

**UNITED STATES EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION, INC. ATHLETE SELECTION PROCEDURES**  
**Paralympic Games 2020**  
**PARA DRESSAGE**  
**Tokyo, Japan**

**August 24 – September 5, 2021**

**Amended June 24, 2020 (DATE IPC AMENDMENTS ARE AVAILABLE)**

**Amendment II, February 17, 2021 to change Wellington Para Dressage National Competition to a CPEDI3\* and date change from March 11-13 to March 12-14**

**AMENDMENTS DUE TO POSTPONEMENT OF THE GAMES**

USEF utilized best efforts to keep the general process outlined in these selection procedures intact as much as possible, however, there has been unavoidable, necessary changes. Specifically, upcoming dates/deadlines referenced in red within these selection procedures. The IPC has confirmed that all quota places already assigned for the Tokyo 2020 Games will remain unchanged.

Along with the postponement of the timing of selection decisions/announcements, other changes (shown in red) include:

- FEI: age eligibility parameters, entry deadlines, Minimum Eligibility Requirement timelines, horse ownership deadlines, sport class status timelines
- USOPC: final team nomination deadline, long list deadlines
- USEF: application due dates, Short List timelines, ranking list timeframes, Sport team nomination dates, evaluative events and/or criteria and applications for waivers.

**Disclaimer: These Selection Procedures are subject to changes/updates because the Equine Health and Transport Requirements have not yet been published by the Tokyo 2020 Organizing Committee.**

**I. SELECTION SYSTEM**

**A. Minimum eligibility requirements for an Athlete to be considered for nomination to the Team:**

- 1. Nationality/Passport Requirements** - The athlete must be a national of the United States and in compliance with FEI General Regulations, 23<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Article 119 (see [www.fei.org](http://www.fei.org)) at the time of application, selection, and until the conclusion of the 2020 Paralympic Games (“the Event”). Athletes must hold a valid U.S. passport.
- 2. Minimum International Olympic Committee (IOC), International Paralympic Committee (IPC) standards for participation:**  
Any competitor in the Olympic, Paralympic, Pan American or Parapan American Games must be a national of the country of the National Olympic Committee (NOC) or National Paralympic Committee (NPC) which is entering such competitor. For additional information regarding an athlete who is a national of two or more countries, has changes his or her nationality or acquired a new nationality, refer to the IOC Charter (Rule 42), or the IPC Handbook (Section 2, Chapter 3.1).
- 3. Minimum International Federation (IF) standards for participation:**
  - a. All athlete/horse combinations wishing to compete on the 2020 Paralympic Games Para Dressage Team (“Team”) **must** earn a FEI Certificate of Capability by having achieved at least one (1) sixty-two (62) percent score at a FEI Para Equestrian 3\* or above event in an Individual or Team competition between January 1, 2019 **and July 5, 2021** (see FEI Rules for Para Dressage Team Championships [3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 1 January 2011 – Updates eff. 1 January 2020], Article 8451). The rules and a list of qualifying events can be found at <https://inside.fei.org/fei/games/paralympic/tokyo-2020>.
  - b. The athlete must have been born before January 1, ~~2004~~ **2005** (see the FEI Rules for Para Dressage [3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 1 January 2011 – updates effective 1 January 2020], Article 8422.2).

- c. A horse must have been born before 1 January 2015. (see the FEI Rules for Para Dressage [3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 1 January 2011 – updates effective 1 January 2020], Article 8422.7.1).
- d. The athlete and horse both must be registered with the FEI.
- e. The athlete and horse must comply with FEI Rules for the Event.
- f. The athlete must be internationally classified with a Confirmed (C) sport class status or a “Review” (R) sport class status with a fixed review date (FRD) after **December 31, 2021** at the time of nomination. A description of sport-specific classification requirements and current international athlete sport class status can be found at the IPC website at [www.paralympic.org](http://www.paralympic.org).
- g. Per FEI Regulations for the Equestrian Events at the 2020 Tokyo Paralympic Games, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Article 619, the NF of a horse belonging to a partnership or a syndicate of owners must inform the FEI by the date of the OCPG/IPC Nominated Entries for NPCs: **July 5, 2021** of the name of one owner to ensure that it is entered in the Paralympic Accreditation System. FEI General Regulations may be found at <https://inside.fei.org/fei/games/paralympic/tokyo-2020>.

