

Emerging and High-Performance Athlete Support Program

Funding Policy

MEATH ATHLETICS 2020

The Support Policy is described in detail in the following sections:

1. The Selection Process
2. Qualification Periods
3. Support Conditions
4. Selection Criteria
5. Retention and Exit
6. Injury Conditions
7. The Deciding Panel
8. Appeals Procedure
9. Monitoring Procedures
10. Athlete Performance Support
11. Amendments
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1. SELECTION PROCESS

1.1 This document describes how athletes are selected on to the Emerging and High-Performance Athlete Support Program (EHPASP) by Meath Athletics Deciding Panel, and the Funding Policy establishes the criteria that will be used to consider athletes for selection.

1.2 High Performance Support: Deciding Panel will meet in December of each year, or at such other time as is necessary, to consider and review any new and existing athletes for individual support using the relevant selection criteria within the Funding Policy. Athletes can only be added to the program or moved between levels at the annual selection meeting. Athletes can only exit (be de-selected) at the annual selection meeting or if their eligibility for the program changes.

1.3 Emerging Support: Deciding Panel will meet in December of each year, or at such other time as is necessary, to consider and review any new and existing athletes for individual support using the relevant selection criteria within the Funding Policy. Athletes can only be added to the program or moved between levels at the annual support meeting. Athletes can only exit (be de-selected) at the annual support meeting or if their eligibility for the program changes.

1.4 Application Process: Applications from athletes (high performance/emerging) will be accepted throughout the year, in a format to be decided by the Deciding Panel, up until the date published, usually the end of November.

2. QUALIFICATION PERIODS

2.1 The Emerging and High-Performance Athlete Support Program will be administered on an annual basis starting from January 1 and ending December 31 of each calendar year.

2.2 To be considered for 2020 support, Performance Standards must be achieved during the Qualification Periods of:

- Cross Country: 31st December 2017 to 31st December 2019
- Marathon, 20-50km Race Walk, 10,000m: 1st July 2017 to 31st December 2019
- All other track and field events: 1st November 2017 to 31st December 2019

3. SUPPORT CONDITIONS

3.1 General

- Performance Standards used in consideration for support must be achieved during competitions organized or authorized by the IAAF, its Area Associations or its National Member Federations. Thus, results achieved at university or school competitions must be certified by the National Federation of the country in which the competition was organized.
- Results must be legal and will be verified through iaaf.org, tilastopaja.org, All-Athletics.com or Athletics Ireland performance list, or through such other means as the Deciding Panel decides.
- Special circumstances or conditions that may be of consideration outside of the EHPASP support conditions will be subject to the approval and the sole authority/discretion of the Meath Athletics Deciding Panel.
- Athletes must adhere to all anti-doping conditions (e.g. whereabouts, athlete filing, agreements) set by the ISC antidoping unit, IAAF, and Athletics Ireland

3.2 Age Restrictions

- Only athletes age 16 (by birth date on or before 31 December in the year of application) will be considered for support.
- Athletes age 24 and over will not be considered as an 'Emerging Athlete' and must enter the EHPASP at the high-performance support level.

3.3 Eligibility

To be eligible for the EHPASP an athlete must meet with the following requirements:

- Must be entitled to hold an Irish passport and satisfactorily demonstrate that they will be eligible to compete in an Olympic Games, IAAF/European Championship event for Ireland.
- Must be a current registered member of Athletics Ireland.
- Must be a current registered member of a Meath affiliated athletic club for a minimum of the two (2) years prior to date of application and must continue to be so throughout the period of support. Should such membership cease then support will no longer be available.
- Must not be under suspension or other sanction by ISC, IAAF, Athletics Ireland or any relevant body for any doping or doping-related offence.
- Must sign any applicable paperwork or Athlete Agreement as required by Meath Athletics.
- Must participate in any medical clearance and screening procedure as directed by Meath Athletics
- Must comply with all codes of conduct/social agreements, as well as, conduct themselves in a way that does not bring the sport, their club, county, or the association into disrepute.
- The athlete must commit to participate in any performance reviews as required by the EHPASP Deciding Panel (or designate).
- Acceptance to the EHPASP is encouraged but optional. If an athlete chooses to decline the support for any reason (including failure to sign an "Athlete Agreement") there will be no other form of financial or support services provided.

