



**AAP CARDING CRITERIA
FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2026-27
CARDING CYCLE**

SPORT CANADA CARDING – ATHLETE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Description and Program Objectives:

The main goal of the Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) is to contribute to the improvement of Canadian performances at major international sporting events such as World Championships and the Olympics. To this end, the AAP identifies and supports athletes already at or on course to be in the Top 16 in the world individually.

AAP is a program of the Federal Government administered by Sport Canada. It is more commonly referred to as “Carding”. The AAP is designed to give Canada’s top athletes direct financial assistance and tuition support, which enables them to better prepare themselves to represent Canada at the highest possible level internationally. The intention of this funding is as a living and training subsidy and not intended to be the Athletes’ sole source of income.

Squash Canada will nominate players annually (based on the enclosed criteria) for direct funding by Sport Canada. Nominated athletes will receive support in the form of a monthly payment from Sport Canada that goes directly to the players. Players being nominated at the Senior International and Senior Domestic levels will receive 12 months’ worth of support. Players being nominated in their first year at the Senior level and players at the Development card level may receive fewer than 12 months of support, depending on the available quota remaining after the assignment of Senior cards.

For more information on the AAP policies and procedures please consult the Sport Canada website

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

Person Responsible for Nominating Players for AAP Support:

–*Director of Athlete Development, Squash Canada*

Tuition and Deferred Tuition Support:

For information on tuition and deferred tuition support please refer to Section 8 of the AAP policies, procedures and guidelines.

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

Accepting or Declining AAP:

Athletes with annual income after sport expenses of \$50,000 or more may decline AAP financial support.

If an athlete **declines** funding as extended by Squash Canada under the carding criteria, the funding will go to the next athlete that meets the criteria of the gender that declined the card. Declining AAP support for one year does not preclude the athlete from future funding and the athlete retains the recognition as a “carded” athlete within Squash Canada based on the level at which they qualify. An athlete who declines an SR1 card could accept their SR2 card in the 2nd year of eligibility.

Application

Athletes who are nominated for carding and accepted by Sport Canada will be required to submit a Carding application and fulfill other Sport Canada requirements. This will occur in late May/early June. **It is the Athletes’ sole responsibility to submit their information. Failure to provide the necessary materials may render the athlete ineligible for carding status.**

Basic Eligibility Requirements:

Minimum requirements for athletes to qualify for AAP are:

- The athlete must be a **Canadian citizen or a permanent resident of Canada** (as defined by Citizenship and Immigration Canada) on the date of the beginning of the carding cycle, and the athlete shall have been a legal resident in Canada (student status, refugee status, work visa or permanent resident) for a minimum period of one year before being considered for AAP support. The athlete would normally be expected to have participated in NSO sanctioned programs during that time period.
- The athlete, under the eligibility requirements of the sport’s International Federation (IF), must currently **be eligible to represent Canada** at major international events including World Championships.
- Athletes must meet the carding criteria as a member of a Canadian Team, at international events or in domestic event or events sanctioned by the NSO for such purposes
- Be a member in good standing with their respective provincial/territorial squash association.
- Sign Squash Canada’s current Athlete Agreement.

- Complete and return the necessary documentation for AAP Carding including: Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Program – Application and Declaration to Accept/Decline AAP Financial Support; Annual training plan for carding year; competitive schedule for the carding year; competitive results from the past 12 months (2025-2026).

Allocation of Squash Canada Carding Levels:

Based on the parameters of Sport Canada’s policies and carding quota, Squash Canada is currently eligible to receive a maximum of six (6) Senior Cards (SR1 / SR2, SR and/or their D card equivalents) for the 2026-2027 carding cycle. ***This quota number is subject to change at any time by Sport Canada.*** Sport Canada guidelines stipulate that Senior Card(s) may be converted into Development (D) cards.

Squash Canada’s card quota for the 2026-27 carding cycle is \$156,600 (the equivalent of 6 senior cards). The criteria for the distribution of these cards are listed below. The equivalent of 4 months of carding support must be available to nominate an additional athlete for the AAP.