#### 4. Other Requirements:

- a. The athlete must be an Active member of the USEF.
- b. At least one of the horse owners listed on the FEI passport must be a USEF member in good standing at the time of application, selection and until the conclusion of the Event.  
The horse must be recorded with USEF pursuant to USEF GR1102.
- c. Application - Athletes wishing to be considered for the Team must complete and submit an online application (Attachment A) with the appropriate application fee at [www.usef.org](http://www.usef.org). Applications submitted online on or before 5 p.m. EST **January 11, 2021** will be charged \$70 per Application. Applications submitted online after 5 p.m. EST **January 11, 2021** and received by the USEF on or before 5 p.m. EST **April 16, 2021** will be charged \$300 per Application. **NO APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER 5 P.M. April 16, 2021. IF AN APPLICATION IS SUBMITTED WITHOUT THE APPLICATION FEE, IT WILL BE ACCEPTED IF THE APPLICABLE FEE IS RECEIVED ON OR BEFORE 5 P.M. EST April 27, 2021.** (Previous applicants are not required to reapply. The only exception is new Games Forms will likely need to be signed by all.)
- d. Horse Loan Agreement: Owners of horses named to the Short List/FEI Nominated Entry must sign the USEF Horse Loan Agreement (Attachment B). A horse owner(s)’ failure to sign the USEF Horse Loan Agreement may result in the removal of the horse and/or athlete from the Short List/FEI Nominated Entry.
- e. The athlete and horse owner(s) must certify, by signing the Application (Attachment A), that they have received and read the Selection Procedures for the Team, the USEF Code of Conduct (Attachment C), the USEF Release, Assumption of Risk, Waiver and Indemnification (Attachment D), and the USEF Safe Sport Policy (Attachment E), USOPC Code of Conduct and Grievance Procedure (Attachment L), and USOPC online registration, and that they understand those documents, and that they agree to be bound by them.
- f. Athletes must have successfully completed all Games Registration requirements by stated deadline, unless the athlete requests for an extension of the deadline due to an extraordinary circumstance. Any extension must be approved by the USOPC.
- g. Athletes age 18 or older will be required to undergo a background screen in accordance with the current USOPC Background Check Policy.
- h. Athletes age 18 or older as of the Closing Ceremony will be required to complete the U.S. Center for Safe Sport’s online training.

#### B. Tryout Events:

1. **Provide the event names, dates and location of all trials, events and/or camps to be used as part of the selection process:**

Athletes are required to complete all three tests (Individual, Team, and Freestyle) in their Classified Grade at a minimum of two (2) CPEDI3\* between **October 1, 2020** and **July 5, 2021**. **Note: The March 12-14, 2021 Wellington National competition will be counted as a CPEDI3\* in 2021 for**

~~the purposes of this requirement (it does not count towards an FEI Certificate of Capability).~~

A list of CPEDI3\* competitions can be found on the FEI website at <https://data.fei.org/Calendar/Search.aspx>. This information was communicated to potential Event athletes and published on the USEF's website on December 19, 2018 (Attachment F).

**An athlete may request special consideration for competing at less than two CPEDI3\*s by submitting a written request prior to the start of the Observation Event to the Selectors who will seek advice from the Technical Advisor and approve or disapprove the request based on these factors:**

- 1. The athlete/horse combinations scores and consistency of scores at CPEDIs since January 1, 2020.**
- 2. Previous international experience of the athlete and/or horse;**
- 3. The circumstances, facts, and in the case of illness or injury to a horse or athlete, documentation by the Team Veterinarian and / or physician(s) approved by USEF;**
- 4. Unforeseen circumstances which create a logistical emergency; and/or**
- 5. Cancellation of Event(s).**

In exceptional circumstances where an athlete has demonstrated they are highly competitive at the CPEDI3\* level but circumstances beyond the athlete's control prevented them from completing a second CPEDI3\*, the Selectors may recommend to the Para Dressage Sport Committee that an athlete/horse combination receive a bye for the second CPEDI3\* within the qualifying period. A list of CPEDI3\* competitions can be found on the FEI website at <https://data.fei.org/Calendar/Search.aspx>. This information was communicated to potential Event athletes and published on the USEF's website on December 19, 2018 (Attachment F).

Tryout Events/Qualifying competitions include all U.S. and foreign CPEDI3\* or above between January 1, 2019 and **July 5, 2021**, as well as the mandatory CPEDI3\*, **June 17-20, 2021**; Tryon, NC.

