



**Para Athlete Stipends and Support Programs**  
**UPDATED: DECEMBER 2023**

**A. Elite Athlete Stipends and Elite Athlete Health Insurance provided by the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC)**

**1. Eligibility Criteria**

To be eligible for Elite Athlete Stipends and Elite Athlete Health Insurance (EAHI) and other support programs provided by the USOPC in 2024, Para athletes must:

- Achieve the 2023 Elite Standard MQS or other qualifying criteria set forth in 2.c.;
- Must be a member of the current year Para United States Archery Team (USAT);
- Be a citizen of the United States and/or meet all World Archery (WA) eligibility requirements to compete for USA Archery (USAA) internationally and be actively working towards, meeting all eligibility requirements to compete for USAA in the following Paralympic Games;
- Commit to a program of preparation with the intent of qualifying for and competing in the next Paralympic Games;
- Be actively competing in a Para division of domestic and international events.
- Have a current USAA membership;
- Have a current U.S. Center for SafeSport training;
- Have a current USAA Background Screen;
- Have a current International Para classification;
- Be compliant with current USADA and WADA whereabouts standards and practices and all anti-doping policies and procedures;
- Have signed USAA Athlete Agreement on file for the current year;
- Adhere to training plans provided by the Paralympic Head Coach;

**2. 2024 Elite Athlete Stipends**

A total of \$50,000 will be distributed equally between all eligible Para athletes as described below:

**a. Non-Paralympic Games Years**

Athletes on the current year Para USAT who achieve the prior year Elite Standard criteria or Elite Standard MQS (See 2.c.) the prior year will receive Elite Athlete Stipends provided by the USOPC provided they meet all eligibility criteria. Stipends will be distributed four (4) equal installments in February, April, June and August.

b. Paralympic Games Year Only

Athletes on Para USAT who achieved the 2023 Elite Standard Criteria and/or 2023 Elite Standard MQS will receive Elite Athlete Stipends provided by the USOPC in 2024 provided they meet all eligibility criteria, up until the Paralympic Games team is nominated. Once the Paralympic Games team is nominated, USOPC Elite Athlete Stipends and EAHF will only be provided to athletes who are nominated to the Paralympic Games team, provided the U.S. has earned Paralympic Games quota slots and the athlete has met all requirements to participate at the Paralympic Games per the Paralympic Games Athlete Selection Procedures and meets all other eligibility criteria. Stipends will be distributed in a Paralympic Games year according to the schedule below:

March: \$12,500 will be equally distributed to athletes on the current year Para USAT who achieve the 2023 Elite Standard criteria or MQS (See 3.c.) the prior year.

June: \$12,500 will be equally distributed to athletes nominated to the Paralympic Games team.

August: \$12,500 will be equally distributed to athletes nominated to the Paralympic Games team.

October: \$12,500 will be equally distributed to athletes nominated to the Paralympic Games team.

c. 2024 Elite Standard Criteria and Elite Standard MQS

- i. Achieve the 2023 Elite Standard MQS (See Table 1) at least once at either a USAT Series Event, U.S. Team Trials Event or World Ranking Event between January 1<sup>st</sup> and December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023; OR
- ii. Earn an individual medal at the 2023 Para World Championships; Funding will only be provided for up to the top 3 in the Para national rankings as of 11/30/23. Ties for the 3<sup>rd</sup> place funding allocation will be broken by the athletes Qualification Round placement at the Target Nationals and if still tied by 10's and then X's.

Table 1: 2023 ELITE STANDARD MQS	
DIVISION	72 ARROW ROUND SCORE
Compound Men Open	686
Compound Women Open	681
Recurve Men Open	625
Recurve Women Open	611
W1 Men	655
W1 Women	629

\*The 2023 Elite Standard MQS scores are estimated to be in the range of the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile of qualification round scores shot at Para international events between 2018-2022.