★ International Senior (SR1 / SR2), Senior (SR cards)	\$2,175/month
★ Developmental (D card)	\$1,305/month

Senior Domestic Cards based on national criteria are normally awarded for one year and are called SR Cards. Squash Canada will nominate a minimum of **3 males and 3 females** who are eligible for the Senior Cards (SR1 / SR2, SR). If there are not enough athletes from one gender meeting the Senior Card criteria, Squash Canada will re-allocate a maximum of one (1) card to the other gender provided there are eligible athletes meeting the criteria. If there is a quota left after the application of the Senior Domestic Card (SR) criteria, it may be used to nominate eligible athlete(s) who met the Domestic Development Card Criteria in the below order:

Carding Cycle:

The carding cycle is July 1st 2026 to June 30th 2027.

Priority for Senior Carding:

1. Athletes eligible under the International Senior Carding criteria (SR1/SR2)
2. Athletes eligible under the Domestic Senior Card Criteria (SR) – Priority #1
3. Athletes carded the previous year that meet the Health-Related Card Criteria – Priority #1
4. Athletes carded the previous year that meet the Health-Related Card Criteria – Priority #2
5. Athletes eligible under the Domestic Senior Card Criteria (SR) – Priority #2
6. Athletes carded the previous year that meet the Health-Related Card Criteria – Priority #3 (as long as the athlete was ranked 40 or better PSA Women and 80 or better PSA Men prior to injury declaration.)
7. Athletes eligible under the Domestic Senior Card Criteria (SR) – Priority #3
8. Athlete eligible under the Development Carding Criteria (D) – Priority #1
9. Athlete eligible under the Development Carding Criteria (D) – Priority #2
10. Athletes eligible under the Development Carding Criteria (D) – Priority #3
11. Athletes eligible under the Development Carding Criteria (D) – Priority #4

For Additional Information:

Jamie Nicholls, CEO
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SENIOR CARDING CRITERIA

Senior Card Eligibility Requirement:

To be eligible for carding consideration for senior level carding, an athlete MUST be a member of Squash Canada’s Senior National or NextGen Squad.

Once an athlete has been carded at the senior level, he/she ***must participate in a minimum of 11 PSA events in the 12 months they are carded in order to qualify for a senior card (SR) the next year.*** Squash Canada will count participation at international events

(Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games, World Doubles Championships (softball), World Games, Pan Am Games, Pan American Championships, World University Championships, or other international events Squash Canada participates in) as an event played for carding purposes. The number of events played will be based on the 12-month carding year (July-June) and not the Squash Canada season (Sept- May).

1. Senior International Card Criteria (SR1/SR2)

Squash Canada athletes are treated on the basis of their results at the World Individual Championships. Athletes must have competed in the individual competition to be considered for SR1/SR2 carding. World Individual Championships occur annually, subject to WSF and PSA changes. Any changes to the World Individual Championships program will be reflected in this criteria as required. Note that in an Olympic year, the results from the World Individual Championship won't count towards SR1/2 carding status, as results from Olympic Games will take precedence. Athletes are eligible for International Senior SR1 / SR2 under the following criteria:

Men and Women

SR1/SR2 Criteria: A Top 8 Finish and Top ½ of the field at the 2025/26 season's PSA World Championships (Men's and Women's events typically being held simultaneously).

Note: A maximum of three athletes of each gender will be awarded a Senior International (SR1/SR2) card prioritized based on the best PSA 12-month average (July 1, 2025 – June 1, 2026), using only the first ranking of each month, and if tied, by the best order of finish at the most recent Canadian Squash Championships 'Open' Division.

Athletes who meet the senior international criteria are eligible to be nominated for carding 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 a SR2.

- The second year of carding is subject to the athlete meeting their PSA 6-month ranking average (Jan 1st – Jun 1st preceding) as per their progressive yearly indicator (see Senior Domestic card criteria priority 2), **OR**;
- Finish in the top 16 at the most recent World Individual Championships, **OR**;
- Finish in top 8 at a PSA World Series Gold Event or higher within the preceding 12 months.
- Being re-nominated by Squash Canada and a training and competitive program approved by Squash Canada and Sport Canada being maintained.