- 2. Provided below are the event names, dates, locations, and description of how athletes qualify for any "preliminary or qualifying" events or procedures that are prerequisites to attend any of the events listed below:**

#### **Qualifying Events**

- Wellington CPEDI3\* January 17-20, 2019
- Wellington CPEDI3\* March 7-10, 2019
- Rancho Murieta CPEDI3\* June 13-16, 2019
- Tryon CPEDI3\* September 12-15, 2019
- Wellington CPEDI3\* January 8-12, 2020
- Wellington CPEDI3\* January 22-26, 2020
- **Tryon CPEDI3\*, October 22-25, 2020**
- **Wellington CPEDI3\* January 21-24, 2021**
- **Wellington CPEDI3\* National, March 12-14, 2021 (Not eligible for an FEI Certificate of Capability, but will serve as an observation event for Selectors.)**
- **Tryon CPEDI3\* June 17-20, 2021 MANDATORY OBSERVATION EVENT**
- All European and North American CPEDI3\* not listed above between January 1, 2019 and completed by **July 5, 2021**.

- C. Provided below is a comprehensive, step-by-step description of the method that explains how athletes will go through the selection process to become Paralympic Dressage team and Individual nominees.**

- 1. Mandatory Observation Event, June 17-20, 2021, Tryon, NC**

Final observation will take place at the CPEDI3\* Tryon, **June 17-20, 2021**.

An "exemption" from part or all of the Mandatory Observation Event will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and must be approved by the Selectors in consultation with the Chef

d'Equipe and Team Veterinarian prior to the start of competition. A request for exemption must be submitted in writing via email, snail mail or fax to the USEF Director of Para Equestrian and the Chef d'Equipe.

If unforeseen circumstances happen during the Mandatory Observation Event that preclude an athlete/horse combination from completing the Mandatory Observation Event, an exemption may be granted at the discretion of the selectors and approved by the Chef d'Equipe.

This Mandatory Observation Event is NOT A STAND ALONE SELECTION TRIAL. Results of the Mandatory Observation Event will only be one factor used in determining the Short List/Nominated Entries.

**Participation in the Mandatory Observation Event does not guarantee that an athlete/horse combination will be named to the Short List/FEI Nominated Entry or the Para Dressage Team for the Event.**

2. **July 5, 2021: Short List/FEI Nominated Entries**—After the Mandatory Observation Event, but no later than **July 5, 2021**, and based upon the procedures set forth herein, the Selectors, in consultation with the Chef d'Equipe, Team Veterinarian, and USEF High Performance Human Sports Science and Medicine personnel will recommend four athlete/horse combinations and up to the maximum number of horses and athletes in accordance with the FEI Regulations for the Equestrian Events at the 2020 Tokyo Paralympic Games, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Annex C, subject to approval of the USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee, and the approval of the Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors. Such list will be submitted to the FEI as the Nominated Entry no later than the closing date for the Short List/FEI Nominated Entry, **July 5, 2021**.

The Short List/FEI Nominated Entry of at least four athlete/horse combinations will be named as follows in accordance with FEI Rules for Para Dressage Events, [3<sup>rd</sup> edition, effective 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011, updates effective 1 January 2020], Article 8456 “A NF having obtained eligibility and qualification according to Paralympic Games Eligibility and Qualification Criteria, may enter a team composed of a minimum of three (3) and a maximum of four (4) Athletes. At the Team Championship three of the four entered Athletes will compete. Declaration of the team will take place after the Individual Championships. Each team must have at least one (1) Athlete in Grade I, II or III. A Team may not include more than two (2) Athletes from any one (1) Grade. The scores of all three (3) team members obtained at the Team Test count for the team result (no drop score).”

**Positions One through Four:** The athlete/horse combinations that will be entered at Nominated Entries, Midnight Swiss Time **July 5, 2021**, will be selected utilizing a comprehensive analysis of the following criteria.

- a. Scores from CPEDI3\* Team Tests and Individual Tests from January 1, 2019 with the more recent scores being scrutinized and considered more heavily. **To clarify, scores will still be counted from spring 2019 with greater emphasis on scores achieved from October 1, 2020 through July 5, 2021.**
- b. International competitiveness, and medal potential within athlete's grade.
- c. Trend of scores (upward, steady, downward) over the six months prior to Nominated Entry date.
- d. Consistency of scores over 72%.
- e. Previous International experience of athlete and/or horse. Both successful & unsuccessful.
- f. Fitness and soundness of the horse – advice of the Para Dressage Team Veterinarian or another appointed Veterinarian approved by the Team Veterinarian.
- g. Fitness of the athlete – advice of the Program Human Sports Science Staff will be sought.
- h. Behavior of the athlete and individuals associated with the athlete (including without limitation owners, coaches, grooms) that may have an impact on creating a positive team environment. Behavior at previous events may be taken into consideration.
- i. Willingness of the athlete to work within the confines of the 2020 Paralympic Games accreditation allocations and restrictions.

**Remaining Positions:** All athletes following the positions one (1) through four (4), will be filled by the discretionary choice of the Selectors recommendation approved by the Chef d'Equipe, Team Veterinarian and USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee up to the maximum number able to be nominated under FEI rules.