3. **Stipulations for Athlete Stipends and EAHI provided by the USOPC**

- a. Pregnancy: An athlete who meets the eligibility criteria for EAHI and/or Athlete Stipends at the time of pregnancy will continue to receive EAHI and/or the same amount of qualified USOPC Athlete Stipends for the duration of the pregnancy, plus an additional one-year period from the date of birth of the child or end of pregnancy, provided that the athlete agrees that it is their intent to return to competition at an elite level. Receipt of these benefits shall not be conditioned upon any agreement that the athlete must continue to train during pregnancy or for the one-year period after the birth of the child or end of pregnancy. Upon the conclusion of the one-year period, the athlete will then have to re-qualify for EAHI and/or Athlete Stipends.
- b. Medical Leave of Absence: Athletes who cannot currently train or compete for more than two consecutive quarters (6 months) due to a medical leave of absence will not receive the Elite Athlete Stipend for the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter and subsequent quarter thereafter they are not actively training and/or competing. Upon return to training, the Elite Athlete Stipend will be awarded once the athlete achieves at minimum, the Para USAT MQS, at a USAA sanctioned state, national, USAT, U.S. Team Trials or world ranking event post return to training. If all necessary requirements are met, the athlete's stipend will be awarded the following quarter. No retroactive Elite Athlete Stipend payments will be made.
- c. Athlete Agreements: Each athlete recipient will be required to execute an agreement with the USOPC and will also be required to sign an Athlete Agreement with USAA, outlining the athlete's commitment with respect to a required training program, camps and events and compliance with USADA, USOPC and USAA policies and procedures. If an athlete fails to maintain a Para national ranking and/or does not participate in required camps and events (see Appendix A) or violates their athlete agreement, the Elite Athlete Stipend and EAHI may be eliminated, reduced or given to the next highest ranked Para athlete who meets the eligibility criteria, on a case-by-case basis, pending approval by USAA and the USOPC.
- d. Suspensions: When a provisional membership suspension has been imposed, USOPC and USAA shall suspend and accrue Elite Athlete Stipend payments prior to a final determination of any violation. If an Elite Athlete Stipend payment has been accrued and the athlete is subsequently found not to have committed a violation, the Elite Athlete Stipend payment accrued shall be paid to the athlete. For EAHI, no consequences will occur until after a final determination of a rule violation has been found.

4. **Elite Athlete Health Insurance (EAHI) provided by the USOPC**

EAHI will be distributed equally between all eligible Para athletes as follows:

a. Non-Paralympic Games Years

Athletes on the current year Para USAT who achieve the Elite Standard criteria or Elite Standard MQS the prior year will receive EAHI January 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup> provided they meet eligibility criteria.

b. 2024 Paralympic Games Year Only

Eligible athletes who achieve the 2023 Elite Standard Criteria or Elite Standard MQS (See 1. and 2.c.) the prior will receive EAHI provided they meet eligibility criteria, until the Paralympic Games team is nominated. Once the Paralympic Games team is nominated, EAHI will only be provided to athletes who are nominated to the Paralympic Games team through December 31<sup>st</sup>, provided the U.S. has earned Paralympic Games quota slots and the athlete has met all requirements to participate

at the Paralympic Games per the Paralympic Games Athlete Selection Procedures. In addition, the athlete must submit all EAHI registration paperwork by the required deadline.

**B. Operation Gold**

In a Paralympic Games year, teams and individuals must place in the top-three at the Paralympic Games to qualify for Operation Gold Awards; multiple Operation Gold Awards can be received if an athlete has multiple top-three finishes at the Paralympic Games.

In non-Paralympic years, Operation Gold Awards are limited to one award per athlete in a program year; athletes who qualify for more than one award automatically receive the higher award. Individuals must finish in one of the top eight places, while teams must finish in one of the top six places at the qualifying event to qualify for Operation Gold Awards in non-Paralympic years, provided individuals/teams finish among the top 50% of the individuals/teams who started the event. For Paralympic sports with a discipline or event that is not included on the program of the upcoming Paralympic Games, that discipline or event will not be eligible for Operation Gold.

For purposes of Operation Gold, a team is defined as three or more athletes (pairs are awarded at the same rate as individual athletes).

<b>Operation Gold Payment Schedule</b>	<b>2024 Paralympic Games</b>
<b>PLACE</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
<b>1st</b>	\$37,500.00
<b>2nd</b>	\$22,500.00
<b>3rd</b>	\$15,000.00

**C. Mental Health Assistance Fund**

The USOPC will provide access to the Mental Health Assistance Fund (MHAF) per the eligibility criteria below:

- 1) All existing EAHI, National Medical Network (NMH), and USOPC mental health resources have been accessed and exhausted or deemed inappropriate;
- 2) Athletes who are training and have either been selected or are in contention to represent the U.S. at the next Paralympic Games or;
- 3) Athletes who represented the U.S. in the past two years at an elite competition in an event or discipline included on the programs at the next Paralympic Games, and/or have been selected to represent the U.S. at a similar event in the current or next calendar year.