2. Senior Domestic Card Criteria

Domestic Senior Cards are intended to support athletes with demonstrated potential to reach International Senior Card status. Athletes meeting the Domestic Senior Card criteria will be carded at the Domestic Senior Card (SR) level.

The remaining number of Senior Domestic Cards will be allocated to eligible athletes in the following priority:

Priority #1:

Canadian male athletes with a 12-month average of 65 PSA ranking or better (July 1, 2025 – June 1, 2026), using only the first ranking of each month, and Canadian female athletes with a 12-month average of 35 PSA ranking or better (July 1, 2025– June 1, 2026), using only the first ranking of each month.

OR

Top 8 finish at a PSA World Series Gold event or PSA World Series Gold Event or higher within the preceding 12 months.

Tiebreaker: If more athletes meet the above criteria than cards available, the athletes will be prioritized based on the athletes with the best PSA 12-month average (July 1, 2025– June 1, 2026), using only the first ranking of each month, and if still tied, by the athletes with the best order of finish at the most recent World Championship, and if still tied, by the athletes with the best order of finish at the most recent Canadian Championships.

Priority #2:

Athletes who achieve the ranking range set forth by the progressive senior development chart below will be eligible for nomination for a SR card. The PSA ranking indicators are 12-month averages from July 1, 2025 – June 1, 2026, using only the first ranking of each month.

PROGRESSIVE SENIOR DEVELOPMENT CHART

	PSA Men’s ranking	PSA Women’s Ranking
1	185 or better	100 or better
2	160 or better	85 or better
3	140 or better	75 or better
4	120 or better	65 or better
5	95 or better	50 or better
6 or more years	65 or better, or Meet Senior International Criteria or Senior Domestic Priority 1 Criteria	35 or better, or Meet Senior International Criteria or Senior Domestic Priority 1 Criteria

NOTE(S):

- *The year of carding as a Health-Related Carded athlete does not count toward the Progressive Senior Development Chart stipulated under the Domestic Senior Card criteria (SR).*
- *Carding received from January-June 2024 does not count as a year on the progressive senior development chart.*
- The Year of Carding refers to the Year they are entering, not the previous number of years carded. Therefore, if this is their first year of carding, the athlete must achieve at least the year 1 standard (i.e.: Men 185 or better & women 100 or better). To be eligible for a second year of carding under this priority the athlete must achieve at least the year 2 standard, etc.

Tiebreaker(s) – the following tie break will be used for priority #2:

1. If multiple athletes meet the same priority level and have the same 12-month average, using only the first ranking of each month, the athlete with the highest ranking on June 1, 2026 will be awarded the card, and if a tie still exists, by the order of finish at the most recent Canadian Squash Championships ‘Open’ Division.

Other Senior Carding Notes:

1. Only whole numbers will be used for ranking averages. All decimal points will be rounded down to the whole number. For example, 90.1 and 90.9 will both be rounded down to 90.
2. Athletes who participate for Canada at international events will receive credit towards their 12-month PSA ranking in order to offset any PSA points potentially lost due to missing a PSA event while competing for Canada at an international event. Credit towards an athlete’s 12-month PSA ranking will be assigned using the International Events Ranking Credits chart that can found in **Appendix 1.0**. The credit received for participation in international events will be applied after all international events have been played for the year and after the publishing of the June 1st, 2026 PSA rankings. The credits applied to an athlete will only be good for the current carding cycle and will not carry over to subsequent years.

DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENT CARD (D)

Domestic Development (D) Cards are intended to support the development needs of developing Junior and NextGen National Squad athletes who clearly demonstrate the potential to achieve Senior International Card Status. There will be two types of athletes who can access Domestic Development (D) Cards:

1. Athletes who have graduated from the U19 age category and have competed for **5 years or less** on the PSA tour.
2. Junior age eligible athletes (Under the age of 19 as specified by the World Squash Federation rules defining U19 players) during the year they are considered for carding. Junior eligible athletes must have participated as a junior athlete during the 12 months applicable for carding (2026-27).

CARDING ALLOCATION

In the event the full annual carding amount has not been allocated via SR1 / SR2, SR cards, the remaining number of cards or carding amounts shall be determined using Domestic Development (D) Card criteria below.

