

# **ATHLETE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (AAP) FOR 2026/2027 SEASON**



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## Introduction

This document aims to describe the criteria that will be used by KARATE CANADA for nominating athletes for Sport Canada's Athlete Assistance Program (AAP).

The carding cycle for karate is from May 1, 2026, to April 30, 2027.

The Sport Canada quota available to KARATE CANADA is the equivalent of two (2) Senior cards (\$52,200). Monthly stipends are \$2,175.00 for Senior Cards. Sport Canada frequently reviews the card quota for all sports; these numbers are therefore subject to change.

The Sport Technical Leader (STL) or designated substitute are responsible to nominate athletes for Sport Canada's Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) based on the approved published AAP compliant carding criteria. Sport Canada reviews and may approve nominations of eligible athletes, based on the published NSO approved AAP-compliant Carding Criteria and the policies and procedures of the AAP.

The AAP policies, procedures and guidelines are found on the Sport Canada website at <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/athlete-assistance/policies-procedures.html>

## Eligibility

To qualify for AAP carding nomination and support, an athlete must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- The athlete, under the karate eligibility requirements of the World Karate Federation, must currently be eligible to represent Canada at major international events, World Championships, in mainstream divisions (para-athletes are currently not eligible for AAP carding nominations). This requirement means that the athlete must possess a Canadian passport at the beginning of the carding cycle.
- The athlete must complete and sign both the Athlete Agreement and Athlete Assistance Program Application Form for the year in question.
- The athlete must be a member in good standing of the Senior or Junior National Team Roster.
- All other athlete eligibility requirements listed in the AAP policies and procedures.

## Prioritization

Nominations for AAP support will be made in the following order of priority:

1. Athletes eligible for "Senior International" SR1 cards;
2. Athletes eligible for "Senior International" SR2 cards;
3. Athletes carded in 2025-2026 at the Senior International Card Level (SR1/SR2) who have health-related circumstances and who meet Sport Canada's policy (Section 9) on curtailment of training and competition for health-related
4. Athletes eligible for "Senior National" (SR) cards;
5. Athletes carded in 2025-2026 at the Senior National Card Level (SR) who have health-related circumstances and who meet Sport Canada's policy (Section 9) on curtailment of training and competition for health-related reasons.
6. Athletes eligible for "Development" (D) cards based on Priority 1

## 7. Athletes eligible for “Development” (D) cards based on Priority 2

### Senior Carding Criteria

#### Senior International Carding Criteria (SR1/SR2)

International Criteria recognize and reward Canadian athletes for outstanding performance at World Championships.

Athletes who meet the International Criteria are eligible to be nominated by Karate Canada for two consecutive years: the first year card is referred to as SR1; the second, SR2. Eligibility for an SR2 card is contingent on the athlete maintaining a training and competitive program approved by Karate Canada, on being re-nominated by Karate Canada, on signing an Athlete Agreement and completing an AAP Application Form, and Sport Canada’s carding program support of karate.

Sport Canada establishes the performance standards for International Criteria used to determine eligibility to be nominated for senior cards. The following are the current standards for international criteria.

- Finish in the top eight, counting a maximum of three entries per country; and
- Finish in the top half of the field.

#### Tie-Breaking for Senior International Cards (SR1 & SR2):

If there are fewer cards than the number of athletes that meet the above Senior International carding criteria, or if two athletes meet the above Senior International carding criteria in any given identified Senior World Championships category, the following process will apply to determine the athletes eligible for nominations:

1. The athlete with the highest placement at the WKF Sr. Individual world championships will be ranked higher
2. If the tie persists, the athlete with the highest WKF ranking in an individual senior category will be ranked higher;
3. If the tie persists, the athlete with the highest individual placement at a Premier League event (within the top 8) within the current season will be ranked higher;
4. If the tie persists, the athlete with the highest individual placement at the 2025 Senior PKF will be ranked higher;
5. If the tie persists, the athlete with the highest individual placement at the 2026 National Championships will be ranked higher;
6. If, after the application of this ranking process, a tie still exists, a final decision will be taken by the Senior National Team Head Coaches (or appointed substitutes). Karate Canada’s High-Performance Committee must approve this final selection and process.

#### Senior National Carding Criteria (SR)

To be eligible for nomination under the Senior National Card criteria:

- The athlete must be a member in good standing with the Senior National Roster and Karate Canada.
- If one or more athletes meet the same senior national carding criteria priority, the number of months of carding remaining will be distributed evenly amongst the athlete(s) provided that a minimum of 4 months of carding is available

Eligible athletes will be prioritized for nomination based on the following sequence.

- Highest WKF world ranking athlete within the top 15, in an individual Senior category, at the time of selection.
  - Next highest WKF world ranking athlete within the top 15, in an individual Senior category, at the time of selection.
  - Athlete(s) who qualify and compete at the 2025 WKF Sr. Individual World Championships
  - Highest WKF world ranked athlete to qualify for the 2025 WKF Sr. Individual World Championships
  - Highest individual placement at a Premier League event (within the top 8) within the current season will be ranked higher;
  - Next highest individual placement at a Premier League event (within the top 8) within the current season will be ranked higher;
  - Highest individual placement at the 2025 Senior PKF event (within the top 3) within the current season will be ranked higher;
  - Next highest individual placement at the 2025 Senior PKF event (within the top 3) within the current season will be ranked higher;
  - Highest individual placement at a Series-A event (within the top 5) within the current season will be ranked higher;
  - Next highest individual placement at a Series-A event (within the top 5) within the current season will be ranked higher;
8. If, after the application of this ranking process, a tie still exists, a selection will be made by the Senior National Team Head Coaches (or appointed substitutes). Karate Canada's High-Performance Committee must approve this final selection and process.

