



Ontario Equestrian Quest for Gold – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program 2019-2020 ATHLETE SELECTION CRITERIA

- 1.0 Quest for Gold – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program 2019-2020 (OAAP) is funded by the Government of Ontario, through the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries (MHSTCI), 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, Ontario Equestrian 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 2019-2020. This Selection Criteria has been approved by Ontario Equestrian and reviewed by MHSTCI staff. Nominated athletes will be required to sign and comply with an Athlete Agreement between the athlete and Ontario Equestrian.

Carding status will be for one year starting April 1, 2019 ending March 31, 2020. 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 Equestrian Cards - For 2019 - 2020, the MHSTCI has allocated Ontario Equestrian a total of 10 Ontario cards (split evenly as 5 male and 5 female cards).

2.2 As a result, the 10 cards issued to Ontario Equestrian will be allocated as follows:

	Male	Female
Full Cards	5	5

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

Discipline	Number of cards
Para Dressage	4
Show Jumping	2
Dressage	2
Eventing	2

An athlete's age will be determined as of January 1, 2019

OE reserves the right to redistribute cards if there are an insufficient quantity of eligible athletes in any discipline.

Ontario Equestrian 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.

2.3 **Selection Committee** - as approved by Ontario Equestrian is comprised of the following members:

Sally Sainsbury and Mark Nelson, Expert Advisors in the Eventing Discipline
Christilot Boylen, Expert Advisor in the Dressage Discipline
Peter Gisborn, Expert Advisor in the Show Jumping Discipline
Alice Beatty, Expert Advisor in the Para Dressage Discipline

How much funding is available?

The exact level of funding for the 2019-2020 carding year will be determined by the MHSTCI after the total number of athletes nominated for Ontario Card status has been determined.

How will the Ontario Equestrian Selection Committee decide who receives funding?

The Ontario Equestrian Selection Committee will use the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries Eligibility Criteria and the Sport Specific Selection Criteria detailed below to determine which athletes will be nominated for Ontario Card status in 2019-2020:

3.0 Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries Eligibility Criteria:

All athletes must meet the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries 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.

3.1 Residency Exceptions:

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

- (a) He/She 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 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 written documentation to Ontario Equestrian by no later than March 30, 2020, 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 Ontario Equestrian.

3.2 Length of time living outside Ontario:

Athletes living outside Ontario for more than 30 consecutive days within the ministry fiscal year 2019-2020 for athletic or academic purposes must demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the PSO/MSO Selection Committee that appropriate training programs are in place and are being monitored by the PSO/MSO. The onus is on the athlete to:

1. Provide a written plan outlining their training and competition plans to the PSO/MSO prior to their departure from Ontario, as part of their Residency Exception request (March 30, 2020); and
2. Adhere to the PSO/MSO-approved competition and training plan throughout the carding cycle. At a minimum, this requires regular quarterly contact by the athlete with Director of Sport for Ontario Equestrian; and
3. Submit quarterly training logs to the PSO/MSO to track progress against the PSO/MSO-approved competition and training plan.

***Athletes who were formally invited to and are currently participating in their NSO’s national team training program are exempt from this requirement. ***

3.3 Ministry criteria continued:

- Athlete must be a member in good standing with PSO/MSO and NSO where applicable;
- Athlete must have entered into a Sports Organization - Athlete Agreement with his or her 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 in 2019-2020;
- 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;
- Athlete must be attending an educational institution full-time (i.e. elementary and secondary schools):
 - Exceptions will be made provided that the athlete can substantiate that his/her training will not allow for full-time attendance or if an athlete requires special needs that preclude full or part-time attendance (e.g. Athlete with a disability (AWAD) athlete);
- Athletes who have completed their area of study at the secondary level (i.e. high school) and who continue to train towards participation in major national or international competitions will also be considered;
- If eligible, the athlete must compete, and continue to compete solely for Ontario and/or Canada for one year from the date of the Minister's letter informing the athlete of acceptance into OAAP program, at Canada Games and other national competitions involving provincial team competitions;
- Athlete must 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.
- Eligibility will be limited to Ontario junior-aged athletes, ages 11-22 ("junior-aged" refers to chronological age, not a sport's specific age category - only exception is for PSO/MSOs using 30% of Ontario Card allotment for athletes older than 22 years of age who have been identified as a potential next generation national team athlete by the PSO/MSO's selection process.

