



**Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago**  
Ministry of Sport and Community Development

## **REVISED POLICY GUIDELINES FOR THE GRANT OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO HIGH PERFORMANCE ATHLETES**

### **1. Introduction**

The purpose of this document is to outline the revised policy guidelines governing the disbursement of grants to all stakeholders meeting the qualification requirements for participation in a financial assistance programme for elite athletes, sub-elite athletes and teams. Through this policy, the Government seeks to provide clarity and direction regarding its support for the individual efforts of athletes and teams whose performances are ranked among the highest in the world in their respective sport and athletes who are on the brink of achieving world class ranking, thereafter known as sub-elites.

In keeping with Government's 2020 Vision for sport, Trinidad and Tobago aims to be recognised as a successful western hemispheric nation in the field of sport and this policy-supporting document is designed to strengthen and support systems for greater medalling opportunities. It also demonstrates Government's commitment to the sustainability of high performance sport, and formalises a support structure for high performance athletes as a key input to the sport tourism thrust that can help keep Trinidad and Tobago on the sporting map.

The development of physical recreation and sport in Trinidad and Tobago is guided by the tenets outlined in the National Sport Policy [NSP] of Trinidad and Tobago and facilitated largely through the voluntary efforts of Sporting Administrators at National Sporting Organizations [NSOs]. The policy was designed to create an enabling

environment for the development of sport and sport elitism by treating with the issue at two broad dimensions of contemporary sport namely; *total participation in sport* and *high performance sport*.

The environment for sport is also facilitated by the State through the provision, operation and maintenance of sporting facilities. Concomitant with this myriad of physical resources is the provision of technical staff to support the operations of sport facilities for the benefit of users; and the grant of financial assistance to NSOs and deserving athletes and teams. With an improved overall performance of the nation's athletes and teams on the world stage in recent years, the State's response to the level of financial assistance to athletes and teams consistent with their performances has been ad hoc and based on the availability of funding.

## **II. Rationale**

The growth in recent successes of local athletes and Team sports on the international stage and the growing requests for assistance in their preparation for continued participation has created the need revising the structure of supporting and rewarding high-performing athletes.

Following on a series of personal financial rewards to highly successful athletes, the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs was mandated by Cabinet, vide Minute 2934 of October 2004, to formulate a policy, in collaboration with the Trinidad and Tobago Olympic Committee [TTOC], to provide financial assistance to individual athletes who are nationals and have attained the qualifying international ranking determined by the TTOC.

Following on this directive, the Ministry held a number of consultations with TTOC, parent associations and other co-opted interests towards formulating policy guidelines relevant to the needs of high performing athletes. Policy considerations included but were not limited to such issues as nutritional needs, drug testing, coach/training requirements and travel. In addition, it was determined that the policy will be specific to *World Ranking of athletes in Individual Sports*, pertain to *Olympic Sports and Events*, and *medaling athletes* at the Olympic Games, World Championships, Commonwealth Games, Pan Am Games and the Central American & Caribbean Games.

The Policy was then approved by Cabinet by Minute 2820 of November 2, 2006 who agreed to the policy guidelines for the grant of financial assistance to high performance athletes at a ceiling of \$250,000 as the maximum annual sum payable to high performance athletes.

Given the experiences of the last quadrennial, the Ministry has realized the need to widen the gap to include sport outside of the Olympic banner eg. Netball, professional boxing etc., as well as include team sports both within and outside of the Olympic banner.

The Ministry recognizes the contributions made on the regional and international stage by up and coming athletes and is committed to creating an enabling environment for their development as part of the sustainability of this policy.

This initiative is expected to continue to make valuable contributions towards the overall development of sport in Trinidad and Tobago as it is in alignment with the mission of the National Sport Policy 'to enrich our lives through total participation, quality training and excellence in sport'.

### **III. High Performance Sport**

The NSP refers to high performance sport as 'competitive sport organized in accordance with International Federations and Olympic Committee rules and conditions at national or international level to determine winners'<sup>1</sup> and these guidelines are consistent with the competitive nature of sport. High Performance Sport is viewed as excellence of the highest standards by athletes performing in their respective sport as determined by world rankings. These rankings are sanctioned by the international governing body for each sporting discipline.