4. SELECTION CRITERIA

General Support Criteria

4.1 The Deciding Panel (see [Section 7](#)) will consider all of the support criteria, as well as any other factors and evidence-based data that may be deemed relevant, when assessing an athlete to be supported under the EHPASP. The Deciding Panel, at their sole discretion, may choose to do the following:

- Select any athlete for the appropriate support that meets with the support criteria as stipulated within this Support Policy, or
- Give any current supported athlete another year on the EHPASP at any level if they believe that the athlete still has realistic potential, or
- Promote any new or current supported athlete to a different level of the EHPASP if the panel believes that in doing so the athlete is better equipped to satisfy the purpose of the EHPASP and has realistic potential, or
- The Deciding Panel may also set conditions and targets for each athlete on the EHPASP, some of which may have to be met and reviewed periodically for support to continue, or
- In exceptional circumstances (e.g. injury or personal), the Deciding Panel may add an athlete who does not satisfy the support criteria of the EHPASP for Discretionary Support, if the panel believes that support alone will enable the athlete to achieve the goals of the EHPASP in the future.

4.2 In addition to this document and the support criteria the Deciding Panel may use the following resources as deemed necessary to make a support selection decision:

- Information regarding previous targets set for the athlete
- The athlete's performance plans
- The athlete's medical history
- Any other relevant information requested by the Deciding Panel.

4.3 Individual Selection Criteria

To be considered for selection for the EHPASP, and in addition to the general and specific criteria; in the first instance the Deciding Panel will consider any new and existing athletes for selection who achieve the criteria during the Qualification Period. In the second instance, new and existing athletes that do not medal or achieve a placing at a championship may be considered for the EHPASP if they achieve a (age/year) Performance Standard twice (2) during the Qualification Period.

*No one criterion achieved in isolation will guarantee support selection.

4.4 Specific Selection Criteria

In considering the Performance Standards the Deciding Panel will also take account of the following criteria:

4.4.1 Achieved at a major Championship: to be considered for selection an athlete must perform at a championship. Further consideration for selection will be given to athletes who are multiple medal winners and/or have multiple championship placing finishes within the Qualification Period. The Selection Panel will also consider the athlete's major competition history (including age-groups where appropriate).

4.4.2 Performance Level: to be considered for selection an athlete must achieve an age/year related* Performance Standard in their event twice (2) during the Qualification Period. For the avoidance of doubt, if multiple performances are achieved in the same discipline in a single day, weekend or championship competition, the best single legal performance will be counted once (1). The Deciding Panel will also further consider, as well as any other factors that may be deemed relevant, the performance level of an athlete by:

- Athlete's position relevant to the Performance Standards taking the average of top two (2) season's best results
- Athletes performance profile (the rate of progression overall and over the last two years)
- Athlete's Personal Best over the last two years
- Athlete's Performance Limits (the total amount and number of times an athlete has achieved a result)
- World and European ranking list, if applicable

*The Performance Standards for support will be updated in January of each calendar year (or when necessary).

4.4.3 Performance Potential: to be considered for selection an athlete must demonstrate that they have a realistic potential, taking into consideration the athlete's age and stage of development; performance progression toward a qualifying standard; and the athlete's injury and training history

4.4.4 Individual yearly progression: athletes are expected to show progression in their individual event every year that they are in the program.

*Athletes who fail to progress for two consecutive years, regardless of injuries or other circumstances, will exit from the program. However, at the discretion of the Deciding Panel, Meath Athletics may choose to retain an athlete who does not progress if it has good reason to believe that the athlete may still meet the aims of the program due to their personal circumstances, the nature of their event, or similar reasons.

