

## 2026 QUEST FOR GOLD - Ontario Athlete Assistance Program **BOCCIA**

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### OVERVIEW

Quest for Gold – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program 2026 (OAAP) is funded by the Government of Ontario, through the Ministry of Sport, and operated through the Sport, Recreation & Major Events Division. The program is administered by the Ontario Cerebral Palsy Sports Association (OCPSA) operating as Ontario Boccia.

The overarching goal of the Quest for Gold - OAAP is directly related to the High-Performance Sport goal of the Canadian Sport Policy which is to ensure that Canadians systematically achieve world-class results at the highest levels of international competition. This goal is advanced by improving both the performance and the number of Ontario athletes competing at the national and international levels, thereby contributing to stronger Canadian results 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 Compete' and '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.

Quest for gold operates as part of Ontario's Boccia High Performance Program and supports athletes identified through the OHPSI Athlete Selection Criteria, in alignment with Boccia Canada's High Performance pathway. Eligibility for Quest for Gold funding is limited to athletes competing in Paralympic-recognized sport classes BC1 to BC4, consistent with the national pathway.

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".

## FUNDING CATEGORIES

In accordance with the OAAP guidelines, Ontario Boccia will provide up to \$21,000\* in direct athlete funding for athletes in two categories:

**1. Tier 1 – National Espoir Team Athletes**

Athletes officially identified by Boccia Canada as members of the 2026 National Espoir Team and nominated to OHPSI.

**2. Tier 2 – National Development Pool**

Athletes nominated to OHPSI under the National Development Pool category.

Only athletes nominated under the above two OHPSI categories are eligible for Quest for Gold funding. Athletes nominated under other OHPSI categories are not eligible for funding under this program.

\*Funding allocations differ by tier and are determined annually based on Ministry allocation and the number of eligible athletes. Funding under the 2026 Quest for Gold – Ontario Athlete Assistance Program applies to the 2026-27 fiscal year only.

## CANADA CARD ATHLETES

Athletes who hold Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) carding status are not eligible for Ontario Cards. However, they will automatically receive the Quest for Gold Canada Card top-up in accordance with Ministry guidelines.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

All athletes must meet the following minimum eligibility criteria:

- Must be a minimum of fifteen (15) years of age at the time of application
- Must be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident
- 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).
- Must be living in and continuing to train in Ontario
- Must be a member in good standing of OCPSA and Boccia Canada
- Must be nominated to OHPSI for the 2026 cycle
- Must have competed for Team Ontario at the 2025 Canadian Boccia Championships
- Must sign and comply with an Athlete Agreement with OCPSA

Meeting OHPSI nomination criteria does not guarantee eligibility for Quest for Gold funding, as athletes must also meet all Ministry eligibility requirements.

## **SELECTION AUTHORITY**

Final selection decisions will be made by the Selection Committee, comprised of designated representatives of Ontario Boccia (PSO) and Boccia Canada (NSO), and will be based on Ministry eligibility requirements, OHPSI nomination status, available funding, and alignment with program objectives.

## **ATHLETE AGREEMENT**

Nominated athletes are required to sign and comply with an Athlete Agreement with OCPSA.

Failure to comply with the agreement may result in withdrawal of funding at the discretion of Ontario Boccia (OCPSA) and in accordance with Ministry policy.

## **APPEALS**

Appeals regarding Quest for Gold nomination decisions may be submitted only on the following grounds:

- a. Whether the Selection Committee completed the selection process in accordance with its published selection criteria and related procedures;
- b. Whether the Selection Committee applied the selection criteria in a manner free from bias, discrimination or conflict of interest.

Issues related to the specific content of the selection criteria or the selection requirements themselves are not grounds for an appeal.

## **PROGRAM CONTACT**

All program inquiries should be directed to:

Juliana von Cramon  
Manager, Technical & Program Development  
[juliana@ocpsa.com](mailto:juliana@ocpsa.com)