

CHAPTER 2 - FOREIGN PARTICIPANTS

The US Olympic Committee recognizes USA Gymnastics as the governing body for the sport of gymnastics in the United States. As such, USA Gymnastics has authority over all gymnastics competitions, exhibitions, and training exchanges hosted in the United States.

USA Gymnastics is a member of the Federation of International Gymnastics (FIG), the International governing body for gymnastics. As such, USA Gymnastics and all its members are subject to the FIG rules and regulations governing gymnastics exchanges between countries. All exchanges involving foreign athletes are under the jurisdiction of the FIG and the host Federation.

With the increased opportunities for participation in events involving foreign athletes, both in the United States and abroad, USA Gymnastics has the responsibility to inform its members of the FIG regulations governing these activities. The FIG and its member federations have jurisdiction over international events (events involving more than one country's athletes). Violations of the FIG regulations can result in restrictions of the member federation and/or its athletes. While USA Gymnastics realizes the cultural enrichment that these types of events provide to our members, strict compliance to the FIG Regulations MUST be followed.

The USA Gymnastics National office must be notified of any competitions in the U.S. involving athletes, coaches and/or judges who are non-citizens and who also reside in and/or represent a foreign country. The USA Gymnastics National office must be notified of any U.S. athletes, coaches, or judges' intention to participate in any gymnastics activities in a foreign country.

Any non-U.S. citizen residing in the United States, who intends to participate in any gymnastics activity within the United States, must notify their country of citizenship gymnastics federation of their intention to participate in gymnastics activities within the United States.

I. Foreign Memberships

Athletes, Coaches, and/or Judges from Countries other than the United States.

- A. A foreign athlete/coach/judge membership must be obtained by submitting a completed membership form along with a fee of \$50.00 to USA Gymnastics member services department.
- B. All foreign memberships are null and void each July 31st.
- C. Foreign Memberships do NOT receive benefits of membership other than the required insurance coverage at the sanctioned event(s).

The Foreign Participant Membership form is available at <https://www.usagym.org/pages/home/pages/forms.html>.

CONTACT THE USA GYMNASTICS MEMBER SERVICES DEPARTMENT FOR ASSISTANCE AND DIRECTION.
DO NOT DIRECTLY CONTACT ANY FOREIGN FEDERATION, CLUB, ATHLETE, COACH OR JUDGE.

II. Duties and Responsibilities of USA Gymnastics members in regards to International Exchanges

- A. EXCERPT FROM THE STATUTES OF THE FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE GYMNASTIQUE (FIG)
VII. OFFICIAL EVENTS OF THE FIG AND ELIGIBILITY OF GYMNASTS

Art. 36.3 Inter-Federation events and responsibilities of Federations: Federations may organize events among themselves in accordance with the Statutes and Regulations of the FIG. It is, however, forbidden for gymnasts or judges of a Federation to participate in competitions or demonstrations in the sphere of activity of another Federation without the prior consent of the Federations involved and that of the Federation organizing the event. Likewise, the participation of gymnasts or judges of a Federation in an event organized by a body other than a Federation must be subject to the prior consent of any Federations involved. Federations are also responsible to FIG for the behavior of their gymnasts, coaches, judges and other officials and they act as guarantors to the FIG in respect of these responsibilities. After every competition, the Federations will send to the FIG the requested documents (see FIG Rules "International Event Approval") as well as, within 30 days, the tax ratified by the Council (see art. 28.3).

Refer to the [FIG Code of Discipline](#) for additional information.

- B. Any competition/exhibition conducted in the United States, which includes foreign athletes, must be sanctioned by USA Gymnastics.
- C. The sanction fee will be determined based upon the particulars of the event (up to \$250,000.00). Do not send any invitations (foreign or domestic) until the USA Gymnastics Member Services department has notified you that approval has been granted.

III. Requirements for Foreign Exchanges

The following categories have been defined for participation of foreign athletes in this country and for participants of USA club athletes in a club exchange in a foreign country. All exchanges involving foreign athletes are under the jurisdiction of the FIG and the host Federation. Every procedure MUST be followed to protect the athletes and the federations.

- A. Competitions/Exhibitions conducted in the United States
 1. Prior approval of Foreign Federation must be secured through request made by USA Gymnastics.
 2. All aspects of the event MUST be approved by USA Gymnastics. This includes but is not limited to:
 - a. sponsorships
 - b. marketing/property rights
 - c. equipment/format
 - d. television
 - e. all promotional, marketing, and advertising materials
 3. The use of the word "INTERNATIONAL" in the title of a competition/exhibition is strictly FORBIDDEN.
 4. Promotion or advertising depicting the event as a competition between two or more countries is forbidden. (i.e., USA vs. Canada)
 - Athletes from a foreign country competing in the United States represent only their club at the exchange; they are NOT representing their country as a National Team member.
 5. Higher sanction fees may be assessed for galas or exhibitions depending upon the level of the participating athletes.
 6. FIG has a 5% tax on prize money awarded at an event.
- B. Training Exchanges conducted in the United States
 1. Prior approval of foreign Federation must be secured through a request made by USA Gymnastics.
 2. Only a letter of invitation with the specific information is required; however, it is not necessary to sanction.
 3. Proof of Insurance coverage:
 - a. It is the sole responsibility of the event host to secure proper insurance for the event. (Be aware that some insurance packages do not cover foreign athletes or coaches.)
 - b. Training exchanges may not be "USA Gymnastics-sanctioned"; therefore, the Athlete Member insurance is not in effect.
 4. Prior notification to USA participants that they represent only their club at this exchange, and they are not participating as official USA representatives.
- C. Competitions, exhibitions, and training exchanges conducted in another country
 1. USA Gymnastics must receive communication from the host country requesting permission for USA Gymnastics members to attend.
 2. USA Gymnastics must approve of your club's participation BEFORE your club accepts an invitation to participate in another country's event. Notification requesting permission to participate in a foreign competition, exhibition or training exchange must be provided to the Program Director at the USA Gymnastics office.
 3. Events sponsored by and/or held in a foreign country CANNOT be "USA Gymnastics-sanctioned"; therefore, the Athlete Member insurance is not in effect. Prior notification to USA participants that USA Gymnastics insurance does not cover their participation in an event sponsored by and held in a foreign country is required.
 4. Any judge (US or foreign citizens) must receive permission from the National Federation of their country of citizenship before accepting an invitation to officiate a competition that is conducted outside of their country of citizenship.
 5. USA participants may only represent their club at these events/exchanges, and they may not participate as official USA representatives.
 - a. For example: Official results may not reflect "USA".
 - b. Prior notification to USA participants that they represent only their club at this exchange, and they are not there as official USA representatives is required.
 6. USA National Team members may not represent their club in an international event without the approval of the Program Director or the National Team Coordinator.

