



Athlete Assistance Policy
Olympic “Classic” and “Beach Sprints” Rowing

Carding Cycle July 1st, 2026 to June 30th, 2027.

1. Purpose and Objectives

Through the SFAF Eligibility process, “Classic” rowing (Appendix 1) has been identified by Sport Canada to receive Quota spots for the Athlete Assistance Program (AAP). With the addition of “Beach Sprints” to the 2028 Olympic Program Rowing Canada Aviron (RCA) has added Criteria for a limited number of Quota spots to support Beach discipline athletes with AAP.

The purpose of this document is to define criteria used by RCA to determine the nominations that will be submitted to Sport Canada for this support.

The target audience for this document are athletes and their coaches. This applies to both athletes who now currently access, or wish to access the Sport Canada AAP program.

RCA’s AAP objectives for both the Classic and Beach discipline (Appendix 1) are based on Sport Canada’s AAP International and National Objectives (*Section 1 and 5 of [the Sport Canada AAP Policy and Procedures Document](#)*).

The AAP contributes toward improved Canadian performances at major international sporting events such as the Olympic/Paralympic Games and World Championships.

The AAP recognizes the commitment that athletes make to the National Team training and competitive programs provided by their NSO and seeks to relieve some of the financial pressures associated with preparing for and participating in international sport. The AAP financial assistance provides support to athletes in the form of a living and training allowance, plus tuition and supplementary AAP support. The living and training allowance is intended to offset some, but not all, of the living and training expenses athletes incur as a result of their involvement in high-performance sport, while tuition support is intended to help athletes obtain a post-secondary level education. The AAP is the only Sport Canada program that provides direct financial support to athletes.

Eligible Athletes who are approved for funding and are financially supported through the AAP are referred to as **carded athletes**. AAP support is also known as **carding**.

**Beach Rowing see Appendix 8*

2. General Information and Definitions

2.1 Rowing Canada Aviron’s Authority for Decisions

RCA does not grant carding to athletes; however, based on the criteria outlined in this document, and AAP policies, RCA's HP Leadership Team will recommend athletes to Sport Canada for AAP Carding.

Final approval of all nominations submitted to Sport Canada for Cards is the responsibility of the HP Leadership team or designate. All nominations will then be reviewed and independently approved by Sport Canada. Sport Canada approves nominations in accordance with the AAP policies and these Carding criteria.

See appendix 2 for AAP Nomination and Approval timelines.

2.2 Athlete Eligibility

To be eligible for a carding nomination, an athlete must meet all the following requirements:

1. Must be a current registered member of, and in good standing with, RCA. Meaning in this instance is not currently suspended or under sanction which precludes them from being eligible for carding.
2. Must have participated in the applicable competitions required for carding purposes (see Section 2.3) unless a request for an exemption due to injury, medical condition, or illness is approved, in advance, by the HPD - (Section 5);
3. Must possess Canadian citizenship, or Permanent Resident status, by June 1, 2026, and must satisfactorily demonstrate that they will be eligible to compete for Canada in World Rowing (WR) competitions and the Olympic/Paralympic Games;
4. Must not be under suspension (including a provisional suspension), or other sanction, for any doping or doping-related offense;
5. Must not be under suspension (including a provisional suspension) for any violation of RCA policies or the policies of any other sport organization with authority over the athlete;
6. Must sign the Athlete Agreement as required by RCA and/or Sport Canada;
7. Must otherwise comply with all eligibility requirements set out by Sport Canada in its publication [Policies and Procedures – Athlete Assistance Program - Canada.ca](#)
8. Must have met the Specific Criteria set out in Section 4,
9. Does not have any outstanding accounts with RCA that are more than 30-days in arrears or are without an approved payment plan.
10. It is Sport Canada's expectation that an athlete is training under the direction of Rowing Canada Aviron, while receiving Sport Canada AAP, Carding support.
11. Athletes Carded at the SR1, SR2, or SR level must be training out of RCA's National Training Centre and sign an NTC Athlete contract or on an Individual Athlete Plan and sign a Decentralized Athlete Contract overseen and approved by RCA's High Performance Director (or designate).
12. Athletes carded at the Development level may still be nominated based on meeting the eligibility requirements, ranking plus the review and approval of an Individual Athlete Plan (IAP) by RCA's High Performance Director (or designate).
13. An athlete's IAP will outline key commitments between the athletes and RCA while training outside the NTC:
 - Camp participation – Selection camps and/or training camps
 - Competition participation – both domestic and international
 - Assessment events
 - Testing – includes ergometer
 - Daily and Performance Monitoring – training load, volumes, health and wellness

