

**AMERICAN CANOE ASSOCIATION  
ATHLETE ADVISORY COUNCIL CHARTER (ATH-003)**

The Athlete Council is established pursuant to Article VIII of the By-Laws of the American Canoe Association (the “By-Laws” and “ACA” or “Association”), which requires the Athlete Advisory Council (the “AAC”) to adopt this Charter to establish rules and procedure for the composition, governance, and operation of the AAC in full compliance with applicable USOPC requirements and ACA By-Laws. Except as expressly stated otherwise herein, all capitalized terms used in this Charter shall have the meaning ascribed to them in the By-Laws.

**1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the AAC is to support the mission of the ACA and to act as a liaison between the athletes and the Board and the staff of the ACA. Such purpose may include but shall not be limited to: (i) handling and addressing confidential athlete issues; (ii) advising the Board on athlete issues; (iii) acting as a resource for the Board and staff on athlete issues and perspectives; (iv) providing ACA athlete perspectives and issues to the Team USA Athletes’ Commission through Athlete Representatives; and (v) appointing eligible National Governing Body 10 Year and National Governing Body 10 Year Plus Athlete Representatives to committees upon request of The Board in conjunction with the ACA Nominating and Governance Committee. The Board and staff shall be entitled to rely on the recommendations of the AAC on matters directly affecting the interest of Olympic, Paralympic, and International Canoe Federation paddle sport athletes.

**2. COMPOSITION**

The AAC shall consist of ten (10) Athlete Members, with gender parity, each of whom must qualify as a “10 Year Athlete” as defined in the ACA By-Laws Addendum A, including:

- a) the two Team USA Athletes’ Commission Representatives (Primary and Alternate);
- b) each Board Athlete Representative who qualifies as a “10 Year Athlete” under ACA By-Laws Addendum A;
- c) one female Athlete Member and one male Athlete Member, both of whom are also a “10 Year Athlete” in canoe sprint;
- d) one female Athlete Member and one male Athlete Member, both of whom are also a “10 Year Athlete” in canoe slalom;
- e) one female Athlete Member and one male Athlete Member both of whom are also a “10 Year Athlete” in paracanoe;
- f) the remaining seats shall be filled by at-large Athlete Members who are “10 Year Athletes” of any eligible discipline in accordance with ACA By-Laws Addendum A; and
- g) if a member seat cannot be filled per Section 2(c-e), the remaining seat(s) shall be filled by at-large Athlete Members who are “10 Year Athletes” of any eligible discipline in accordance with ACA By-Laws Addendum A.

**3. COMPLIANCE**

Prior to and as a prerequisite to appointment or election as an AAC member, each candidate must be in good standing pursuant to Article V, Section 1 of the By-Laws and must (i) be in compliance with the ACA's Background Check Policy; (ii) sign and abide by the ACA's Conflict of Interest form; (iii) sign and abide by the Team USA Athletes' Commission Conflicts of Interest Policy; (iv) abide by the ACA's Code of Conduct and the AAC written Professional Code; (v) not have served a period of ineligibility for a Safe Sport Code violation as defined by the U.S. Center for SafeSport; (vi) not received a suspension or period of ineligibility from USADA in excess of three (3) months; (vii) in the case of Paralympic athletes, not committed a violation of the Athlete Classification Code; and (viii) conduct themselves in accordance with the fiduciary duties to the Athletes of the ACA.

#### **4. GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS**

##### **4.1 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Each calendar year, the AAC members shall appoint an Executive Committee for an annual term, by majority vote of the AAC members, consisting of a Council Chair, Council Vice-Chair and a Council Secretary. Specific stipulations for each position are:

- a) The Council Chair shall be appointed from the pool of Board Athlete Representatives.
- b) The Council Vice-Chair shall serve in the place and stead of the Council Chair when the Council Chair is unavailable and shall assist the Council Chair in guiding the work of the AAC.
- c) The Council Secretary shall record all meeting minutes.

Unless otherwise expressly prohibited by law, the By-Laws, or resolution of the AAC, the Executive Committee shall have all the powers and authority of the AAC during such times that the AAC is not in session. Any motions approved by the Executive Committee must be ratified at the subsequent AAC meeting, or by digital quorum as defined in Section 4.2.

