



# 2022 USAT Elite Triathlon National Team Program

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES, OVERVIEW, & CRITERIA

SELECTION PERIOD JANUARY 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2022

### Program Guiding Principles & Overview

USA Triathlon (USAT) High Performance (HP) Department is responsible for supporting athletes who have the vision, goals and are capable of winning Olympic & Paralympic Games medals, while identifying, supporting & developing future Games medalists. To help achieve this objective USAT has developed and supports Elite Triathlon and Elite Paratriathlon National Team Programs. The USAT Elite Triathlon National Team Program (the “Program”) and any financial support associated is designed specifically to assist athletes in their pathway to achieving podium performances at the Olympic Games. The three-tiered Program provides performance-based support to athletes in the form of administrative assistance, performance advisement and allocation of equipment and financial resources. The Program is comprised of athletes with proven performance capability and is designed with three ascending tiers to support athletes as they advance towards their goal of achieving podium performances at the Olympic Games. Athletes are expected to advance levels during their time in the Program with improving international performances reflective of their ability to execute Olympic podium performances.

In addition to the qualification criteria specific to each tier outlined on Page 3, athletes must meet the following minimum criteria to be eligible for the Program:

- Eligible to represent USA Triathlon in World Triathlon competition, including but not limited to:
  - National Federation (NF) affiliation
  - Current USA Triathlon elite license holder in good standing
  - Current with World Triathlon Pre-Participation Evaluation (PPE) requirements
- Current with SafeSport training & Background Check
- Commitment to the draft-legal format (to be evaluated by USA Triathlon; all non-drafting and non-World Triathlon events must be approved in advance by the Elite Triathlon Senior Manager [courtney.gardner@usatriathlon.org](mailto:courtney.gardner@usatriathlon.org))
- Creation, submission, & adherence to an annual performance plan
- Signed National Team Program Athlete Agreement for the term

Results achieved on or after January 1, 2022 are eligible to be used as automatic qualification criteria outlined on Page 3. It is the responsibility of each athlete to inform USAT High Performance when they have achieved a result which would earn a change in program status. All Program athletes (who are named at the start of the term) will be subject to renewal on December 31, 2022. Criteria objectively achieved by program athletes during 2022 guarantees selection to that tier for the 2023 season. Athletes not currently in the Program may be named in advance of the next term, once all eligibility criteria are confirmed and processed, and will retain selection for the 2023 season as well assuming they remain eligible, in good standing, and have a signed 2023 National Team Program Athlete Agreement. Existing Program athletes who have achieved objective criteria may advance to a higher Tier starting on the first of the next month.

Any financial support outlined in this document represents expected funding levels based on the three tiers of the Program, though additional funding and support opportunities may become available to Program athletes and will be communicated accordingly. The descriptions below summarize the purpose of each funding mechanism available. After a review of the Annual Performance Plan (APP), a customized support plan will be developed for each athlete depending on resources available. Adjustments to the approved APP must be approved prior to incurring reimbursable expenses.

- USAT stipend: supports basic living and training expenses
- Travel reimbursement: supports athlete’s travel to compete in developmentally appropriate World Triathlon events
- Coaching stipend: compensates USA Triathlon Certified Coaches working with National Team Program athletes.
- USOPC benefits: Elite Athlete Health Insurance & Operation Gold funding will be distributed per the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) criteria

### Performance Progress

Athletes who qualify for A Team, or B Team will be supported at those levels indefinitely through the term of the Program regardless of Program history and term. Athletes who have been part of the Elite Triathlon National Team Program for 2 years or more (consecutively or not) and who only qualify for C Team will not be automatically eligible for the Program. Requests for special consideration will be subject to discretionary review (as described above) which will review performance results, data analytics, and age performance analytics with an objective of demonstrating continued progress towards Olympic medal capacity in the next Games before being eligible for the Program.

C Team is the entry level of the Elite Triathlon National Team Program and is designed to capture developing athletes on their way to attain higher levels of National Team status en route to achieving their Olympic Games medal objectives. Therefore, returning Elite Triathlon National Team Program athletes are not expected to remain on C Team for more than 2 years and athletes who have been on A & B Teams will not be permitted to drop to C Team without special consideration. Athletes who are not confirmed for repeat National Team Program support, may be eligible for other High Performance support resources at the discretion of USAT High Performance.

### Discretionary Consideration

USA Triathlon may use discretion to select athletes who have not met the objective criteria for the Program for several reasons. These include, but are not limited to, injury or illness, the occurrence of exceptional circumstances (e.g. earthquakes, cancellation of other World Triathlon events, epidemics, riots), and other unanticipated failure of objective criteria to select an athlete likely to achieve competition results consistent with the program Tiers.

Discretionary nominations, if any, may be based on a variety of factors, including consideration of competition results outside of the selection period and data analytics, to ensure that USA Triathlon is investing in the most qualified athletes with the greatest potential of winning Olympic Games medals. Discretionary nominations for the Program, along with Tier level and term length, will be determined by a panel of two USA Triathlon High Performance Staff (who do not serve in the capacity as a personal coach to program athletes) and one elite athlete representative.