2.3 Events for Performance Evaluation

Decisions on carding nominations will include but not limited to performances in the following events. These events are not listed in order of priority and RCA reserves the right to add, adjust or

remove events that support the objectives of the program. Any changes to evaluation events will be communicated to effected athletes/coaches as early as possible.

1. Olympic and Paralympic Games
2. World Rowing Championships - Olympic events
3. U23 World Rowing Championships - Olympic events
4. World Cups - Olympic events
5. Pan Am Games - Olympic events
6. Selection events specific to Senior and NextGen Teams
7. National Rowing Championships or Identified Assessments
8. RCA's Testing and Monitoring Program

3. Funding Allocation

Sport Canada has awarded Rowing Canada the equivalent of 45 Senior Cards or \$1,174,500 for Olympic athletes competing in the Classic Category, and 3 Senior Cards worth \$78,300 for Paralympic athletes competing in the Classic Category (see Paralympic Carding Document) in AAP funding for the July 2026 to June 2027 Carding cycle. RCA will hold up to the equivalent of 4 Development Cards used as outlined in Appendix 8 for Beach Sprints. Sport Canada reviews its carding allocations regularly therefore this amount is subject to change.

The Sport Canada AAP Program provides three types of cards – Senior International, Senior National, and Development – and 2 levels of funding, \$2175/ month for Senior International and Senior National, and \$1305/month for Development cards. A Senior International Card is awarded to an athlete who achieves a performance of Top 8 and top half (1/2) of the field in an Olympic event at a Senior World Championships (non- Olympic year) or Olympic Games; or Top 5 and top half (1/2) of the field in a Paralympic event at a Senior World Championships (non-Paralympic year) or Paralympic Games.

Distribution of cards between SR1, SR2, SR and Development cards is dependent on the performance criteria as specified in this document (Sections 4,5, 6 and 7)

✪ The benefits of achieving SR1 performance standards only take affect at the beginning of the July Carding Cycle. As the start of the carding cycle is prior to events that determine SR1 Carding athletes are assigned this level based on their performance from the previous year. Additionally, athletes who achieve performances that reflect SR1 Carding part way through the year must wait until the following carding cycle to see the benefit of an SR1 card. Athletes must achieve the required eligibility requirements and be nominated for the carding cycle in which the SR1 Card is to be assigned.

Athletes can retain Senior National (SR) card status for a maximum of 4 years total, by the end of which SR1/2 status should have been attained.

A 5th year may be awarded under the following circumstances:

- Athlete has achieved the selection to World Cup team in an Olympic boat, and
- Performance monitoring on water and ergometer suggest progress to SR1 standard.

A 5th or 6th year may be awarded under the following circumstances:

- In the Olympic year, the athlete has been selected and has a confirmed seat in an Olympic boat, and the card would only be approved for 4 months (July – Oct).
- If the athlete achieves the Top 8 / Top ½ (SR1) in the Olympics, their SR card can be extended to cover the remainder of the cycle, otherwise carding ends at the 4 months.

An athlete previously carded at the Senior Card level (SR, SR1, SR2) for more than two years cannot be nominated for a Development Card.

