



Cross Country Ontario (CCO)

***Quest for Gold* – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program 2009-2010**

Able-bodied Athlete Selection Criteria

A Program Description

A.1 Objectives

Quest for Gold – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program 2009-2010 (OAAP) is funded by the Government of Ontario, through the Ministry of Health Promotion (MHP), and operated through the Sport and Recreation Branch. The overarching goal of the *Quest for Gold* – OAAP is directly related to the Enhanced Excellence goals of both *ACTIVE2010* and the *Canadian Sport Policy* – to improve 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 program will provide direct financial assistance to Ontario junior-aged athletes through an "Ontario Card" designation. "Junior-aged athlete" is defined as those athletes who fall within the eligible age range for the Canada Games - 11 to 22 years of age. (Consideration will be given to older junior-aged athletes if a PSO/MSO's NSO-approved Long Term Athlete Development model (LTAD) identifies older athletes in the "Train to Train" and "Train to Compete" categories). The intent of the OAAP is to provide funding to individual athletes based on their demonstrated commitment to high performance sport, allowing them to pursue athletic excellence at the highest levels of national and international competition.

A.2 How does it work?

In accordance with the OAAP guidelines, the Cross Country Ontario is responsible for developing sport specific selection criteria and forming a Selection Committee that will apply the criteria to select those athletes who will be awarded Ontario Card status in 2009-2010. The Selection Criteria is approved by the Board of Directors and reviewed by MHP staff. Nominated athletes will be required to sign and comply with an Athlete Agreement between the athlete and Cross Country Ontario. Carding status will be for one year starting April 1, 2009 ending March 31, 2010.

In 2009-2010, the Ministry of Health Promotion allocated a certain amount of OAAP Ontario Cards to each eligible Provincial Sport / Multi-Sport Organization (PSO/MSO). Cross Country Ontario has been allotted a total of 10 Ontario cards (split evenly as 5 male and 5 Female Cards).

A minimum of 70% of the Ontario cards will be allocated to what the Ministry of Health Promotion defines as junior-aged athletes (11 to 22 years of age). A maximum of 30% of the Ontario cards may be allocated to athletes no longer eligible for "junior athlete" status, (athletes 23 and over).

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

	Male	Female
Full Cards – 10	5	5

In accordance with the OAAP guidelines Cross Country Ontario is responsible for forming a Selection Committee and sport specific selection criteria to nominate the athletes for Ontario carding status in 2009-2010. This selection criteria has been approved by the Cross Country Ontario Board of Directors.

The Selection Committee is comprised of the following members:

Brad Jones, Chair, CCO High Performance Committee
Richard Lemoine, CCO Treasurer
Kateri Mills, Ontario Provincial Coach
Patti Kitler, Ontario Coaching Development Coordinator

A.3 How much funding is available?

The exact level of funding for the 2009-2010 carding year will be determined by the Ministry after the total number of athletes nominated for Ontario Card status has been determined. Funding will be released prior to March 31, 2010.

A.4 How will the Cross Country Ontario Selection Committee decide who receives funding?

The Cross Country Ontario Selection Committee will use both the Ministry of Health Promotion Eligibility Criteria and the Sport Specific Selection Criteria detailed below to determine which athletes will be nominated by the Cross Country Ontario for Ontario Card status in 2009-2010.

B Ministry of Health Promotion Eligibility Criteria

B.1 Minimum Eligibility Requirements

All athletes must also meet the Ministry of Health Promotion's minimum athlete eligibility criteria:

1. Athlete must be a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant;
2. Athlete must be a resident of Ontario for one year prior to his/her nomination for carding status, with the following exception;

The residency requirement will be waived if the athlete is a direct family member of:

- a regular force member, or
- a reservist as defined in subsection 1 (1) of the *Employment Standards Act, 2000* who is deployed under a circumstance described in clause 50.2 (1) (a) or (b) of that Act, or who is deployed or in any other way placed on active duty under a

circumstance described in regulations made for the purposes of clause 50.2 (1) (c) of that Act.

