



# Football Canada (FC) Athlete Selection Procedures

## SECTION 1: Purpose

These procedures outline a clear and fair process on how athletes are identified and selected to the National Flag Football Team for Football Canada.

The selection process has two objectives:

1. Select Eligible athletes to the Athlete Pool. Athletes in the pool are identified by Football Canada to have demonstrated potential to earn a position on a current or future National Team.
2. From the pool, select the best possible team consisting of 12 Athletes on the Roster, supplemented by 6 Alternates, with a total of 24 Athletes being carried for Various Training Opportunities.

## SECTION 2: Authority for Selection

The Football Canada High Performance Team Selection Committee will be responsible for making discretionary selections or other decisions and recommendations directly impacting athletes in the selection process.

### Football Canada High Performance Team Selection Committee

- Football Canada High Performance Director or their designee (1)
- 2026 National Team Head Coach (1 per team)
  - Men’s Head Coach for the Men’s Team Selection
  - Women’s Head Coach for the Women’s Team Selection
- 2026 National Team Assistant Coaches (up to 2 per team)
- Football Canada Executive Director or their designee (ex-officio/non-voting)
- Up to three other additional Experts

## SECTION 3: ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY & REQUIREMENTS

### AGE ELIGIBILITY

- Must be 18 years of age or older on 31st December in the year of competition.
- For 2026, eligible athletes for the Senior Flag National team must be born in the year 2008 or earlier.

Year of Competition	Must be born in ___ or earlier
2026	2008
2027	2009
2028	2010
2029	2011



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## NATIONALITY/PASSPORT REQUIREMENTS

- **Passport:** Must have a valid Canadian passport at the time of participation in an evaluation event that does not expire for six months after the conclusion of the international event
- Be eligible per IFAF's Core Eligibility Requirements: International Competitions – Nationality
  - <https://americanfootball.sport/events/eligibility/>

## TRANSGENDER POLICY

For International events, Football Canada will use the Transgender Policy from the International Federation of American Football (IFAF) that is noted on their website under Core Eligibility Requirements: International Competitions – Transgender Policy

- <https://americanfootball.sport/events/eligibility/>

## NATIONAL GOVERNING BODY REQUIREMENTS

- To be eligible to participate on the Football Canada National Team, the athlete must:
  - Sign the Football Canada Athlete Agreement
  - Sign the Football Canada Code of Conduct
  - Complete the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES) [Anti-Doping Program](#) and Anti-Doping education and training requirements.
- Athlete must be a registered member in good standing with Football Canada and their PSO from the time of selection through the conclusion of the Event.
- Athletes must successfully complete all Football Canada High Performance Player Application Requirements.
- Any athletes aged 18 and older will be required to undergo a background screen in accordance with the current Safe Sport Guidelines
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## ANTI-DOPING REQUIREMENTS

- Agree to be bound by and adhere to all IOC, WADA, IFAF, FC, and CCES anti-doping policies and protocols and procedures, as applicable. This includes submitting Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE) forms, participation in Out-of-competition Testing and an agreement to be bound to the results management authority of the IOC, WADA, IFAF or CCES as applicable.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

- Meet all health and safety protocols, to include vaccine requirements and/or testing requirements set for by the government, local laws, COC, IFAF, and/or the Local Organization Committee.

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### Section 4: Athlete Selection Process

#### Athlete Pool Selection

Athletes who are part of the Football Canada Athlete Pool may include the following:

- Athletes identified through Football Canada's Identification Camp events
- Athletes identified through PurpleShift and other combines
- Athletes identified through Football Canada Events
- Athletes identified by Football Canada staff, scouts, consultants or other flag football coaches; and/or
- Any athletes identified and selected by the Football Canada High Performance Selection Committee

National Team Identification camps will be held in every province (one camp for Atlantic provinces) from December 2025 through March 2026. From these camps, 48 standout athletes will receive invitations to the final selection camp in June 2026.

This camp is a critical juncture in our selection process, where athletes will undergo rigorous testing. These tests are designed to track the physical and skill-based progress of both current and prospective athletes, ensuring they meet the high-performance standards we've set for Olympic flag football. The camp will culminate with a thorough evaluation of individual skills and tactical acumen through individual drills as well as scrimmages.

