



2025 USA Goalball National Team Programs OVERVIEW & CRITERIA

Program Overview

USABA's High Performance (HP) Department is responsible for supporting athletes who have the mentality, goals and capability of winning Paralympic Games medals, while identifying, supporting & developing future Games medalists in the sport of goalball. It is important that USABA is investing in our High Performance goalball programs in the most careful and thoughtful ways, in alignment with its strategic initiatives, capturing the important aspects of our development philosophy and high performance investment strategies. In addition, United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) invests significant financial resources into the USABA's High Performance strategies and directly into its teams and athletes. USOPC does so with the belief that USABA teams are on track to continue winning medals in the Paralympic Games. If USABA's goalball teams are not on-track to achieve podium performances in the Games, USABA can expect a reduction in USOPC investment.

The three-tiered Program provides performance-based support to athletes in the form of administrative assistance, performance advisement and allocation of financial resources. The Program is comprised of athletes with proven performance capability and is designed with three ascending tiers to support athletes as they advance towards their goal of being selected for Major tournament teams and assisting those teams in achieving podium performances at the Paralympic Games. Athletes are expected to advance levels during their time in the Program with improving performances reflective of their ability to execute Paralympic podium performances.

In addition to the qualification criteria specific to each tier outlined on Page 3, athletes must meet the following minimum criteria to be eligible for the Program:

- Eligible to represent USABA in IBSA competition, including but not limited to:
 - Nationality of USA and be eligible to compete for Team USA at IBSA sanctioned tournaments immediately
 - Be internationally classified according to the IBSA master list with a Fixed Review Date ("FRD") or Confirmed "C" within 3 months of making the national team
 - Eligible for IBSA licensing
- Current USABA annual or lifetime member in good standing
- Current with Safe Sport training & Background checks
- Commitment to an elite goalball training regimen and international competition whether or not part of the resident program
- Creation and submission of an annual performance plan and monthly progress reporting
- Signed National Team Athlete Agreement for the term

Objective criteria, as outlined below, achieved during the 2025 calendar year by athletes guarantees selection to that tier for the duration of that term (note there are two terms). Athletes not currently in the National Team Program may be named in advance of the proceeding term once all eligibility criteria is confirmed and processed, any direct athlete support benefits (*ie: Athlete Stipends or EAH*) will be only extended to eligible National Team Program athletes within the duration of each team defined below.

Any financial support outlined in this document represents expected funding levels based on the three tiers of the Program, though additional funding and support opportunities may become available to Program athletes and will be communicated accordingly. The descriptions below summarize the purpose of each funding mechanism available. After a review of the Annual Performance Plan (APP), a customized support plan will be developed for each athlete depending on resources available. Adjustments to the approved APP must be approved prior to incurring reimbursable expenses.

- Direct Athlete Support (DAS) stipend: supports training expenses
- Travel reimbursement: supports international travel to compete in developmentally appropriate USA tournament teams as selected
- USOPC benefits: Elite Athlete Health Insurance & Operation Gold funding will be distributed per the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) criteria

Therefore, returning National Team Program athletes are not expected to remain on Tier 3 for more than 2 years and athletes who have been on Tier 1 & 2 may not be eligible for Tier 3 without special consideration.

Athletes are encouraged to contact the Athlete Ombuds Office as a resource for confidential, independent advice and assistance with resolving disputes (contact information below). After the previous steps have occurred, athletes may contact USABA CEO (mquinn@usaba.org or 719-866-3220) to administer an executive review to ensure published criteria and process was followed. Athletes have the right to file a grievance per the [USABA's Grievance, Complaint and Appeal Policy Procedures](#). Athletes also have the right to report any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest and will not be retaliated against for raising concerns or asking questions of USABA or the Athlete Ombuds Office. For more information, please see [USABA's Whistleblower Policy](#).

Athlete Ombuds - The Office of the Athlete Ombuds offers independent, confidential advice to elite athletes regarding their rights and responsibilities in the Olympic and Paralympic Movement, and assists athletes with a broad range of questions, disputes, complaints and concerns.

Phone: 719-866-5000

Email: ombudsman@usathlete.org

Website: usathlete.org

Direct Athlete Support (DAS)

The United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) allocates DAS support to National Governing Bodies (NGBs) on a basis of objective performance. In 2025, DAS will be made available to USABA National Team Program athletes at the levels of Tier 1, 2, and 3. The amounts are based on tier level and can be found on page 3. Athletes must remain in good standing to receive DAS for the duration of their National Team Program term. Athletes who choose to break their agreement or no longer remain committed to an elite goalball training regimen and international competition whether part of the resident program or not will be removed immediately. At the end of the year, any unallocated DAS funds the USOPC has allocated to USABA athletes will be split equally amongst all athletes in Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3.

Elite Athlete Health Insurance (EAHI)

The United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) allocates EAHI slots to National Governing Bodies (NGBs) on a basis of objective performance. This program provides an affordable insurance option to athletes. This benefit is provided through the USOPC and in 2025 will be made available to USABA National Team Program athletes at the levels of Tier 1, 2, and 3. Athletes must remain in good standing to receive EAHI benefits for the duration of their National Team Program term. Athletes who choose to break their agreement or no longer remain committed to an elite goalball training regimen and international competition whether part of the resident program will be removed immediately. Athletes who are removed through the program (by choice or

contract expiration) may have the option to remain on the insurance program at their own cost for up to one year.

Projected 2025 Support Levels:

(subject to change at the start of each Term depending on USABA & USOPC funding)

Goalball Athlete eligibility for Athlete Stipends will be based upon a three-tiered system from January 1st, 2025 – December 31st, 2025. Athletes must remain in good standing with the USABA to maintain eligibility for Athlete Stipends for the duration of their National Team program term. Athlete Stipends will be disbursed to athletes four times through the 2025 calendar year on a quarterly basis. Athlete Stipend payments will be disbursed on or before the last day of February, May, August, and November 2025 based on below criteria listed in each Term.

2025 Tier 1, 2, and 3 Athlete Stipend Support Levels	Athlete Stipend payment per quarter
Tier 1	\$2,000/quarter
Tier 2	\$1,000/quarter
Tier 3	\$350/quarter

Term 1: January 1st, 2025 – June 30th, 2025

Tier 1

- Member (excluding alternates) of the 2024 Paralympic Games Team

Tier 2

- Alternate of the 2024 Paralympic Games Team
- Member (including alternates) of the 2023 Parapan American Games Team
- Member (excluding alternates) of any Q1 or Q2 2025 international adult tournaments the U.S. team participates
- Member (excluding alternates) of any Q3 or Q4 2024 international adult tournament the U.S. team participates

Tier 3

- Alternates of any Q1 or Q2 2025 international adult tournament the U.S. team participates
- Alternates of any Q3 or Q4 2024 international adult tournament the U.S. team participates

Term 2: July 1st, 2025 – December 31st, 2025

Tier 1

- Member (excluding alternates) of the 2025 IBSA Americas Championships Team

Tier 2

- Alternates of the 2025 IBSA Americas Championships Team
- Member (including alternates) of the 2024 Paralympic Games Team
- Member (excluding alternates) of any Q3 or Q4 2025 international adult tournament the U.S. team participates

Tier 3

- Member (including alternates) of any Q1 or Q2 2025 international adult tournaments the U.S. team participates
- Alternate of any 2025 international adult tournament the U.S. team participates