*Concerns or questions related to discretionary decisions should be communicated to the USA Triathlon High Performance General Manager ([hpqm@usatriathlon.org](mailto:hpqm@usatriathlon.org) or 719-744-2842). In addition, athletes are encouraged to contact the Athlete Ombuds Office as a resource for confidential, independent advice and assistance with resolving disputes (contact information below). After the previous steps have occurred, athletes may contact USA Triathlon Senior Counsel ([legal@usatriathlon.org](mailto:legal@usatriathlon.org) or 720-800-6622) to administer an executive review to ensure published criteria and process was followed.*

*Athletes have the right to file a grievance and have a hearing per the [USAT Grievance and Disciplinary Policy](#). Athletes also have the right to report any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest and will not be retaliated against for raising concerns or asking questions of USA Triathlon or the Athlete Ombuds Office. For more information, please see [USA Triathlon's Whistleblower Policy](#).*

**Athlete Ombuds** - The Office of the Athlete Ombuds offers independent, confidential advice to elite athletes regarding their rights and responsibilities in the Olympic and Paralympic Movement, and assists athletes with a broad range of questions, disputes, complaints and concerns.

Phone: 719-866-5000

Email: [ombudsman@usathlete.org](mailto:ombudsman@usathlete.org)

Website: [usathlete.org](http://usathlete.org)

### Elite Athlete Health Insurance (EAHI)

The United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) allocates EAHI slots to National Governing Bodies (NGBs) on a basis of objective performance. This program provides an affordable insurance option to athletes. This benefit is provided through the USOPC and is made available to USA Triathlon Elite Triathlon National Team Program athletes at the Tier 1 (A), Tier 2 (B) and Tier 3 (C) Team levels.

Athletes must remain in good standing to receive EAHI benefits for the duration of their Elite Triathlon National Team Program term. Athletes who break their agreement or are no longer committed to the draft-legal format will be removed. Athletes who are removed from the program (by choice, by actions, or by contract expiration) may have the option to remain on the insurance program at their own cost for up to one year.

**Projected 2022 Support Levels:** (subject to change at the start of each selection period depending on USAT & USOPC funding capacity)

NTP Level	DAS (Direct Athlete Support) stipend	Coaching Stipend	USOPC Insurance
Tier 1	\$5,000/quarter	\$2,400/quarter	Eligible for EAHI
Tier 2	\$3,750/quarter	\$1,800/quarter	Eligible for EAHI
Tier 3	\$2,250/quarter	\$1,200/quarter	Eligible for EAHI

**USAT Elite Triathlon National Team Program Criteria:** January 1 – December 31, 2022 (Selection Period).

### Tier 1 (A Team)

Athletes may achieve Tier 1 status through any **one** of the following criteria:

- Win a World Triathlon Championship Series event
- Podium (Top 3) World Triathlon Championship Final (Olympic or Sprint)

Athletes may also achieve Tier 1 status through any **three** of the following criteria:

*(In situations where only individual event results are used, at least one must be contested over the Olympic distance or Super-Sprint distance.)*

- Top 8 finish at the World Triathlon Championship Final (Olympic or Sprint)
- Podium (Top 3) finish at a World Triathlon Championship Series event

### Tier 2 (B Team)

Athletes may achieve Tier 2 status through any **one** of the following criteria:

- Podium (Top 3) in a World Triathlon Championship Series individual event
- Top 5 World Triathlon Championship Final (Olympic or Sprint)

Athletes achieve Tier 2 status through any **three** of the following criteria:

*(In situations where only individual event results are used, at least one must be contested over the Olympic-distance or Super Sprint distance. Only two World Cup results may be utilized towards the three criteria. A maximum of two Mixed Relay (MR) results may be used, meaning to reach three criteria, one individual result must be achieved as well.)*

- Top 10 finish at the World Triathlon Championship Final (Olympic or Sprint)
- Top 8 finish in a World Triathlon Championship Series event
- Win a World Triathlon Cup event (starting field must have 50 or more athletes)
- Win World Triathlon U23 Championship event
- Member of top 2 team at a World Triathlon Championship Series MR event or World Triathlon MR Championships

### Tier 3 (C Team)\*

Athletes may achieve Tier 3 status through any **one** of the following criteria:

- Top 8 World Triathlon Championship Series individual event result
- Top 10 World Triathlon Championship Final (Olympic or Sprint)
- Win a World Triathlon Cup event (starting field must have 50 or more athletes)
- Win U23 World Triathlon Championships individual event

Athletes may achieve Tier 3 status through any **three** of the following criteria:

*(In situations where only individual event results are used, at least one must be contested over the Olympic-distance or Super Sprint distance. Only two World Cup results may be utilized towards the three criteria. A maximum of two Mixed Relay (MR) results may be used, meaning to reach three criteria, one individual result must be achieved as well.)*

- Top 20 finish at the World Triathlon Championship Final (Olympic or Sprint Championship event)
- Top 15 finish in a World Triathlon Championship Series event
- Podium (Top 3) finish in a World Triathlon Cup event
- Podium (Top 3) at U23 World Triathlon Championship individual event
- Member of a podium team at a World Triathlon Championship Series Mixed Relay event or World Triathlon Mixed Relay Championships event
- Member of the winning team at the World Triathlon Junior/U23 Mixed Relay Championships

*\*Returning athletes with 2 years (or more) of National Team Program status are not automatically eligible for C Team. (see page 2).*