**Substitutes:** (See Definitions on page 15) - Athlete/horse combinations listed in position five (5) through the maximum number of athletes and horses permitted under FEI rules for the Event, will be named as "substitute" athlete/horse combinations for the Short List/FEI Nominated Entry for the Event.

Once the FEI Nominated Entry for the Event has been announced but prior to the deadline for the submission of the FEI Nominated Entry (not later than **July 5, 2021**), FEI Nominated Entry athlete/horse combinations may be substituted with a substitute athlete/horse combination for veterinary or medical reasons, breach of the USEF Code of Conduct (Attachment C), breach of Safe Sport Policy, for failure to sign the USEF Horse Loan Agreement (Attachment B), or other exceptional circumstances, such as negative behavior of individuals associated with the athlete, having a direct bearing upon obtaining the best qualified team for the Event, but only with the approval of the Chef d'Equipe and with the majority vote of the Selectors, USEF Para Dressage Sports Committee, and the Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors. Any substitutions for medical or veterinary reasons must also be documented by a physician(s) or veterinarian(s) and approved by the USEF International Disciplines Council. Please refer to Section IV for further details regarding Substitute/Replacement of athletes.

#### **REQUIRED AGREEMENT OF COMPETITION AND TRAINING PLANS**

Following the submission of Nominated Entry, all athletes named to Nominated Entry must submit and agree to a training and competition plan, as well as a human and equine maintenance plan with the Chef d'Equipe, Team Veterinarian and USEF approved Human Sport Science Consultant. **Failure to abide by the agreed training and competition plan may result in removal of the athlete/horse combination** from the Nominated Entry or from positions one through four.

#### **Funding of Individuals**

The USEF will only provide funding, if funding is available, if the athlete/horse combination achieves scores of 72% or higher from a minimum of two different CPEDI3\* between January 1, 2019 and **July 5, 2021** from Individual or Team Para Dressage tests. This restriction does not impact the right for an athlete to be FEI qualified for an Individual slot and entered in accordance with the FEI Regulations for the Equestrian Events at the 2020 Tokyo Paralympic Games, 2nd Edition, Annex C, subject to approval of the USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee, and the USEF Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors. The FEI Nominated Entry will be forwarded to the FEI by no later than midnight, Swiss Time on **July 5, 2021**.

**Chef d'Equipe Permissions:** Once athlete/horse combinations have been named to the FEI Nominated Entry, they will come under the control of the Chef d'Equipe through the Event. They shall not compete without the permission of the Chef d'Equipe.

3. **July 21, 2021: USOPC Final Entries** - After the Invitational Event, but no later than the closing date for the USOPC Final Entries for the Event, **July 21, 2021**, USEF will nominate to the USOPC four (4) athlete/horse combinations to the Team. The USEF Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors, acting upon the Selectors' certification that the Selection Procedures have been followed and their recommendations to the USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee, will nominate up to the maximum number of athlete/horse combinations permitted according to the FEI rules (four athletes/four horses). In the event that an athlete(s) is named to the Short List/FEI Nominated Entry on two horses listed in the athlete's highest placed position, the determination as to which horse the athlete will be named on the USOPC Final Entry will be made based on the recommendation of the Selectors, Chef d'Equipe and Team Veterinarian, USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee, the USEF Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Selection Group



approved by the Board of Directors. The Team will be the same as those originally approved at the time of the Short List/FEI Nominated Entry unless a Substitution is made in accordance with the criteria outlined in Section IV.B.2

The USEF Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors, acting upon the Selectors' certification that the Selection Procedures have been followed and their recommendation to the USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee, will also nominate the remaining athlete/horse combinations as replacement athlete/horse combinations in order of the Selectors Ranked List in accordance with Section I.C.1.

4. In the event that an athlete(s) is named to the Short List/FEI Nominated Entry on two horses, the determination as to which horse the athlete will be named on the Definite Entry will be made based on the recommendation of the Chef d'Equipe considering all qualifying scores, and the scores earned at the Invitational Event at the recommendation of the Selectors taking into consideration athlete/horse combinations listed in medal potential order by Team & Individual tests, with the recommendation of the USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee, the Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors, and the approval from the United States Olympic Paralympic Committee (USOPC). The athletes listed on the Definite Entry will be named in order of medal potential by tests, Team and Individual of athlete/horse combinations listed on the Short List/FEI Nominated Entry unless a Substitution is made in accordance with the criteria outlined in Section IV.B.2.

In addition to nominating the athletes to the Definite Entry, based upon the Selectors' evaluation and their recommendation to the USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee, and the approval of the USEF Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors will approve athlete/horse combinations on the Short List/FEI Nominated Entry to serve as substitute athlete/horse combinations for the Team in order of their listed order by medal potential by tests on the Nominated Entry.

**After acceptance of the Definite Entry and until one hour before the First Horse Inspection:**

After acceptance of the FEI Definite Entry and until one hour before the First Horse Inspection, the athletes will be the same as originally approved at the time of the FEI Definite Entry unless a Replacement is made in accordance with FEI Rules for Para Dressage, [3<sup>rd</sup> edition, effective 01 January 2011, updates effective 1 January 2020], Article 8423 (see [www.fei.org](http://www.fei.org)), and in accordance with the criteria outlined in Section IV.B.3. An earlier deadline for final substitutions may be listed in the Paralympic Definite Schedule and will be communicated to all athletes.

**5. Replacements/Substitutions**

The last date for replacements is the last date at which an athlete or horse can be substituted up to the time of travel to Tokyo. The date will be based on when the U.S. horses fly to Tokyo, where they fly from, the number of athletes / horses taking part in final training prior to departing to the Event, the availability of space on Official Tokyo Horse flights departing at a later date and the practicality of travelling a horse at a later date. The date will be decided by the USEF Director of Sport in consultation with Peden Bloodstock, Director of Para-Equestrian, Chef d'Equipe, and Team Veterinarian. The date will be published to all athletes selected to the Nominated Entry List as soon as it can be decided upon. To clarify, horses will only be allowed to travel to Tokyo on the Official Horse flights as organized by Peden Bloodstock.

See Section IV.B for the method in which substitution athletes and horses should be selected, should a vacancy occur.

6. **Declaration of Starters:** The declaration of starters (if required) will be done in accordance with FEI Rules for Para-Equestrian Dressage, [3<sup>rd</sup> edition, effective 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011, updates effective 1 January 2020], Article 8458.

In the case of two athlete/horse combinations in the same Grade the Chef will determine the order of go based on the recommendation of the Selectors athlete/horse combinations listed in medal potential order by Team & Individual tests and current observation during training prior to and/or at the event and in consultation with the Para Dressage Team Veterinarian and Team Physio (Human & Equine).

**D. Provided below are the names of all committees/groups who oversee the selection process, including the name(s) and role(s) of their members.**

The USEF Selectors and USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee will oversee the selection process, which process shall be reviewed and approved by the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC), USEF Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors, (Attachment G for list of USEF committees, their roles, and list of members).

**E. Other Considerations:**

- 1. Equine Drug Testing:** All applicant horses are subject to drug testing both in competition and out of competition.

In-Competition. All horses entered to compete in any FEI or USEF competition are subject to drug testing at any time from when the competition begins until the competition ends or beginning when the horse arrives for the competition until the competition ends, whichever beginning occurs first. Blood and/or urine samples may be collected and tested for substances prohibited or forbidden under the subject competition rules. National competitions may invoke GR 409 whereby samples will be tested for FEI prohibited substances, including metabolites and markers.

Positive Finding. At any time during the selection period that the presence of a prohibited or forbidden substance, or a metabolite or marker is detected in the sample collected in-competition, the results, including the level detected for controlled medications, will be reported to the USEF Chief Executive Officer and General Counsel, who will notify the Director of Sport Programs or Discipline Director for dissemination of information as appropriate. In such instance, the positive finding may result in the elimination of the horse and/or athlete from the Selection Process. Before elimination occurs, the owner and athlete will be afforded a hearing by a panel ("Selection Hearing Panel") comprised at least one member of the Para Dressage Sport Committee along with at least two members of the Hearing Committee, one of which must be an Eligible Athlete. The Chairman of the USEF Veterinarian Committee, or his designee, may serve Ex Officio and a member of the Veterinarian Panel selected for the Event may serve Ex Officio.

Out-of-Competition. Blood and/or urine samples may be collected out-of-competition at any time throughout the selection period, which is defined as commencing on January 1, 2017 following notification to the applicant at least 24 hours prior to collection. Samples collected from horses out-of-competition will be tested for the presence of substances prohibited by the FEI, including metabolites and markers. Failure to make the horse available for collection of samples may result in the elimination of the horse and/or athlete from the Selection Process. Before elimination occurs, the owner and athlete will be afforded a hearing by the Selection Hearing Panel.

Positive Finding. At any time during the selection period that the presence of a prohibited or forbidden substance, or a metabolite or marker, in the sample, the results, including the level detected for controlled medications, will be reported to the USEF Chief Executive Officer and General Counsel, who will notify the Director of Sport Programs or Discipline Director for dissemination of information as appropriate. In such instance, the positive finding may result in the elimination of the horse and/or athlete from the Selection Process unless the Veterinarian Panel appointed for selection of the Event certifies that the substance detected has been approved or is legitimate and appropriate under the circumstances. Before elimination occurs, the owner and athlete will be afforded a hearing by the Selection Hearing Panel.