4.5 Exceptional Selection Criteria

An athlete that has not achieved the individual criteria for the EHPASP may be considered for Exceptional Support.

To be considered for selection for Exceptional Support, an athlete must achieve such a performance standard as renders them to be a potential candidate for selection/or selected to represent Athletics Ireland at an identified 2020 team championship. The Deciding Panel will consider any factors that may be deemed relevant, when assessing an athlete's limiting factors of performance, performance level and potential for the championship.

Additional guidelines:

- Athletes may be considered for Exceptional Support selection if they are selected for a National Team selected event and or a Relay/Endurance Special Team project.
- After such selection an athlete will receive Exceptional Support until the next quarterly review.
- Support for Exceptional Support will be limited by the resources available to Meath Athletics.

5. RETENTION AND EXIT

5.1 General Information

- Previous successes alone cannot be used to justify an athlete's continued support.

5.2 The Deciding Panel will review individual and exceptional supported athletes on a quarterly basis and during the annual review. At the annual review athletes currently supported in the EHPASP will be retained if they:

- Satisfy the individual or exceptional selection criteria and overall selection criteria in ([Section 4](#)), or
- Satisfy the selection criteria but were injured (see injury conditions Section 6) or otherwise affected by an exceptional circumstance that had a performance limited factor during the qualification period.

5.3 At the annual review athletes currently supported will exit the EHPASP if they:

- Do not satisfy the individual or exceptional selection criteria and overall selection criteria in ([Section 4](#)), or
- Were injured (see injury conditions [Section 6](#)) or otherwise affected by a performance limiting factor during the qualification period and do not meet the individual or exceptional selection criteria and overall selection criteria in ([Section 4](#)).

6. INJURY CONDITIONS

6.1 The injury exception conditions apply when an athlete has a documented performance limiting injury confirmed by a registered medical practitioner. A performance limiting injury is considered as, partial or no training for at least 3 months (intermittent or continuous) during the qualification periods.

6.2 The athlete who suffered a confirmed performance limiting injury will be retained on the EHPASP until the next annual review, although for the injury exception conditions to apply, a supported athlete must be fully compliant with their rehabilitation program as directed by their medical team and show clear potential and medical prognosis to return to the previous levels of performance.

6.3 If a supported athlete is not able to return to competition during the qualification period and the injury is deemed sufficiently severe to warrant a full year of rehabilitation and where an athlete is retained on the EHPASP (under [Section 5](#)), after the annual review (1 January) the athlete may be retained at their existing level of support or retained without any financial support and supported through other benefits of the EHPASP.

6.4 Any athlete who has had a full year of rehabilitation after quarterly/annual review will be expected to return to full compliance with the rules governing retention (see [Section 5](#)) to the EHPASP.

7. DECIDING PANEL

7.1 The Deciding Panel under this Selection Policy are considered the experts for selection decisions and will be appointed by Meath Athletics.

- The Panel will comprise of 4 members. Where a vacancy occurs, for whatever reason, Meath County Board will appoint a member to the vacant place. The members of the Deciding Panel will select a Chairperson from amongst their members.
- The Deciding Panel may seek input and information, as deemed necessary but not limited to, Team Managers, National Event Coordinators, Medical representatives, or coaches.

7.2 Using the Selection Criteria set out within this Selection Policy the Deciding Panel will:

- Consider status and selection of existing EHPASP athletes;
- Confirm the EHPASP selections;
- Consider the status and selection of athletes not currently in the EHPASP;

7.3 As each athlete is considered, the Deciding Panel will declare any conflict of interest and the Chairperson of the Panel will decide if that panel member should contribute to the discussion.

8. APPEALS PROCEDURE

8.1 The purpose of the Appeals Procedure is to enable dispute resolution around EHPASP support decisions to be dealt with fairly and expeditiously, within Meath Athletics, without recourse to external legal procedures.

8.2 Appeals Panel

The Appeals Panel will consist of three (3) members.