##### **4.2 MEETING OPERATIONS**

The AAC shall convene no less than once per quarter and shall meet more frequently as needed to fulfill its purpose as set forth herein. A majority of the members of the AAC shall constitute a quorum. Minutes shall be kept at all meetings by the Council Secretary, if the Council Secretary is not present a notetaker will be appointed through a majority vote of the AAC. Minutes shall be reviewed and approved by a majority vote of the AAC by vote at the subsequent meeting or asynchronously by digital quorum, and shall be available for review by the Board and public through the AAC page of the ACA website. For the purposes of the AAC, a 'digital quorum' shall be defined as a majority of AAC members casting votes electronically within a designated timeframe, which shall be no less than 48 hours from when the matter is submitted for electronic vote, unless circumstances require a shorter voting period as determined by the AAC Council Chair.

### **4.3 COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**

The AAC shall appoint eligible Athlete Representatives to committees upon request of the Board as referenced in Section 4.2 in adherence to the following process; Any member of the AAC, Board, or relevant committee may nominate an eligible athlete for committee membership. Approval of such nominations may be granted by the AAC Council Chair, by a majority vote of the AAC, or a digital quorum of the AAC as defined in Section 4.2. The AAC Council Chair shall maintain records of all committee appointments. All committee appointments must meet the eligibility requirements for the respective committee as defined by the Board and the By-Laws, and shall adhere to the same compliance standards of the AAC as defined in the By-Laws.

### **4.4 TERM**

The term of office on the AAC of each of the Team USA Athletes' Commission Representatives and the Board Athlete Representatives shall coincide with their term of office for their service on the Board as applicable; four (4) years for Team USA Athlete's Commission Representatives and two (2) years for Board Athlete Representatives. The term of office on the AAC of each of the non-Board affiliated AAC members will be two (2) years. Board affiliated AAC members will stand for election on even numbered years while the non-Board affiliated AAC members will stand for election on odd numbered years. If an AAC position is vacated before the end of term, the AAC shall extend a call for nominations from the eligible athlete body to fill the position for the remainder of the term. The newly elected AAC member shall match the eligibility requirements of the vacated seat. Team USA Athlete's Commission Representatives may not serve more than two (2) full terms on the AAC and remaining AAC members may serve no more than five (5) consecutive terms on the AAC.

### **4.5 NOMINATIONS**

The AAC shall, in conjunction with the ACA Volunteer Coordinator and ACA Staff, screen all non-Board affiliated AAC members for the AAC prior to an eligible "10 Year Athlete" body vote. As part of such screening procedures, nominations may include: (a) a written statement of intent, which may include a nominee's qualifications and reason for pursuing membership on the AAC; and (b) a brief resume.

### **4.6 MEMBERSHIP STATUS AND REMOVAL**

All members of the AAC must adhere to the requirements stipulated in Section 3, the responsibilities outlined in this here document (ATH-003), and fulfill all responsibilities as AAC members. Failure to adhere to the aforementioned requirements may constitute grounds for removal though the following procedure;

- 1) Removal proceedings may be initiated by written request to the AAC Council Chair from any AAC member or the Board;

- 2) The member in question shall be provided with written notice of the proposed removal and grounds;
- 3) The member in question shall be provided the opportunity to respond the written notice in writing or at the subsequent AAC meeting;
- 4) After review of the relevant material (Section 4.6 (1-3)), a majority vote of the AAC will constitute removal.

Any vacancies created by a removal shall be filled in accordance with Section 4.4. Any removal shall be documented in the meeting minutes and reported to the Board.

## **5. PROFESSIONAL CODE**

The AAC shall draft a Professional Code that will supplement the ACA Athlete Code of Conduct. The purpose of the Professional Code is to hold all national team athletes accountable for their actions as representatives of the United States, both within and outside of competition. The athletes of the ACA are expected to use the code to help each other grow as competitors on all levels as well as ambassadors of their sport and country. The code shall be treated as a living document and can be added to or amended as deemed appropriate by the AAC. Each edition of the Professional Code shall be posted each prior to national team selection each season on the ACA website.