PARA TALENT IDENTIFICATION PROGRAM GUIDE



Program Summary

The USA Archery Para Talent Identification (ID) Program is designed to identify and develop the next generation of elite Para archers who desire to represent the U.S. at the highest levels of competition. By expanding the talent pool and creating clear pathways for progression, the program aims to increase representation on Para United States Archery Team (USAT) rosters and elevate the United States' competitiveness on the international stage across all disciplines. The end goal is for each athlete to participate in the 2028 Paralympic Games U.S. Team Trials, with the goal of qualifying for the 2028 Paralympic Games in Los Angeles, CA and other future international events.

Program Standards

As part of the Para Talent ID Program, athletes are expected to build the skills necessary to compete at national and international levels within one to two years. To achieve this, they will work closely with USAA coaching and sport performance staff, gaining hands-on training and development while striving to meet key performance benchmarks on the path to the next Paralympic Games.

Application Process

Athletes may apply to the program by completing the Para Talent ID Application Survey. Para Talent ID Application Survey

The application deadline is **June 30, 2026**. Applications received outside this deadline will be considered on a case-by-case basis for Athlete Fast Track status (see Athlete Fast Track for more info).

Program Eligibility Criteria

To be considered for the Para Talent ID Program the athlete, at minimum, must meet the following program eligibility criteria prior to the selection process:

1. Athletes must be a citizen of the United States and must be able to obtain a valid U.S. passport. Athletes must also meet the eligibility requirements of Rule 41 of the IOC Charter.
2. Athletes must be 14 years or older by Jun 30, 2026, to participate in USA Archery's Talent Identification Program.
3. Athletes must have no prior selection to a Para USAT or previously attended a USA Archery Para camp.
4. Athletes must be eligible to obtain a national classification and must obtain an international classification if they intend to compete at international events such as the 2028 Paralympic Games. A description of sport-specific classification requirements and current international athlete sport class status can be found on the World Archery website (WA) website at http://www.archery.sport. Athletes will be required to obtain an international classification prior to the beginning of the Stage #1 U.S. Paralympic Trials Event (TBD Q2 2028).

5. Athletes named to the program must complete and/or maintain the following requirements for the duration of the program:
    a. Maintain a current eligible USA Archery membership type.
    b. Athletes age 18+ must pass and retain a current USA Archery Background Screen and complete and retain a current U.S. Center for SafeSport training.
    c. Sign the Para Talent ID Program agreement by the required deadline. Failure to sign the agreement will be deemed as declining their nomination to the program.

Athlete Ranking and Selection Process

To apply to the program athletes must complete the USA Archery Para Talent ID Program Survey. Athletes will be assigned ranking points for their survey responses (the highest points achieved per category will be applied).

Application Criteria and Ranking Points Scale

Archery experience

Yes	**1 point**
No	0 points

Shot process (video) *evaluated by USAA Paralympic Head Coach

Athlete demonstrates excellent alignment, control of the draw weight, shot process and physical process. Athlete also demonstrates excellent execution of release and follow through of the shot	**5 points**
Athlete demonstrates some control of the draw weight and shot process with some physical process. Athletes alignment and shot execution needs improvement	2 points
Athlete does not demonstrate control of the draw weight and shot process and lacks a clear physical process. Athlete does not demonstrate alignment and or a fluid shot execution	0 points

Athlete has met Paralympic Games Minimum Qualifying Score (MQS)

Yes	**5 points**
No	0 points

Bow Draw Weight

10-20 lbs	**1 point**
21-20 lbs	2 points
31-40 lbs	4 points
41+ lbs	5 points

Maximum Distance Shot

15-40M	**1 point**
50M or more	2 points

Previous experience competing in sports as a para athlete

Paralympic Medalist	**25 points**
Para World Championship Medalist	25 points
Paralympian	20 points
National Champion	15 points
National Level	10 points
Collegiate Level	6 points
Local (Recreational/School/Other)	4 points
N/A =	2 points

Previous experience competing in sports as an able body athlete (if applicable)

Olympic Medalist	**25 points**
World Championship Medalist	25 points
Olympian	20 points
National Champion	15 points
National Level	10 points
Collegiate Level	6 points
Local (Recreational/School/Other)	4 points
N/A =	2 points

Likelihood of receiving a classification in the sport of archery (eligible impairment)

Classified in Archery	**5 points**
Classifiable	5 points
To Be Determined	2 points
Not Classifiable	0 points

Current involvement in structured training (strength and/or conditioning)

5-7 days a week	**15 points**
3-4 days a week	10 points
1-2 days a week	5 points
0 days a week	0 points

Athlete proximity to archery training resources (i.e. Archery Club, Coach or Range)

< 60 miles	**10 points**
61-100 miles	4 points
101-150 miles	3 points
> 151 miles	1 point

Perceived athlete commitment to long-term training (Based on survey, video, and/or interview responses)

Perceived Commitment Scale	**Total Hours per week**	**Points**
90%-100%	25 hours or more	20 points
80%-89%	20-24 hours	10 points
60%-79%	15 -19 hours	8 points
40%-59%	10-14 hours	2 points
0-39%	Less than 10 hours	0 points

Pre-Selection Athlete Follow Up:
As needed, USAA High Performance staff may request video submissions or follow up interviews with applicants to better understand athlete commitment and competitive potential in archery.