The guidelines that follow, establish the criteria for athletes' eligibility for financial assistance and sets out the conditions for adherence. They have been developed to ensure adequate accountability and transparency in the management of funds and focus

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<sup>1</sup> The National Sport Policy of Trinidad and Tobago, page 3.

on 'increasing the scientific and competitive nature of high performance sport'<sup>2</sup> that could result in greater medalling opportunities.

#### **IV. Policy Considerations**

A key aspect of the policy is the ability of high performance athletes to attain and maintain a current World Ranking. This is consistent with best practices and conforms to internationally accepted criteria for 'rewarding' elite athletes in Olympic Sports and Events. The programme of funding for successful qualifiers will be dealt with on a case-to-case.

The decision to treat with a tiered reward system in determining the level of funding to qualified nationals is based on the need to keep the programme of funding for an elite group, encourage consistency of performance, recognise ranking, reward peak performances, promote medalling chances, treat with the athletes requirements for preparation, training and competition in order to maintain his/her Top 40 ranking.

In respect of athletes holding Top 40 rankings, assistance is intended to be a motivation for their preparation, training and competition and to develop consistent high-level performances. Financial assistance will go towards the provision of sport science and technology, and meet required nutritional needs.

For athletes who fall outside the World Top 40 rankings but have won medals, funding is not automatic but assistance will be considered on a case by case basis.

In the case of the sub-tier element, the Ministry in collaboration with National Sporting Organisations would look at the developmental pathways of the athlete or Teams and will meet their requests on case by case basis.

The process for determining the selection of an applicant for the disbursement of grants will be the responsibility of the Ministry of Sport after consultation with the relevant National Sporting Organisation to verify qualification criteria. In keeping with financial procedures and accounting regulations governing disbursement of funds, the Ministry

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<sup>2</sup> The National Sport Policy of Trinidad and Tobago, page 3

will effect payment of grants to successful nominees. **It should be noted that the Ministry will be the final arbitrator to select the successful nominee before the disbursement of any funding.**

## **V. Components of the Policy**

This policy treats with several components governing the provision of grants to eligible applicants. These include:

- Qualification Criteria
- Application Process
- Registration Procedure
- Sanctions
- Injuries
- Funding
- Monitoring Procedures
- Time frame

## **VI. Qualification Criteria**

Athletes and Teams must:

- Be nationals of Trinidad and Tobago as defined by law and accepted by the International Federation governing their respective sport
- Be ranked within the Top 40 of their respective sporting discipline in the world.
- Be medalists at the Olympic Games, World Championships, Commonwealth Games, Pan Am Games and Central American and Caribbean Games
- Represent Trinidad and Tobago at sanctioned international competitions
- Make themselves available for selection at the Stipulated Games within the current quadrennial
- Be performing at a sub-elite level with major success.

## **VII. Application Process**

- Athletes must meet the policy requirements

- Submit applications<sup>3</sup> to their respective National Sporting Organizations for recommendation
- Obtain endorsement from their respective National Sporting Organisation, which will then be forwarded with recommendations to the Ministry of Sport to effect payment. While the Ministry remains committed to honouring all successful applicants of the programme, it should be noted that the payment of grants will be subject to the availability of funds in the relevant Vote in any given year.

It should be noted that this policy treats only with individual performances by athletes.

The payment of grants will be terminated if:

- The athlete retires from international competition
- The athlete has not attained the agreed ranking within a 12 month time frame
- No appropriate performance reports have been received or documented

### **VIII. Registration Procedure**

Athletes who have been ranked and deemed eligible for assistance will be entitled to receive financial assistance on provision of the following documentation:-

- Personal Information Form
- Athlete tracking Form
- Short and long term detailed plans and training schedules with clearly outlined goals which should include targets, standards and points, along with corresponding budgets for Olympic cycles inclusive of the following:-
  - Coaching fees
  - Nutritional and medical supplies
  - Travel expenses for training
  - Travel expenses for sanctioned competition and pre-games tours
  - Accommodation for training
  - Professional services [e.g. physiotherapy, medical doctor etc.]
- Details of information on sponsorship or other financial support
- A list of training facility (ies) to be used, duration of usage and facility user fee

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<sup>3</sup> See Registration Procedure, section viii

- Details on the athlete's Technical Team inclusive of mailing and email addresses and contact numbers for the Coach, Trainer, Nutritionist, Psychologist, Therapist and others
- Copies of the Technical Team members' supporting credentials (both hard and soft copies). Verification of their Professional Status is required to support the integrity, validity and credibility of the Technical programme.