IV. Eligibility and Participation Requirements for Foreign Athletes Residing in the USA

- A. **Foreign athletes (US Citizens residing in a foreign country or non-US Citizens):** Foreign athletes who have competitive experience outside the US and now reside in the US are eligible to petition by submitting a formal written request to the Regional Development Program Committee Chairman for entry into the Development Program at Level 8 or above or the State Administrative Committee Chairman for Level 7 or below. The petition must be accompanied by a video that demonstrates the skill level for which she is submitting the petition and proof of residency outside the US.
1. Non-U.S. citizen athletes who are living in the United States and training in a U.S. gymnastics club are eligible to compete and receive awards for all USA Gymnastics Development Program sanctioned events, including State, Regional, East/West, and National Championships.
 - a. If a non-citizen athlete places in the top four (4) All-Around at Development Program National Championships, she will receive the award for her AA placement; however, she is not eligible to become a member of the Development Program National Team. In this instance, the next US citizen in rank order will be placed on the Development Program National Team.
 2. Foreign athletes (those that reside and/or train in another country) are eligible for individual as well as Team awards at any Invitational competition that has secured a foreign sanction from USA Gymnastics.
- B. **Foreign Elite athletes who have represented a foreign country and Foreign Elite National Team Members (current or former):** A non-US citizen Elite gymnast residing in the US who wants to compete in the Development Program and who is currently named to, has previously competed for, or has represented a foreign national team, must petition to enter the Development Program by sending a formal written request and proof of citizenship (driver's license, birth certificate, passport) to the National Development Program Committee Chair. In addition to the formal request, the athlete must request documentation be sent to the Vice President of Women's Program at USA Gymnastics directly from the country's federation in which she has competed, granting the athlete permission to compete in the Development Program for the US Club.
1. The two-step process must be completed before the athlete's scores achieved in the Development Program are valid for any qualifying purposes.
 2. Once proper documentation has been received by USA Gymnastics, the athlete may compete in the Development Program and represent her club up to, and including Regional Championships for the current competitive season.
 3. For the athlete to remain eligible to compete in the Development Program, this process must be completed annually.
 4. An Elite gymnast residing in the US who is a US Citizen or has retained a green card (demonstrating intent to become a US Citizen) and who wants to compete in the Development Program and who is currently named to, has previously competed for, or has represented a foreign national team, she must petition to enter the Development Program by sending a formal written request to the National Development Program Committee Chair. In addition to the formal request, the athlete must request documentation be sent to the Vice President of Women's Program at USA Gymnastics directly from the country's federation in which she has competed, granting the athlete permission to compete in the Development Program for the US Club.
 - a. The two-step process must be completed before the athlete's scores achieved in the Development Program are valid for any qualifying purposes.
 - b. Once proper documentation has been received by USA Gymnastics, the athlete may compete in the Development Program and represent her club up to and including East/West Championships and National Championships.
 - c. If the athlete has a green card but is not yet a US Citizen, and places in the top four (4) All-Around at the Development Program National Championships, she will receive the award for her AA placement; however, she is not eligible to become a member of the Development Program National Team. In this instance, the next US citizen in rank order will be placed on the Development Program National Team.

V. General Foreign Sanction Procedures

Competitions/Exhibitions conducted in the United States:

Every procedure MUST be followed to protect the athletes and the federations.

- A. If the event involves athletes and is a competition/camp/clinic/exhibition, a USA Gymnastics Foreign Sanction is REQUIRED.
- B. Submit a completed Request for Foreign Sanction form, with the application fee of \$140 no later than 120 days prior to the event date to USA Gymnastics Member Services, Attention: FOREIGN SANCTIONS.
- C. ONLY one discipline per foreign sanction request. A separate foreign sanction request must be submitted for each competing discipline.

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1. If received in less than 120 days, an additional \$100.00 rush fee is due.
 2. Additional countries may be added no less than (14) business days of the event for a fee of \$25 per country.
- D. The final Foreign Sanction fee will be determined based upon the particulars of the event (up to \$250,000.00). Do not send any invitations (foreign or domestic) until the USA Gymnastics Member Services department has notified you that approval has been granted.
- E. Higher sanction fees may be assessed for galas or exhibitions depending upon the level of the participating athletes.
- F. After receiving the Foreign Sanction request form/payment, USA Gymnastics will contact the foreign federation to request their approval for their athletes/coaches to participate.
- G. All participants residing in the USA must have the appropriate USA Gymnastics membership and certifications.