Generally, athletes are nominated for Domestic Development (D) Cards for the full carding period. However, given that Sport Canada has provided Squash Canada with a carding allocation of \$156,600 for 2026-27, it is Squash Canada’s objective to nominate developmental athletes for D Cards so as to maximize this allocation. Consequently, Squash Canada may nominate athletes for D Cards for less than the maximum number of months in the carding period, so long as the carding support to any one athlete is no less than four (4) months.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENT CARDS:

To be eligible the athlete must:

- Have participated in the most recent Canadian Junior Championships in either U17 or U19 division or at the most recent Canadian Senior National Championships, ‘Open’ division, or at the most recent Canadian National U23 Championships;
- Have been named to the most recent season’s Senior National Squad, NextGen or National Junior Squads.
- Normally, a Development card cannot be allocated to an athlete previously carded at the Senior card levels (SR1, SR2, SR) for more than **2 years**, except if the athlete was still eligible to compete at junior international level when carded at the Senior card levels.

NOTES:

1. Athletes previously carded at the SR level (including SR Health-Related) for **3 years or more are not eligible for D Cards**.
2. Domestic Development Cards (priorities 1 – 3) will not be allocated based on gender; the athletes meeting the highest priorities will be nominated for carding regardless of gender. Please refer to the **Domestic Development Card Tiebreaking section**.
3. Junior eligible athletes **must normally earn a minimum of 16 points** from the chart in **Appendix 2.0** in the year of carding consideration, Priority #3.

Maximum Number of Years Carded at the ‘D’ Level

Once an athlete has graduated from the U19 age category they can only be carded a maximum of three (3) years at the D level after which the athlete is expected to meet the Senior Carding Criteria. There is no maximum number of years for junior age athletes.

2.1 Post U19 Age Category Card Criteria

In addition to meeting the yearly progressive domestic chart indicator below, an athlete who has graduated the U19 age category **must** win a **minimum of 3 main draw matches** at PSA 10k or higher tournaments to be considered for carding.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT CHART

<i>Level of Carding</i>	<i>PSA (men)</i>	<i>PSA (women)</i>	<i>Evaluation Methodology</i>
D (1 st year)	370 or better	200 or better	Players must achieve ranking indicator based on a 4-month average ranking (Feb 1, 2026 – Jun 1, 2026), using only the first ranking of each applicable month
D (2 nd year)	325 or better	175 or better	Players must achieve ranking indicator based on a 12-month average (Jul 1, 2025 – Jun 1, 2026), using only the first ranking of each applicable month
D (3 rd year)	280 or better	150 or better	Players must achieve ranking indicator based on a 12-month average (Jul 1, 2025 – Jun 1, 2026), using only the first ranking of each applicable month

Priority #1 – Senior National Squad Athletes

Eligible athletes, members of the Senior National Squad (only), who have reached their respective Progressive Development Criteria and **win a minimum of 3 main draw matches** at PSA 5k or higher tournaments to be considered for carding.

Tiebreaker: If there is more than one eligible athlete meeting Priority #1, then priority will be given to the athlete who had the best order of finish at the most recent Canadian Squash Championships ‘Open’ Division. If multiple athletes in either gender have the same order of finish, then the athlete with the highest PSA ranking on June 1, 2026, using only the first ranking of each applicable month will be prioritized.

Priority #2 – NextGen Squad Athletes

Eligible NextGen Squad athletes, who have reached their respective Progressive Development Criteria and **win a minimum of 3 main draw matches** at PSA 5k or higher tournaments to be considered for carding.

Tiebreaker: If there is more than one eligible athlete in Priority #2, then priority will be given to the athlete who had the best order of finish at the most recent Canadian Squash Championships ‘Open’ Division. If multiple athletes in either gender have the same order of finish, then the athlete with the highest PSA ranking on June 1, 2026 will be prioritized.

2.2 Junior Development Card Criteria

Priority #3 – Junior Eligible Athletes

Eligible Junior Squad athletes must earn a minimum of 16 points in **Appendix 2.0** to be considered for carding nomination.