Please additional eligibility criteria and MHAF Program information or contact [mentalhealth@usopc.org](mailto:mentalhealth@usopc.org) or call 719-866-2388 (See Appendix B).

#### **D. International Event Athlete Selection**

1. For funded Para International events with a closed registration process held prior to June 15<sup>th</sup> that do not have a unique trials process such as Para World Ranking events or the Para Pan Am Championships, Para USAT members will be given the first opportunity to attend based on their final Para national ranking as of December 31<sup>st</sup> of the prior year.
  - a. If a Para USAT athlete declines to participate or fails to respond within the given accept/decline deadline, then the available position will be offered to the next highest nationally ranked Para athlete (to include eligible non-Para USAT members with a Para national rank) 60 days prior to the event. This process will repeat itself until all available slots are filled or until all eligible athletes have had the opportunity to accept or decline. Non-Para USAT athletes will be required to self-fund to the event and in addition must provide their own shooting assistant or agent.
  - b. If additional slots are available after all Para USAT and Para Nationally ranked athletes have accepted or declined, non-ranked Para athletes may self-fund to the event if slots are available if they meet all eligibility requirements set forth by USAA and WA to compete internationally for USAA. All athletes must be internationally classified or register for international classification at the event.
2. If a funded Para international event with a closed registration process is held June 16<sup>th</sup> or later, athletes will be invited by order of placement in the current Para national rankings 60 days prior to the event. If the “60-day prior” to the event timing falls over the top of a Para USAT ranking event, the results of the updated Para national rankings upon completion of that Para USAT event will be used to determine the order of selection of the team. If the event invitation is received after the 60 days’ timeframe, individuals will be selected based on the most current Para national rankings as of the date the invitation is received.
  - a. If an athlete declines to participate or fails to respond within the given accept/decline deadline, then the available position will be offered to the next highest nationally ranked Para athlete (to include eligible non-Para USAT members with a Para national rank) 60 days prior to the event. This process will repeat itself until all available slots are filled or until all eligible athletes have had the opportunity to accept or decline. Non-Para USAT athletes will be required to self-fund to the event and in addition must provide their own shooting assistant or agent.
  - b. If additional slots are available after all Para USAT and Para Nationally ranked athletes have accepted or declined, non-ranked Para athletes may self-fund to the event if slots are available if they meet all eligibility requirements set forth by USAA and WA to compete internationally for USAA. All athletes must be internationally classified or register for international classification at the event.

## **E. International Event and Camp Funding**

Funding guidelines will be announced no later than January of each year and are subject to increase or decrease annually based on fluctuating travel costs and yearly budgets.

For 2024 the following funding guidelines will be in place for international events and camps:

- a. Recurve Open, Compound Open and W1 athletes selected to Para USAT will be eligible for funding to international events and required camps up to the number of positions to be funded (see Appendix A for 2024 Funding Guidelines).
- b. Athletes who are not on Para USAT, to include those without a Para National Rank and athletes in visually impaired categories may opt to self-fund to international events as slots become available (see Section D).

Para USAT MQS Table:

<b>Division</b>	<b>72-Arrow Round MQS Score</b>
Men W1	590
Compound Men Open	650
Recurve Men Open	570
Women W1	520
Compound Women Open	620
Recurve Women Open	530

\*The Para USAT MQS is based on the Paralympic Games MQS set by World Archery.

- c. Recurve Open, Compound Open and W1 athletes who have not met the Para USAT MQS within the last 12 months who self-fund to the 2024 Final Qualifying Tournament (FQT) will be eligible for event registration and travel reimbursement if they earn Paralympic Games quota slots for the U.S. at the FQT and have also achieved the Paralympic Games MQS and other eligibility requirements per the Paralympic Games Athlete Selection Procedures. Event registration and travel reimbursement receipts must be provided to [international\\_teams@usarchery.org](mailto:international_teams@usarchery.org) within 30 days of the conclusion of the event and will be issued in accordance with USAA's Travel Policy.