#### National Team Selection

Athletes from the Athlete Pool will be selected to the National Team consisting of 12 Athletes on the Roster, supplemented by 6 Alternates, with a total of 24 Athletes being carried for Various Training Opportunities; with the goal being to put together the best possible team for any particular event. Factors that will be considered in this selection include physical and technical aspects of the game, as well as numerous subjective elements such as leadership qualities, team cohesion, experience, etc.

### SECTION 5: Athlete Selection Criteria

#### Expectations

To be selected for and remain on a National Team, all athletes must:

- a. Submit to and accept evaluation by the selectors pursuant to the Athlete Evaluation System set out below;



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- b. Meet and maintain fitness requirements as determined and publicized by the Coach;
- c. Sign and submit to the current form of Football Canada's Athlete Agreement;
- d. Demonstrate commitment to winning medals at international competitions;
- e. Demonstrate commitment to the rigors of National Team training and competition, including travel, fitness, lifestyle, and personal sacrifice;
- f. Exhibit the ability to adapt to new training environments;
- g. Demonstrate a positive and cooperative attitude toward other athletes, the National Team, Coaches and FC staff;
- h. Comply with the requirements of the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport, including the Canadian Safe Sport Program and anti-doping requirements;
- i. Demonstrate commitment to injury reduction practices and injury management programs;
- j. Demonstrate a commitment to fair play; and
- k. Meet all financial commitments required of a National Team Athlete.

Additionally, players are expected to possess individual fundamental skills, possess team skills, place team goals ahead of personal goals, demonstrate the capacity to learn and implement new concepts on the field, as well as being quick, fast, and well-conditioned.

### Position Specific Skills

- Quarterback
  - Vision of the field
  - Ability to read different defences
  - Throwing Mechanics
  - Quickness to avoid a defensive pass rush
  - Leadership skills and mental toughness under pressure
- Receiver
  - Speed and stamina
  - Ability to run specific and complex pass routes
  - Good hands and athleticism to catch difficult passes (acceleration, strength, jumping) in coverage
  - Ability to create separation from defenders
  - Clearly communicates with the quarterback
  - Ability to gain yardage after the catch
- Centre
  - Quick reflexes
  - Quality snaps on target and with good speed
  - Ability to read the defensive team
  - Ability to sharply increase speed and take off down field for a pass
  - Similar skills as a receiver



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- Defensive Back
  - Ability to play Person-to-person defence
  - Ability to play Zone defence
  - Mental sharpness to read the field and react to passing play vs running play
  - Ability to react to the ball and intercept the ball
  - Technique to properly pull the ball-carrier's flags off, correct alignment, stance, movement
  - Ability to read the field and play, while making game-time decisions on where coverage is needed
  - Speed and acceleration
- Rusher
  - Speed and acceleration, with the ability to come under control once they are within distance of the quarterback to remove the flag(s)
  - Technique to properly pull the ball-carrier's flags off, correct alignment, stance, movement
  - Ability to influence the Quarterbacks field of vision

Acknowledging that a team's strength extends beyond the individual skills of its players, the Football Canada High Performance Selection Committee will evaluate various factors. These include the composition of players concerning positions, experience, suitability against international opponents, consistent demonstration of elite-level potential, alignment with team requirements, and player qualities that extend beyond mere statistics and technical skills but significantly contribute to the overall success of the team. The criteria listed are not weighted, are not listed in an order of importance, and may be revised from time to time to ensure short term and long-term success in international competition for Canada

### Other Considerations

- Team work and Communication
- Sportsmanship and Character
- Adaptability and Coachability
- Passion
- Responsibility
- Having a balance of expertise in positions and roles
- Presence of experience and leadership
- Positive player interactions and team cohesiveness both on and off the field
- Player ability to respect the coaches, staff, and other players
- Players exhibited maturity on and off the field
- Combine and testing results
- Previous National Team reporting compliance



## SECTION 6: Athlete Evaluation System

Athlete evaluations for National Teams will be conducted by the High-Performance Team Selection Committee based on Football Canada's evaluation matrix. The development of this system of evaluation and understanding of the qualitative measures will be on-going and used by the selectors as a tool to aid in the selection process. Conducting athlete evaluations for selection to a National Team involves weighing the needs of the team and the perceived relative strengths and weaknesses of the athletes in order to select a National Team deemed most appropriate to represent Canada.

Using a 5-point scale, the High-Performance Team Selection Committee will assign values to the position specific skills and other considerations outlined in the Athlete selection criteria (Section 5).