8.2.1 The Appeals Panel shall, in the first instance, be composed of the County Chairperson, the County Vice Chairperson, and the County Secretary. In the case of a conflict of interest on any matter, an alternate shall replace the conflicted member for the determination of that issue. The Chair of the Appeal Panel shall be the County Chairperson, unless conflicted.

8.3 Grounds for Appeal

The Appeal Procedures and the right to an appeals process are primarily intended to apply to athletes who have applied for support or are who currently supported within the EHPASP at the date of the support decision.

8.3.1 The Appeal Procedures shall only apply to EHPASP support decisions and not to any grievances or grounds in relation to Meath Athletics in general or an appeal against the published content of the EHPASP Selection Policy.

8.3.2 The Appeals Procedure is provided on limited grounds and cannot be used to dispute the opinion of the Deciding Panel where they have followed the proper procedure. In reaching their decision the Deciding Panel are acting as experts and will exercise judgement and sole discretion.

8.3.3 The Grounds for Appeal upon which an EHPASP selection decision may be appealed are limited to the following:

- There has been an alleged failure by Deciding Panel to follow or apply the relevant Selection Procedure and/or criteria (e.g. there has been a procedural defect), or
- The Deciding Panel and the decision for support for the EHPASP has been reached on an error of fact.

8.4 How to Appeal

8.4.1 This Appeals Procedure is commenced when an athlete affected by a support decision makes a formal written appeal by email (the 'Notice of Appeal') to the Chair of Appeals Panel. This must be done within seven (7) days of the support decisions being announced or communicated (sent by email) to the athlete, whichever is earlier. If the athlete fails to submit the Notice within the time limit set out in this Appeals Procedure they will automatically lose their right of Appeal under this Procedure, unless in the opinion of the Chairman (acting reasonably) that there was an exceptional circumstance or other good reasons for the submission to be made outside of the time limit.

8.4.2 The Notice of Appeal will set out the grounds of the appeal which will include full details of the basis of the appeal including the precise manner in which the athlete alleges that the support decision procedures have not been applied or followed (as per section 8.3.3 of the Grounds for Appeal). The Notice of Appeal should be as full as possible (including any supporting documentation) as it will form the basis of the remainder of this procedure.

8.5 Screening of Appeal

8.5.1 Within 48 hours of receiving the Notice and grounds of an appeal, the Chair of the Appeals Panel will determine whether there are appropriate grounds for the appeal to proceed as set out in section 8.3.

8.5.2 The Chair of the Appeals Panel will determine, in the first instance, if the appeal is denied due to insufficient grounds, and the athlete will be notified of this decision by email, giving reasons. In these instances, if the Chair decides there are grounds for an appeal an Appeal Procedure will commence.

8.6 Appeal Procedure

Where the Chair of the Appeals Panel considers the Notice of Appeal was based on an alleged procedural defect or error of fact, the Appeals Panel will proceed by way of an Appeal Procedure. The Chair of the Appeals Panel will decide if the Appeal Procedure will be done solely by Documentation or an Oral Appeal Hearing (including documentation).

8.6.1 Where the Chair of the Appeals Panel has determined that the appeal will be held by way of documentary submission, the Appeals Panel will govern the appeal by such procedures as it deems appropriate provided that:

- All parties are given a reasonable opportunity to provide written submissions to the Appeals Panel, to review written submissions of the other parties, and to provide written rebuttal and argument.

8.6.2 Where the Chair of the Appeals Panel has determined that the appeal will be held by way of oral hearing, the Appeals Panel will govern the hearing by such procedures as it deems appropriate, at which the athlete and a member of the Deciding Panel may present written evidence, and may make oral submissions, provided that:

- The athlete is able to attend the hearing and present the case, but may not be replaced by any other person to act as the athlete's representative (athletes 18 and under may be represented by a coach or parent/guardian), and
- An athlete is not restricted to seek advice, be it legal or otherwise. For example, they may wish to avail of legal advice in preparing written and oral submissions and this option to avail of such advice should not be restricted.
- Meath Athletics will not be responsible for any such cost incurred.