## **F. Other Support**

### **1. Travel Reimbursements**

Athletes who met the 2023 Elite Standard Eligibility criteria and/or Elite Standard MQS will be eligible for a \$1,000 travel reimbursement. Athletes may request reimbursement for eligible travel expenses according to the USAA travel policy for event registration, airfare, ground transportation or lodging expenses incurred due to participation in the USAA Outdoor Target Nationals and U.S. Open, USAT events or other non-funded WA sanctioned World Ranking events. Funding may also be used for travel costs associated with short-term training programs. Funding may not be requested for event prize pool registration fees. **All reimbursement requests must be made by October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024.**

## **2. Funded and Non-Funded Short-Term Training Programs**

Please review the [Short-Term Training Program Policy and Application](#) for information on eligibility criteria and how to apply. When more user nights are requested than funding available USAA will evaluate applications based on Para national rank and gender equity.

## **3. Sport Performance Services**

Athletes selected to the 2024 Para USAT and/or funded to 2024 international teams will be eligible for USOPC provided Sports Medicine, Mental Performance and Dietician support as funding permits. Sports Medicine access requires pre-registration. Athletes are required to provide their own medical insurance and cover out of pocket expenses, if not supported by EAHI.

## **G. 2025 USOPC Athlete Stipend and EAHI Elite Standard Criteria**

Para athletes will need to meet one of the following requirements, to be eligible for USOPC Athlete Stipends and EAHI in 2025:

- a. Achieve the 2024 Elite Standard MQS (See Table 4.) at least once at either a USAT Series Event, U.S. Trials event or World Ranking Event between January 1<sup>st</sup> and December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024; or
- b. Earn an individual medal at the 2024 Paralympic Games

Funding will only be provided for up to the top 3 athletes in the Para national rankings per gender and division to include Recurve Open, Compound Open and W1 as of 12/31/24.

<b>Table 4: 2024 ELITE STANDARD MQS</b>	
<b>DIVISION</b>	<b>72 ARROW ROUND SCORE</b>
Compound Men Open	681
Compound Women Open	673
Recurve Men Open	624
Recurve Women Open	597
W1 Men	648
W1 Women	625

**\*The 2024 Elite Standard MQS scores are based on 80<sup>th</sup> percentile average of qualification round scores shot at the last three Para World Championships.**

## APPENDIX A

### 2024 Required Events and Camps

USAA will provide funding for eligible athletes to attend the required events and camps per the schedule below. Athletes receiving Elite Athlete Stipends and EAHI from the USOPC will be required to attend the events and camps listed in Appendix A.

Required Events and Camps	Event Funding	Travel Stipend
<b>Paralympic Games Final Qualification Tournament– Dubai, UAE</b>	Up to the top 3 athletes per category who meet the funding eligibility criteria set forth in Section E. will be funded.	Yes – For Funded Athletes (\$500)
<b>Para Pan Am Championships – Location TBD</b>	SELF-FUNDED	N/A
<b>Para World Ranking Event– Czech Republic</b>	Up to the top 3 athletes per category who meet the funding eligibility criteria set forth in Section E. will be funded.	Yes- For Funded Athletes (\$500)
<b>Paralympic Games and Prep Camp –Paris, France</b>	Athletes nominated to the Paralympic Games team who meet all Games eligibility requirements will be funded.	Yes-For Funded Athletes (\$500)

Dates and locations of events or camps will be announced 45 days prior to each event or camp, when possible. Events and/or camps dates may be modified or extended for due to COVID-19 related local, state or federal government restrictions.





## **United States Olympic & Paralympic (USOPC) Mental Health Assistance Fund (MHAF)**

### **Overview**

The USOPC is committed to protecting the mental health of elite athletes training for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Despite the mental health resources being developed at the USOPC, there are situations in which gaps in mental health coverage result in a financial burden. The USOPC Mental Health Assistance Fund (MHAF) will be used to direct financial gifts from our mental health ambassadors to close these gaps by financially supporting the mental health of our athletes.

### **Background**

The USOPC supports the mental health of elite athletes training for the Olympic and Paralympic Games in multiple ways: Elite Athlete Health Insurance (EAHI), the National Medical Network (NMN), USOPC Mental Health Services (MHS), and other mental health resources. These programs are designed to support the mental health of our elite athletes and reduce the financial burdens related to mental health costs. Despite this investment in mental health, there are gaps necessitating athletes to manage expenses related to mental health that often result in elite athletes postponing or forgoing support for mental health to avoid encountering financial burden.

