



Ministry of Health Promotion & Swim Ontario
Quest for Gold – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program 2008-2009
ATHLETE SELECTION: GENERAL CRITERIA

Quest for Gold – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program 2008-2009 (OAAP) is funded by the Government of Ontario, through the Ministry of Health Promotion (MHP), and operated through the Sport and Recreation Branch. 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* – 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.

The program will provide direct financial assistance to Ontario junior-aged athletes through an “Ontario Card” designation. “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). 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 accordance with the OAAP guidelines, Swim Ontario is responsible for developing sport specific selection criteria and forming a Selection Committee that will apply the criteria to select those athletes who will be awarded Ontario Card status in 2008-2009. The Selection Criteria is approved by the Board of Directors and reviewed by MHP staff. Nominated athletes will be required to sign an Athlete Agreement between the athlete and Swim Ontario. Carding status will be for one year starting April 1, 2008 ending March 31, 2009.

In 2008-2009, the Ministry of Health Promotion allocated a certain amount of OAAP Ontario Cards to each eligible Provincial Sport / Multi-Sport Organization (PSO/MSO). Swim Ontario has been allotted a total of 24 Ontario cards (split evenly as 12 male and 12 Female Cards) for able-bodied swimmers and 4 Ontario cards (split evenly as 2 male and 2 female Cards) for swimmers with a disability.

A minimum of 70% of the Ontario cards will be allocated to what the Ministry of Health Promotion defines as junior-aged athletes (11 to 22 years of age). A maximum of 30% of the Ontario cards may be allocated to athletes no longer eligible for “junior athlete” status, (athletes 23 and over).

In accordance with the OAAP guidelines Swim Ontario is responsible for forming a Selection Committee and sport specific selection criteria to nominate the athletes for Ontario carding status in 2008-2009. This selection criteria has been approved by the Swim Ontario Board of Directors.

The Selection Committee is comprised of the following members:

Barb Richmire, Chair of the Swimming Development Committee, Swim Ontario Board.

Iain McDonald, Chair of the Ontario Swim Coaches Association, Member of Swim Ontario Board.

Kelly Steeves, Provincial Program Coordinator, Swim Ontario.

How much funding is available?

The exact level of funding for the 2008-2009 carding year will be determined by the Ministry after the total number of athletes nominated for Ontario Card status has been determined. Funding will be released prior to March 31, 2009.

How will the Swim Ontario Selection Committee decide who receives funding?

The Swim Ontario Selection Committee will use both the Ministry of Health Promotion Eligibility Criteria and the Sport Specific selection criteria detailed below to determine which athletes will be nominated by Swim Ontario for Ontario Card status in 2008-2009.

Ministry of Health Promotion Eligibility Criteria:

All athletes must also meet the Ministry of Health Promotion's minimum athlete eligibility criteria:

- 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, with the following exception;
The residency requirement will be waived if the athlete is a direct family member of:
 - a regular force member, or
 - a reservist as defined in subsection 1 (1) of the *Employment Standards Act, 2000* who is deployed under a circumstance described in clause 50.2 (1) (a) or (b) of that Act, or who is deployed or in any other way placed on active duty under a circumstance described in regulations made for the purposes of clause 50.2 (1) (c) of that Act.
- Athletes must be training and continuing to train in Ontario. Exceptions ("Residency Exceptions") will be made on a case specific basis 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 athlete will submit written documentation to the Swim Ontario Selection Committee clearly indicating how they meet these exceptions. The Ministry may require that the athlete provide supporting documentation from Swim Ontario, Swimming Canada 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 Swim Ontario and Swimming Canada.
- 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)).

- 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 ("junior-aged" refers to chronological age, not a sport's specific age category - only exception is for Swim Ontario 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 Swimming Canada 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.

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.

SWIM ONTARIO SPORT SPECIFIC SELECTION CRITERIA 2008 - 2009

Ontario Card (OAAP) Nomination Allotment

Able Bodied

- 12 Male plus 2 alternates
- 12 Female plus 2 alternates

SWAD Athletes (S1 to S13)

- 2 Male plus 1 alternate
- 2 Female plus 1 alternate

Swim Ontario Priority of Nomination

1. Eligible Athletes from the 2008-2009 Swim Ontario Carding list, as published by Swim Ontario October 2008.
2. Eligible Athletes from the 2008-2009 Swim Ontario Swimmers with Disability Carding list, as published by Swim Ontario October 2008.
3. Other Eligible athletes, in rank order of performance, based on the 2008 Long Course Season.

Selection Guidelines*:

- Ranking based on the current FINA point chart.
- Only Olympic events are eligible.
- Only competitions from the 2008 LC Season are eligible.
- In the event of a tie the IPS Calculator will be used.
- Gender equality will be maintained within the list of nominated athletes.
- Athletes have to attend school on a full time basis.
- Athletes who have completed their major area of study and continue to train towards participation in major national or international competitions may be given consideration.

