



JUDO ONTARIO

Quest for Gold – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program 2025-2026 ATHLETE SELECTION CRITERIA



1.0 **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

Quest for Gold – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program 2025-2026 (OAAP) is funded by the Government of Ontario, through the Ministry of Sport (SPORT), and operated through the Sport, Recreation & Community Programs Division. The overarching goal of the Quest for Gold – OAAP is directly related to the High-Performance Sport goal of the Canadian Sport Policy – that Canadians are systematically achieving world-class results at the highest levels of international competition – by improving 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 intent of the OAAP is to provide funding to individual athletes in the sport's Train to Train through Train to Win categories based on their demonstrated commitment to high performance sport, allowing them to continue to pursue athletic excellence at the highest levels of national and international competition. **Only those athletes that meet the required minimum performance standard detailed in this Selection Criteria will be considered for this program.** Ideally an athlete will first receive a Quest for Gold "Ontario Card" for 1 to 3 years, which will allow them to train towards the goal of a national team position in subsequent years. Once an Ontario athlete reaches the national level and becomes a recipient of Sport Canada's carding program, they become eligible for the Quest for Gold "Canada Card". Athletes who are not planning to train towards this level of competition should not apply for this program.

2.0 **HOW DOES IT WORK?**

In accordance with the OAAP guidelines, Judo Ontario develops sport-specific selection criteria and forms a Selection Committee that will apply these criteria. The top-ranked athletes, based on the criteria, will be awarded Ontario Card status in 2025-2026. This Selection Criteria has been approved by Judo Ontario. Nominated athletes will be required to sign and comply with an Athlete Agreement between the athlete and Judo Ontario.

Carded athletes will be required to compete exclusively on behalf of the Province of Ontario at National Championship events and for Canada at International Championship events, for a period of one year from the date carding is approved and acknowledge Ontario as their permanent place of residence on athlete profiles, Media Guides, PSO/NSO and personal websites, and in similar types of public communications.

2.1 **Number of Ontario Cards**

A total of 10 Ontario Cards will be available to Judo Ontario athletes, allocated as follows:

Cards	Male	Female
Full Cards – 6	3	3
Half Cards – 4 full cards = 8 half cards	4	4

Cards will be specifically allocated to the following categories/disciplines:

Category	Number of cards
Senior (Born in 2005 and before) *	2 Full Cards (1 male, 1 female)
U21 (Born in 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011) *	4 Full Cards (2 male, 2 female)
U18 (Born in 2009, 2010 & 2011) *	8 Half Cards (4 male, 4 female)

*** Also includes Early Bloomer years, see Section 5.1 below**

An athlete's age will be determined as of December 31, 2026

Judo Ontario is not obligated to assign all Ontario Cards if there are an insufficient number of athletes who have demonstrated potential to be considered for future National Teams.

If there are insufficient eligible athletes in one gender or category, the card can be reassigned to another gender or category.

2.2 Selection Committee:

As approved by Judo Ontario:

- James Cunningham, Quest for Gold Chair, Judo Ontario Managing Director
- An Jeong-Hwan, Quest for Gold Committee Member, Judo Ontario Head Provincial Coach
- Amanda McAlpine, Quest for Gold Committee Member

2.3 Funding Amount:

Funding for the 2025-2026 carding year will be \$3000 per athlete for a full card and \$1500 per athlete for a half card.

3.0 SELECTION PROCESS

The Judo Ontario Quest for Gold Selection Committee will use the Ministry of Sport Eligibility Criteria and the Sport Specific Selection Criteria detailed below to determine which athletes will be nominated for Ontario Card status in 2025-2026:

3.1 Ministry Of Sport Eligibility Criteria:

All athletes must meet the Ministry of Sport minimum athlete eligibility criteria:

- Athlete must be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident (previously known as a Landed Immigrant).
- Athlete must be a permanent resident of Ontario for one year prior to his/her nomination for carding status, (and continue to be a permanent resident throughout the term of the agreement).
- Athletes who have achieved Canada Card status (carded by Sport Canada) are not eligible for Ontario Cards.
- Athletes must be living in and continuing to train in Ontario.

