



ATHLETE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

2026-2027

Manitoba Fencing Association
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Introduction

The Manitoba Fencing Association (MFA) in 2026 – 2027 offers seven tiers of high-performance development. These programs represent the early stages of an athlete development model leading to high performance. The programs offered are Para, Novice, Squad, Intermediate, Youth High Performance, High Performance, and National Team.

The Squad program gives athletes a developmental experience through introduction to a training and competition program. Intermediate and High-Performance athlete programs will target success **at Nationals, Canada Games**, North American and International levels of performance, facilitating athlete selection into National High-Performance Programs.

Athletes entering both provincial and national programs should be aware that while provincial programs may include some national program criteria, they may not always be complimentary, and the athletes will incur the combined costs for both programs.

To participate in this program, all athletes or parents of athletes who are minors are required to complete and sign the athlete agreement within the registration portal confirming the training and competition commitments as prepared by the Provincial Coach. It remains the responsibility of the athletes or the parents of minors to be aware of the MFA policies that apply to program membership, the commitment they are making, and the expenses they may incur prior to entering the program.

Athletes interested in CFF Cadet, Junior or Senior programs can find links to these on the CFF website at: <https://events.fencing.ca/hpp/>.

1. Provincial Team Program Objectives.

The MFA is committed to providing athletes with the resources necessary to develop high level fencing skills and physical literacy to allow them to reach their personal goals. The following resources may be available to PT members: a provincial training venue, a provincial coach, and administrative support through MFA programs. In return, the expectation is that athletes commit to the program requirements and endeavour to meet their personal goals as defined with the Provincial Coach and as agreed to in the registration process.

The MFA commits to providing athletes with opportunities for fundraising and grants through program links to Sport Manitoba or to athlete-funding programs and opportunities, where they arise.

Provincial Team members are required to maintain specific criteria as they take on the responsibility for their personal development, as well as provide development opportunities for their club, program, and team members. Athletes will be encouraged to enhance their technical skills, as well as meet the CFF armband requirements at specified levels to enhance and maintain their knowledge of fencing rules, refereeing, and coaching.

2. Provincial Team (PT) Program Fees

Provincial team athletes must belong to a club and pay their annual club fees. Fees for all PT programs may be prorated if the athlete enters mid-season.

- Novice \$900
- Squad \$ 1200
- Para Fencing \$250 (subsidized by Bilateral Grant)
- Intermediate \$1800
- Youth High Performance \$2400
- High Performance \$2400
- Sparring Partner \$600
- Out of Province \$1250

2. Athlete Program Criteria

2.1 General Criteria

- The Provincial Coach will be responsible for the selection of athletes to the Provincial Team.
- Late registration with any provincial program may jeopardize access to that program subject to space availability within that program.
- New athletes face a probationary period of three (3) months before which time the athlete can be demoted within or from the program; athletes demoted within the program are subject to the change in program requirements including prorated costs.
- Upon the approval of the Provincial Coach, athletes may be asked to participate in additional out-of-province training and competitions.
- Athletes residing outside the province of Manitoba may be accepted into the program during the year with approval from the Provincial Coach
- Athletes must keep a training log attesting their participation in competitions, training and volunteer activities
- Athletes must maintain 80% or higher attendance at Provincial Team and club training.
- Athletes qualifying for a higher tier during the fencing season are required to re-apply for the higher tier program. Change in fees will be prorated effective upon acceptance into the new tier.
- Athletes must be registered with an MFA sanctioned club.

2.2 Weapon Criteria

The MFA will support programs in each of the CFF weapon categories - Foil, Epee and Sabre.

2.3 Age Criteria

Other than the Youth High Performance, no age criteria will be applied unless there is an external restriction placed upon the program (e.g. Canada Games, Special Programs).

2.4 Specific Program Criteria

2.4.1 Novice Program Criteria

1. Fencers under 12 years old who want to eventually be on the Provincial

- Squad and have been invited by the Provincial Coach
2. Minimum training sessions per week: 2 (1 at registered home club and 1 with the Provincial Team)
 3. No volunteer activities required
 4. Strength training program by invitation only and at an additional cost of \$200/year.
 5. Weekend Training Camps: 2 (as approved by Provincial Coach). Additional camps at a fee of \$100 per camp.
 6. Summer Training Camp: Not included, but available at a fee of \$250/week.
 7. Competition Participation : All Manitoba competitions MFA Competitions
 8. Individual lessons are not required to be taken but are optional based on availability of provincial or assistant coaches.