Ranking Point Score Calculation
USAA will select finalists based on total score from their survey submission to determine camp invitees prioritizing the following:

1. Survey Score
2. Additional information collected via video submission or athlete interview
3. Willingness to train and receive coaching in a specific discipline
4. Recruitment of athletes new to USA Archery in a Paralympic Archery category of critical roster need
5. Classification eligibility
6. Commitment to attending events

Athletes that have provided inaccurate information or misrepresented themselves in the application process may not be selected to join the Para Talent ID Program.

Para Talent ID – Fast Track
Athletes who complete the survey application for the Para Talent ID Program outside of the application window may be considered for the Para Talent ID Program if the following conditions are met:

Fast Track Eligibility Criteria

Athletes must meet the following minimum standards based on their survey responses:

1. Athlete must be eligible to obtain a Para classification
2. Perceived athlete commitment = 90-100%
3. Athlete location in relation to training resources = <60 miles
    a. Or, willingness to travel 3 or more times a week to access training outside of a 60-mile radius
4. Previous experience competing at a high level in sport (international, national or collegiate)

Mandatory In-person Meeting with USAA Paralympic Head Coach

In addition to meeting the criteria above, the athlete must travel to the Paralympic Head Coach for a 1-2 day evaluation to be considered for the Para Talent ID Program

    a. Athlete must cover all expenses associated with travel, housing, and meals

In-Person Athlete Evaluation

In addition to meeting the Program Eligibility Criteria, The Paralympic Head Coach will evaluate the athlete on the following:

- Coachability
    - Ability to take instruction in the sport of archery
    - Ability to learn archery technique
- Training Commitment
    - Ability to commit to a training program with performance benchmarks
    - Proximity of access to coach and club/range at home
    - Willingness to meet with assigned coach a minimum of once a week until next Para Talent ID Camp
    - Must work towards competing at a Para USAT event within 6 months
- Stamina
    - Athlete must possess general fitness and stamina levels required to train at a high level
        - Coach may create progression benchmarks for those new to archery
- Communication
    - Athlete must be a good communicator
    - Athlete must be diligent in documenting and tracking training progress and promptly share this data with USAA High Performance staff when requested.

Athlete Fast Track Selection

Athletes who are selected outside of the initial application window will be provided with onboarding resources, connected with a coach/club, and provided with training plans, performance benchmarks, and mentorship.

Para Talent ID Camp

Para Talent ID Camp - Athlete Selection

Select athletes will be invited to participate in the 2026 Para Talent ID Camp. The first camp will be a fully funded tryout, with subsequent camp opportunities either partially or fully funded for those athletes who are selected to the program. If applicable, Fast Track athletes accepted into the program will be invited.

If a selected athlete is unable to attend or complete the Para Talent ID tryout at the initial camp (scheduled for September 2026), they may request a separate 1–2 day evaluation with the Paralympic National Team Coach, which must be completed by September 30, 2026. The athlete must coordinate scheduling and travel logistics with the coach in advance. Athletes who complete a separate evaluation are eligible for reimbursement of up to $700 in travel expenses, including airfare, rideshare (e.g., Uber), mileage, baggage fees, lodging, and expenses for a personal care assistant (PCA), if applicable. Any travel costs exceeding the $700 reimbursement limit are the responsibility of the athlete.

Athletes who do not attend the initial camp will not receive the full benefit of the camp's webinars, presentations, and knowledge-sharing opportunities. As a condition of completing a separate evaluation, athletes are expected to independently educate themselves on the sport, including the competitive landscape, classification process, and competition rules. If an athlete is not able to meet this requirement, the position for the program will be offered to the next ranked athlete.

Para Talent ID Camp 1 – Program Tryout (TBD September 2026)

This 3-4 day camp is designed to introduce athletes to elite competitive archery and evaluate which athletes demonstrate the skill and dedication needed to be selected to the Para Talent Program. Over the course of the camp, the athletes will be provided the following:

- Introduction to archery
    - Fitting for bow and adaptive equipment
    - Range safety
    - Expert instruction (form and technique)
    - Education on equipment tuning and care
    - Practice shooting under the guidance of elite coaching staff
    - Practice scoring
- Webinars
    - Introduction to training plans and Para Talent ID Program expectations
    - Classification
    - World Archery competition Rules
        - Competition schedule and format
    - Competitive landscape
        - Top countries, competitors and MQS benchmarks

        - What it takes to win a Paralympic Games medal
    - USA Archery USAT Selection Process
    - Competitive opportunities (local, national, international)
    - Paralympic Qualification Process (how to plan for the U.S. Team Trials)
    - Anticipated expenses associated with archery
- Keynote Speakers
    - Paralympic gold medalist (Talent Transfer Athlete)
    - National Classifier
    - World Archery Judge

<u>Para Talent ID Camp Tryout - Athlete Ranking and Selection Process</u>
Athletes will be evaluated by Para Talent ID Camp staff utilizing the Para Talent ID Evaluation Form (see Appendix B).