Additional Eligibility Criteria:

- Athlete must be a member in good standing with the PSO/MSO;
- Athlete must enter into a Sports Organization - Athlete Agreement with the PSO/MSO and must be in full compliance with the terms and conditions of that Agreement;
- Athlete must have met all terms and conditions of any previous Quest for Gold Sports Organization – Athlete Agreements to the satisfaction of the PSO/MSO in order to be eligible for consideration;
- Athlete must demonstrate a commitment and dedication to a proper training and competitive program, the goal of which is to continue to train towards a national team position and Sport Canada carding;
- Athlete's coach should be minimum Level 2 NCCP certified or trained status Competition Stream or the sport's equivalent in the Instruction Stream, or be engaged in completing this training, as determined by the PSO;
- Athlete must not be under a sanction that prohibits competition as per the Canadian Anti-Doping Policy;
- If eligible, the athlete must compete, and continue to compete solely for Ontario and/or Canada for one year from the date of receiving any prior QFG funding, at Canada Games and other national competitions involving provincial team competitions;
- Athlete shall not receive financial support from any other provincial/territorial athlete assistance program. This does not include academic scholarships, bursaries, student grants, student loans, social assistance, disability pensions, and other forms of financial assistance that have nothing to do with competitive sport.

3.2 Residency Exceptions:

Exceptions to these criteria, known as a “Residency Exception” will be considered on a case specific basis by the Judo Ontario Quest for Gold Selection Committee provided that the athlete can substantiate in writing that:

- (a) He/she/they 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);
- (b) He/she/they must attend a post-secondary institution out-of-province either because the course of study is not offered by an Ontario institution; or
- (c) 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.

Any change in an athlete’s residency status must be communicated in writing to the PSO/MSO immediately.

The onus is on the athlete to demonstrate that he/she needs to be out-of-province for one of the above reasons. The athlete must submit a written request for residency exemption at the time of applying for Quest for Gold funding, clearly indicating how they meet a residency exception(s).

Athlete’s applying for a Residency Exception related to exception (a) above, who are training at an NSO-approved National Training Centre MUST include a letter from the NSO outlining their support for the athlete, the progress the athlete is making and the athlete’s potential to make the national team level. Additional documentation may include but shall not be limited to an explanation of why the athlete is training out of province, whether or not the athlete was formally invited by the NSO, what additional opportunities are being made available beyond those provided in Ontario; and any other information that will illustrate that the athlete is receiving enhanced training while still meeting all obligations of Judo Ontario.

4.0 ATHLETES FUNDED THROUGH THE SPORT CANADA AAP:

Ontario athletes who have been nominated and accepted for funding through Sport Canada’s AAP within the government of Ontario’s fiscal year (April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026) and who continue to meet AAP and OAAP eligibility requirements will automatically be considered for a Quest for Gold ‘Canada Card’. MTCS will contact those athletes directly at the mailing and email addresses the athlete provided to Sport Canada. Athletes are solely responsible for ensuring that their contact information is kept accurate and up to date at all times.

An athlete who received Sport Canada AAP carding during any part of MTCS’ fiscal year April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025 and/or any part of fiscal year April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026 and is no longer in receipt of Sport Canada Athlete Assistance shall not be eligible to receive Quest for Gold funding during fiscal year 2025-2026 (April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026.)

The intent of this rule is to prevent athletes whose performance levels and rankings no longer qualify them for Sport Canada carding from taking an Ontario Card from a future national-level athlete.

5.0 JUDO ONTARIO ATHLETE SELECTION CRITERIA:

The following sport specific athlete selection criteria will be utilized in the identification, ranking and selection of athletes for Ontario Cards.

5.1 Age Standards as defined for the 2025-2026 Season

- U18 (Born in 2009, 2010 and 2011)
- U21 (Born in 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011)
- Seniors (Born in 2005 and before)

* It is understood that at the time of the 2025 U18 and U21 Canadian Championships, the definition of each age standard differed by at least one calendar year.

* It is also understood that under the Judo Canada “Early Bloomer Clause” athletes born in 2011 may be considered for U18, U21 or Senior.

5.2 Selection Criteria for U18 Cards:

** All athletes must apply through the online form to be eligible for 2025-2026 Quest for Gold funding (section 9.0)*

Eligibility:

- Complete the online application for 2025-2026 Quest for Gold
- Meet minimum performance threshold by earning points, as described below in three (3) pointable tournaments. Athletes who don't compete in three pointable tournaments because of injury or international competition need to indicate this on the application form, for consideration based on the exemptions listed below.