2.4.2 Squad Program Criteria (Learn to Train): By invitation of the Provincial Coach upon recommendation from club Head Coach or advancement from Novice program.

1. Minimum training sessions per week: 3 (1 at registered home club and 2 with the Provincial Team + 1 Specific Strength Training)
2. Weekend Training Camps: 4 (as designated by Provincial Coach). Additional camps at a fee of \$100 per camp.
3. Summer Camps : 1
4. Competition Participation: All MFA Competitions and two out-of-province competitions (designated by the Provincial Coach). Additional competitions as approved by Provincial Coach.
5. Volunteer Activities: 5 hours (volunteering at home fencing club, MFA tournaments, or participating in MFA promotional activities)
6. Individual Lessons: Minimum of 15 individual lessons per season from Assistant Provincial Coach (APC). Payment to be arranged directly with the coach.

2.4.3 Parafencing Program Criteria (Learn to Train) – Foil-Epee - Sabre

The parafencing program includes the following components:

- Fundamentals: Guard, Hold of the grip, Positions, Body movement,
- Techniques: Hit, Simple Attack (Direct, Indirect), Compound attacks, Attack with blade, Parries, Ripostes, Remise, Reprise. Counter-Attack, Line, defense with avoidance.
- Tactical; 1st and 2nd intention knowledge.
- Theory: Rules, Weapons characteristics.
- Equipment and its characteristics.
- Warm up.
- General and Specific physical preparation for a wheelchair fencer.
- Competition and its characteristics.

In addition,

1. The program is open to any participant, but the participant must hold both a valid club and MFA licence.
2. Includes Para Fencing Categories: A, B and C.

3. Minimum training sessions per week: 1 session per week with the Provincial Team
4. The training will be run at the same time as the squad group or others.
5. Weekend Training Camps: **As** designated by Provincial Coach. Additional camps at a fee of \$100 per camp.
6. Summer Camps : 1
7. Competition Participation: All MFA Competitions and two out-of-province competitions (designated by the Para Fencing Coach). Additional competitions as approved by the Coach.
8. Volunteer Activities: 5 hours (volunteering at home fencing club, MFA tournaments, or participating in MFA promotional activities)
9. Individual Lessons: Minimum of 10 individual lessons per season from the Para Fencing Coach. These lessons can be during the open fencing sessions. Payment to be arranged directly with the coach.
10. Wheelchair athletes could receive financial support toward additional training and/or competition participation, conditional on available funding.

2.4.4 Intermediate Program Criteria (Train to Train)

1. 1 Minimum Result from the 2025-2026 season at any 2 of the following:
 - a. Top 16 placing in U15, Cadet, Junior or Senior Canada Cup or National Competitions.
 - b. Top 64 at a North American Cup
 - c. Top 4 at a Regional or Open tournament outside the province with minimum 10 participants (events designated and pre-approved by Provincial Coach).
2. Minimum training sessions per week: 4 -5 (1 at registered home club and 3-4 with the Provincial Team).
3. Individual Training: 1 per week (strength, physical or specific training)
4. Training Camps:
 - a. All designated provincial camps
 - b. Out of province / out of country camp recommended at the discretion of the Provincial Coach
5. Minimum individual lessons: 30 (10 of the 30 mandatory lessons subsidized by the MFA)
6. Annual weapon-based training program
7. Competition Participation:
 - a. All MFA Competitions
 - b. Canada Cup
 - c. Canadian Nationals
 - d. One designated out-of-province competition
 - e. Other designated competitions as recommended by Provincial Coach
8. Volunteer Activities: recommended 10 hours (volunteering at home fencing club, coaching Squad athletes, or participating in MFA promotional activities)

2.4.5 Youth High-Performance Program Criteria (Learn to Compete)

NOTE: Number of athletes accepted for this program cannot pass 3 athletes all weapons.