3.4 Residency Exemption for Military Families: The one-year Ontario residency requirement is waived for any Ontario Card or Canada Card applicant who is a spouse or dependant of a: Regular Force member of the Canadian Forces; or Reservist currently deployed by the Canadian Forces into active service and who takes up residence in Ontario during the fiscal year. This means that eligible military family members now qualify for OAAP funding immediately upon becoming residents of Ontario. Please contact Ontario Equestrian for more information if you are applying for this exemption.

- To be deemed a potential next generation national team athlete, the athlete must be age-eligible to compete on the national team in the year following receipt of Ontario Card funding.
- All athletes under the age of 18 must have their parent or legal guardian sign their OAAP application form. Cheques will be processed in the name of the eligible athlete.
- An athlete can only be nominated to receive Quest for Gold funding in one sport.

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, 2019 to March 31, 2020) and who continue to meet AAP and OAAP eligibility requirements will automatically be considered for a Quest for Gold 'Canada Card'. MHSTCI 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 Ministry fiscal year April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019 and/or any part of fiscal year April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020 and is no longer in receipt of Sport Canada Athlete Assistance shall not be eligible to receive Quest for Gold funding during fiscal year 2019-2020 (April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020.)

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.

4.1 Canada Card Exception (CCE)

Exceptions may apply to this rule (known as a Canada Card Exception (CCE)) and will be considered by the Ministry on a case-by-case basis. Exceptions may include, but may not be limited to logistical or administrative changes (e.g. reduction in Sport Canada carding allocation), injuries, etc.

It is the sole responsibility of the athlete to contact Ontario Equestrian Selection Committee prior to (March 30, 2020) to request a CCE. The athlete must submit, in writing, an explanation of why they have not been, or do not expect to be re-carded by their NSO. The submission must include a statement from the NSO, signed and dated on their letterhead, confirming that the athlete still has potential to return to the NSO's carding program

in the future. It is the responsibility of the athlete to submit this letter to the PSO; Ontario Equestrian will not obtain this letter from the NSO on the athlete's behalf.

Ontario Equestrian will then contact MHSTCI in writing prior to the submission of the Athlete Nomination Form to seek individual Canada Card Exceptions. Ontario Equestrian is not responsible for seeking a CCE for any athlete unless requested to do so by the athlete as detailed above.

5.0 National College Athletic Association (NCAA):

On August 1, 2013, the NCAA revised their By-law that previously prevented an athlete from accepting grants from a governmental entity, such as Quest for Gold. Despite this change, any athlete considering an application to an NCAA institution is strongly encouraged to contact the NCAA Eligibility Center prior to applying for QFG funding.

The onus is entirely on the athlete to determine the impact of accepting OAAP funding on current or future NCAA eligibility and to decide whether or not to accept OAAP funding. The athlete will be required to acknowledge this onus and responsibility when signing the OAAP Ontario Card application form and agreeing to the related terms and conditions of the program. Athletes are strongly encouraged to contact the NCAA Eligibility Center to determine the impact of Quest for Gold - OAAP funding on current or future eligibility for a NCAA scholarship or on eligibility to compete in a non-scholarship NCAA sport.

National Collegiate Athletic Association www.ncaa.org

NCAA Eligibility Center mailing address:
700 W. Washington Street
P.O. Box 6222
Indianapolis, Indiana 46206-6222
Phone: 317-917-6222

6.0 Ontario Equestrian Athlete Selection Criteria

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

Please NOTE

- Competition results will be weighted in favour of results reported in competitions of a higher level of difficulty than the minimum established in the criteria and where the number of starters in the reported competition exceeds 30;
- Scores submitted must be for the same human athlete but may report results for different horse/rider combinations;
- Scores being relied upon for qualification must be proven by providing a copy of the official competition results, including the name and level of class., the number of entrants in the class, and the applicants results including faults, penalties, time allowed and jump off results (which ever may apply depending on the discipline).

Qualifying Period

The qualifying period for rankings and scores submitted is between October 1, 2018 and September 30, 2019.

Discipline Specific Criteria

Show Jumping

The applicant must submit scores and rankings from three Gold or FEI level Competitions, competing at a height of not less than 1.35M (FEI 2*)

Scores and rankings submitted will be evaluated as follows:

1. FEI level competitions results will be weighted 20% higher than national Gold Shows;
2. Heights jumped will be weighted with an increase of 5% in factor for every 0.05M in additional height jumped.