This provision does not abrogate the enforcement of applicable equine anti-doping rules at

Federation licensed competitions, including competitions where GR 409 is invoked whereby samples will be tested for FEI prohibited substances, including metabolites and markers.

Also see the section on Veterinarian Treatment, a violation of which may result in elimination under this provision. Before elimination occurs in either instance, the owner and athlete will be afforded a hearing by the Selection Hearing Panel.

#### **USEF GR409.2 Equine Drugs and Medications, Prohibited Substance Provisions:**

No horse and/or pony competing in a Breed or Discipline designated as (or part of) a No Prohibited Substance Group is to be shown in any class at a competition licensed by the Federation if it has been administered in any manner or otherwise contained in its tissues, body fluids or excreta a prohibited substance as defined in the FEI Equine Anti-Doping and Controlled Medication Regulations, which can be found at <https://inside.fei.org/content/anti-doping-rules>.

2. **Soundness:** Horses that are candidates for the Short List/FEI Nominated Entry or as Substitutes for the Short List/Nominated Entry may be examined by the Team Veterinarian, or a Veterinarian approved by the Team Veterinarian, for soundness prior to the FEI Nominated Entry being named so that a report may be made to the Chef d'Equipe and Selectors prior to their naming of the Nominated Entry and Substitutes to the Nominated Entry.

All horses named to the FEI Nominated Entry will undergo a baseline exam with the Team Veterinarian, or a Veterinarian approved by the Team Veterinarian. The Team Veterinarian and the athlete's veterinarian must be in communication regarding the soundness and preparation of the horse(s) named to the FEI Nominated Entry.

Horses that are candidates for selection for the FEI Definite Entry/Squad will be examined for soundness by the Team Veterinarian or a Veterinarian approved by the Team Veterinarian at any time after the FEI Nominated Entry has been named and prior to naming the FEI Definite Entry/Squad.

All horses chosen to be part of the 2020 Paralympic Games Para Dressage Definite Entry will also be examined for soundness by the Team Veterinarian prior to traveling to the Event.

Horses found to be unsound by the Team Veterinarian, or a Veterinarian approved by the Team Veterinarian, may result in the elimination of the athlete/horse combination from the selection process, but only with the recommendation of the USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee and the approval of the USEF Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors.

3. **Team Veterinarian Request:** Applicants, **at their own expense**, shall make available, upon the request of the Team Veterinarian, 24 months' worth of veterinary records of horses under consideration for selection. In addition, applicants, **at their own expense**, shall be responsible for supplying any follow-up diagnostic information requested by the Team Veterinarian for horses under consideration for selection. Applicants, **at their own expense**, shall complete any treatment prescribed by the Team Veterinarian, after consultation with the horse's treating veterinarian if such a consultation is requested by the athlete, for horses under consideration for selection. Failure to comply with any reasonable request of the Team Veterinarian **may result in the removal of the horse and/or athlete** from the selection process by the Chef d'Equipe and Selectors upon the recommendation of the Team Veterinarian and the USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee, and approval by the USEF Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Selection group approved by the Board of Directors
4. **Veterinary Treatment:** Once a horse(s) is named to the FEI Nominated Entry or FEI Definite Entry all selected athletes will be required to obtain written permission from the Team



Veterinarian prior to their selected horses being treated by any person other than the Team Veterinarian. This permission must be obtained by using the official USEF Para Dressage Veterinary Treatment Request Form (Attachment I).

Failure to adhere to this policy and/or the directives of the Team Veterinarian as outlined on the USEF Para Dressage Veterinary Treatment Request Form **may result in the removal of horse and/or athlete from the selection process** by the Chef d' Equipe, and the Selectors upon the recommendation of the Team Veterinarian and the USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee, and approval by the USEF Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors.

5. **Medical Request:** In the event of illness or injury, applicants may be required to submit to a medical examination by physician(s) approved by the USEF International Disciplines Council at any time during the selection process for the purposes of determining the applicant's ability to compete at the Event. Failure to submit to such examination **may result in the removal of the applicant from the selection process** by the Chef d'Equipe and Selectors upon the recommendation of the USEF-approved physicians(s) and with the recommendation of the USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee, and the approval of the Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors. Following the examination, should the USEF-approved physician(s) find the applicant to be unfit to compete, the applicant may be removed from the selection process with the recommendation of the USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee, and the approval of the Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors.