1. Fencers **13 years old and under only** - selected by the Provincial Coach
2. Minimum training sessions per week: 4 (one at registered home club and three with the Provincial Team)
3. Training Camps: **7** as scheduled
4. Directed training or individual lessons with personal coach/partner: minimum 1 per week with approved training partner
5. Minimum individual lessons provided by Provincial Coach: **40** (20 of the 40 mandatory lessons subsidised by the MFA)
6. Individual Training: 1 per week (strength, physical or specific training)
7. Competition Participation:
 - a. All MFA Competitions
 - b. 2-3 designated out-of-province competition (depending on the athlete development level)
 - c. Western/National Canadian Championships – in respective age category
9. Personalized Annual training program
10. Athletes who make the U15, Cadet, National *Team* will have all their private lessons with the Manitoba Provincial Coach funded at the discretion of the Board and if available in the budget.
11. Volunteer Activities: recommended 15 hours (MFA Open House, fencing demos, and other activities)

2.4.6 High-Performance Program Criteria (Train to Compete)

1. Minimum Results (from 2025– 2026), as follows:
 - a. One top 4 result, or 8 results in U15, Cadet; or one top 4, or 8 results in Junior or Senior Canada Cups, Canada Games or Nationals; or one Top 32 placing at a NAC; or top 32 at any World Cup Satellite or a Top 75 result at any World Cup in the previous season;
 - b. or having ranked in the top 8 of the National HP rankings and participated at a major international championship in the past two calendar years. Recommended Armband Level: Blue
1. Minimum training sessions per week: 6 (one at registered home club and five with the Provincial Team)
2. Training Camps:
 - a. All designated Provincial camps (8)
 - b. National Weapon camps when applicable (1)
 - c. Out-of-province/out-of-country camp recommended at the discretion of the Provincial Coach
3. Directed training or individual lessons: Minimum of 1 per week with approved club coach or designated partner.
4. Minimum individual lessons per season: 60 (20 of the 60 mandatory lessons subsidised by the MFA)
5. Personalized annual training program
6. Athletes who make the U15, Cadet, Junior or Senior National Team will have all their private lessons with the Manitoba Provincial Coach funded at the discretion of the Board and if available in the budget.
7. Competition Participation:
 - a. All MFA Competitions – Open events
 - b. Westerns - Open events
 - c. Canadian Cup Series

- d. NAC: Recommended 3 in age group
 - e. World Cups: minimum 2 in age group recommended (Cadet & Junior) 1 World Cup or FIE 'B' recommended (Senior)
 - f. Nationals – in age category (U15, Cadet, Junior, Senior)
8. Volunteer Activities: recommended 15 hours directed only to coaching Squad athletes or school demos.

2.4.7 National Team Program Criteria: (Train to Win)

1. Minimum Results (from 2025 – 2026), as follows:
 - a. Top 4 National High-Performance Ranking; or Participation at any major international championship or games and the recommendation of the Provincial Coach based on weapon strength in the previous season, or:
 - b. Athletes having obtained a Top 8 result at Cadet, Junior, or Senior Pan American Championships or an outstanding result at World Championships (Top 16 for Cadet or Junior, or Top 32 for Senior) in the past three calendar years.
2. Recommended Armband Level: Blue
3. Minimum Individual Training: 2 per week (Strength training, Physical Training or Specific Training)
4. Minimum Training sessions per week: 9 (one Club, six Provincial Team and two Personal Training)
5. Training Camps:
 - a. All designated Provincial Camps (7)
 - b. National Weapon Camps when applicable
 - c. Out of province / out of country camp recommended at the discretion of the Provincial Coach/National Coach
6. Directed training or individual lessons: Minimum of 1 per week with approved club coach or designated partner.
7. Minimum individual lessons per season: 100
8. Minimum individual lessons provided by Provincial Coach: 60 (30 of the 100 lessons subsidised by MFA)
9. Personalized Annual training program
10. Competition Participation (dependent on international scheduled events):
 - a. All MFA Competitions – Open event
 - b. Western Canadian Championships – Open event
 - c. Canadian Cup Series- in age category (Cadet, Junior, Senior)
 - d. Nationals – in age category (Cadet, Junior, Senior)
 - e. NAC: Recommended 2 in age group
 - f. World Cups: minimum 2 in age group recommended (Cadet & Junior) 1 World Cup or FIE 'B' recommended (Senior)
11. Volunteer Activities: recommended 15 hours directed only to coaching Squad athletes or school demos.

