

USA Track & Field Competition Classification Policy for Athletes Competing in USATF Sanctioned Events

1. Introduction and Purpose

USA Track & Field (USATF) is the national governing body for the sports of track & field, long distance running, and race walking in the United States and is responsible for governance and regulation of competition rules for USATF-sanctioned events. The United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC) serves as both the National Olympic Committee (NOC) and National Paralympic Committee (NPC) for the United States. World Athletics (WA) is the international governing body for the sport of athletics and is responsible for the rules and regulations in the sport, as well as the organization and sanctioning of competitions. As a national governing body under the USOPC and a member federation of World Athletics, USATF follows USOPC and World Athletics regulations, rules, and policies.

USATF is committed to fostering an inclusive and equitable environment that upholds the values of fairness, respect, and inclusivity for all athletes. Fair and meaningful competition conditions are required to motivate athletes to make the commitment and sacrifice required to excel in sport, as well as inspire others to join the sport and achieve excellence.

At the core of USATF's Competition Classification Policy is the fundamental imperative that *inclusion in sport is maximized by clearly defined classification categories*. As stated by a Consensus Statement by the American College of Sports Medicine (2023), there are clear categorical advantages in age, sex, and disability that substantially influence sport performance. Creating classifications based on age, sex, and disability with clear criteria maximizes inclusion and meaningful participation by members of those classes, while excluding no athletes from participation.

2. Age Classifications

Both the World Athletics Book of Rules and the USATF Competition Rules define age classifications and age eligibility for select events. (WA Book of Rules, section 3, rule 141; USATF Competition Rules, Article IV, Section I, rule 141; USATF Competition Rules, Article VI, Section I, rule 300; USATF Competition Rules, Article VI, Sections II, II-A, and II-B, rules 320, 330, and 340).

2.1 The WA Book of Rules age classifications apply to any athlete who wishes to participate in a [World Rankings Competition](#) (as defined by World Athletics), or to be eligible to set a World Record in a competition that is not a World Rankings Competition. World Rankings Competitions are those that are sanctioned or endorsed by member federations and submitted to World Athletics for inclusion on the [World Athletics Calendar](#) for [World Ranking Points](#) consideration.

If any USATF sanctioned / endorsed event is also submitted to and included on the [World Athletics Calendar](#) as a World Rankings Competition, and the event has age classifications or an age eligibility for participation (e.g., a minimum age), then WA Book of Rules age classifications and age eligibility requirements will apply and are to be followed.

2.2 If any USATF sanctioned / endorsed event is **not** listed on the World Athletics Calendar as a World Rankings Competition, and the event has age classifications or an age eligibility for participation, then the USATF Competition Rules age classifications and age eligibility requirements will apply and are to be followed.

3. Sex Classification

On September 1, 2025, World Athletics updated Eligibility Rule 3.5 and published [C3.5A Regulations for the Implementation of Eligibility Rule 3.5 \(Male and Female Categories\)](#). Of note, Eligibility Rule 3.5 states (in part) that only biological females (athletes with no Y chromosome) may compete in the female category, with exceptions only for unique and rare medical circumstances (e.g., males with Complete Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome or differences in sex development (DSD) who satisfy the transitional provisions established by World Athletics).

On June 18, 2025, the USOPC updated the [USOPC Athlete Safety Policy](#). Section 3.3 states that “The USOPC will continue to collaborate with various stakeholders with oversight responsibilities, e.g., IOC, IPC, NGBs, to ensure that women have a fair and safe competition environment consistent with Executive Order 14201 and the Ted Stevens Olympic & Amateur Sports Act, 36 U.S.C § 22501, et. seq.”

As a World Athletics member federation and a national governing body under the auspices of the USOPC, USATF is complying with both the WA Eligibility Rule and the USOPC Athlete Safety Policy for all USATF sanctioned events.

4. Disability Classification

USA Paralympics Track & Field is the governing body for para track & field in the United States and has established rules for para track & field competition, following the World Para Athletics Classification Rules and Regulations.

4.1 If a USATF sanctioned / endorsed event for able bodied athletes includes a para track & field event, eligibility for participation in the para classification will be determined by the rules of USA Paralympics Track & Field and the World Para Athletics Classification Rules and Regulations.

4.2 If a para athlete who uses a mechanical aid or other support wishes to compete in an able bodied event at a USATF sanctioned / endorsed competition, eligibility to compete will be determined by the World Athletics Book of Rules (e.g., section C2.1B – Mechanical Aids Regulation) and the USATF Competition Rules.

4.3 USATF will manage the disciplinary and dispute resolution process, following the WA Book of Rules and USATF Competition Classification Policy.