

# ***U.S. Figure Skating Team Leader Program Selection and Assignment Guidelines***

## **Introduction – Selections Guidelines**

The U.S. Figure Skating Team Leader Program offers a variety of opportunities for volunteers. This document describes the procedures by which interested volunteers can progress from their first day of involvement to their desired level of service

## **I. Team Leader Selection Guidelines**

The strategy for selecting U.S. Figure Skating's team leaders is to support and promote volunteers who can foster team unity and have the ability to encourage and develop relationships with athletes, coaches, and officials while creating an environment that allows them to achieve their goals. In addition, team leaders should have a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the ISU rules and regulations governing the sport, strong administrative and organizational skills, crisis management capabilities, and the capacity to create a cohesive team atmosphere.

The strategy for assigning team leaders to represent Team USA at international competitions is to place candidates at competitions that will provide them with experience and to help them develop the working relationships necessary to ascend to higher-level competitions such as the Senior Grand Prix's and ISU Championship events. Some of the other factors taken into account when selecting team leaders include the location of the competition, the athletes attending the competition, and opportunities to enhance international relations.

### **A. Team USA Eligibility Criteria**

Volunteers who meet the criteria listed below are eligible to apply to the Team USA pool. The following criteria detail eligibility requirements only and do not guarantee acceptance to the Team USA pool.

### **Preliminary Application Criteria**

1. A United States citizen.
2. At least 25 years of age.
3. A valid and current passport.
4. A current member in good standing of U.S. Figure Skating.
5. Previous history or current activity as a U.S. Figure Skating athlete (as defined in the U.S. Figure Skating Rulebook, Article XXII, Section 2, Bylaws)
6. or U. S. Figure Skating official.
7. Prior or current participation as a U.S. Figure Skating coach; provided there is no conflict of interest with coaching responsibilities and the skaters competing in the assigned international events.

### **Qualification Enhancements**

The following experiences are considered enhancements to any application for Team USA.

1. Prior member of Team USA.
2. Prior involvement as an athlete in other competitive sports.
3. Related professional experience such as physician, mediator, coach, etc.
4. International travel experience.
5. Fluency in languages other than English.

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Team leaders are selected based on their knowledge of the sport, their management and organization skills, their ability to think on their feet, and their willingness to provide a total support system for their team. Team leaders are expected to monitor all aspects of their assigned competition.

### **Specific Skills and Responsibilities**

The following areas are identified as essential skills and responsibilities that Team USA applicants must be able to offer.

1. **TECHNICAL.** Team leaders must demonstrate knowledge and technical understanding of the rules and regulations of the sport, especially as they relate to the International Judging System (IJS). Team Leaders must be current on all ISU and U.S. Figure Skating communications and have in their possession the most recent versions of the following publications. Some of these publications are available online, others can be obtained from U.S. Figure Skating Headquarters.

- ISU Constitution and General Regulations (Online)
- ISU Special Regulations for Singles, Pairs and Ice Dance (Online)
- ISU Special Regulations for Synchronized Skating (Online)
- Team Leader Handbook (Headquarters)
- U.S. Figure Skating Rulebook (Headquarters)
- U.S. Figure Skating Media Guide (Headquarters)

Team leaders must have both historical and current knowledge of the athletes comprising Team USA, including their competitive histories and their current competitive standings.

2. **ADMINISTRATIVE.** Team leaders are expected to work closely with the US Team Coordinator at Headquarters prior to and during their assigned event to organize the team and manage the logistics of the competition. This includes the following responsibilities.

- Send all team members a written communication prior to the start of travel. This communication should include the assigned officials for the competition. One important part of this communication should be the travel plans for all team members.
- Upon arrival at the competition, check-in with the LOC and the registration room. Make sure all team members have credentials. Also, make sure all team members are on the transportation arrival schedule and that the hotel sheet matches the hotel's information.
- Organize the team meeting. If applicable, distribute the per diem, travel medical cards, team pins and trading pins while at the team meeting.
- If applicable, organize the team dinner, staying within the approved budget.
- Attend all necessary and required meetings at the event.

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- Make sure all team members have their schedules and they attend all required sessions.
- Serve as the media liaison for U.S. Figure Skating. If U.S. Figure Skating public relations and media personnel are present, work with them to arrange media requests.
- Establish communication linkages between the LOC and your team members so that information can be transmitted in a timely manner. This may include distribution of cell phone numbers or other methods of verbal or written communication.
- If applicable, organize team gifts for the athletes to distribute.
- Organize, from the entire team, a thank you note addressed to the local organizing committee.
- Make sure that all team members are on the transportation departure schedule.
- Complete all required reports, such as the team leader, expense, and post-competition confidential and logistical survey reports, within the required time.

3. **CRISIS MANAGEMENT.** Team leaders are required to address all unexpected or emerging situations that involve team members in a timely manner. This includes the following circumstances.

- Handle all discipline and behavior management issues.
- Work with the medical team to handle all medical emergencies.
- Work with the LOC regarding any security issues.

4. **TEAM SUPPORT AND SPIRIT.** Team leaders are expected to have excellent communication skills and demonstrate the ability to develop rapport and camaraderie within the team. They should be able to create the following type of team environment.

- A team with a sense of identity and unity.
- A solid communication and support network between and for team members.
- Harmonious relationships between team members.
- Adherence to the highest ethical standards of U.S. Figure Skating.

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### **B. Team USA Pool: Application Procedures – Guidelines**

Each year all candidates in the Team USA pool must have on file a current application. Persons who have previously participated as a team leader and want to continue to do so must verify this request in writing to the Selections Committee. Persons who have never served as a team leader are invited to submit their applications to the Team USA pool. All applications are submitted to the Selections Committee. The Selections Committee keeps applications on file as long as an individual participates in the team leader program. Once applications are on file, if personal information changes, it is the responsibility of the Team USA pool member to update this information by contacting the Selections Committee.