Athletes who satisfy the criteria will be required to submit annual budgets at the start of each year. Requests for financial assistance should be submitted on a quarterly basis, accompanied by quarterly performance reports, training/preparation schedules and tracking schedules prepared by personal coaches. Funding for various expenses will be disbursed directly to the athlete to be expended only as detailed in the budgetary submission.

All applications shall be certified by National Sporting Organisations before submission to the Ministry of Sport for processing of payment.

Athletes under the age of eighteen (18) applying for financial assistance must do so with parental authorisation. This is to be reflected on the Nomination Form.

National Sporting Organisations will utilize the following criteria to determine an athlete's and team's eligibility:-

- Best Times Attained – Supported by Official Documentation
- Best Technical Performances
- Disciplinary records/Attitude

All elite athletes will be required to submit complete information on the Athlete's Tracking Form (Whereabouts List) to the relevant Trinidad and Tobago National Sporting Organisation. This is to satisfy Anti-Doping Requirements for Random Testing from the relevant recognized testing body.

## **IX. How to Apply**

Athletes will be required to complete a:

- Personal Information Form (Appendix 1)
- Nomination Form (Parental Authorization if under 18 years) – (Appendix 2)

Coaches/Trainers will be required to complete an:

- Athlete Tracking Form – (Appendix 3)
- Athlete Training Schedule – (Appendix 4)

The relevant National Governing Body will be required to certify submissions from respective applicants.

Registration Forms will be available at the Ministry's Head Office, 12 Abercromby Street, Port of Spain and through the respective National Sporting Organisations. Online application forms may be available at the Ministry's or other Websites at a later date.

**The Ministry will disburse grants to successful applicants in accordance with the policy criteria and recommendations of the National Sporting Organisation.** Athletes will be required to sign Service Level Agreements which outline their spending responsibilities and will

## **X. Sanctions**

Financial assistance will be suspended and/or terminated based on the following conditions:-

- Falsification of documents/performance reports from coaches.
- Withholding information on the athlete's sponsorship
- Non-submission of quarterly reports from coaches/trainers (foreign/local), elite athletes.
- Non-disclosure of Athletes whereabouts during training
- Evidence of the use of performance enhancing drugs.

## **XI. Injuries**

Athletes sustaining injuries during competition or training will be provided with financial assistance for rehabilitation for a period to be determined by the nature and severity of



the injury. The level of assistance will be based on medical reports submitted by the athlete detailing diagnosis and expected recovery timeframes. These reports will be subject to an independent verification process.

## **XII. Funding**

The Ministry of Sport through its Arbitrating Panel will determine funding eligibility of up to a ceiling of \$350,000 based on policy criteria. Funding will be distributed in two tranches. The second tranche is contingent on the submission of:

- Quarterly performance reports prepared by your personal coaches/trainers (Performance Evaluation forms would be available from the Parent Organisation) (Appendix 5)
- Financial Statement on the first tranche disbursed, supported by bills. (Appendix 6)

**The present level of funding may be reviewed and/or rationalised in the event of inflation or any significant changes in the country's economic environment; and subject to an increase in the number of applications that meet the qualifying criteria.**

## **XIII. Monitoring Procedure**

The Ministry of Sport will adhere to the following guidelines for disbursement of funds under this programme:-

- Government's guidelines on the payment of subventions
- Employment of proper accounting procedures
- Submission of the required financial statements by athletes and coaches to the Ministry as required.
- Utilisation of grants by successful applicants for the purposes for which granted
- Quarterly evaluation reports from NSO on the status of rankings of successful programme applicants
- Regular updated reports on incidences of sport-related injuries among participating athletes.
- Provision by athletes of statements/bills from service providers of training, medicals, coaching (fees), accommodation etc.

- Completion of Performance Evaluation forms by athletes based on half-yearly tranches.
- Availability for drug and medical testing.

#### **XIV. Time Frame**

The guidelines presented are designed to cover a time frame of two quadrennial periods in the competitive cycle of sports. This is based on a four-year cycle that ends in an Olympic year and will be subject to review after the Olympic games of 2012.

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