The athlete must certify (attesting to a statement included on the application form) based on the results being submitted for the horse/rider combination, that they were not eliminated (during the performance portion of the competition) from three or more competitions during the qualifying period.

Eventing

The applicant must submit scores and rankings from four Preliminary, CCI 1* or 2* level Horse Trials.

All competition results must not exceed:

1. 45 penalty points in the dressage phase
2. 12 penalty points in the stadium/show jumping phase
3. And they must have a clean cross country

Competition results will be ranked according to the level of competition (greatest difficulty will have the highest ranking), provided the applicant scores within the top 50% of the total entries for the competition.

International competition results will also be ranked above national competition results, in the order of the level of competition.

The athlete must certify (attesting to a statement included on the application form) that they were not eliminated (during the performance portion of the competition) from three or more competitions during the qualifying period.

Dressage

The applicant must submit scores and rankings from four Gold Level or FEI Level competitions, as follows:

1. 2nd, 3rd, or 4th Level – Test 3; and/or
2. Junior Team, Young Riders Team, Prix St. George (open) or FEI Grand Prix

The average score of all four tests must be a minimum of 65%

Applicants will be ranked according to the degree of difficulty as well as the test scores received.

Para Dressage

The applicant must submit scores and rankings from two technical tests and one freestyle test achieved at nationally sanctioned dressage competitions.

The average score of all three tests must be a minimum of 64%

Scores and rankings submitted will be weighted, whereby Gold or FEI sanctioned qualifying competition results will be weighted 5% higher than qualifying competition results below Gold.

Ranking and Selection Process

Horse/Rider combinations that have met the minimum qualification standards will be ranked in order of the degree of difficulty of the competition results submitted, and:

1. For Dressage – in order of the scores received
2. For Show Jumping and Eventing – in order of the scores received, placing and number of entrants (highest weighting being awarded to highest score, highest placing and largest number of entrants)
3. For Para Dressage – in order of the scores received, regardless of the athlete classification

7.0 Breaking a Tie:

If there is a tie in the final score between two athletes, the lowest score submitted will be eliminated (for Dressage and Para Dressage by percentage, for Show Jumping by placing and for Eventing by total penalty points) and the ranking points recalculated. Should a tie still exist, the next lowest score will be eliminated and the rankings recalculated a final time.

8.0 **Ontario Equestrian has no criteria for ranking an athlete who is unable to meet these requirements as detailed above due to illness, injury or pregnancy.**

9.0 Alternates: Ontario Equestrian 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 2019-2020 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).

10.0 **To Apply:**

All required information (listed below) must be submitted to Ontario Equestrian no later than March 30, 2020 at 4 pm ET.

Application Requirements –

- a) A completed application form including:
 - a. Name, Gender, Date of Birth of Applicant
 - b. Address and contact information including phone number and email address
 - c. Confirmation of PSO and NSO Sport Membership & Licences in good standing
 - d. Identification of Equestrian Discipline
- b) Attachment of proof of Qualifying Competition Results that comply with the discipline specific criteria posted on the OE website and included above
- c) Attachment of letter of recommendation from athletes' coach (including coaches NCCP certification)
- d) Athlete YTP for upcoming season (2020-2021)

To be submitted to -

Hilary Gregory, Program Coordinator – Athlete Development
h.gregory@ontarioequestrian.ca
1 West Pearce Street, Suite 201, Richmond Hill, ON, L4B 3K3
905-709-6545 ext. 38

10.1 Any athlete requesting a "Residency Exception" must submit this information by March 30, 2020 as detailed above.

10.2 It is the sole responsibility of the athlete to provide a full and complete application that meets all stated requirements. Ontario Equestrian will neither review applications in advance of the deadline in order to make applicants aware of any missing/incorrect information and/or attachments nor make corrections on behalf of the athlete. Any revisions on the part of the athlete will only be accepted prior to the posted submission deadline.

Applications that are sent directly to the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries rather than to Ontario Equestrian will not be considered valid or to have been received by the Ontario Equestrian deadline.

