suggestions, please write to gymnastics@usoc.org.