8.6.3 As soon as reasonably feasible, and in any event within 10 working days from the date of receipt of the Notice of Appeal, the Chair of the Appeals Panel shall give such directions (to both the athlete and the Deciding Panel) as are appropriate for consideration of the Appeal Hearing, namely the date and place at which the Appeals Panel will hear the appeal and the timetable for the exchange of written and oral evidence.

8.6.4 Appeal Hearing

The manner that the Appeals Panel will meet is the decision of the Chair of the Appeals Panel.

8.6.5 The Appeal Hearing Panel will be comprised of three (3) individuals (one being the Chair of the Appeals Panel) who will have no significant relationship with the affected parties, will have had no previous involvement with the decision being appealed, and will be free from any other actual or perceived bias or conflict.

8.6.6 If the Chair of the Appeals Panel is unable to attend a hearing or declares a conflict of interest with an appeal, the Chair of the Appeals Panel will appoint a designate member of the Appeals Panel to Chair the hearing or portion thereof.

8.7 Appeal Decision

The decision of the Appeals Panel shall be final and binding and may not be appealed again.

8.7.1 The Appeals Panel may decide as follows:

- That the Deciding Panel's EHPASP support decision be set aside as it was based on a procedural flaw or an error of fact, and the matter of the athlete's inclusion within the EHPASP be remitted to the Deciding Panel to re-consider the matter; or
- That the Deciding Panels EHPASP support decision be upheld and the athlete's appeal be rejected.

8.7.2 The Appeals Panel may also make recommendations for the future revision and/or execution of the EHPASP support selection and Appeals Process, which will be considered by Meath Athletics and the Deciding Panel.

9. MONITORING PROCEDURES

Monitoring of athletes' progress and performance will be undertaken on a quarterly basis and reviewed annually for all supported athletes ([Section 5](#)). Possible outcomes for all supported athletes from these meetings may include the following:

- The review will find the athlete to be performing satisfactorily and the quarterly payment will be made, or
- The review will find the athlete may not be performing satisfactorily but that the quarterly payment should be made. The Deciding Panel will notify the athlete of this position and warning about the possibility of non-payment of future quarterly payments, or
- The review will find the athlete not to be performing satisfactorily or that there is insufficient information for the Deciding Panel to complete the evaluation. Payments to the athlete may be suspended pending further evaluation and may be withheld for such a period as the Deciding Panel considers appropriate.
- The annual athlete review for retention and exit for the EHPASP can be found in [Section 5](#).

10. ATHLETE PERFORMANCE SUPPORT

The allocation of support to individual athletes is assessed on a case by case basis having regard to the overall budget available, the criteria achieved, and overall athlete performance assessment. There is no guarantee that the maximum level of support will be allocated to athletes in any category. Meath Athletics will set annually the overall and maximum individual funding support allocations. For 2020 the Overall Allocation will not exceed €10,000 in value. The maximum individual level of support available under the 2020 Scheme to any single athlete will not exceed €5,000.00 in value.

Financial support allocations for the Emerging and High Performance categories in the scheme will be paid directly to each athlete, in arrears on a quarterly basis, by Meath Athletics. These will be made following the quarterly review of the athlete's performance by the Deciding Panel.

Possible outcomes that may arise from these quarterly review meetings are detailed under the "Application Process and Monitoring" section of this document.

As a part of the Application Process a full competition and training program for the athlete must be included, to include detailed and realistic performance targets for each event. Quarterly/annual reviews will be conducted on the basis of this program. Progression will be assessed against these performance targets.

11 Procedure for Amendments

Meath Athletics reserves the right to amend this Policy at its sole discretion and will make the amended version available via its website. An athlete's continuing membership of the

EHPASP shall be deemed as continued acceptance of this Policy being amended when appropriate.

12 Notifications

The athlete support list will be published by Meath Athletics on its website: