YUKON GYMNASTIC ASSOCIATION

ATHLETE SELECTION TO THE 2027 CANADA WINTER GAMES

1. INTRODUCTION

In Canada, artistic gymnastics has three categories; Provincial (consisting of several developmental levels), National and High Performance. The Canada Winter Games are a high level (National to High Performance) sporting event. Athletes participating in the Canada Winter Games ("CWG") often go on to be named to the National Team and to represent Canada at an international level. The requirements for artistic gymnastics at the CWG are equivalent to Women's and Men's National Level and are not at the developmental Provincial level.

Like other smaller jurisdictions in Canada, the Yukon Gymnastics Association ("YGA") has, at any given time, had only a small number of athletes above the Provincial levels. As the sport governing body for gymnastics in the Territory, YGA would like to see these numbers increase. In order to do so, athletes at the higher Provincial levels need greater exposure and increased training opportunities in order to develop into the National and High Performance Levels.

YGA recognizes that development of National/High Performance gymnasts is a long term process that begins at the recreational level and proceeds through pre-competitive and Provincial levels. The age requirements for Women's Artistic Gymnastics at the 2027 CWG is a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 19 years of age during the year 2027.

As YGA does not have a traveling Yukon Men's competitive program currently in place, this policy document will only address the criteria and training that shall be used to select athletes to represent the Yukon for the 2027 Canada Games Women's Team.

Given the current status of athlete development in the Yukon, the goal of the Yukon Gymnastics Association is to send as many athletes as possible to the 2027 CWG (maximum of 6).

2. POLICY STATEMENT

In the interests of athlete development, YGA is prepared to send gymnasts to the CWG that are not yet at the National or High Performance Level. However, YGA feels that athletes must still have met a minimum skill requirement in order to be competitive at the Games and to ensure a positive Games experience.

The key is to balance the developmental benefits and "experience" of the CWG, while ensuring Yukon athletes are both physically and mentally prepared for competition at such a high level. It is the opinion of YGA's Technical Director that in order to represent the Yukon at the 2027 CWG, athletes must have attained the minimum requirements of the Canadian Competitive Program Level 8.

YGA accepts this recommendation and accordingly, only athletes that meet the YGA Team requirements for Canadian Competitive Program Level 8 to 10 will be considered for the 2027 CWG Team.

It is the Polarettes Gymnastic Club Head Coach that shall determine the athlete's readiness and ability to compete at Canadian Competitive Program Level 8 to 10. A list of athletes at this level will be submitted to the Technical Director for selection to the 2027 CWG Team. This decision is final as YGA will not involve itself in the determination of athlete ability and preparedness to compete at any level. Athletes can demonstrate the requirements and readiness for Canadian Competitive Program Level 8 to 10 (and the CWG) to the Polarettes Gymnastic Club Head Coach in two ways:

1) Any athletes who represent the Yukon at the 2026 Western Canadian Championships and/or Canadian National Championships in April/May 2026 in Canadian Competitive Program Level 8, 9 or 10 shall be deemed to have been selected to the 2027 CWG team. They must maintain their skill level and training consistency between those events and the minimum 32 eligibility score for their level.

2) Any remaining number of team spots can be filled by an athlete that demonstrates to the Polarettes Gymnastic Club Head Coach that they are able to perform full routines and all required skills for a minimum of Canadian Competitive Program Level 8 by November 30, 2026 or by the CWG Registration Deadline -- whichever occurs first.

3. REQUIRED DEVELOPMENTAL STEPS

As of the date of this policy, the 2027 CWG are approximately 4-5 months away. This leaves a good timeline of opportunity to safely develop those athletes who are not yet at Canadian Competitive Program Level 8 and to increase the skill level. It is important that a structured developmental plan be in place to ensure athlete preparedness for the Games. This is also a requirement of the Sport and Recreation Branch of the Government of Yukon and of Sport Yukon.