Note: A minimum of 4 months of AAP support must be available to recommend an athlete.

### Maximum number of years at SR level

Maximum number of years at SR level applies once the athlete reached the WKF post-junior (21 years and older) age category. Since the WKF's "Junior" divisions include U21 (18-20-year-old), the designation "WKF post-junior age category," in this document, refers specifically to athletes 21 years of age and older.

Once the athlete reaches the WKF post-junior age category, they can be carded at the SR Card level for a maximum of four (4) years, after which the Senior National Team Head Coach in the respective discipline (or appointed substitute) will review the athlete's past performances to determine the potential to progress to the Senior International Card level, and establish clear and specific performance benchmarks/standards and indicators for the athlete to achieve within the ensuing season(s) to be deemed eligible for future nominations towards SR level Cards. These performance benchmarks, once approved by Sport Canada and the High-Performance Committee, must be communicated in writing to the athlete at the start of the Carding cycle for which they may be considered for future Carding nominations at the SR level. If approved by Sport Canada, such an athlete will be eligible for carding at the SR level subject to meeting the annual performance standards and an annual review.

## Development Carding Criteria (D card)

Nomination under the Development Carding criteria will occur in the following priority sequence.

### Priority 1:

An athlete who won gold in an individual U21 division at the 2025 Pan American Championship will be ranked higher; (bye and absence of an adversary do not count as a win).

### Tie-Breaking for Development Cards allocated according to Priority 1

If there are fewer Development cards available than the number of athletes who meet the Priority 1 of the Development carding criteria, the following process will apply to determine the athletes eligible for nominations:

1. If two or more athletes have won gold in an individual U21 division at the 2025 Pan American Championship, any athlete who is also a current Senior National Team member (in the same discipline) at the time of the athlete selection for Carding nomination will be ranked higher;
2. If, after the application of this ranking process, a tie still exists, a selection will be made by the Senior National Team Head Coaches (or appointed substitutes). Karate Canada's High-Performance Committee must approve this final selection and process.

Note: A minimum of 4 months of AAP support must be available to recommend an athlete.

### Priority 2:

U21 age-eligible kumite athletes holding Senior National Team Roster member status, and Junior (16-17) and U21 age-eligible kata athletes holding Senior National Team Roster member status.

### Tie-Breaking for Development Cards allocated according to Priority 2

If there are fewer Development cards available than the number of athletes who meet Priority 2 of the Development card criteria, the process below will be applied in the following order:

1. The athlete having achieved the best finish (in the discipline where they are both a Junior and Senior National Team Roster member at the time of the carding nomination) with at least one win at the highest priority competition of the season (as per the 2025-2026 Senior National Team Criteria) will be ranked higher;
2. If the tie persists, the athlete holding the having achieved the best finish (in the discipline where they are both a Junior and Senior National Team Roster member at the time of the carding nomination) with at least one win at the second-highest priority competition of the season (as per the 2025-2026 Senior National Team Criteria) will be ranked higher;
3. The same process as described in points 1 and 2 immediately above will be followed until the tie is broken, or until all finishes in point-earning competitions of the season have been compared and a tie still exists;

If, after the application of this ranking process, a tie still exists, a selection will be made by the Senior National Team Head Coaches (or appointed substitutes). Karate Canada's High-Performance Committee must approve this final selection and process.

Note: A minimum of 4 months of AAP support must be available to recommend an athlete.

## HEALTH-RELATED CIRCUMSTANCES Carding Criteria

Athletes carded the previous year at SR1, or SR2 level who have failed to meet renewal criteria strictly due to health-related reasons may be considered for re-nomination for the upcoming carding period under the following conditions:

- The carded athlete has fulfilled all reasonable training and rehabilitation requirements aimed at a speedy return to full high-performance training and competition during the period of their injury, illness, pregnancy or other health-related circumstance, or is continuing a rehabilitation program approved by Karate Canada;
- In the view of Karate Canada, the carded athlete's failure to attain the applicable carding standards is strictly related to the injury, illness, pregnancy or other health-related circumstance;
- Karate Canada, based on its technical judgement and that of a Karate Canada team physician or equivalent, indicates in writing the expectation that the carded athlete will achieve at least the minimum standards required for carding during the upcoming carding period;
- The carded athlete has 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;
- Karate Canada must provide evidence that the above requirements are being met in order to nominate athletes for carding based on the above provisions.

KARATE CANADA, based on its technical judgment and that of KARATE CANADA National Team Coaches, determines that the athlete has satisfactorily demonstrated and continues to demonstrate a 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.

### Tie-Breaking for Health Related Circumstances Cards

If there are fewer cards than the number of athletes that meet the health related circumstances carding criteria, the athletes will be ranked as per the previous year's AAP nomination ranking.

Athletes should familiarize themselves with the policy explained in Section 9 of the Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Program Policies and Procedures. This document can be found online at:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/athlete-assistance/policies-procedures.html#a11>

## Notification of Nomination

The list of athletes being nominated for the AAP Carding support will be posted on Karate Canada's official website. Athletes will have a review period of seven days commencing on the date of

announcement to advise Karate Canada of any omissions or errors in the nomination list. Sport Canada determines the final approval of nominations.

## Appeal of Procedure

Appeals of Karate Canada's AAP nomination / re-nomination decision or of a Karate Canada recommendation to withdraw carding may be pursued only through Karate Canada's Appeal process, as described in its Appeals Policy.

Appeals of AAP Decisions made under Section 6 (Application for and Approval of Cards) or Section 11 (Withdrawal of Carding Status) of the AAP Policies, Procedures and Guidelines may be pursued through Section 13 of these same AAP Policies, Procedures and Guidelines.