3. Athletes must be training and continuing to train in Ontario. Exceptions (“Residency Exceptions”) will be made on a case specific basis providing that the athlete can substantiate that:
 - 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);
 - ▶ The onus is on the athlete to demonstrate that he/she needs to be out of province. The athlete will submit written documentation to their PSO/MSO’s Selection Committee clearly indicating how they meet these exceptions. The Ministry may require that the athlete provide supporting documentation from the athlete’s PSO/ MSO, National Sport Organization (NSO) or other sources to verify reasons for athlete’s absence from the Province of Ontario.
 - He/She must attend a post-secondary institution out-of-province because the course of study is not available to him/her in Ontario;
 - 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.
4. Athlete must be a member in good standing with PSO/MSO and NSO where applicable.
5. 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.
6. Athlete must demonstrate a commitment and dedication to a proper training and competitive program.
7. Athlete must be instructed by a coach who has been trained and certified in the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) Level 2 or equivalent.
8. Athlete must not be under sanction as per the Canadian Anti-Doping Policy.
9. Athlete must be attending an educational institution full-time (i.e. primary and secondary schools)
 - Exceptions will be made providing 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))
10. 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 given consideration.
11. If eligible, the athlete must compete, and continue to compete 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. Athletes who have achieved Canada Card status are not eligible for Ontario Cards.
12. Eligibility will be limited to Ontario junior-aged athletes (“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 Senior level athletes not funded by Sport Canada – see note below) who have been identified as a next generation national team athlete as demonstrated by:
 - Identification within the NSO pool of identified next generation national team athletes for the last two competitive seasons; OR

- Results at regional championships, national championships (junior and/or senior) or other recognized national/international competitions over the last two competitive seasons; OR
- Representation on a Canadian National Team (developmental and/or junior). Athletes training for Canada Games or provincial teams may also be considered.

B.2 Important Notes:

- 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.
- Athletes who are attending any foreign post-secondary educational institution (including NCAA institutions) and are receiving an athletic scholarship in any sport are not eligible to receive OAAP support.
- An athlete that received Sport Canada Carding between April 1, 2008 and March 31, 2009 and/or April 1, 2009 and March 31, 2010 and is no longer in receipt of Sport Canada Athlete Assistance shall not be eligible to receive *Quest for Gold* funding during fiscal year 2009-2010 (April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010.) 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. However, exceptions may apply and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Exceptions may include, but may not be limited to logistical or administrative changes, injuries, etc.
- An athlete can only be nominated to receive *Quest for Gold* funding in one sport.
- 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.
- In the event of a conflict or inconsistency, the selection criteria established by the Ministry and set out the Athlete Handbook provided to each nominated athlete shall prevail over the selection criteria established by the PSO/MSO.

C Cross Country Ontario 2009/2010 Sport-Specific Athlete Selection Criteria

This section contains the sport-specific athlete selection criteria to be used in the identification, ranking and selection of athletes for Ontario Cards. In order to avoid the possibility of a conflict of interest in the OAAP selection process, the Athlete Representative, and any member of the HPC who has a child on the Ontario Ski Team, will not participate in the application of the criteria or the selection process.

C.1 What are the CCO Objectives for OAAP funding?

The CCO HPC is looking to support Ontario athletes who have the best chance of making a national team in the next three years. The determination of who has the best chance of making a national team will be based on an athlete's performance on the Canada Points List (CPL) and their percentage proximity to the International Points Curve (IPC).

