2027 SINGLES, PAIRS AND ICE DANCE QUALIFYING SEASON
ATHLETE BYE & ADVANCEMENT CRITERIA

OVERVIEW

The purpose of this document is to outline the approved criteria for which an athlete may receive a bye which will automatically advance the athlete to the next round of qualifying events without needing to qualify by placement or score.

Qualifying events in the singles, pairs and ice dance pipeline include:

National Qualifying Series (NQS) → NQS Finals (Sectional Singles, U.S. Pairs, U.S. Ice Dance) → U.S. Figure Skating Championships & U.S. Development Team Championships.

The following bye criteria and advancement rules were reviewed and approved by the chairs of the Competitions Committee and International Committee, the Athlete Advisory Committee (AAC) and U.S. Figure Skating's Board of Directors as required under Rule 2511.

REQUIREMENTS OF ALL ATHLETES

Registration for the Qualifying Season: All athletes seeking a bye are required to first register for participation in the U.S. Figure Skating qualifying structure by registering for the NQS Series before Oct. 1 annually.

Failure to complete a series registration will result in the athlete(s) not being allowed to enter nor compete at the NQS Finals or U.S. Figure Skating Championships in the current season.

Receiving and Confirming a Bye: All athletes will receive an email communication from U.S. Figure Skating Headquarters when a bye has officially been awarded to them. Athletes are required to respond to a bye email confirming they either:

1) accept the bye and automatically advance to the next round without competing
    a. Example: An athlete earns a bye to the U.S. Figure Skating Championships without having to compete at their respective NQS Final.
2) choose to compete at the event they have earned a bye through and will maintain their advancement to the next phase of competition regardless of their placement at the qualifying event.
    a. Example: If an athlete that earns a bye to the U.S. Figure Skating Championships elects to compete at their respective NQS Final, they are still

guaranteed a spot at the U.S. Championships regardless of what placement/score they achieve at the NQS Final.

b. Note: choosing to compete with a bye will not displace an athlete who would have qualified if the athlete with a bye had not competed.

NOTE: Athletes who earn a bye to the U.S. Figure Skating Championships or U.S. Development Team Championships will still be required to register for the NQS Final, regardless of their intent to participate at that round of competition so that their entry can be advanced to the U.S. Figure Skating Championships/U.S. Development Team Championships.

Minimum Score: Athletes participating in senior events will be required to meet a minimum technical score, regardless of their bye status, in order to proceed to the next phase of competition. The minimum technical score will be defined via Technical Notifications to be posted at a later date. See Rules 2477 and 2505 for more information.

ADVANCEMENT TO THE NQS FINALS

Athletes in novice, junior, or senior events may earn a bye through the National Qualifying Series (NQS) to their respective NQS Final (Sectional Singles, U.S. Pairs, U.S. Ice Dance) if they meet any of the following criteria:

1) International Assignment: any member of the U.S. Figure Skating Team, defined in rule ICR 3.05, who has received a fully funded assignment to an international competition. Athletes must compete at their international assignment in order to maintain this bye.
2) Having won the U.S. Figure Skating Championships at the junior level in the previous season, if competing at the junior level in the current season. See Rules 2472 (B), 2474 (B), and 2476 (B).
3) Having won their respective NQS Final at the senior level in the same event in the previous season. See Rules 2472 (C), 2474 (C), 2476 (C).

Additional athletes will advance to the NQS Finals based on their placement from the National Qualifying Series (NQS) per Rule 2470.

All competitors, including those with byes or invited as alternates, must also have met a minimum combined total element score (CTES) at an NQS or ISU competition in the current season. This minimum score will be defined in a Technical Notification at a later date. See Rule 2477.

ADVANCEMENT TO THE U.S. FIGURE SKATING CHAMPIONSHIPS AND U.S. DEVELOPMENT TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

SENIOR EVENTS

Athletes/teams that meet any of the following criteria will earn a bye:

1) Athletes/teams who placed in the top 5 in the same event at the previous U.S. Figure Skating Championships. See Rules 2501 (B) (1), 2502 (B) (1), 2503 (B) (1).
2) Athletes/teams selected to the U.S. Figure Skating World Team in the previous season in the same event (not including alternates). See Rules 2501 (B) (2), 2502 (B) (2), 2503 (B) (2).
3) Athletes who have won a medal in the same event at any Olympic Winter Games (not including the Team Event). See Rules 2501 (B) (3), 2502 (B) (3), 2503 (B) (3).
4) Athletes who qualify for the same event at the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final or the ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final (not including alternates). See Rules 2501 (B) (4), 2502 (B) (4), 2503 (B) (4).
    a. Example: an athlete that qualifies for the JGP Final in men will earn a bye to the U.S. Figure Skating Championships in the Senior Men's event if they registered at the senior level domestically.
5) Athletes who receive a fully funded assignment to three (3) international competitions at the senior level in the same event. Athletes must compete at their international assignment in order to maintain this bye.
6) Athletes who receive a fully funded assignment to an international competition in the two weeks before or after the athletes respective NQS Final. Athletes must compete at their international assignment in order to maintain this bye.

Additional athletes, after byes are accounted for, will advance as follows until the maximum spots available in each event are filled; see Rules 2501 (B), 2502 (B), 2503 (B):

- Singles: Maximum 18 spots
    - Top 2 total combined scores from each section in the NQS Finals
    - Next-best scores nationwide until the maximum is met
- Pairs: Maximum 12 spots
    - Next best placements at the NQS Final until the maximum is met
- Ice Dance: Maximum 15 spots
    - Next best placements at the NQS Final until the maximum is met

JUNIOR EVENTS

Athletes/teams that meet any of the following criteria will earn a bye:

1) Athletes who qualify for the same event at the ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final (not including alternates). See Rule 2501 (3) (A).
2) Athletes that receive a fully funded assignment to and compete at three (3) international assignments at the junior level.
3) Athletes who receive a fully funded assignment to an international competition in the two weeks before or after the athletes respective NQS Final. Athletes must compete at their international assignment in order to maintain this bye.

Athletes will advance as follows; see Rules 2501 (A), 2502 (A), 2503 (A):

- Singles: Top 4 total combined scores from each section in the NQS Finals plus byes
- Pairs: Maximum 12 spots, including byes
    - After athletes with byes are advanced, additional athletes will advance in order of placement at the NQS Final until the maximum is met.
- Ice Dance: Maximum 15 spots, including byes
    - After athletes with byes are advanced, additional athletes will advance in order of placement at the NQS Final until the maximum is met.

JUVENILE – NOVICE EVENTS

Juvenile – novice athletes will advance based on their placement at the NQS Finals per Rules 2491-2493.

OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES

Athlete(s) may submit a petition to receive or maintain a bye to U.S. Figure Skating via the Events Department at events@usfigureskating.org for other circumstances not outlined in this document. Only the athlete(s) in question or a member of the High Performance staff may submit a petition. The petition will be reviewed by the chairs of the Athlete Advisory Committee (AAC), Competitions Committee, and International Committee and the final decision will be communicated to the athlete within 2 business days of the petition being received.

No medical byes will be granted for the U.S. Figure Skating Championships per Rule 2513.

CONTACT INFORMATION

U.S. Figure Skating Events Department – events@usfigureskating.org