



COC ATHLETES' COMMISSION

TERMS OF REFERENCE

This version was last updated in January 2026
Approved by: COC Athletes' Commission on January 12th, 2026

**Canadian Olympic Committee
Athletes' Commission
Terms of Reference**

1. GENERAL

The COC Athletes' Commission ("**Commission**") is a recognized body of the COC whose purpose is to represent current and aspiring Olympians and Pan American Games athletes (the "**Athletes**"). In contributing to the achievement and the development of philosophies, policies, and strategic plans of the COC, members of the Commission will rely on their unique perspectives to promote the views and interests of athletes within the Canadian sporting system and the COC.

As a recognized body of the COC, the Commission is permitted to establish its own terms of reference, subject to the provisions of the COC General By-Law N.1.

These Terms of Reference (the "**Terms of Reference**") set out the role, composition, structure and internal functioning of the Commission. They were approved by the Commission on January 12th, 2026 and take effect as of that date, superseding all previous documents relating to the Commission and the matters addressed herein.

2. ROLE

The role of the Commission is to advise the COC Board of Directors, COC Committees, COC Staff and more generally the COC and the Canadian Olympic Foundation on matters relating to, among other things, the following:

- (a) providing the Athletes' perspective and voice to the current or contemplated policies, programs, and decisions of the COC impacting athletes;
- (b) promoting and advocating the rights and interests of the Athletes within the COC and the Canadian sporting system;
- (c) acting as a link between the Athletes and the COC to convey the Athletes' views to the COC and vice versa;
- (d) providing avenues in which Athletes may share and develop information or ideas as they relate to Athletes;
- (e) pursuing the establishment and maintenance of deep and growing relationships among the Athletes, COC partners and Canadian Olympic Foundation (and its donors); and
- (f) fostering relationships with international athlete bodies and promoting Canadian and Olympic values on the international stage.

3. COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

The Commission is comprised of members who are either elected, appointed and/or ex-officio (the "**Commission Members**").

The process for the establishment of the Commission Membership is as follows:

3.1 Elected Members

- (a) There shall be six (6) Commission Members elected following a Summer Olympic Games and four (4) Commission Members elected following a Winter Olympic Games for a total of 10 elected

members (the “**Elected Members**”).

- (b) The procedure for the elections shall be established by the Commission, and such procedure may be updated by the Commission from time to time.
- (c) The term for the Elected Members shall be four (4) years from the time of such election.
- (d) The persons entitled to attend and vote for such election are:
 - i. For Summer Olympic Games, each athlete who was officially named to represent Canada at the previous Summer Olympic Games and/or previous Pan American Games. For sports that were on the Olympic programme of the previous Summer Olympic Games but that did not have any athletes compete at that Games, an athlete representative from that NSO shall also have the right to vote in the elections.
 - ii. For Winter Olympic Games, each athlete who was officially named to represent Canada at the previous Winter Olympic Games. For sports that were on the Olympic programme of the previous Winter Olympic Games but that did not have any athletes compete at that Games, an athlete representative from that sport’s NSO will also have the right to vote in the elections.
- (e) Every candidate for election must meet all of the eligibility requirements set out below and continue to meet these requirements throughout their Term:
 - i. For elections following Summer Olympic Games, have competed in at least one of the last two Summer Olympic Games or have competed in the Pan American Games directly preceding the Summer Olympic Games;
 - ii. For elections following Winter Olympic Games, have competed in at least one of the last two Winter Olympic Games;
 - iii. Be at least 18 years of age;
 - iv. Not have been sanctioned for a period of two years or greater pursuant to a breach of the World Anti-Doping Code or Canadian Anti-Doping Program (CADP) Rules;
 - v. Not have been convicted of a serious criminal offence for which a Pardon or record suspension has not been granted;
 - vi. Not have been subject to any sanctions or provisional measures under the Canadian Safe Sport Program (“CSSP”);
 - vii. Agree to comply with the COC Codes and policies; and
 - viii. Not be subject to a suspension, or period of ineligibility, under any COC Code or Policy.
- (f) The ten (10) elected members of the Commission shall also be voting Class D Members of the COC, as described under General By-Law No. 1 of the COC (the “**COC By-Laws**”).

3.2 Appointed Members

- (a) The Commission has the right to appoint up to two (2) members (the “**Appointed Members**”).
- (b) The term for Appointed Members shall be determined by the Commission and will not go beyond a maximum of two (2) years from the time of appointment. However, there is the potential for reappointment in accordance with Sections 3.2 (c) and (d) of this Mandate.
- (c) The Commission shall assess representation on the Commission following each election/vacancy and have discretion to replace an Appointed Member with another new appointee to ensure diversity on the Commission or if Commission Members determine it is in the best interest of the Commission.
- (d) In deciding both the number of Appointed Members and the people to be appointed, the Commission must strive to ensure diverse representation on the Commission by considering, among other things, the following:
 - i. a desire for the Commission Members to best represent the diversity of Athletes in Canada and the desire for a balance of Commission Members that includes athletes from Pan American Games only sports, team sports, individual sports, western and eastern Canada.
 - ii. the person’s skills/expertise and availability to be on the Commission.
- (e) Appointed Members must meet all of the eligibility requirements set out in 3.1 (e) throughout their term.

3.3 Ex-Officio Members (IOC and Panam Sports Athlete Commission Members)

- (a) In the event that a Canadian athlete is a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Athletes’ Commission or the Pan American Sports Athletes’ Commission, that person shall be an ex-officio member of the Commission.
- (b) The Term of the Ex-Officio Members of the Commission shall coincide with their membership on the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Athletes’ Commission or the Pan American Sports Athletes’ Commission.
- (c) Ex-officio members do not have a vote on matters to be decided by the Commission.

4. VACANCIES

- (a) A Commission Member may resign prior to the expiry of their Term of office by giving notice in writing to the Commission’s Chair or Vice-Chair.
- (b) The members of the Commission may remove another member, with or without cause, by a vote of a minimum of two-thirds of the members who are present at a meeting called for that purpose with a quorum of at least six (6) members of the Commission present at the meeting. The following are

non-exclusive grounds for removal of a Commission Member:

- i. breach of any duty set out in Section 6 of these Terms of Reference or a breach of any COC codes, policies, procedures, rules, and/or the COC General By-Law N.1;
- i. are absent from three (3) or more meetings of the Commission without prior approval of the Chair; or
- ii. any other act or conduct that, in the opinion of the members of the Commission, brings the Commission or the COC into disrepute.

(c) In addition, a Commission Member shall automatically cease to be a member of the Commission if they:

- ii. no longer meet the Eligibility Criteria described in Section 3.1 (e);
- iii. are rendered legally incapable of discharging their duties; or
- iv. die.

(d) Any vacancy occurring in respect of Elected Members and Appointed Members may be filled at any time at the discretion of the Commission, provided that such vacancy must be filled with an individual who meets the eligibility requirements outlined in Section 3.1 (e). Any individual so appointed shall assume all rights, duties, and responsibilities of the members they are replacing, including, if applicable, the right to be a Session member and vote at COC Session. The term of the appointed member shall be the remainder of the unexpired term of the member being replaced.

5. COMMISSION EXECUTIVE

(a) The executive of the Commission (the “**Commission Executive**”) shall consist of three (3) officers: the Chair, Vice-Chair and the First Officer.

(b) A description of the roles for members of the Commission Executive is set out in Schedule A;

(c) Elections for each of the Chair, Vice-Chair will take place once every two years, and the election of the First Officer will take place once every year.

- a. Under the circumstance that the Chair and/or Vice-Chair term out of the Commission prior to the completion of their Chair term(s), an election will take place and the next elected Chair and/or Vice-Chair will fulfill the past Chair and/or Vice-Chairs term(s).

(d) All elected and appointed members are eligible for election to the Commission Executive.

(e) The members of the Commission Executive shall be elected in such a manner that, to the extent reasonably possible and accepted by a majority of the Commission Members present at the time of an election, the Commission Executive is representative of all genders as well as a balanced representation from eastern Canada and western Canada, winter sports and summer sports, and team sports and individual sports.

(f) The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be members of the COC Board of Directors. With approval from the COC Board, the First Officer can be an observer at board meetings without a vote. If there is a conflict of

interest with the Chair or Vice-Chair being a director, the First Officer will take on the role of Director.

- (g) The Commission Executive shall strive to hold meetings 2 weeks before the Commission meetings to review the agenda and other topics.
- (h) A member of the Executive Commission shall automatically cease to be a member of the Commission if they meet any of the grounds listed in Section 4 (a) and 4 (c).
- (i) The members of the Commission may remove a member of the Commission Executive, with or without cause, by a vote of a minimum of two-thirds of the members who are present at a meeting called for that purpose with a quorum of at least six (6) members of the Commission present at the meeting. The following are non-exclusive grounds for removal of a member of the Commission Executive:
 - i. missing more than three (3) meetings of: the Commission, the Commission Executive, and/or the COC Board (as applicable) without providing a reasonable explanation.
 - ii. any of the grounds listed in Section 4 (b) (i) and (ii).