## **II. DISCRETIONARY SELECTION**

A. **Rationale for utilizing discretionary selection:** Discretionary selection is used to field the best team possible for the Event.

### **Discretionary criteria and how it will be used:**

B. **Discretionary criteria and how it will be used:** (if U.S. qualifies a team in accordance with the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games Qualification Guide) – Athletes following the fourth position on the Short List/FEI Nominated Entry will be filled by the horse/athlete combination named by the USEF Para-Equestrian Dressage Selectors ("Selectors" – see Section II.C.2.). Selectors may use the following criteria in making discretionary selections:

1. Preference will be given to a Grade I or II athlete, if required, to satisfy team composition requirements in accordance with FEI Para Dressage Rules, effective January 1, 2015, Updates effective 1 January 2020– Article 8456.2.1: Each team must have at least one (1) Athlete in Grade I, II, or III and no team may have more than three (3) Athletes from any one (1) Grade.
2. The Selectors may use performance related criteria, including previous International experience and/or competition results and any tests completed at the Invitational Event, in making selections.
3. Selectors may be advised by the Chef d'Equipe.
4. Selectors may be advised by the Team Veterinarian approved by the USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee, USEF Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors (Attachment G).
5. Demonstrated ability of the athlete/horse combination to win an individual medal or contribute to a Team medal at the Event.
6. Behavior of athlete and people associated with the athlete (including, without limitation, owners, coaches and grooms) that may have an impact on creating a positive team environment.
7. Willingness of the athlete to work within the confines of the Tokyo Paralympic Games/USOPC Accreditation allocations and restrictions.

## **C. Discretionary Selection Committee**

- a. **Provide the name of the committee(s) that will be responsible for discretionary selection.**
  - i. USEF Para Dressage Selectors

- ii. USEF Para Dressage Chef d'Equipe
- iii. USEF Para Dressage Team Veterinarian
- iv. USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee
- v. USEF Board of Directors or Ad Hoc Selection Group

- b. Provide a complete list of the members of the committee(s), their titles and their NGB role that qualifies them to serve in this capacity:** See Attachment G for list of USEF committees, their roles, and list of members.

**Selectors:** (the "Selectors") Four Selectors and one alternate Selector will be appointed by the USEF International Disciplines Council upon the recommendation of the USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee. The Selectors are subject to the USEF Code of Conduct, Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policies of the USEF (Attachment J), and Safe Sport Policy. The Selectors are Senior Active Members in good standing of USEF, who are also members of the Para Dressage community and who are knowledgeable and experienced in Para Dressage at the international level, and include a minimum of one Para Dressage Eligible Athlete Representative as defined by the USOPC (See Definitions on page 16) but who is not an applicant for the Team (the "Eligible Athlete Representative Selector").

In making their decisions, the Selectors will consult with the Chef d'Equipe, and/or the Team Veterinarian.

A minimum of one Substitute Selector will also be named. A Substitute Selector will take the place of a Selector who has a conflict of interest or a substantial appearance of a conflict of interest. There will be a minimum of 20% Eligible Athlete Representation on the panel of Selectors.

**Ad Hoc Selection Group:** The Ad Hoc Selection Group will consist of five USEF International Disciplines Council members approved by the USEF Board of Directors. One member must be an Eligible Athlete and one must be a USEF Board member.

### **III. REMOVAL OF ATHLETES**

- A. Prior to acceptance of nomination by the USOPC, USEF has jurisdiction over potential nominees:** An athlete who is nominated to the Short List/FEI Nominated Entries may be removed as a nominee for any of the following reasons, as determined by USEF and in accordance with these procedures:

- Voluntary withdrawal. An athlete must submit a written letter to the USEF CEO.
- Injury or illness as certified by a USEF-approved physician (or medical staff). If an athlete refuses verification of their illness or injury by a USEF-approved physician (or medical staff), their injury will be assumed to be disabling and they may be removed.
- Violation of the USEF's Code of Conduct (Attachment C).
- Failure of the horse owner to sign the Horse Loan Agreement (Attachment B).
- Injury or illness of the horse as determined by the Team Veterinarian. If an athlete and/or horse owner refuses to have the horse examined by the Team Veterinarian and/or Veterinary Panel, the injury or illness will be assumed to be disabling and the horse may be removed.
- Exceptional circumstances having a direct bearing upon obtaining the best qualified team for the Event, in consultation with the Chef d'Equipe and Selectors, such as negative behavior of individuals associated with the athlete. Concerns regarding the behavior of individuals will be communicated to athletes during the selection process.
- Detection of a prohibited substance in the horse.
- Failure to adhere to all WADA, FEI, USEF, and/or USADA anti-doping protocols, policies and procedures including participation in the out-of-competition testing as required by the WADA, FEI, and/or USADA Rules.
- Failure to comply with a request of the Team Veterinarian or with the USEF Para-Dressage Veterinary Treatment Request Form protocols (Attachment I).
- Failure to submit a written request via email, snail mail, or fax, to the Director of Para

Equestrian and the Chef d'Equipe, not to attend the Invitational Event prior to the start of the Invitational Event, if possible, but no later than the conclusion of the Invitational Event to the Selectors.

