



2026-2027 Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) Qualification Criteria

Purpose

The purpose of the Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) is to identify and support Canadian amateur golfers who have the aspiration and greatest potential to reach the major world tours, as indicated by competitive results in amateur events.

Prerequisites and background information

In order to be considered for AAP support, an athlete must be selected to Golf Canada's Team Canada or Team Canada – NextGen program. Players must be amateur as of November 1, 2026, to be eligible for AAP support.

Athlete Assistance Program support is also known as “carding” and athletes who receive AAP support are known as “carded athletes”. The carding cycle for Golf Canada runs from November 1st to October 31st on a one-year basis.

The equivalent of eight (8) senior cards (\$208,800 CAD) is available for distribution to male and female players for 2026-2027. A minimum of five cards (combination of full and / or partial) will be allocated to each gender, irrespective of carding category (SR1/2, SR, or Development). Please note that Sport Canada may review the card quotas for all sports and that this exercise may affect the number of cards available to Golf Canada.

In alignment with the Canadian Safe Sport Program (CSSP), Golf Canada and Sport Canada reserve the right to recommend the suspension or withdrawal of an athlete's carded status as a provisional measure or sanction related to the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS) which is imposed following a third-party review. This process includes administrative guidelines regarding an athlete's eligibility to access carding benefits during any such provisional measures, suspensions, or sanctions.

Funding will be allocated based on the priority order outlined below.

Levels of AAP funding and their associated qualification criteria

Senior International Criteria (SR1, SR2)

Athletes who finish in the top 8 and top ½ of the field individually, or who are member of a medal-winning team in the top ½ of the field at the World Amateur Team Championships meet Sport Canada's “Senior International Criteria” and earn SR1 or SR2 status. These athletes are eligible to be nominated by Golf Canada to be carded for two consecutive years provided they remain members of Team Canada or Team Canada - NextGen, with the card for the first year referred to as SR1 and the card for the second year referred to as SR2. The second year of carding is contingent on the athlete being re-nominated by Golf Canada and completing a training and competitive program approved by Golf Canada and Sport Canada. The athlete must also sign an Athlete/NSO Agreement and complete an AAP Application Form each year.

Senior Criteria (SR)

Athletes who demonstrate potential for senior international success will be considered for SR cards. Athletes will be awarded these cards if they meet the following benchmarks on the World Amateur Golf Ranking (WAGR) as of October 28, 2026:

- **Men:** WAGR ranking of 500 or better, with a minimum applied divisor of thirteen (13);
- **Women:** WAGR ranking of 330 or better, with a minimum applied divisor of fifteen (15).

Development Criteria (D)

Athletes who do not meet the benchmarks for SR1/2 or SR cards will be considered for D cards. Development cards are intended to support the developmental needs of younger athletes or new athletes to the sport who clearly demonstrate the potential to achieve the Senior Card International Criteria but are not yet able to meet the Senior Card. Normally, an athlete previously carded at the Senior Card who is older than 18 is not eligible for a development card.

Priority Order of Nominations

The equivalent of eight (8) senior cards (\$208,880 CAD) is available for distribution to male and female players for 2026-2027. This allocation may consist of a combination of Senior (SR) and Developmental (D) cards. The allocation will proceed as follows:

1. Athletes who meet the Senior International Criteria (SR1/ SR2).
2. Athletes who were carded the previous year at the SR2 level who meet the Injury or Pregnancy Considerations criteria (see note below).
3. Following SR1/SR2 allocations, Senior (SR) cards will be awarded to athletes who meet the established World Amateur Golf Ranking (WAGR) benchmarks.
 - After five cards have been awarded, cards will first be awarded to the gender with fewer total cards allocated at that point. In the event of a tie, the athlete with the lower (better) WAGR ranking will be prioritized.
4. Any remaining cards will be allocated as follows:
 - Thereafter, cards will alternate between genders based on WAGR ranking order. If the next athlete in line for a card is not eligible for a card, the allocation will revert to the opposite gender, and the alternating process will continue.

Athletes on Athletic Scholarship

Athletes who are receiving an athletic scholarship in any sport and are attending any foreign post-secondary educational institution or an NCAA / NAIA institution based in Canada are not eligible to receive AAP support in the months in which they are attending the institution. These athletes may be nominated by Golf Canada for AAP

support during the months they are involved in Team Canada training and competition activities in Canada and are not attending the institutions noted above.

Maximum Number of Years for Carding

A golfer is eligible for six (6) years total at the Senior Card level. If the athlete does not advance to the Senior International level after this period, they will undergo a stringent review. To be carded at the Senior Card level for more than six years, Golf Canada must be satisfied that the athlete's performance is progressing and that they still have the potential to advance to the Senior International level.

Injury or Pregnancy Considerations

Athletes carded at the SR2 level who are injured or pregnant and fail to meet the criteria for re-nomination the following year may be considered for carding, based on the priority order for injured or pregnant athletes, as outlined in this document and provided the following conditions are met:

1. The athlete has fulfilled all reasonable training and rehabilitation requirements designed to facilitate an efficient return to full high-performance training and competition during the period of their injury, illness, or pregnancy. However, despite making every reasonable effort to attain the applicable carding standards during the year in which the injury, illness, or pregnancy occurred, has failed to do so, in the view of Golf Canada, for reasons strictly related to the injury, illness, or pregnancy.
2. Golf Canada, based on its technical judgment and that of a Golf Canada approved physician or equivalent, indicates in writing the expectation that the athlete will achieve at the least the minimum standards required for carding during the upcoming carding period.
3. The athlete demonstrated and continues to demonstrate their long-term commitment to high-performance training and competition goals, as well as their intention to pursue full high-performance training and competition throughout the carding period for which they wish to be renewed despite not having met the carding criteria.