Within 2 weeks after the conclusion of the Para Talent ID Program Tryout, and with consideration to available budget and resources, USAA will officially invite athletes to join USA Archery's Para Talent ID Program by prioritizing the following in order of highest importance:

1. Para Talent ID Evaluation Scores from Para Talent ID Tryout
2. Staff confidence in athlete's ability to become nationally classified in a Paralympic archery discipline
    a. Or, athlete ability to obtain a classification within 2-3 months (if requested)
3. Willingness to train and compete in a specific discipline
4. Athlete access to training and coaching resources
5. Commitment to a long term training program and performance benchmarks

<u>Para Talent ID Program - Additional Resources</u>

a. Athletes will be connected with a local club/range and coach to facilitate training and development
b. Athletes will receive customized training plans, performance benchmarks, and goal setting sessions
c. Athletes will receive performance planning guidance from USAA High Performance staff:
    i. 1:1 Meetings to plot competition schedules, understand eligibility requirements, and plan for the 2028 Paralympic Games U.S. Team Trials
d. Athletes will be paired with a Coach/Athlete Mentor to support development and assist with integration into archery
e. Athletes will meet with USA Archery's Paralympic Head Coach on a quarterly basis
f. Athletes who maintain eligibility standards will qualify for future Para Talent ID Program Camps (budget dependent). See Appendix A for tentative schedule.

g. Funding, when available, will be provided to help athletes gain competition experience, secure necessary archery equipment, and other training and support resources.

Appendix A

2026-2028 Program Timeline (Subject to Change)

2026	
May-June	Open Application Process (Deadline June 30)
July	Application Review
July	Athlete Selection for Camp (connect athletes with local coaches/clubs)
September	Para Talent ID Program – Camp #1
October-December	Remote - Athlete Development Programming
2027	
January	Para Talent ID Program – Camp #2
February-March	Remote - Athlete Development Programming
April-May	Para USAT #1 and #2 and Para World Championships and Para Pan Am Games U.S. Team Trials
June-August	Remote - Athlete Development Programming and USAT Events continued
September	Para Talent ID Program Camp #3
2028	
January	Para Talent ID Program Camp #4
February-March	Remote - Athlete Development Programming
April	Para USAT Event #1
May	Stage #1 Paralympic Games U.S. Team Trials
June	Stage #2 and Stage #3 Paralympic Games U.S. Team Trials – Team Selection

Appendix B

PARA TALENT ID TRY OUT EVALUATION FORM

Archers Name: _____

ABILITY TO FOLLOW A SHOT PROCESS	CONSISTANCY OF FORM	STAMINA AND PHYSICAL ABILITY TO MANAGE PROGRAM TRAINING LOAD

SCORING GUIDE FOR ABILITY TO FOLLOW A SHOT PROCESS		
0	5	10
Athlete does not demonstrate the ability to follow a shot process	Athlete demonstrates some ability to follow a shot process	Athlete demonstrates excellent ability to follow a shot process

SCORING GUIDE FOR STAMINA AND PHYSICAL ABILITY	
0	2
Had to sit out of activites at the camp, did not fully shoot all arrows asked by coaching staff	Participated in all activites fully, shot what was asked by coaching staff

SCORING GUIDE FOR CONSISTANCY OF FORM			
1 to 2	3 to 4	5 to 6	7 to 8
Poor	Average	Above Average	Excellent

COMMUNICATION		TEAMWORK		POSITIVE ATTITUDE	
Maintains respectful, open and honest communication with coaches, other athletes, and USA Archery and is willing to receive and give feedback		The willingness to accept a role that leads to team success and work well with others		Is present, mindful and engaged in the program and maintains a growth mindset with an optimistic outlook for achieving success	

COACHABILITY		ENGAGEMENT AND COMMITMENT TO PROGRAM		DEPENDABILITY AND PUNCTUALITY	
Maintains respectful, open and honest communication with coaches, other athletes, and USA Archery and is willing to receive and give feedback		Enthusiastically engages in the camp activities and exhibits a proactive approach to training and growing in the sport		Arrives on time for all training and meetings	

SCORING GUIDE FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT					
0	1	2	3	4	5
Very Poor Did not fulfill any aspect of topic	**Poor** Archer rarely demonstrated criteria	**Below Average** Archer did not demonstrate enough criteria	**Average Archer** demonstrated adequately in criteria but not consistent	**Above Average** Archer demonstrated majority of criteria proficiently	**Excellent** Archer demonstrated all criteria consistently and dominantly