C.2 CCO Selection Criteria for Full Cards

1. The HPC will rank all Ontario Ski Team athletes, as follows:
 - a) A sprint ranking list and a distance ranking list will be generated. These lists will rank athletes using each athlete's CPL for distance and sprint, and calculate a percentage of the IPC distance and IPC sprint values respectively, for the applicable year of birth.
 - b) The selected athletes will be those five females and five males who have the highest average percentage based on an equal weighting of both the Distance and Sprint percentages.
 - c) The IPC to be used will be the standard IPC developed by Cross Country Canada advanced to the 2008-2009 year of competition. The CPL used will be the Period 5 list published April 25, 2009.
2. A tie between two or more athletes on the ranking list will be broken by comparing the results of the head-to-head competitions in the common races used to generate the respective CPL numbers for those athletes.

C.3 CCO Selection Process

The athletes who meet the minimum eligibility requirements and the CCO selection criteria as set out above are invited to apply for OAAP carding through an online application process. Information provided to Cross Country Ontario must include:

1. A detailed training plan. The plan must show the athlete's current training and racing plan and the steps they intend on following to achieve national and international success. The plan must be approved by their personal or club coach, and the Ontario Coach.
2. A commitment to sign an Athlete Agreement, which will be sent to eligible athletes. The agreement covers the athlete's obligations and commitments for the period of funding. This agreement will include a commitment to engage the services of a qualified coach, and to participate in a number of specified training camps and races over the carding period, of April 1st, 2009 to March 31, 2010.

D Residency Exceptions

Any athlete living/training outside of Ontario is required to **submit written documentation** to the Cross Country Ontario Selection Committee clearly identifying how they meet the following residency exceptions, identified in the Ministry of Health Promotion's General Eligibility Criteria:

- Athletes must be living and continuing to train in Ontario. Exceptions will be made on a case specific basis providing that the athlete can substantiate that:
 - 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);
 - He/She must attend a post-secondary institution out-of-province because the course of study is not available to him/her in Ontario;

- 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.

This information must be received by the Selection Committee by no later than **September 30, 2009** in order to be considered.

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. This means that eligible military family members now qualify for OAAP funding immediately upon becoming residents of Ontario. Please see the 2009-2010 *Quest for Gold* Athlete Handbook for details of this exemption, including a list of documents needed to verify eligibility for this waiver of the one-year Ontario residency requirement.

E Failure to Meet Selection Criteria for Health-related Reasons (Force Majeure)

Athletes that, 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.
- Cross Country 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.

Athletes who apply for OAAP carding consideration under Force Majeure will be ranked against one another, and the other athletes on the standard CCO OAAP ranking list as follows:

1. A performance figure for the Force Majeure candidate will be determined based on the average of the CPL for the best two distance races and the best two sprint races attained by that athlete in the competitive season where training and/or competition was curtailed or restricted for health reasons.
2. This performance measure will be used to generate an OAAP ranking for the Force Majeure athlete(s) in the same manner (i.e., proximity from IPC based on Year of Birth) that is used for all other eligible athletes on the OAAP ranking list.
3. The addition of a male Force Majeure athlete to the ranking list will not affect the selection process for female athletes and vice versa.
4. A maximum of two Force Majeure appeals (one male and one female) will be accommodated in any one OAAP carding cycle.

5. A Force Majeure athlete must demonstrate a performance figure on the CCO OAAP ranking list that would put them in the top half of the ranking list for the available number of cards in their gender.
6. The CCO HPC reserves the right to revert to the CPL performance history from the previous year of competition in the case where a Force Majeure candidate was not able to participate in the minimum number of races specified in criteria # 1 above.

This information must be received by the Selection Committee by no later than **September 30, 2009** in order to be considered.

F Alternates

Cross Country 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 2009-2010 fiscal year;
- An alternate 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).

G To Apply

Nominated athletes will be advised to apply online at www.questforgold.ca by **October 26, 2009**

Athlete Agreements and proof of Ontario Residency must be submitted to:

Name: Liz Inkila
Email: admin@xco.org
Address: 738 River St, Thunder Bay, ON, P7A 3S8
Phone number: 807-768-4617
Fax number: 807-768-8368

and must be received not later than **November 17, 2009**. The athlete agreement will only come into effect if an athlete is selected and accepts carding status through the OAAP program.