Eligible junior athletes are ranked for Domestic Development (D) card status based on the total points accumulated through the Development Carding Table for junior eligible athletes as indicated in **Appendix 2.0**. The athlete with the highest score is ranked higher.

Tiebreakers: If there is more than one eligible athlete meeting Priority #3 (Junior Eligible Athletes), priority will be given to the athletes in the following order:

- a) The athlete(s) who achieve the highest number of points in **Appendix 2.0**
- b) If more than one athlete achieves the same number of points in **Appendix 2.0**, priority will be given to the athlete with the best order of finish at the most recent Canadian Junior Championships
- c) In the event that more than one athlete has the same order of finish at the most recent Canadian Junior Championships, the tie will be broken by the athlete with the highest Canadian senior ranking; if still tied then,
- d) The athlete(s) with the best order of finish at the most recent Canadian Squash Championships ‘Open’ Division.

2.3 NextGen Development Card Criteria

Priority #4 – Further NextGen Eligible Athletes

Eligible NextGen Squad athletes, ordered by the highest 4-month PSA-ranking average from Mar 1 2026-Jun 1 2026 and eligible D-card recipients (24 years or younger), as per the preceding criteria, to be considered for carding.

Tiebreaker: If there is a tie in Priority #4, then priority will be given to the athlete who had the best order of finish at the most recent Canadian Squash Championships ‘Open’ Division. If multiple athletes in either gender have the same order of finish, then the athlete with the highest PSA ranking on June 1, 2026 will be prioritized.

HEALTH RELATED CIRCUMSTANCES AND PREGNANCY CARD PROVISION

A player carded the previous year at the senior card level (SR1, SR2, SR and D) will be considered for carding if injury, illness, pregnancy or other health related circumstance that prevents the player from meeting the carding criteria. The requirements of Sport Canada’s policy on the “Curtailed Training and Competition for Health Related Reasons” must be met in order for a player to be nominated as a “health card”. Health Cards will only be granted for a maximum of **one carding cycle**. The year of carding as a health Carded athlete does not count toward the Progressive Yearly Indicator chart stipulated under the Domestic Senior Card criteria (SR) above.

In the event that multiple athletes apply for a health card and there are not sufficient cards available, the following priority will be utilized to determine injury card(s):

Priority #1 - Athletes who were carded at the International Senior Carding level (SR1) during the previous carding cycle.

Priority #2 - Athletes who were carded at the International Senior Carding level (SR2) during the previous carding cycle.

Priority #3 – Athletes who were carded at the Domestic Senior level (SR) during the previous carding cycle (as long as athlete was ranked Top 40 PSA Women and Top 80 PSA Men prior to injury declaration).

Note: the 2024 6-month carding cycle does not count as a “previous carding cycle”, therefore athletes who received an injury card from January 2024-June 2024 may re-apply for a health card.

Pregnancy-Related AAP Support

Athletes who are unable to meet AAP criteria due to pregnancy may be eligible for a Health-related Card at the SR level. Sport Canada may approve such nominations from Squash Canada on a case-by-case basis, even if the organization has reached its assigned AAP quota.

To qualify, the athlete must have been tracking toward meeting the sport-specific criteria and program commitments prior to the pregnancy but became unable to do so directly as a result of the pregnancy.

An athlete approved for a Health Card related to pregnancy may be eligible for a second consecutive cycle of support if ongoing health circumstances related to the pregnancy or birth prevent them from meeting AAP criteria. After two consecutive cycles, the athlete must again meet sport-specific standards to be reconsidered for nomination.

Health cards related to pregnancy will not count toward limits on the number of years or consecutive years an athlete may receive health-related cards.

For more information, please refer to Sport Canada’s Athlete Assistance Program Policies and procedures <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/athlete-assistance/policies-procedures.html>

Note: If multiple athletes meet the same priority level, the athlete with the highest 12-month (July 1, 2025 – June 1, 2026 year) PSA ranking average, using only the first ranking of each month, will be nominated for the card in the priority. In the event there are multiple athletes meeting the same priority level and have the same 12-month average, the athlete with the highest ranking on June 1st, 2026 will be awarded the card.