Note Regarding Development cards: It is Sport Canada's expectation that an athlete is training under the direction of Rowing Canada Aviron, while receiving Sport Canada AAP Carding support. Athletes who are centralized at the National Training Centre [NTC] (SR or Development card) fulfill this expectation. Athletes training outside this environment, for a portion of the year, may still qualify based on an Individual Athlete Plan (IAP). This plan must be approved by RCA's High Performance Director. The IAP will outline key expectations for athletes while training outside the NTC or NGPC including:

- Camp participation – Selection camps and/or training camps
- Competition participation – both domestic and international
- Assessment events
- Testing – includes ergometer
- Daily Monitoring – training load, volumes, health and wellness
- Meeting Dev to SR progression benchmarks (See appendix)

Athletes receiving a Development card and unable to fulfill the expectations of the IAP can choose to opt out of a 12-month card and request one of the following carding options.

- 1) 4 Month Card (July, August, Sept, and June of following year) – the following athletes may fit into this carding
 - Athletes training and competing with University programs (Canadian and US) and unable to attend Camps and Competitions set out in their IAP.
 - Athletes training outside of Canada.
- 2) 6 Month Card (July to Sept, and April to June of the following year) Can fulfill all IAP requirements during these months.

Note: Athletes receiving 4 month or 6 month Dev cards are still required to meet Dev to SR progression benchmarks (see appendix)

In most cases athletes training in a US College/University programs must select a 4 month card.

See appendix 5 – Development Card Funding Cycle: for an overview of possible carding cycles and affiliated support.

BEACH SPECIFIC: in 2026 athletes competing in the “Beach” category will be eligible to be part of Carding Process. Specific Criteria regarding eligibility and assignment of beach cards sits outside the criteria of “classic” cards and can be found in Appendix 8.

4. Specific Carding Criteria

The following priorities constitute the sequential order for nominating eligible athletes until there are no funds remaining.

Step 1: ELIGIBILITY. - CLASSIC

Athletes are deemed “Eligible” for sport Canada Carding, under the CLASSIC category, if they fit into one of the two categories.

- 1) Identified as and NTC athlete (Centralized or Decentralized) and;
 - Selected to a World Cup or identified International Event or;
 - Meet the points outlined in section 8, Performance Scoring Rubric.
- 2) Identified as a U23 Targeted athlete and;
 - Selected to a World Rowing U23 Championships team or;

- Selected to a NextGen Development project training within an approved environment, and;
- Meet the points outlined in section 7, performance scoring Rubric.

*A U23 Targeted athlete is an individual who has been invited to U23 Selection trials by RCA's coaching staff.

Step 2: All "ELIGIBLE" athletes are assigned to a Group based on performance, section 5.

Step 3: Carding level is identified by referring to RCA's requirements for each level of carding, section 6

Step 4: Cards are assigned by group starting with group 1 through to group 8 until either all funding is dispersed, or all eligible athletes are supported.

- If there is not enough funding to card all athletes within a group, athletes will be ranked using the "Performance Scoring Rubric" Section 7
 - If there is a tie of one or more athletes, and not enough funding to support all. Athletes will be ranked based on their score in grouping 1 the Performance Scoring Rubric, Section 7.
 - If a tie remains, athletes will be ranked based on their score from grouping 2 of the Performance Scoring Rubric, Section 7.
 - If a tie still remains. The athlete with the best 2k erg score against the associated erg standards listed in Appendix 6 will be ranked highest. The 2k ergometer submitted between;
 - January 1st, 2026, and May 31st, 2026, will be used for July intake, and
 - September 1st, 2026, and November 30th, 2026, will be used for the January intake
- Coxswains – Coxswains who meet eligibility requirements and do not achieve a performance as outlined in section 5, grouping 1 through 6, may be considered for carding support in group 7. Athletes will be assessed against their abilities to support RCA's HP goals. The following are considerations that could be used in assessing an athletes' nomination for carding.
 - Scoring within RCA's Coxswain evaluation rubric,
 - Coaches' assessment of competitive performance during training sessions.
 - Athlete and Coach feedback on compatibility and commitment to program.
 - Other factors that support their performance.