2.5 Additional Expectations – All programs

1. The Provincial Coach will approve a designated training partner or coach for Squad athletes, and a designated training partner for Intermediate, Youth High Performance and High-Performance athletes if the club coach

- does not have the required experience.
2. Individual Lessons provided by the Provincial Coach are partially subsidised by the MFA, as noted in each of the program criteria sections. The athlete is responsible for ensuring they meet the lesson requirements taken with their designated coach. The lessons should be spaced approximately evenly throughout the fencing season to meet training plan. Additional lessons beyond those subsidised by the MFA are at the expense of the athlete and payments are made directly to the coach providing the lesson.
 3. Athletes designated as High Performance or Intermediate are expected to take part in supplementary conditioning, training and sport psychology sessions throughout the fencing season, at their own cost. These sessions have proven essential in assisting our athletes be successful in competitions throughout the world.
 4. Prior to missing a training session, the athlete is responsible to notify the Provincial Coach. An athlete who is suspended from the Provincial Team for poor attendance at training will not be eligible for funding for the duration of the suspension
 5. The selection of athletes to the High Performance, Youth High Performance, Intermediate, and Squad Programs is the responsibility of the Provincial Coach, however, club coaches are encouraged to recommend athletes to the program.

2.6 Recording of Attendance

Attendance at provincial training sessions will be recorded by the Provincial.

Attendance at the athlete's registered home club must be recorded by the athlete in his/her training log.

2.7 Athletes Residing and Training Outside of Manitoba

The MFA acknowledges that from time to time, an athlete who is registered in an MFA Athlete Program may not reside within Manitoba. This may be to attend university, to train with another group, coach, or for other valid reasons. In such instances, to maintain their Athlete Program status, the athlete must notify the MFA in writing indicating the reason for residing out of Manitoba. Through dialogue with the Provincial Coach, the MFA may approve the out-of-province training as a substitute for the athlete program criteria.

All out-of-province requests will be dealt with individually and will be subject to a \$750 "Out-of-Province Member" fee.

2.8 Athletes Residing Outside of Manitoba and Temporarily Training with The Provincial Program

Occasionally throughout the fencing season, High Performance Athletes from outside Manitoba may come to train with our Provincial Athletes. This is a benefit to our athletes as it raises the competition level, providing different opposition during training. Athletes from outside Manitoba must be affiliated with a recognized fencing body associated with the world governing body (FIE) and are responsible for paying a fee of \$15 per session at the discretion of the Provincial Coach.

2.9 Designated Sparring Partners

On the invitation of the Provincial Coach, athletes not registered with a provincial team program may participate in a maximum of **2** provincial team training sessions per week. These athletes must register as an MFA Sparring Partner and pay a fee of **\$600** per season. This fee may be waived at the discretion of the Provincial Coach. Sparring Partners must be members in good standing of the MFA.

Athletes seeking to qualify for provincial, National, International Championships, or Games are not eligible Sparring Partners and should register with an appropriate Provincial Team program.

2.10 Provincial Team Uniform

When possible, athletes on the Provincial Team are required to wear their provincial team uniform during their events at all out-of-province tournaments. An order form for provincial team clothing (including tracksuit) shall be made available to all Provincial Team members before the first National tournament (i.e., Canada Cup) of the season. **Provincial team members are responsible for the cost of this uniform.**

The design of the provincial team tracksuit may be altered periodically following the Olympic Games cycle, or as a reflection of other needs, in order to maintain an updated look for the team.

3 Inability to Meet Program Requirements

3.1 Request for Exemption

From time to time, an athlete may have a valid reason for being unable to meet specific program requirements and may request an exemption.

Athletes must notify the Provincial Coach **in advance** of any planned absence and provide the reason for the absence. Absences approved by the Provincial Coach will not be considered when assessing attendance or determining disciplinary action.

For absences exceeding three (3) consecutive days, the athlete must provide a written explanation to the Provincial Coach. The Provincial Coach recognizes that the reasons for an absence may be confidential and will maintain such information in confidence. The Provincial Coach will determine whether the absence is justified.

Examples of acceptable reasons may include:

- Illness or injury;
- Compassionate or family circumstances;
- Mid-term or final examinations;
- Participation in other approved training or competitions; or
- Other circumstances approved by the Provincial Coach.

Training sessions missed due to a general or heavy school workload will normally be considered unjustified.

Athletes seeking an exemption from participation in a designated competition must submit the request **in writing to the Provincial Coach at least forty-five (45) days prior to the competition**. The Provincial Coach will provide a written decision to the athlete, and the decision will be retained by the Executive Director for the duration of the season.