Selection Process:

- All eligible athletes will be ranked on separate lists for male and female, based on the ranking details in 5.3.
- The highest ranked athletes will be selected for carding until all cards are awarded, or no eligible athletes remain.

Pointable Tournaments:

- Open National Championships – Calgary, AB – May 14-17th, 2025
- National A Circuit Events – Jan 1st, 2025 to Nov 30th, 2025
 - Saskatchewan Open – Regina, SK
 - Pacific International – Abbotsford, BC
 - Edmonton International – Edmonton, AB
 - Eastern Canadian Championships – Edmundston, NB
 - Ontario Open – Toronto, Ontario
 - Manitoba Open – Winnipeg, Manitoba
 - Quebec Open – Montreal, Quebec
- International tournaments appearing on the IJF rankings – Jan 1st, 2025 to Dec 15th, 2025

5.3 Ranking Details for U18 Cards:

Tournament Level	Gold	Silver	Bronze	5th Place	7th Place
World Championships	250	200	175	150	125
Continental Championships	200	160	140	100	80
International (IJF calendar)	150	120	105	75	50
Open Nationals	100	80	70	55	35
Ontario Open Quebec Open	80	70	60	45	30
Edmonton International Pacific International	70	60	50	35	25
Manitoba Open Sask Open Eastern Canadians	60	50	40	25	15

- In cases where an athlete has two wins and the division has less than 5 contestants, he/she/they will receive 80% of the awarded ranking points.
- In addition, the athlete will receive 6 points per win. This does not include wins by a bye, default or an injury before a match has commenced.
- For example: An athlete places 3rd with a record of 2 wins and 1 loss receives 60 points for 3rd place plus 6 points for each win for a total of 12 points and for a grand total of 72 points; if the athlete was in a division of less than 5 contestants, then the total is 80% of 60 points, i.e. 48, plus 12 points, for a grand total of 60 points.
- In order to accumulate points at a tournament, the athlete must have a minimum of two wins.
- Athletes eligible by age to qualify for and compete as a U18, may use and combine their best results in qualifying events from the U18 or U21 age divisions, but are only eligible for a U18 Quest for Gold Card if results are combined.
- Where an athlete competes in the U18 and U21 divisions at the same qualifying event, the better of the two results will be used for U18 points.

- h) In the event that an athlete qualifies for both U18 and U21, that athlete will receive the Quest for Gold Card that the Quest for Gold Selection Committee determines, provided he/she/they are age eligible to both U18 and U21 competitions during the current season.

5.4 Selection Criteria for U21 Cards:

** All athletes must apply through the online form to be eligible for 2025-2026 Quest for Gold funding (section 9.0)*

Eligibility:

- Complete the online application for 2025-2026 Quest for Gold
- U21 Athletes training full time at National Training Centre, Montreal or at the Regional Training Centre, Toronto.

Selection Process:

- All eligible athletes will be ranked on separate lists for male and female, based on the National Team Rankings on Dec 15th, 2025 (the most recent list available on the Judo Canada website as of December 15th)
- The highest ranked athletes will be selected for carding until all cards are awarded, or no eligible athletes remain.

5.5 Selection Criteria for Senior Cards:

** All athletes must apply through the online form to be eligible for 2025-26 Quest for Gold funding (section 9.0)*

Eligibility:

- Senior Athletes training full time at National Training Centre, Montreal or at the Regional Training Centre, Toronto.
- Minimum 100 points in the World Senior Ranking or Top 32 in IJF Junior World Ranking, as of Dec 15th, 2025

Selection Process:

- All eligible athletes will be ranked based on the ranking lists used for Judo Canada AAP Carding selection.
- The highest ranked athletes, not receiving AAP carding, will be selected for Q4G carding until all cards are awarded, or no eligible athletes remain.
- In the event that an athlete qualifies for both U21 and Senior Quest for Gold Cards, that athlete will receive the Quest for Gold Card that the Quest for Gold Selection Committee determines provided he/she/they are age eligible to compete in U21 competitions during the current season.

