



SITTING VOLLEYBALL NATIONAL TEAMS
2026-2027 ATHLETE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM CARDING CRITERIA

1. Sport Canada's Athlete Assistance Program (AAP)

The Sport Canada AAP is intended to provide financial support to National Team athletes, to assist with living and training expenses enabling their participation in year-round training and competition regimes, in order to facilitate the attainment of their immediate and long-range goals of excellence at a Paralympic Games or World Championships.

Athletes who are approved for funding and are financially supported through the AAP are referred to as Carded Athletes. AAP support is referred to as Carding.

2. Eligibility

To be considered eligible for AAP assistance in Volleyball Canada's National Team Program, an athlete must:

- Have a medically documented physical disability that meets the World ParaVolley classification standards for Sitting Volleyball;
- Be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada at the beginning of the carding cycle for which the athlete is being nominated. Permanent residents must live in Canada for the full year preceding the carding cycle for which the athlete is being considered for AAP support;
- Be eligible to represent Canada, under the eligibility requirements of World ParaVolley and the IPC as it pertains to citizenship or residency status, at major international competitions, including World Championships, at the beginning of the carding cycle for which the athlete is being nominated;
- Be a registered member in good standing of Volleyball Canada, including returning athletes having met all requirements of previous years Athlete Agreement as well as individual training (IPP) outlined by Volleyball Canada staff and IST;
- Sign an Athlete Agreement, complete the Athlete Assistance Program Application Form for the year in question, and complete the required CCES on-line anti-doping courses;
- Maintain a training and competitive volleyball program approved by Volleyball Canada throughout the carding cycle.

3. AAP Carding Quota, Levels and Cycle

Sport Canada currently provides Volleyball Canada with the equivalent of 6 SR cards (\$156,600) for the Men's National Sitting Volleyball Team and the equivalent of 13 SR cards (\$339,300) for the Women's National Sitting Volleyball Team. The number of cards may vary from year to year and is at the discretion of Sport Canada and may be dependent on the prior year's performance of each respective national team.

The current carding cycle runs from June 1, 2026 to May 31st, 2027.



Athletes approved by Sport Canada for the AAP may be eligible for a living and training allowance, tuition support (in a Sport Canada approved University, College program or other post-secondary institution), deferred tuition support, and special needs assistance. Athletes funded through the AAP receive a monthly stipend as follows:

Card Type	Monthly Stipend
Senior International Card (SR1/SR2)	\$2,175
Senior National Card (SR)	\$2,175
Development Card (D)	\$1,305

Approved athletes must be nominated for a minimum of 4 months, and up to a maximum of 12 months.

More information on the AAP can be found at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/athlete-assistance.html>.

4. Nomination Timelines and Procedures

The nomination of athletes for AAP generally takes place between April and May of each year for the sitting volleyball programs.

The AAP submission document, along with athlete carding nominations is completed and submitted to Sport Canada annually according to the timelines above. The submission is prepared by the High-Performance Director for Sitting Volleyball in partnership with the Sitting Volleyball National Team Head Coaches. Prior to submission to Sport Canada, the Volleyball Canada High Performance Director for Sitting Volleyball will review the carding nominations with the respective National Team Head Coach and Volleyball Canada's Chief Sport Officer who will approve on the basis of the selection criteria.

5. AAP Nomination Criteria

CATEGORIES & DEFINITIONS OVERVIEW

A. Senior Card categories include SR1, SR2 or SR

- Senior International carding criteria (SR1/SR2): finish in the top 8 and top half of the field at the World Championships or Paralympic Games.
- Senior National carding criteria (SR): members of the National Team.

B. Development Card category

- Development carding criteria (D): intended to support the development needs of athletes who clearly demonstrate the potential to achieve the Senior Card international criteria but are not yet able to meet the Senior Card criteria.



Sport Canada International Eligibility Criteria: (SR1/SR2 cards)

Senior International cards are valid for two consecutive years, with the card for the first year referred to as SR1 and the card for the second year referred to as SR2. To be eligible for the SR1, the player must have competed as a member of the Senior National team that placed in the top 8 and top half of the field at the most recent World Championships or Paralympics. The second year of carding (SR2) is contingent on the athlete meeting the National Senior card criteria, being re-nominated by Volleyball Canada and participating in a training and competitive program approved by Volleyball Canada. The athlete must also sign an Athlete/NSO Agreement and complete an AAP Application Form for the year in question.

Note: In a Paralympic Year, only the Paralympic result can provide SR1 status. Results achieved at World Championships will not be used for awarding new SR1 cards.

National Senior Card Eligibility Criteria: (SR cards)

National criteria identify athletes who have the potential to achieve international criteria. Senior Cards based on national criteria are normally awarded for one year and are called SR.

Health-related cards

At the end of a carding cycle during which an Athlete has, for strictly health-related reasons (family emergencies would also apply), not achieved the standards required for the renewal of carded status, he/she may be considered for re-nomination for the upcoming carding period under the following conditions:

- In the view of Volleyball Canada, the Athlete's failure to attain the applicable carding standards is strictly related to the injury or illness;
- The 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 his injury or illness;
- Volleyball Canada, based on its technical judgment and that of a team physician or equivalent, indicates in writing the expectation that the Athlete will achieve at least the minimum standards required for carding during the upcoming carding period;
- The Athlete has demonstrated and continues to demonstrate his long-term commitment to high performance training and competition goals, as well as his/her intention to pursue full high-performance training and competition throughout the carding period for which he/she wishes to be renewed, despite not having met the carding criteria.