6. STRUCTURE AND GENERAL DUTIES OF COMMISSION MEMBERS

- (a) Commission Members shall attend each meeting of the Athletes' Commission (in person or virtually) unless approved in advance by a member of the Commission Executive. Each Commission Member shall actively participate in the Commission meetings and in matters undertaken by the Commission between meetings. Each Commission Member must be adequately prepared for each Commission meeting in order to participate effectively and constructively;
- (b) Each Commission Member will be expected to be responsible for a functional area within the Commission's strategic plan, as may be approved by the Commission from time to time.

7. COMMISSION MEETINGS

- (a) The Commission, though not necessarily so limited, shall strive to hold twelve (12) meetings on a monthly basis throughout the year, including 10 virtual meetings and 2 in-person meetings to coincide with the COC Session and Sport Community Gathering. The dates and venues are to be agreed by the Commission, as required.
- (b) The Chair and/or Vice-Chair shall prepare an agenda for each meeting with support from the COC Staff Liaison. Commission Members may submit items for the agenda through the Chair or Vice-Chair. The agenda, together with relevant papers, will be distributed to all Commission Members prior to each Commission meeting (usually two (2) weeks prior) or posted on any technology storage platform used by the Commission, from time to time.
- (c) The Chair will chair all meetings, unless they are unavailable, in which case the Vice-Chair will do so. If neither is available, then the First Officer will chair the meeting.
- (d) The quorum for all Commission meetings shall be considered a simple majority (more than half) of the total number of Commission Members. This Quorum also applies to meetings held virtually.
- (e) Decisions of the Commission shall generally be made by consensus. If a consensus cannot be reached

and a vote is required, each Commission Member shall have one (1) vote. Voting by proxy is not permitted. Except to the extent specified in these Terms of Reference, a majority of votes in favour of an action by those Commission Members present at a meeting is required for it to be passed. A Commission Member who attends a meeting virtually shall be regarded as being present. In the event of a tie in the votes, the Chair may cast a deciding vote.

- (f) A resolution in writing agreed to, by email, by greater than seventy-five percent (75%) of all Commission Members, shall be valid as if it had been passed at a Commission meeting.
- (g) Minutes of each meeting of the Commission shall be taken. The minutes will be finalized within a maximum of one (1) month of the meeting. Any amendments to the Minutes will be agreed at the next meeting of the Commission and noted accordingly.
- (h) At the request of the Commission, the COC shall provide the services of a staff liaison, to assist with the planning and organization of Commission meetings and to serve as a resource person for such background or other information as may be required for Commission deliberations. Such a facilitator will attend or participate in the Commission meeting, at the discretion of the Chair.
- (i) All Commission meeting expenses, together with Commission member expenses associated therewith, shall be borne by the COC in keeping with the COC's guidelines established for that purpose.
- (j) All meetings and the work of the Commission are confidential. No documents, information, discussion, recommendations or decisions made at a Commission meeting or otherwise exchanged or agreed in connection with the work of the Commission shall be disclosed to any other person (other than the COC and its staff, or members of a committee of the COC) unless:
 - (i) the Commission Chair authorizes such disclosure;
 - (ii) the Commission agrees that such disclosure is necessary or desirable to advance its work;
 - (iii) the matter is in the public domain; or
 - (iv) such disclosure is required by applicable law.
- (k) former members of the Commission Executive may be available at the request of the Commission for a period of one year and may be allowed to attend meetings as observers without a right to vote.

Schedule A
Commission Executive Positions

Chair

Position Description

1. Purpose

The Chair is responsible for providing leadership and managing the affairs of the Commission. The Chair is instrumental in fostering an environment of integrity, decision-making and openness among members of the Commission and with the COC Board of Directors, related committees and commissions, and staff of the COC.