- Able Bodied Athletes must be between 11 and 22 years of age.
- SWAD Athletes must be between 11 and 21 years of age.
- Athletes older than the suggested age range may be given consideration.
- Athletes must meet the Ministry of Health Promotion (MHP) Quest For Gold program eligibility guidelines as listed in this document.
- Athletes on an NCAA University Athletic Scholarship are not eligible.
- Athlete must be a Canadian citizen or a landed immigrant and be eligible to represent Canada at Major International Games.
- Athlete must be an Ontario resident for one year prior to the nomination.
- Athlete must demonstrate a commitment and dedication to a proper training and competitive program.
- Athlete must be a member in good standing with Swim Ontario and Swimming Canada.
- Athlete must not be under any sanction as per the Canadian Anti-Doping Policy.
- All athletes under the age of 18 must have their parent or legal guardian sign their AAP application form and their Swim Ontario Athlete Agreement.

SWIM ONTARIO QUEST FOR GOLD ONTARIO ATHLETE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (OAAP) SELECTION PROCESS

- The Swim Ontario (Provincial Program Coordinator) will contact all eligible swimmers for nomination – by October 7, 2008.
- Nominated swimmers must complete an Athlete Agreement with Swim Ontario – by October 7, 2008.
- The Athlete Agreement will be provided, to the nominated swimmers, by Swim Ontario.
- Swim Ontario to publish list of nominated swimmers by– by October 13, 2008.
- Nominated swimmers must also complete the Ministry of Health Promotion Ontario Card application on line at www.questforgold.ca – by October 23, 2008.

Residency Exceptions:

Any athlete living/training outside of Ontario is required to **submit written documentation** to the Swim Ontario Selection Committee clearly identifying how they meet the following residency exceptions, identified in the Ministry of Health Promotion's General Eligibility Criteria:

- Athletes must be living and continuing to train in Ontario. Exceptions will be made on a case specific basis 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);
 - 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.

This information must be received by the Selection Committee by no later than **October 13, 2008** in order to be considered.

Residency Exemption for Military Families: The one-year Ontario residency requirement is waived for any Ontario Card or Canada Card applicant who is a spouse or dependant of a: Regular Force member of the Canadian Forces; or Reservist currently deployed by the Canadian Forces into active service. This means that eligible military family members now qualify for OAAP funding immediately upon becoming residents of Ontario. Please see the 2008-2009 *Quest for Gold* Athlete Handbook for details of this exemption, including a list of documents needed to verify eligibility for this waiver of the one-year Ontario residency requirement.

Alternates:

Swim Ontario will also nominate alternates to those athletes nominated for Ontario Card status. Alternates will be those athletes who are ranked directly behind those athletes nominated for the allotment of Ontario Cards. The names of alternates will be published along with the names of nominated athletes. If an athlete drops out or is removed from the OAAP an alternate will be substituted into that athlete's position, provide that:

- Alternate is substituted within 2008-2009 fiscal year
- An alternate is available from the same category/discipline/card level (Full/Half)
- 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)

Contact Address and Deadline

All information must be submitted no later than October 20, 2008 and must be sent to:

Kelly Steeves, Provincial Program Coordinator,

Swim Ontario

1185 Eglinton Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, M3C 3C6

kelly@swimontario.com

Swim Ontario will publish or make known the athletes nominated for Ontario Card status by no later than:

October 13, 2008.

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 will be dealt with by an Appeals Committee comprised of representatives from the sport community and chosen by the Ministry.

Appeals must be submitted through regular post, registered mail, in person or by courier and on the form provided. 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.**

Note: Any/all information provided to the Appeals Committee may be shared with Swim Ontario by the Appeals Committee.

Grounds for appeals will be limited strictly to:

- Whether or not Swim Ontario 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 Swim Ontario were fair, objective, transparent and free from discrimination or conflict of interest.

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

- Direct Swim Ontario to redo the selection process using the correct criteria/process and submit new list of nominated athletes;
- Deny the appeal;
- Allow the appeal and nominate the appellant for carding status.

The deadline for athletes to submit appeals to the Appeals Committee is:

October 27, 2008.

Appeals must be completed on the template below and will 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
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2S1

**2008/2009 Quest for Gold – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program
- Appeal Template –**

The date for athletes to submit appeals to the Appeals Committee is October 27, 2008. Appeals will only be accepted on the MHP-provided template, in writing through regular post, registered mail, courier or delivered in person. **Please refer to the appeals section of the Guidelines prior to completing this form.**

Full Name: _____
Address: _____ City: _____
Postal Code: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____
Sport / PSO: _____

Reason for Appeal (Check one only):

- Whether or not Swim Ontario 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 Swim Ontario were fair, objective, transparent and free from discrimination or conflict of interest.

Provide a two-line summary of the reason for the appeal:

In the space below (continue on to next page as needed), provide a detailed account of the situation to allow the Appeals Committee to understand the basis of the appeal (please submit additional pages/supporting documentation if necessary):

Print Name Appellant

Signature of Appellant

Date

Any/all information provided to the Appeals Committee may be shared with Swim Ontario by the Appeals Committee.