To receive and maintain their AAP support, carded Athletes must:

- Attend all scheduled activities they are invited to participate in (e.g. once invited an Athlete must attend all camps, events, or training sessions);
- Follow their prescribed, year-round individual performance plans (IPP's) as provided to by Volleyball Canada;
- Submit their training logs as reasonably requested, as prescribed by the program established by Volleyball Canada and its affiliated Integrated Support Staff;



- Perform all fitness testing as prescribed by the program established by Volleyball Canada;
- Comply with the requirements, standards and expectations of National Team Athletes as outlined within the Volleyball Canada Athlete Agreement.

As indicated in Section 3 above, the National Team programs only have a limited number of Sport Canada cards that can be allocated to athletes. An athlete may receive a minimum of 4 months and a maximum of 12 months of AAP support and this is determined by the athlete's commitment to the centralization period, attendance at all scheduled training camps and competitions and position on the National Team's depth chart. Not all members of each respective National Team will necessarily be carded.

Athletes will be nominated for a Carding level and the number of carding months in the following order of priority:

- a. SR1 and SR2: Senior athletes who have placed top 8 and top half in the world at a Paralympic Games or World Championship who are committed to attending all scheduled training camps and participate in international competitions. If centralization period occurs prior to major competition, attendance for majority of period is required (70% of training is required, with discretion up to the High-Performance Director, and Head Coach).
- b. SR: Member of the team (based on all above criteria including training, centralization and international rosters) but have not placed top 8 in the world will receive a SR card.
- c. DEV: Athletes committed to all scheduled training camps but are not selected for (or their team has not qualified for) the World Cup or Paralympic Games team may be nominated for a DEV card depending on available resources. Athletes are required to attend all team training and requirements to be eligible.

Carding levels are also based on an athlete's overall position in the National Team depth chart, as determined by the athlete's performance and expertise in the criteria areas outlined below. Team sport athletes are required to spend a minimum of 30 days training/competing with the National Team program to be eligible for the minimum 4 months of carding support (at the SR and DEV card levels). A minimum of 60 days of training/competing is needed to be eligible for a full 12 months of support.

Volleyball Canada's Sitting Volleyball National Teams train and compete throughout the year and eligible athletes who meet World ParaVolley Classification Criteria for international competition may be identified and recruited to the Senior National Team at any point during the year; however, only eligible athletes who have been identified and selected to the National Team prior to June 1, 2026 may be nominated for carding during the 2026-2027 year. Athletes can be nominated for carding at two points during the year:

1. Annual Selection Camp (Spring 2026):

Athletes will be selected to a National Team program and rated within the athlete depth chart by the HPD, Head Coach and Assistant Coach(es) following the annual selection camp, based on present expertise and/or



demonstrated potential in the areas outlined below. Initial carding nominations will be made to Sport Canada for athletes selected to a National Team program following the Annual Selection Camp.

- Present technical skill level
- Technical Abilities
- Tactical Abilities
- Physical Abilities and Physical Resiliency
- Mental Performance Skill Abilities
- Team Sport Abilities
 - Coachability
 - Commitment to Program
 - Professionalism and demonstration of high-performance behaviors
 - Positive contributions to team Values and culture
- International Potential

2. Midseason Athlete Evaluation (December 2026)

Athletes who have previously been selected to the National Team and are returning to the program after the Annual Selection Camp can be nominated for 6-months of bridge carding in December of each year. To be nominated for bridge carding, athletes must attend a minimum of one full Senior National Team training camp between June and December and rated within the athlete depth chart by the HPD, Head Coach and Assistant Coach(es) following the attended camp. The athlete's depth chart rating will be based on present expertise and/or demonstrated potential in the following areas below.

- Present technical skill level
- Technical Abilities
- Tactical Abilities
- Physical Abilities and Physical Resiliency
- Mental Performance Skill Abilities
- Team Sport Abilities
 - Coachability
 - Commitment to Program
 - Professionalism and demonstration of high-performance behaviors
 - Positive contributions to team Values and culture
- International Potential

During the midseason athlete evaluation period, current Senior National Team athletes who received a carding nomination at the Annual Selection Camp may be considered for additional months of carding (“top-ups”) if it does not exceed the maximum 12 months of funding in a carding cycle (June 1 – May 31).



5. Athlete Appeal Process

If an athlete wishes to appeal of Volleyball Canada's athlete selection and nomination procedures, the appeal will be dealt with as per Volleyball Canada's Appeal Policy. The detailed process is documented in Volleyball Canada's Appeal Policy, a copy of which can be found on Volleyball Canada's website at the following link:

https://volleyball.ca/uploads/Policies/2020/Pan_Canadian_Policy_-_Appeal_Policy_-_Oct_2020.pdf

Notwithstanding the above paragraphs, for any matters related to the Athlete Assistance Program Nomination or de-carding, all appeals must follow the Policies and Procedures of Sport Canada's Athlete Assistance Program (AAP). The appeal process can be found in section 13.1 of the Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Handbook:

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