Each year, the chair of the Selections Committee, working closely with the chair of the International Committee and the Athlete Advisory Committee, will evaluate all applications, and a determination will be made as to a person's eligibility for the Team USA pool. Eligibility for the Team USA pool means that all the preliminary application criteria are met, all enhanced qualifications are evaluated, references are verified and a resume is submitted. The Selections Committee will notify all applicants if they qualify for the Team USA pool. If an applicant qualifies, they are eligible to be considered for a team leader assignment. Final selection will depend on a successfully completed background check. Membership in the Team USA pool does not necessarily guarantee an assignment.

Each year the Selections Committee will send availability forms for the upcoming international competition season to all members of the Team USA pool.

### **II. Team Leader Assignments: Circuits and Advancement**

From the first team assignment, there is a logical progression of experience that leads to the success of the team leader. Most team leader assignments follow a progression of competition experiences. Each competition assignment is evaluated, that is, all team members evaluate the performance of the team leader at these competitions. These evaluations provide data in a report card format to the team leader. In addition, this information can be used to decide future team leader assignments.

#### **A. Getting Started: Developmental Internationals and Team Camps**

The foundation and entry level of the U.S. Figure Skating Team Leader Program begins with developmental internationals and team camps. These programs offer interested volunteers an opportunity to be a team leader for US athletes and gain experience in this role. The availability of these programs varies from year-to-year.

#### **B. The Team USA Circuit**

Members of the Team USA pool are eligible for assignment to provide services to athletes, coaches and officials who travel on behalf of U.S. Figure Skating to international competitions according to the Team USA circuit. This is the circuit of international competitions in which our athletes compete on an annual basis. Three circuits comprise the international competition season.

In general, these three circuits represent a progression of competition experiences both for the athletes as well as the team members. As a team leader progresses through these circuits from 1

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to 3, experience at these levels of competition builds and provides the stepping stone to the challenges of the next higher level international and world competitive environments. Within circuit 2 and 3, there is a progression of experience leading up to a World Championship event. A team leader may stay within a specific circuit for a number of years and may also repeat a circuit based on various factors including skill level, personality (works better with junior versus senior athletes), location of events, etc. An excellent team leader also may repeat or rotate through the circuits again. Experienced team leaders who recycle through the circuits can act as valuable mentors to new team leaders.

### **Circuit 1**

Developmental Internationals  
Spring Internationals  
Senior "Bs"  
Team Camps/National Programs  
International Synchronized Skating Competitions

Note. Each event requires approximately one week of service with transportation, housing and meals usually provided by U.S. Figure Skating. For the International Synchronized Skating Competitions the assignment will be as assistant team leader.

### **Circuit 2**

Junior Grand Prix Events  
Junior/Senior Grand Prix Final (assistant team leader if combined event)  
World Junior Championships  
ISU Synchronized Skating Junior World Challenge Cup  
International Synchronized Skating Competitions

Note. Each event requires approximately one week of service with transportation, housing and meals provided by U.S. Figure Skating.

### **Circuit 3**

Senior Grand Prix Events  
Junior/Senior Grand Prix Final  
Four Continents Championships  
World Championships  
World Synchronized Skating Championships

Note. For the Junior/Senior Grand Prix Final, the team leader is circuit 3 but the assistant team leader can be from circuit 2. Each event requires about 10 days of service with transportation, housing and meals provided by U.S. Figure Skating.

Although these circuits provide a general approach to a training progression for team leaders, there are a number of extraneous factors that can influence whether a team leader will follow this exact developmental course. Some of these factors include the team leader's particular background and experience within the sport, the number and type of athletes comprising a specific team, etc. Therefore, not all team leaders may advance at the same rate through this progression, and advancement can depend on the circumstances of each particular team experience.

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### **D. Advancement: Evaluation of Performance**

Each time a team leader completes an international assignment there is a set of surveys distributed to all team members requesting an assessment of the team experience. From these surveys a report card is developed and distributed to each team leader.

The Selections, International and Athlete's Advisory Chairs also receive a report card for each team leader's assignment. This report card underlines the various characteristics that contribute to a successful team leader. There is both a quantitative and qualitative aspect to the report card, allowing for an evaluation of the team leading experience. A positive evaluation leads to future team leading assignments.

### **E. Important Team USA Selection Disclosure**

- Volunteers may be invited to and may attend more than one event at each level.
- Due to a limited number of each type of event, volunteers may be selected for lower level events even if they have successfully completed higher level events.
- International assignments on an annual basis are not guaranteed.
- Progression to the next level is not guaranteed.
- At each level, athletes, coaches, officials and NGB staff evaluate volunteers on logistical competency, rapport with athletes/coaches, policy adherence, interaction with sport and administrative officials, and technical understanding.
- Successful completion of at least one international event assignment within a five year period is required to retain promotion to the Team USA pool.
- **Mandatory Volunteer Disclosure:** It is agreed that if at any time, while serving in the Team USA pool, a criminal charge or disciplinary action is filed against a volunteer by any organization, board, or licensing agency, the volunteer must notify the Selections Committee chair immediately upon such a charge or action being filed. It is further agreed that, depending upon the nature of the allegation involved, the Selections Committee chair may remove the volunteer from the Team USA pool during the period the criminal or disciplinary action is pending.

*Conflict of Interest:* Team USA volunteers who are *eligible* for the upcoming season and are also current members of any U.S. Figure Skating Committee must declare a conflict of interest and excuse themselves from personally relevant team leader and assistant team leader selection discussion