Cross Country Ontario will publish or make known the athletes nominated for Ontario Card status by no later than **October 21, 2009**.

H Appeals

Appeals will be allowed in writing from athletes who have not been nominated by a PSO/MSO for Ontario Card status. Appeals will be dealt with by an Appeals Committee comprised of representatives from the sport community and chosen by the Ministry.

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

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

B) Whether or not the selection criteria developed and applied by the PSO/MSO were fair, objective, transparent and free from discrimination or conflict of interest.

After hearing an appeal the Appeals Committee will have the authority to:

1. Direct the PSO/MSO 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.

The appeals will only be accepted on the MHP-provided template, in writing through regular post, registered mail, courier or delivered in person. Appeals that are delivered personally or by courier shall be deemed to be received on the date of delivery. Appeals that are delivered by regular post or registered mail shall be deemed to be received three days after the date of mailing. Appeals submitted by e-mail or fax will not be accepted. The Appeals Committee will discuss all appeals at once, after PSO/MSOs publish their list of nominated athletes. Appeals received in advance of the PSO/MSO announcing nominees will not be reviewed until after the Appeals deadline.

The deadline for athletes to submit appeals to the Appeals Committee is

Cycle One: **October 26, 2009.**

Appeals must be completed on the template below and will be directed to:

Quest for Gold Ontario Athlete Assistance Program Appeals Committee
c/o Sport and Recreation Branch
Ministry of Health Promotion,
18th floor, 393 University Avenue
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2S1

2009/2010 Quest for Gold – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program Appeal Template

The deadline for athletes to submit appeals to the Appeals Committee is October 26, 2009 for Cycle 1 and February 1, 2010 for Cycle 2. Appeals will only be accepted on the MHP-provided template, in writing through regular post, registered mail, courier or delivered in person. **Please refer to the appeals section of your PSO/MSO's Athlete Selection Criteria document prior to completing this form.**

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

Reason for Appeal (Check one only):

- Whether or not the PSO/MSO has completed the selection process in accordance with their own published selection criteria and related procedures;
- Whether or not the selection criteria developed and applied by the PSO/MSO were fair, objective, transparent and free from discrimination 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 a detailed account of the situation to allow the Appeals Committee to understand the basis of the appeal (please submit additional pages/supporting documentation if necessary):

Print Name of Appellant

Signature of Appellant

Date

Any/all information provided to the Appeals Committee may be shared with the athlete's PSO by the Appeals Committee.

Cycle 1 - Dates and Deadlines for 2009-2010

Date	Activity	Responsibility
September 8, 2009	Deadline to submit Sport Specific Selection Criteria	Cross Country Ontario
September 14, 2009	Deadline for posting of sport specific selection criteria to www.xco.org	Cross Country Ontario
September 30, 2009	Deadline for athletes to submit Ontario residency exemption application and force majeure documentation	Athletes
October 19, 2009	Deadline for CCO to send athlete nomination form to MHP for review	Cross Country Ontario
October 21, 2009	Deadline for CCO to publish list of nominated Ontario Card athletes	Cross Country Ontario
October 26, 2009	Deadline for athletes to complete Ontario Card application online at www.questforgold.ca	Athletes and Cross Country Ontario
October 26, 2009	Ontario Card appeal Deadline	Athletes
November 4, 2009	Appeals Committee reviews appeals	MHP Appeals Committee
November 12, 2009	Appeals Committee notifies athletes and CCO of outcome of appeals	MHP Appeals Committee
November 17, 2009	Deadline for athletes to submit proof of residency and athlete agreements	Athletes
November 20, 2009	Deadline for CCO to submit confirmation to MHP that all Athlete Agreements have been received	Cross Country Ontario
November 20, 2009	MHP to finalize list of 2009-2010 carded athletes to confirm accuracy of content	MHP