Step 5: Wild Cards During each 12-month carding cycle, the HPD can assign up to two Cards, bypassing all steps and criteria outlined within this document. These cards would be assigned based on "exceptional" circumstances and can be assigned at any point throughout the year. See appendix 7 for specifics regarding the Wild Card Process.

Step 6: January intake: the primary focus of January intake is to distribute any remaining funding. Eligible athletes are assigned to a Group (section 5) based on performance. For section 5 group 3, 4, 5, and 6, 2025 events are replaced with 2026 events.

Additionally, any athlete selected to a U23 National Team in an OPEN boat class, are "ELIGIBLE" for January Intake.

5. RCA's Carding Grouping list:

All "ELIGIBLE" athletes are grouped based on the following performance groups.

Group	Performance Requirement
1	Athletes eligible for SR1 or SR2 based on Sport Canada's Criteria
2	Achieve a placing that would reflect qualification to the 2028 Olympic / Paralympic games through 2025 Sr World Championship results. See appendix (3) (NOT APPLICABLE IN 2028)
3	Top 3 finish that is also top half of the field, at a 2025 World Cup event,
4	Gold Medal at the 2025 U23 World Rowing Championships.
5	Achieve an Olympic Qualification placing that is also top half of the field, through 2025 World Cup results. See appendix (3)
6	Top 5 and top Half or top 3 at the 2025 U23 World Rowing Championships in an open boat class.
7	Coxswains, Health-related cards. Injury, illness or pregnancy (see appendix 4)
8	Performance Ranking within RCA 2025/26 Selection and monitoring Activities. **

Progression once assigned NTC Status

Group	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6(+)	Exception
1	X	X	X	X	X	X	Athlete who raced at an Olympic Games and choose to take more than 12 months off can be assessed in group 8 in the first year they return to NTC status
2	X	X	X	X	X	X	
3	X	X	X	X	X	X	
4	X	X	X	X			
5	X	X	X	X			
6	X	X	X				
7			X	X	X	X	
8	X	X					

**Eligible athletes who do not fit into Groups 1-7 will be ranked based on their performance within the Performance Scoring Rubric in Section 7. A ranking of athletes will be communicated at the end of June for review. For athletes to be considered in the 2026/27 cycle a minimum of 20 points from the Ranking Rubric must be achieved.

6. Allocation of Carding level table

Carding Level	Description	Amount
Senior 1 / 2 🏆	As identified by Sport Canada – Classic	\$2,175 / Month
Sr National	- Assigned Elite or World Class NTC status Training full time at NTC (or) decentralized NTC athlete on approved IAP. - Athletes assigned 'Aspirational' and training full time at the NTC	\$2,175/ Month
Development	- Athletes who have been invited to the NTC and assigned an 'Aspirational' Status and are decentralised on an approved IAP. - Athletes who have been invited to the NTC, assigned a "NTC-NextGen" Status, and Training full time at the NTC. - Next Gen athletes engaged with Under 23, Pan Am games or other seasonal based programming. - Athletes who have achieved 20 or more points and are decentralized.	\$1,305 / Month

See appendix 5 for an overview of the funding cycles for development cards.

7. Performance Ranking Scoring Rubric

The following scoring sheet will be used to rank athletes in Group 8 who are eligible for carding, and do not achieve performances outlined in groups 1-7 of Section 5.

For Group 8 athletes to be considered in the 2026/26 cycle they must score a minimum of 20 points

Athletes receive the highest score available to them from each of the 2 Groupings.