- 1 = Athlete is poor for an elite player
- 2 = Athlete is below average level for an elite player
- 3 = Athlete is of an average level for an elite player
- 4 = Athlete is above average level for an elite player
- 5 = Athlete is exceptional at the skill

The evaluation of these elements will be an ongoing process from the High-Performance Team Selection Committee up to the Team selection date, training camp, or competition.

## Section 7: Timeline

Football Canada is looking to adhere to the following schedule for 2026

- Winter 2026:
  - Provincial Identification Camps
- Spring 2026:
  - Selection of National Team Talent Pool
  - Final Selection Camp
- Summer 2026:
  - National Championships for future ID
  - Selection and Announcement of 2026 National Teams
  - Training and Camps, Potential International Friendlies
  - 2026 IFAF Flag Football World Championships (Dusseldorf, Germany)



## SECTION 8: Disqualification

On the recommendation of the High-Performance Team Selection Committee and after reasonable notice to the Athlete as well as after an opportunity to be heard; may remove an athlete from a National Team at any time if they do not maintain the requirements of the Selection Criteria. In order to remain on a National Team, selected athletes must commit to the training and competitive programs as established by the Coach. A Coach may require an athlete to provide a written or oral injury report from appropriate medical or paramedical personnel. Additionally, Football Canada may remove an athlete from a National Team if the athlete, after reasonable notice and an opportunity to be heard, fails to meet their financial commitments to the National Team Program.

## SECTION 9: Substitution

Where necessary and appropriate, an athlete removed from the National Team may be replaced by an alternate from the long roster.

## SECTION 10: Appeals

Any appeals will adhere to Football Canada's Appeal Policy found on the Football Canada website.

### **WHO CAN APPEAL**

Athletes who are directly affected by a selection decision have the right to appeal.

### **FILING A FIRST APPEAL**

Individuals who wish to appeal a decision have twenty one (21) days from the date on which they received notice of the decision to submit, in writing to Football Canada's office, the following:

- a) Notice of the intention to appeal;
- b) Contact information and status of the appellant;
- c) Name of the respondent and any affected parties;
- d) Date the appellant was advised of the decision being appealed;
- e) A copy of the decision being appealed, or description of decision if written document is not available;
- f) Grounds for the appeal;
- g) Detailed reasons for the appeal;
- h) All evidence that supports these grounds;
- i) Requested remedy or remedies; and
- j) An administration fee of one hundred dollars (\$100), which will be refunded if the appeal is successful.

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### GROUNDS FOR AN APPEAL

A decision cannot be appealed on its merits alone. An appeal may only be heard if there are sufficient grounds for appeal. Sufficient grounds include the Respondent:

- a) Made a decision that it did not have authority or jurisdiction (as set out in the Respondent's governing documents)
- b) Failed to follow its own procedures (as set out in the Respondent's governing documents)
- c) Made a decision that was influenced by bias (where bias is defined as a lack of neutrality to such an extent that the decision-maker is unable to consider other views)
- d) Failed to consider relevant information or took into account irrelevant information in making the decision
- e) Made a decision that was grossly unreasonable

The Appellant bears the onus of proof and must demonstrate, on a balance of probabilities, that the Respondent has made a procedural error as described in the 'Grounds for Appeal' section of this Policy and that this error had, or may reasonably have had, a material effect on the decision or decision-maker.

## Section 11. Roles and hierarchy clause

### *11.1 Selection Committee Recommendation*

A Selection Committee, chaired by the Head Coach, will review eligible athletes and prepare a recommended roster for the Olympic Team.

### *11.2 Head Coach Decision*

The Head Coach has ultimate authority over the composition of the recommended roster and may accept, reject, or amend the Selection Committee's recommendations in forming the proposed team list.

### *11.3 Football Canada Approval*

The proposed roster submitted by the Head Coach is subject to final approval by Football Canada, through the High Performance Director (or designate). Football Canada retains the right, in its sole discretion, to approve, modify, or reject any proposed roster in order to ensure alignment with organizational policies, eligibility requirements, and high-performance objectives.

### *11.4 Final Roster Authority*

For clarity, while the Head Coach has final authority over the recommended roster arising from the selection process, the final Olympic Team roster is not confirmed until it has been formally approved by Football Canada.



## Football Canada (FC) Athlete Selection Procedures

### SECTION 12: Questions Regarding Athlete Selection Procedures

Football Canada Athletes may contact the individual listed below for information about these selection procedures.

Name: Warren Craney

Position: High Performance Director, Football Canada

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