### **Proposal**

The USOPC Athlete Services and Development Divisions have secured mental health ambassadors and hope to direct some of the donations from these mental health ambassadors to a Mental Health Assistance Fund (MHAF). This fund will be managed by the USOPC Sports Medicine's Director, MHS.

The initial budget for MHAF is \$250,000 annually. If demand exceeds \$250,000, the amount will be re-evaluated for the following year. These funds will be used to pay for mental health costs incurred by elite athletes training for Team USA.

### **Mental Health Reimbursement Program**

Athlete mental health expenses eligible to be covered by the MHAF include:

- 1) Payment for mental health treatment
- 2) Deductibles and copayments for mental health services
- 3) Psychiatric prescription medication costs
- 4) Mental health related travel and accommodations



Criteria for eligibility of the MHAF are:

- 1) All existing EAH, NMN, and USOPC mental health resources have been accessed and exhausted or deemed inappropriate.
- 2) Athletes who are training and have either been selected or are in contention to represent the US at the next Olympic or Paralympic Summer or Winter Games OR
- 3) Athletes who represented the US in the past 2 years at an elite competition in an event or discipline included on the programs at the next Olympic or Paralympic Summer or Winter Games, and/or have been selected to represent the US at a similar event in the current or next calendar year.

*Please consult appendix for eligibility.*

The USOPC reserves the right to make exceptions to these eligibility requirements in its sole discretion.

Athletes with qualifying mental health expenses will submit their claim to USOPC MHS. MHS staff will collect all information regarding the case (e.g., receipts, medical records) necessary to determine eligibility. The MHS staff will coordinate with stakeholders to confirm all existing assets have been explored. Once the case has been compiled, it will be routed to the Director, MHS to initiate the approval process. Eligible cases will be approved by the Director, MHS for reimbursement. If there are questions regarding eligibility, a committee of the Director, MHS, Vice President of Sports Medicine, Chief Medical Officer, and Chief of Athlete Services will make the final determination as to whether the case is eligible for funding, and if so, the amount of funding.

The MHAF, as with all USOPC services and benefits, is subject to the USOPC benefits eligibility matrix. Individual suspensions and sanctions will be reviewed during the application process.

### **Reimbursement Process**

Each claim is eligible for approval for a maximum of \$25,000 per year for eligible mental health expenses. Payment through the MHAF can only reimbursement expenses that have already been paid by the athlete. During the fourth quarter of each year, a review of the MHAF budget and any outstanding claims will be performed. Athletes with claims that were not fully paid by the MHAF may receive additional reimbursement if resources are available.

### **Conclusion**

The USOPC can help athletes improve mental health and ease the financial burden of unmet mental health expenses by creating and funding a MHAF. The MHAF provides a solution for the athletes who are not fully supported by USOPC mental health resources.



# USOPC

## MENTAL HEALTH ASSISTANCE FUND

*Alleviating obstacles to mental health care for Team USA athletes*

The USOPC is committed to protecting the mental health of elite athletes training for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Despite the mental health resources being developed at the USOPC, there are situations in which gaps in mental health coverage result in a financial burden. The USOPC Mental Health Assistance Fund (MHAf) will be used to direct financial gifts from our mental health ambassadors to close these gaps by financially supporting the mental health of our athletes.

### ELIGIBLE EXPENSES



**Mental Health  
Treatment**



**Copays &  
Deductibles**



**Prescription  
Medication Costs**



**Travel &  
Accommodations**

1) All existing EAHI, National Medical Network, and USOPC mental health resources have been accessed and exhausted or deemed inappropriate.

2) Athletes who are training and have either been selected or are in contention to represent the U.S. at the next Olympic or Paralympic Games. **OR**

3) Athletes who represented the U.S. in the past 2 years at an elite competition in an event or discipline included on the programs at the next Olympic or Paralympic Games, and/or have been selected to represent the U.S. at a similar event in the current or next calendar year.

### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

**Apply**



[go.teamusa.org/MHAF](https://go.teamusa.org/MHAF)

**Contact Us**



(719) 866-2388



[mentalhealth@usopc.org](mailto:mentalhealth@usopc.org)