	July 2026 Intake			January 2027 Intake		
Grouping	Details		Points	Details		Points
1	Selected to the following programs for the 2026 International Race Season, June 1, 2026 – October 31, 2026	Selected to a 2026 World Cup Team or identified International Event	20	NTC Athlete	Selected to the 2026 SR World Championships Team	20
		Identified as an NTC Athlete in the Spring	17		Identified as an NTC Athlete in the Fall	17
		Identified as a U23 Targeted athlete, as listed in section 4	15	OR		
		Invited to NTC Spring Assessment Camp	10	Performance at 2026 World Rowing U23 Championships in an open boat class	Top 5 and top 30%	15
				Top 8 and top 50%	10	
2	Achieved one of the erg targets. From January 1 to June 17 th , 2026	2k equal or better than Level 1	12	Achieved one of the erg targets. From September 1 to November 30 th , 2026	2k equal or better than Level 1	12
		2k equal or better than Level 2	10		2k equal or better than Level 2	10
		2k equal or better than Level 3	8		2k equal or better than Level 3	8
		2k equal or better than Level 4	6		2k equal or better than Level 4	6
		OR			OR	
	See appendix 6	6k equal or better than level 1	11	See appendix 6	6k equal or better than level 1	11
		6k equal or better than level 2	9		6k equal or better than level 2	9
		6k equal or better than level 3	7		6k equal or better than level 3	7
		6k equal or better than level 4	5		6k equal or better than level 4	5

In the case of a tie (same score) the following process will be used to break the tie.

- If there is a tie of one or more athletes, and not enough funding to support all. Athletes will be ranked based on their score in grouping 1 the Performance Scoring Rubric, Section 7.
- If a tie remains, athletes will be ranked based on their score from grouping 2 of the Performance Scoring Rubric, Section 7.
- If a tie still remains. The athlete with the best 2k erg score against the associated erg standards listed in Appendix 6 will be ranked highest. The 2k ergometer submitted between;
 - January 1st, 2026, and April 31st, 2026, will be used for July intake and;
 - September 1st, 2026, and November 30th, 2026, will be used for the January intake

APPENDIX 1: Classic and Beach Disciplines

Classic Discipline: Is considered Sprint Racing over a set distance, typically 2000m, in a straight line. Athletes race side by side in buoyed lanes. Although impacted by external conditions races are completed on a course with no flow, current, or tide.

Beach Discipline: is a new discipline typically raced on large bodies of water (Oceans, Lakes, other). Events include running, and rowing as key elements to their performance. Racers compete Head-to-head in over a course that includes slalom and point to point rowing. Athletes must manage multiple conditions including current, tide, waves, and other extreme conditions.

APPENDIX 2: AAP Nomination and Approval timelines

July 2026 Intake		
Dates	Details	Other info
January 1 st – June 21 th , 2026	Athletes engaged in selection processes as outlined in RCA selection documents and overviews	
	Athletes engage in required testing and monitoring.	Section 7, grouping 2
June, 2026	A list of athletes Eligible for carding to be posted on RCA website	Section 4 Step 1
	Athlete groupings assigned including scoring for group 8	Section 4 Step 2 through 5
	Athletes assigned to GROUPS and group 8 scoring communicated to eligible athletes	Section 7
June 23-25th, 2026	HP Leadership team meeting. Review and confirmation of; 1. finalized names. 2. Grouping for each athlete. 3. Carding level assigned. 4. Funding allotment available for January 2026 intake.	
	After completion of this meeting a final list will be produced and communicated to eligible athletes	
July 2026	RCA meeting with Sport Canada within the first 2 weeks of July, to review and confirm list	
July 2026	Funding cycle begins- Retroactive to July 1 st , 2026	

January 2027 Intake		
Dates	Details	Other info
July 1 st – December 31st, 2026	Athletes engaged in competitions and selection processes as outlined in RCA selection documents and overviews	
	Athletes engage in required testing and monitoring.	Section 7, grouping 2
	A list of athletes Eligible for carding to be posted on RCA website	Section 4, Step 1