5.6 U18, U21 & Senior Quest For Gold Athlete Expectations:

- Athlete must demonstrate a commitment and dedication to a proper training and competitive program, the goal of which is to continue to train towards a national team position and Sport Canada carding. The Judo Ontario HP Committee will approve submitted plans.
- Athletes living within 200kms from the Judo Ontario office must attend at least 1 Open Mat or Provincial Training per month between January and May 2026 unless granted an exemption from the Selection Committee of Judo Ontario prior to missing the said training.
- Athletes living more than 200kms from the Judo Ontario office must attend 2 monthly Provincial Trainings or Open Mat trainings throughout the 2025-2026 season unless granted an exemption from the Selection Committee of Judo Ontario prior to missing the said training.
- Athletes living in the Ottawa area must attend 2 monthly Provincial Trainings or Open Mat trainings and 4 NTC trainings in Montreal unless granted an exemption from the Selection Committee of Judo Ontario prior to missing the said training.
- Athletes must attend the Summer Training Camp (at least one week), Winter Training Camp and National Camp after the May National Championships, organized by Judo Canada in 2026
- Athletes training at the NTC have to attend a minimum 5 judo trainings per week. (NTC coach will keep attendance).

6.0 BREAKING A TIE:

In the event of a tie for the final Quest for Gold card, the following process shall apply:

- a. the athlete already identified by the NSO RTC within their talent identification process and through the NSO RTC, and not already in receipt of Sport Canada Carding, shall be awarded the final card;
- b. if still tied, the athlete with the highest ranking at the National Championships will be awarded the final card;

- and
- c. if still tied, the athlete with the best result at Ontario Open 2025 will be awarded the final card.

7.0 FAILURE TO MEET SELECTION CRITERIA FOR HEALTH REASONS:

Athletes who, for strictly health-related reasons, have not achieved the standards required for nomination of carded status may be considered for nomination under the following conditions:

- 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 or her injury, illness or pregnancy and, despite making every reasonable effort to attain the applicable carding standards during the year in which the injury, illness or pregnancy occurred, has failed to do so, in the view of the PSO/MSO, for reasons strictly related to the injury, illness or pregnancy.
- Judo Ontario, based on its technical judgement and that of a PSO/MSO 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 or her long-term commitment to high-performance training and competition goals, as well as his or her intention to pursue full high-performance training and competition throughout the carding period for which he or she wishes to be renewed despite not having met the carding criteria.

If an Ontario Team athlete became injured and was unable to compete in part of the previous competitive season due to injury, the athlete could be considered for nomination, based on prior seasons' ranking, so long as they meet the following:

- a. Notification - they must have sent written notification and proof to the Judo Ontario office as soon as they became injured, and before September 1 of each season. This notification must include the projected date by which the athlete is able to return to competition and must include proper documentation from a Judo Ontario approved medical doctor.
- b. Eligibility – To be considered under the Injury, Illness or Pregnancy clause, an athlete **MUST** have been either Nationally Carded or on the Quest for Gold program last year. Athletes cannot be carded under the Injury, Illness or Pregnancy clause two years in a row.
- c. Data Ranking Process – Once it has been determined an athlete is eligible to use this injury clause, the athlete in question would receive the same number of currently age eligible points that he or she received in the previous year's pointable tournaments.

8.0 ALTERNATES:

Judo Ontario 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, provided that:

- Alternate is substituted within 2025-2026 fiscal year;
- An alternate meeting all requirements 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).

9.0 TO APPLY:

Athletes must apply by **December 31st, 2025** in order to be considered and included in the selection process.

All required information must be submitted through the online form on the Judo Ontario website or included below:

<https://registration.judocanada.org/event/2025-26-Q4Registration>

- 9.1 Judo Ontario will publish a draft list of athletes nominated for Ontario Card status by no later than **January 23rd, 2026**.

10.0 APPEALS:

Athletes who have not been nominated for an Ontario Card by the Judo Ontario Quest for Gold Committee will be allowed to appeal that decision by filing a "Notice of Appeal" with Judo Ontario by **January 30th, 2026**

Grounds for appeals will be limited strictly to issues related to:

- A) Whether or not the Selection Committee has completed the selection process in accordance with its own published selection criteria and related procedures;
- B) Whether or not the Selection Committee applied the selection criteria in a manner that was free from bias, discrimination and/or conflict of interest.