WITHDRAWAL OF CARDED STATUS

Carded athletes may have their carded status suspended or withdrawn under the following conditions:

- Failure to meet training or competition commitments;
- Violation of the Athlete Agreement;
- Failure to meet athlete responsibilities outlined in the AAP policies and procedures;
- Gross breach of discipline including assertion of, or prosecution of a criminal offence;
- Violations of the **Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS)** or imposition of a **Canadian Safe Sport Program (CSSP)** sanction or provisional measure;
- Investigation for cause; and
- Violations of anti-doping rules.

In most cases, Squash Canada will make the recommendation to withdraw or suspend carded status, however, Sport Canada may also initiate withdrawal in accordance with the AAP policies and procedures.

For full details, please refer to **Section 11: Withdrawal of Carded Status** in the Athlete Assistance Program Policies and Procedures available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/athlete-assistance/policies-procedures.html>

APPENDIX 1.0 INTERNATIONAL EVENTS RANKING CREDITS

Event	Participation	Top 16	Top 10	Top 8	Top 4
Olympic Games - Singles	5 ranking credits	+4	NA	+6	+8
World Team Championships	4 ranking credits	+0	+2	+3	+4

Commonwealth Games – Singles World Open & World Games – Main Draw	2 ranking credits	+4	NA	+6	+8
Pan American Games – Individual Event	2 rankings credits	+0	NA	+0	+4
Pan American Games – Team Event	2 ranking credits	+0	+0	+0	+2
Pan American Championships – Individual Event	1 ranking credit	+0	NA	+0	+1
Pan American Championships – Team Event	1 ranking credit	+0	NA	+0	+1
World Junior Championships – Individual Event	1 ranking credit	+0	+0	+1	+2
World Junior Championships – Team Event	1 ranking credit	+0	+0	+1	+2

NOTE:

1. *An athlete may receive participation points (participation column) PLUS any bonus points for Top finishes (Top 16, Top 10, Top 8, Top 4 columns) as listed above.*
2. *Ranking credits are applied directly to the 12-month average. If an athlete earns 10 ranking credits, their final year-end (12-month average) ranking, using only the first ranking of each month, will drop by 10 points.*

**APPENDIX 2.0 – (D) Card Table
JUNIOR ELIGIBLE ATHLETES' PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

INDIVIDUAL PLACING

BOYS / GIRLS EVENTS	Champion	Finalist	Top 4	Top 8	Top 16
Junior National Championships					
U17 Division – Canadian Junior Squash Championships	3	2	1	0	0
U19 Division – Canadian Junior Squash Championships	4	3	2	0	0
Junior National Team Selection Events					
U19 Division – Canadian National Team Selection Events	2	1	0	0	0
Major International Events – British Jr. Open & World Individual Championships					
U17 Division – British Junior Open	9	8	7	6	5
U19 Division – British Junior Open	15	14	13	12	10
U19 Division – World Junior Individual Championships	16	15	14	12	10
International Events – Canadian Junior Open, US Junior Open, Pioneer Junior Open, Dutch Junior Open, Scottish Junior Open					
U17 Division – Canadian Junior Open, US Junior Open, Pioneer Junior Open, or Dutch Junior Open	3	2	1	0	0
U19 Division – Canadian Junior Open, US Junior Open, Pioneer Junior Open, or Dutch Junior Open	4	3	2	0	0
Pan American Junior Individual Championships					
U19 Division – Individual Singles Event	4	3	2	1	0
Junior Pan American Games					
U23 Division – Individual Singles Event	15	14	13	12	10

TEAM PLACING

NATIONAL JUNIOR TEAM PARTICIPATION IN WORLD / REGIONAL EVENTS	Participation	Champion	Finalist	Top 4	Top 8
Represent Canada at the World Junior Team Championships	2 pts.	6	5	4	0
Represent Canada at the Pan American Junior Team Championships	1 pts.	3	2	1	0
Represent Canada at the Junior Pan American Games	1 pts.	3	2	1	0

NOTE:

1. Athletes will be responsible for providing supporting documentation for **EVERY** point listed. No point will be included in the final application to Sport Canada without the appropriate back up. Squash Canada will assist as necessary.