There are several developmental steps that will contribute towards achieving the requirements for Canadian Competitive Program Level 8 to 10 by the registration deadline (approximately November 30, 2026). These will include a combination of training and competition experience as determined by the Head Coach & Technical Director. There are 6 important competitions and training camps that will occur prior to the registration deadline and athletes who wish to be considered for the Team must attend/meet 5 of the 6 events between April 1st, 2026 and November 30, 2026. Exceptions may be granted by the Head Coach in the case of severe illness, injury, or bereavement preventing participation, but will not be considered for vacation or personal reasons. These 6 events are as follows:

PREPARATION COMPETITIONS AND TRAINING CAMPS

1. Western Canadian Championships - April 21 to 24th, 2026 (Whitehorse)
2. Canadian Championships - May 25 to 29th, 2026 (Ontario)
3. YEG Excellence in Action - August 24th to 30th, 2026 (Edmonton)
4. Physical Abilities Testing - September 8th, 2026 (Local)
5. Winterfest In-House Event - December 6th, 2026 (Local)
6. Register for Rock the Rockies - CWG Team Competition Warm Up Event - January 21 to 24th, 2027 (Calgary)

4. ATHLETE, COACH AND PARENT COMMITMENT

Attendance at the CWG is a privilege, not a right. Athletes, parents and coaches must be prepared to accept the responsibilities and commitment involved in training for the Games. Below is a list of YGA's expectations for each.

Athlete Commitment

In personal development, as well as athletic development, the athlete themselves play a critical role. They must understand and respect their relationship and the commitment that is required as a member of a team. The athletes must also recognize that to achieve complete success they should understand both the values and goals of Gymnastics Canada Gymnastique and the Yukon Gymnastics Association.

Once an athlete has been selected to the team, they will be expected to:

1. Sign the attached athlete/coach agreement;
2. Abide by YGA's Athlete Code of Conduct;

3. Attend all scheduled training and events as determined by the Head Coach; and

4. Miss no more than two consecutive weeks of training due to vacation periods (athletes who are leaving the Territory on vacations may train in another club only if approved by Head Coach).

5. Put forth great effort, and take care of their health outside the gym including managing illness, injury, nutrition, sleep, and general wellness;

6. During Team Travel, please contact the Team Chaperone first for any situations that arise, as they are there to provide support throughout the entire event.

Consideration will be given to those athletes that are unable to meet this commitment due to illness or injury. However, failure to meet the above requirements can result in removal from the CWG Team. Removal will be at the recommendation of the Head Coach. Should the Head Coach recommend (to YGA) that an athlete be removed from the Team, YGA shall meet with the athlete, parents and the Head Coach to ensure the views and interests of both are considered.

YGA shall then make one of the following decisions:

1. That the athlete shall remain on the Team;

2. That the athlete shall be placed on a probationary period with a review of the matter at a date set by YGA;

3. That the athlete shall be removed from the Team.

A decision by YGA to remove an athlete from the Team shall be final and binding.

Athlete Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

<u>Coach Responsibilities</u>

The athlete/coach relationship is a privileged one. Coaches play a critical role in the personal as well as athletic development of their athletes. Coaches must understand and respect the inherent power imbalance that exists in this relationship and must be extremely careful not to abuse it. Coaches must also recognize that they are conduits through which the values and goals of this sporting organization are channeled. Thus, how an athlete regards this sport is often dependent on the behavior of the coach.

Head Coach and Coaches have a responsibility to:

1. To make selections to the Team in a fair and consistent manner;

2. Sign the athlete/coach agreement; and

3. Abide by YGA's Coach's Code of Conduct which includes that the Coach;

   - Ensures that the developmental training of selected athletes is suitable for the experience, ability and fitness level of the gymnast;
   - Considers the gymnast's future health and well-being as foremost when making decisions regarding an athlete's ability to continue training or competing; and
   - Be aware of the pressures placed on gymnasts as they strive to balance the physical, educational, mental, emotional and spiritual aspects of their lives and conduct training and competitions in a manner so as to allow optimum enjoyment of gymnastics.

4. Follow all safe sport and travel standards laid out by YGA, Polarettes, and Gymnastics Canada

Coach Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parental Responsibilities

Sport provides many great moments that parents and children can share and enjoy. It should be part of the educational process for children, and therefore, should be operated as an educational experience so that all children have the right to learn and participate in an enjoyable, positive, and stress-free environment. It's up to parents to nurture children's dreams and to help their child's sport experience to be fun, safe and valuable. Parents want their child to be able to look back on the youth sport experience with fondness and play a large role in ensuring this is the case.

A parent has a responsibility to:

1. Stay up-to-date on coaching decisions made that impact their child as well as provided with contract and travel information from the coaches or chaperones;
2. Communicate any mental or physical health needs or challenges that could impact their athlete or the team, as well as any additional medical conditions, and ensure that the team will be able to accommodate any needs reasonably;
3. Ensure their athlete is available and on time for all training, competitions, and mandatory team events/meetings;
4. Pay all training and competition expenses by the due date;
5. Abide by the Universal Code of Conduct and all YGA policies

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Kim Jones, ChPC
Executive Director & Head Coach

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