10.3 An email will be sent by March 30, 2020 – 4:00 pm confirming receipt. It is the athlete's responsibility to contact the Ontario Equestrian if this email is not received to be certain that the application has been successfully received by the deadline date.

The Sports Organization – Athlete Agreement will only come into effect if an athlete is selected and accepts carding status through the OAAP program. Athletes who fail to return a signed Athlete Agreement by the deadline date will not be carded.

10.4 Ontario Equestrian will publish or make known a draft list of athletes nominated for Ontario Card status by no later than April 8, 2020.

In the event of a conflict or inconsistency between the MHSTCI eligibility requirements detailed in the MHSTCI binder provided to PSO/MSOs and duplicated in the Athlete Handbook provided to each nominated athlete and the eligibility requirements listed in the PSO/MSO Athlete Selection Criteria Document prepared by the PSO/MSO, the MHSTCI Binder/Athlete Handbook shall prevail.

11.0 Appeals

Athletes who have not been nominated for an Ontario Card by the Ontario Equestrian Selection Committee or who have been nominated for a 'Half Card' versus a 'Full Card', where applicable will be allowed to appeal that decision by filing a "Notice of Appeal" with MHSTCI. Appeals will be heard by an Appeals Committee comprised of representatives from the sport community, selected by the MHSTCI.

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 Ontario Equestrian Selection Criteria are not grounds for an appeal and should therefore be discussed directly with the leadership of Ontario Equestrian.

Please note that before an athlete can file a Notice of Appeal, he or she must first ask Ontario Equestrian for reasons explaining why he or she was not nominated for an Ontario Card.

If the athlete is not satisfied with the Ontario Equestrian 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 MHSTCI-provided template (typed or hand-printed, no hand-written entries) 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 MHSTCI 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 MHSTCI has received the Notice of Appeal, it will share it with Ontario Equestrian, who will then submit a "**Response**" with MHSTCI by a specified deadline. The Response will outline why Ontario Equestrian believes

that the Selection Committee's decision not to nominate the athlete should be upheld by the Appeals Committee. MHSTCI will share the Ontario Equestrian Response with the athlete.

If, after receiving the Ontario Equestrian Response, the athlete believes that Ontario Equestrian 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 MHSTCI, 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 MHSTCI-provided template.

Once MHSTCI receives the Notice of Appeal, the Response, and the Reply (if applicable), it will provide those materials to the Appeals Committee. The Appeals Committee will discuss all appeals at once. During its review of the appeals, the Appeals Committee reserves the right to request additional information from both the athlete and Ontario Equestrian.

After reviewing an appeal, the Appeals Committee will have the authority to:

1. Direct Ontario Equestrian 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 Appeals Committee has reached its decision, it will contact the athlete and Ontario Equestrian 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 Appeals Committee on the same or different grounds.

Note: Ontario Equestrian is encouraged to resolve disputes or disagreements informally with athletes who have not been nominated to avoid, wherever possible, formal appeals.

11.1 The deadline for athletes to submit an "**Athlete's Notice of Appeal**" to the Appeals Committee is **April 20, 2020 at 12 noon.**

11.2 Appeals must be completed on the Notice of Appeal template below and will be directed to:

Quest for Gold Appeals Committee
c/o Sport, Recreation and Community Programs Division
Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries
777 Bay Street, 18th Floor
Toronto, ON, M7A 1S5 questforgold@ontario.ca

**2019-2020 Quest for Gold – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program
Athlete's Notice of Appeal Template**

The deadline for an athlete to submit an appeal to the Appeals Committee is 12 noon on April 20, 2020. Appeals will only be accepted on the MHSTCI-provided Notice of Appeal template. **Please refer to the appeals section of your PSO/MSO's Athlete Selection Criteria document prior to completing this form.**

Return form to:

**Quest for Gold Appeals Committee
c/o Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries
Sport, Recreation and Community Programs Division
777 Bay Street, 18th Floor, Toronto ON, M7A 1S5 Email: questforgold@ontario.ca**

Full Name _____
Address _____ City _____
Postal Code _____ Phone _____ Email _____
Sport / PSO _____

Reason for Appeal (Check all that apply):

- Whether or not the PSO/MSO has completed the selection process in accordance with its own published selection criteria and related procedures;
- Whether or not the PSO/MSO 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 your PSO/MSO 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 your PSO/MSO.)

Date of PSO response: _____