December, 2026	Athlete groupings assigned including scoring for group 8	Section 4, Step 2 through 6
	Group assignments and group 8 scoring communicated to eligible athletes	Section 7
January 4-8, 2027	HP Leadership team meeting. Review and confirmation of; 1. finalized names. 2. Grouping for each athlete. 3. Carding level assigned. 4. Funding allotment available for January 2026 intake.	
	After completion of this meeting a final list will be produced and communicated to eligible athletes	
Week of January 11th, 2027 (tbc)	RCA meeting with Sport Canada to review and confirm list	
January 1 st , 2027	Funding Cycle Begins	

HP leadership team consists of.

- High Performance Director – Adam Parfitt
- SSSM lead – Jordan Clarke
- NextGen Program Lead – Chuck McDiarmid
- Lead Women’s Coach – Tom Morris
- Lead Men’s Coach – Lauren Fisher

APPENDIX 3: Olympic and Paralympic Qualification Spots.

To be confirmed by World Rowing.

APPENDIX 4: Health Related Card

For carding information related to injury, illness, pregnancy, or other applicable situations, Rowing Canada Aviron defers to section 9 of Sport Canada’s Athlete Assistance Plan.

Health-related cards for SR1/2, SR and Development will be prioritized at the bottom of their respective carding levels.

APPENDIX 5: Development Carding – Funding Cycle Options

		2026						2027						Available Support	Tuition Voucher
		July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June		
July Intake	12 Month	1 st											30 th	\$1305 / Month	
	6 Month	1 st		30 th							1 st		30 th	\$1305 / Month	
	4 Month	1 st		30 th									1 st –30 th	\$1305 / Month	

January Intake	6 Month							1 st					30 th	\$1305 / Month	
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Additional 4 Month blocks can be assessed and implemented based on the needs of the athlete and RCA's HP program. This adjustment would require the approval of Sport Canada

Tuition Vouchers: Athletes are eligible for \$5,500 per cycle, or \$27,500 lifetime maximum in tuition to a Canadian Post-Secondary School.

APPENDIX 6: RCA 2026 Ergometer Targets for Carding

2000m		
	Open Men	Open Women
Level 1 – 12 points	5:50.0	6:43.0
Level 2 – 10 points	5:56.0	6:49.0
Level 3 – 8 points	6:01.0	6:54.0
Level 4 – 6 points	6:06.0	6:59.0

6000m		
	Open Men	Open Women
Level 1 – 11 points	18:50.0	21:45.0
Level 2 – 9 points	19:05.0	22:00.0
Level 3 – 7 points	19:20.0	22:15.0
Level 4 – 5 points	19:35.0	22:30.0

APPENDIX 7: Wild Cards

For a Wild Card to be assigned an athlete must demonstrate that although they do not meet the Specific Carding Requirements outlined in Section 4, their support through carding will achieve the performance goals set out by Rowing Canada Aviron's Olympic and Paralympic Program, and Sport Canada's Carding Objectives.

For an athlete to be considered, for a WILD CARD, a clear case must be presented to RCA's High Performance Leadership team outlining the merits of supporting the individual with carding.

This should include past and present performances against the key characteristics outlined in RCA's Gold Medal Profile.

Athletes who wish to be considered for a wild card should contact RCA's High Performance Director directly to discuss.

APPENDIX 8: Beach

July Intake: Up to 4 (Four) 12-month Development Cards (D Cards) will be assigned in August to athletes that achieve the following.

Athletes selected to represent Canada at the World Rowing Beach Sprints Finals in the following events.

Open Men's Solo – M1x; 1 Card
Open Women's Solo – W1x; 1 Card
Open Mixed Double – Mix2x; 2 Cards

Selection will happen through RCA's Beach Spring Selection process, in which boats must achieve performance standards to be selected to the team.

Cards will run for 12 months with funding being retroactive to July 1st, 2026, through to June 30th, 2027.