2. Scope & Duties

The Chair's duties and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

2.1 Commission Leadership

- (a) chair and prepare the agenda and materials (with the assistance of the Vice-Chair and the COC Staff Liaison) for all meetings of the Commission;
- (b) serve as one of the two voting directors of the COC Board;
- (c) liaise with the President and Chief Executive Officer of the COC as required or requested;
- (d) prepare and present reports at COC Session;
- (e) provide timely and relevant information and ensure other resources are available to the Commission to support informed and efficient decision-making.
- (f) with the support of the Vice-Chair and First Officer, create, maintain and evaluate, as applicable, the Commission's strategic plan;
- (g) facilitate formal and informal communication with and among members of the Commission;
- (h) except to the extent of any conflict of interest, work with the Vice-Chair, First Officer and COC Staff Liaison, as required, to plan and execute the elections of members of the Commission;
- (i) support in keeping a committee member's terms matrix.

2.2 Working with External Partners

- (a) be the spokesperson for the Commission, including to the media;
- (b) liaise with the staff of the COC and Canadian Olympic Foundation.
- (c) liaise with AthletesCAN, Pan American Sport Organization Athlete Council, Canadian Paralympic Committee's Athletes' Council, the International Olympic Committee's and other National Olympic Committee's Athlete Commission's and any other athlete representation and advocacy group or Sport Organization; and

2.3 Athlete Representation on the Board

- (a) provide progress reports to the Board of Directors of the COC.

Vice-Chair

Position Description

1. Purpose

The Vice-Chair is responsible for carrying out any of the responsibilities described above with respect to the Chair if the Chair is unable to do so or has a conflict of interest. They may also have specific responsibilities delegated to them by the Chair or the Commission.

2. Scope & Duties

The Vice-Chair's duties and responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- (a) assist the Chair to fulfill the Chair's duties and responsibilities, as necessary;
- (b) in the absence of the Chair, chair meetings of the Commission and present to the COC Session members at COC Session; and
- (c) support and lead the Commission in the operational & technical aspects of the Commission's objectives under its strategic plan, including with respect to any means of communication or similar electronic method (i.e., Google docs management, team calendar management, team slack management).

First Officer

Position Description

1. Purpose

The First Officer is responsible for providing leadership and oversight of the affairs of the Commission, and to help the Chair & Vice-Chair, as necessary.

2. Scope & Duties

The First Officer's duties and responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- (a) assist the Chair and Vice-Chair in the fulfillment of their duties and responsibilities, as may be delegated to the First Officer from time to time;
- (b) with the approval of the Board of Directors of the COC, attend any meetings of the Board of Directors as an observer without a vote.
- (c) in the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, chair meetings of the Commission and present reports at COC Session.

RACI Chart – COC Athlete Commission

(R)esponsible: person who does the work

(A)ccountable: person who is ultimately accountable for successful task completion

(C)onsulted: person that needs to give feedback or contribute to the activity.

(I)nformed: person that is kept informed of the decision, action, information.

	COC Support Staff	Chair	Vice Chair	1 st Officer	Strategic Plan Lead	Member
Planning & Running Meetings						
Plan meeting agendas & schedule	I	R, A	R	R	C	C
Organize general meeting logistics	I, C	R, A	R	R	C	C
Ensure adherence to governance rules	I	R, A	R	R	I	I
Strategic Plan						
Update of strategic plan (Minor updates – annually. Major updates – every 4 years)	I	R, A	R	R	R	R
Communicate & track progress of high-level aims/objectives	I	R, A	R	I	I	I
Board of Directors, Session & Committees						
Prepare COC AC report to BoD & Session	I, C	R, A	R	C	I	I
Present Athlete Commission report to BoD & Session	I	R, A	R	I	I	I
Organize COC staff or external meetings with AC at session	I, C	R, A	R	C	I	I
Vote in Session matters (Proxy if absent)	I	A	A	A	C	C

Attend Board of Directors meetings in the absence of AC chairs	I	C	C	A	I	I
Join, attend & contribute to COC committees	I	R, A	R	R	I	I
COC Committees and Commission Projects						
Create annual committee and Project objectives	I	A	R	R	R	C
Execute individual Committee and Project activities	I	R, A	R	R	R	R

	COC Support Staff	Chair	Vice Chair	1 st Officer	Strategic Plan Lead	Member
Monitoring & oversight of AC committee and Mini Project progress	I	R, A	R	R	I	I
COC AC Logistics: (Dropbox, Shared calendar, receipts, team building etc)						
Upload team documents to Dropbox, link in team, etc.	I	R, A	R	R	R	R
Update shared google calendar with important events	I	R, A	R	R	I	I
Liaise with COC staff on AC budget issues	C	R, A	I	I	I	I