



The Ontario Soccer Association

Quest for Gold – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program 2008-2009

ATHLETE SELECTION CRITERIA TEMPLATE

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, the Ontario Soccer Association 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 the Ontario Soccer Association. 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). The Ontario Soccer Association has been allotted a total of 34 Ontario cards (split evenly as 17 male and 17 Female Cards).

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 The Ontario Soccer Association 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 Ontario Soccer Association Board of Directors.

The Selection Committee is comprised of the following members:

- a) The OSA Director of Player Development (currently Bryan Rosenfeld)
- b) The OSA Player Development Coordinator (currently Kevin Small)
- c) A third member, a Provincial Team Coach, (either Dave Peak, Ruben Flores, Joey Lombardi, Patirck Tobo, Brian Ashton or Alex McNutt), selected by the OSA Executive Director.
- d) The OSA Executive Director is an ex officio member (currently Guy Bradbury)

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 Ontario Soccer Association Selection Committee decide who receives funding?

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 their PSO/MSO's Selection Committee clearly indicating how they meet these exceptions. The Ministry may require that the athlete provide supporting documentation from the athlete's PSO/ NSO, National Sport Organization (NSO) 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 PSO/MSO and NSO where applicable.
- 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 PSO/MSOs 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 NSO 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.

What are the eligible expenses that can be funded through the OAAP?

Funding may be used on the following items:

- Normal living costs;
- Costs directly associated with training (e.g. coaching, facility fees, other athlete services);
- Costs associated with attending training camps and competitions (e.g. entry fees, travel costs);
- Sport-specific equipment;
- Tuition and education-related expenses (e.g. books, fees)

Important information pertaining to the Quest for Gold Ontario Card funding program and NCAA scholarship eligibility:

The Quest for Gold Ontario Card program is funded and coordinated by the Government of Ontario with the delivery assistance of The Ontario Soccer Association. The Ontario Soccer Association has clarified that the Quest for Gold Ontario Card funding program does not meet the NCAA’s legislated exceptions for the receipt of training or education expenses by athletes. The two legislated exceptions for the receipt of training expenses and education expenses by athletes require such expenses to come directly from the Canadian Olympic Committee or the national governing body of the sport. In the case of The Ontario Soccer Association, that is the Canadian Soccer Association.

Nominated athletes that choose to accept the funding provided by the Quest for Gold Ontario Card funding program will forfeit their eligibility to participate in that sport at an NCAA institution.

The Ontario Soccer Association strongly urges all athletes nominated to the Quest for Gold Ontario Card funding program and/or their parents/guardians/coaches, who are considering an NCAA scholarship, to make an informed decision. We encourage you to confirm this information with the NCAA by going to www.ncaa.org and following the links or calling NCAA Membership Services at (317) 917-6222.

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.

The Ontario Soccer Association 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 the Ontario Soccer Association for Ontario Card status in 2008-2009:

For Ontario Cards in 2008/09, the OSA OAAPSC will select athletes from the pool of athletes attending the Canada Games (CC)/National Training Centre-Ontario (NTCO), a joint program of OSA and Canadian Soccer Association. These athletes represent the following two eligibility groups:

- National Jr. Development Team or Training Pool Players (U14 to U18)
- Canada Games Level Players (U18)

The criteria for inclusion in the pool are therefore the same as the criteria for selection to the NTCO. For detailed criteria contact the OSA Manager of Player Development, but in brief, selection to the NTCO is based on:

- Consistent, excellent performance at Provincial Team or higher level competitions for U-16 to U-18, as identified by a Provincial Team or National Team Coach who recommends the athlete to NTCO;
- Consistent excellent performance at the NTCO scouting dates (4 to 5 events within the training fiscal year) organized for NTCO selection by OSA.

From this NTCO pool, 17 male and 17 female athletes will be selected for Ontario Cards for 2008/09. Selection for Ontario Cards will be based upon:

- Current registration within the CC/NTCO program as at the date of application for OAAP funding;
- Consistent, excellent performance within the CC/NTCO program, including identification by National Team, selection to National Team projects, etc, as identified and recommended by the CC/NTCO coach(es) to the OAAPSC;
- Ongoing athlete compliance with the CC/NTCO Code of Conduct;
- Minimum 75% attendance at CC/NTCO training and competitions;
- Eligibility for Ontario Card support, per the policies of the “Quest For Gold” OAAP;
- Receipt of an Application for OAAP Support by OAAPSC, including a signed Athlete Agreement due at the time of application. Signing an Athlete Agreement indicates the athlete’s eligibility and intention to comply with all terms and conditions of OAAP Ontario Card funding and is not a guarantee of selection for an Ontario Card.

A scoring system will be applied to rank the eligible athletes for Ontario Card selection:

Selection Criteria	Points Awarded
Meets all Quest For Gold OAAP eligibility criteria	Prerequisite
OSA has received athlete application and signed athlete agreement by deadline	Prerequisite
Player is currently registered in CC/NTCO as at date of application for OAAP support	Prerequisite
Player has completed compulsory medical exam within	Prerequisite

12 months of application at designated testing centre.	
Minimum 75% attendance at CC/NTCO training and competitions	Prerequisite
Ongoing athlete compliance with CC/NTCO Code of Conduct	minus 1 point for each documented infraction
Selection to National Team projects while at CC/NTCO (maximum of 4 events, therefore, maximum of 4 points)	plus 1 point for each project attended
Has participated in CC/NTCO fitness testing program within current calendar schedule (3 annual testing dates, therefore, maximum of 3 points)	plus 1 point for participation in previous calendar schedule

In the event of a tie in rankings the following additional criteria will be taken into consideration:

TEAM-PLAY ATTRIBUTES

- Demonstrated ability and willingness to work effectively and cooperate within the team environment.
- Demonstrated ability to contribute to overall team cohesiveness and to communicate effectively with coaching staff and other players on and off the field of play.
- Demonstrated ability and willingness to implement the game plan of the coaching staff.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

- Demonstrated cooperative and team-oriented attitudes.
- Demonstrated self-motivation, confidence, determination and goal-oriented nature.
- Demonstrated flexibility and adaptability to change.

Athletes who wish to pursue this funding option need to indicate so in writing that they wish to be considered for inclusion on the Athlete Nomination List by or before January 4th, 2009. They must also obtain and complete the “Quest for Gold” application from their associated Team Manager. The fully completed “Quest for Gold” must then be returned to their associated Team Manager by or before the cut off date of January 9, 2009.

Residency Exceptions:

Any athlete living/training outside of Ontario is required to **submit written documentation** to the Ontario Soccer Association 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 **January 9th 2009** 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:

The Ontario Soccer Association 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 in a particular category/discipline. 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 January 4, 2009 and must be sent to:

Kevin Small
Player Development Co-ordinator
The Ontario Soccer Association
905-264-9390 ext 247
905-264-9445
ksmall@soccer.on.ca

The Ontario Soccer Association will publish or make known the athletes nominated for Ontario Card status by no later than **January 19, 2009**.

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 the athlete's PSO by the Appeals Committee.

Grounds for appeals will be limited strictly to:

- Whether or not the PSO/MSO 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 the PSO/MSO 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 the PSO/MSO 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

Cycle Two: **February 2, 2009.**

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 for Cycle 1 and February 2, 2009 for Cycle 2. 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 the PSO/MSO 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 the PSO/MSO 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 the athlete's PSO by the Appeals Committee.