Issues related to the specific content or selection requirements contained in the Judo Ontario Selection Criteria are not grounds for an appeal and should therefore be discussed directly with the leadership of Judo Ontario.

10.1 Appeals Process:

Please note that before an athlete can file a Notice of Appeal, he or she must first contact Judo Ontario requesting reasons explaining why he/she/they were not nominated for an Ontario Card.

If the athlete is not satisfied with the initial response, the athlete may submit a **Notice of Appeal**, found below.

A Notice of Appeal will only be accepted from the athlete or their parent/guardian on the provided template (typed) through email, regular post, registered mail, courier or delivered in person. One appeal cannot be written on behalf of multiple athletes. The Notice of Appeal must be received by Judo Ontario by noon on the deadline day. Appeals that are delivered personally or by courier shall be deemed to be received on the date of delivery.

Once the Notice of Appeal is received by Judo Ontario Ad-hoc appeals committee, a response will be requested from Judo Ontario Quest for Gold Committee. The response will be issued to the Judo Ontario Ad-hoc appeals committee and will outline why Judo Ontario Quest for Gold Committee believes that the decision not to nominate the athlete should be upheld by the Appeals Committee. The Judo Ontario ad-hoc appeals committee will share the response with the athlete.

If, after receiving the Judo Ontario Response, the athlete believes that Judo Ontario Quest for Gold Committee has raised new or additional reasons to justify the Selection Committee's decision not to nominate the athlete for an Ontario Card, then the athlete will have an opportunity to file a **"Reply"** with Judo Ontario Ad-hoc appeals committee, responding to these additional reasons. The Reply must be limited to these additional reasons and cannot be used to make submissions already raised in the Notice of Appeal, or that the athlete neglected to include in the Notice of Appeal. The Reply will only be accepted on the provided template.

Once the Response, and the Reply (if applicable) are received, the Judo Ontario Ad-hoc appeals committee will discuss all appeals at once. During its review of the appeals, the Judo Ontario Ad-hoc appeals committee reserves the right to request additional information from both the athlete and Judo Ontario Quest for Gold Committee.

After reviewing an appeal, the Judo Ontario Ad-hoc appeals committee will have the authority to:

1. Direct Judo Ontario Judo Ontario Quest for Gold Committee to redo the selection process using the correct criteria/process and submit a new list of nominated athletes;
2. Deny the appeal; or
3. Allow the appeal and nominate the appellant for carding status.

Once the Judo Ontario Ad-hoc appeals committee has reached its decision, it will contact the athlete and Judo Ontario Quest for Gold Committee in writing to communicate its decision and the reasons therefore.

An athlete who has had his or her appeal denied is not permitted to submit a second appeal to the Judo Ontario Ad-hoc appeals committee on the same or different grounds.

The deadline for athletes to submit an **"Athlete's Notice of Appeal"** to the Appeals Committee is **January 30th, 2026 at 5pm ET.**

**2025-2026 Quest for Gold – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program
Athlete's Notice of Appeal Template**

Appeals will only be accepted on the provided Notice of Appeal template.

Deadline: 5pm on January 30th, 2026

Return form to:

Judo Ontario

Quest for Gold Ad-hoc Appeals Committee

875 Morningside Avenue, Scarborough, ON M1C 0C7

Email: info@judoontario.ca

Full Name _____

Address _____ City _____

Postal Code _____ Phone _____ Email _____

Reason for Appeal (Check all that apply):

☐

Whether or not the Quest for Gold Committee has completed the selection process in accordance with its own published selection criteria and related procedures;

☐

Whether or not the Quest for Gold Committee applied the section criteria in a manner that was free from bias, discrimination and/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 the reasons communicated to you by the Quest for Gold Committee as to why you were not nominated for an Ontario Card, and the date the information was provided. (Note: This Appeal will not be accepted unless it contains a response from this committee.)

Date of Committee response: _____

In the space below, 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 as necessary):

PLEASE NOTE that all decisions of the Appeals Committee are final.

Print Name of Appellant

Signature of Appellant

Date

All information provided to the Judo Ontario Ad-hoc Appeals Committee will be shared with both the Appellant and the Judo Ontario Quest for Gold Committee.