An exemption request may be submitted less than forty-five (45) days before a competition when the valid reason could not reasonably have been known earlier. In such cases, the athlete must submit the request as soon as the reason becomes known. Examples may include the release of an examination schedule, notification of a conflicting competition, sudden injury, or illness.

Unexplained absences from designated training or failure to participate in designated competitions without an approved exemption may negatively affect an athlete's continued participation in an MFA program.

3.2 Suspension from MFA Programs

An athlete may be temporarily suspended from an MFA program for a maximum of one (1) month, at the discretion of the Provincial Coach, where the athlete does not meet established program expectations.

Except where immediate suspension is permitted under this policy or another applicable MFA policy, the Provincial Coach will provide the athlete and, where applicable, their parent or guardian, with written notice identifying the concern and the expectations that must be met.

Prior to imposing a suspension for attendance, work ethic, or performance-related concerns, the athlete will normally be provided with a one (1) month probationary period to demonstrate improvement.

3.3 Removal from MFA Programs

A recommendation to remove an athlete from an MFA program will be made to the MFA Board of Directors by the Provincial Coach.

The MFA Board of Directors will review the recommendation and determine whether to approve or deny the recommendation at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

An athlete who has been recommended for removal may be temporarily suspended from the program until the Board of Directors has reviewed the recommendation.

A decision to remove an athlete from an MFA program must be communicated to the athlete in writing by the MFA President.

3.4 Reasons for Suspension and/or Removal from MFA Programs

An athlete may be suspended and/or removed from an MFA program for any of the following reasons:

Code of Conduct and Ethics

Infractions of the **Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy** will be addressed exclusively through the process outlined in the **MFA Discipline and Complaint Policy**. Any resulting sanctions or decisions will be administered in accordance with that policy and any other applicable safe sport requirements.

Attendance, Participation, Performance and Work Ethic

For matters unrelated to the Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy, an athlete may be suspended and/or removed from an MFA program for:

- Cumulative attendance below **80% over two (2) consecutive months**, excluding justified absences as determined by the Provincial Coach. Attendance will be evaluated separately for:
 - Provincial Team training;
 - Home Club training;
 - Individual training; and
 - Provincial training camps.
- Failure to attend designated competitions without an approved exemption;
- Consistently poor work ethic at designated training sessions, as assessed by the Provincial Coach; or
- Consistent failure to attain the required results to maintain status within the program, including applicable performance standards for High Performance programs.

Before a suspension is imposed for attendance, performance, or work ethic concerns, the Provincial Coach will provide the athlete and, where applicable, their parent or guardian, with written notice of the concern and the expectations for improvement. The athlete will normally be provided with a one (1) month probationary period to demonstrate improvement.

If the athlete does not demonstrate sufficient improvement during the probationary period, the Provincial Coach may impose a suspension in accordance with Section 3.2 or recommend removal from the program in accordance with Section 3.3.

Illegal and Performance-Enhancing Drugs

The MFA has a zero-tolerance policy with respect to the use of illegal or performance-enhancing drugs by its members, volunteers, and staff.

Any violation of this expectation will be addressed through the **Non-Maltreatment Complaint Process** of the MFA in accordance with the **Discipline and Complaint Policy**.

3.5 Appeals

Athletes may appeal decisions regarding their suspension or removal from an MFA program, except where the decision arises from a violation of the Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy and is subject to a separate disciplinary or safe sport process.

Any decisions made through the ITP Sport process must be appealed in accordance with the **Appeal Policy outlined in the Safe Sport Manual.**

Appeals related to suspensions or removals based on attendance, performance results, or work ethic must be submitted to the MFA Board of Directors by emailing the President **within fourteen (14) days of receiving written notice of the suspension or removal.**

The appeal must include:

- The reasons the athlete believes the decision should be overturned; and
- Any relevant evidence or documentation supporting the appeal.

The Board of Directors will review the appeal and communicate its decision to the athlete in accordance with applicable MFA policies.

Appendix 1: Local, National, NAC & International Competition Schedule 1) Manitoba Competition Schedule Updates www.fencing.mb.ca 2) Canadian Competition Schedule Updates www.fencing.ca 3) North American Cup Competition Updates www.usfencing.org 4) International FIE Competitions www.fie.ch