- Failure to adhere to the agreed upon plans and/or directives of the Chef d'Equipe.
- Failure to comply with the USEF Safe Sport Policy (Attachment E).
- Re-classification by the IPC/IF such that the athlete's qualifying performance would not have qualified him or her for the Team.
- Removal by the IPC/IF of the event in which the athlete qualified for the Team from the program of the Tokyo Paralympic Games.

In these procedures, the removal of an athlete is closely related to the process by which they will be replaced. Therefore, the reasons for which an athlete may be removed are thoroughly addressed in Section IV SUBSTITUTION/REPLACEMENT OF ATHLETE AND/OR HORSE.

An athlete removed from the FEI Nominated Entry pursuant to this provision has the right to a hearing per the USEF's Bylaws, Article 703 and USEF General Rules, Chapter 6, GR 605 or USOPC Bylaws, Section 9.

**B. After the acceptance of nomination by the USOPC:** Once an athlete nomination is accepted by the USOPC, the USOPC has jurisdiction over the Team, at which time, in addition to any applicable NGB/HPMO Code of Conduct, the USOPC Code of Conduct and Grievance Procedures apply. (Attachment L).

An athlete may be removed from the USOPC Final Entry or Team at any time for the following reasons:

- Voluntary withdrawal. An athlete must submit a written letter to the USEF CEO.
- Violation of WADA, FEI, USEF, USADA, IPC, and/or USOPC anti-doping protocol, policies and procedures. In such instances, the adjudication process will be managed through the United States Anti-Doping Agency.
- Injury or illness as certified by a USEF approved physician (or medical staff).
- Injury or illness of the horse as determined by a majority of the Veterinary Panel and/or Team Veterinarian.
- Violation of the USEF Code of Conduct (Attachment C).
- Violation of the USOPC Code of Conduct and Grievance Procedures (Attachment L).
- Violation of the USEF Safe Sport Policies (Attachment E).
- Re-classification by the IPC/IF such that the athlete's qualifying performance would not have qualified him or her for the Team.
- Removal by the IPC/IF of the event in which the athlete qualified for the Team from the program of the Tokyo Paralympic Games.

A USOPC approved Team member is subject to the USOPC Code of Conduct and Grievance Procedures (Attachment L).

**C. An athlete may be removed from the Short List/FEI Nominated Entries, Team, or Individual or Reserve Combination at any time for violation of WADA, FEI, USEF, USADA, IPC and/or USOPC anti-doping protocol, policies and procedures. In such instances, the adjudication process will be managed through the United States Anti-Doping Agency.**

#### **IV. SUBSTITUTION OF HORSE/ATHLETE COMBINATIONS**

**A. Following is the process by which the replacement pool of athlete/horse combinations will be identified:** One or more substitute athlete/horse combinations will be named to the Short List/FEI Nominated Entry in accordance with Section I.C.2.a. or by an athlete/horse combination(s) named as a discretionary choice by the USEF Para Dressage Selectors in accordance with the discretionary choice criteria outlined in Section II.

**B. Substitution/Replacement athlete(s) will be selected, should a vacancy occur, according to the following method:**

- 1. Prior to acceptance of Nominated Entry by the FEI:** Once the Athletes who have been named to the FEI Nominated Entry for the Event has been announced and prior to the submission of the Nominated Entry (by no later than **July 5, 2021**) athletes and alternates may be substituted with substitute horse/athlete combinations for any of the reasons outlined in III.A (reasons for removal). Any substitutions for veterinary reasons must also have the recommendation of the USEF Team Veterinarian. Any substitutions for medical reasons must also be documented by a USEF-approved physician(s) approved by the USEF International Disciplines Council.
- 2. Prior to acceptance of the USOPC Final Entries:** After Nominated Entries and prior to the closing date for FEI Definite Entries, **July 21, 2021**, athletes named to the FEI Definite Entry and alternates may be substituted with substitute horse/athlete combinations for any of the reasons outlined in III.A.

Any substitutes for veterinary reasons must also be recommended by the Team Veterinarian. Any substitutes for medical reasons must also be documented by a physician(s) approved by the USEF International Disciplines Council.

- 3. After the Acceptance of nomination by the USOPC and until the Day of the Horse Inspection:** After acceptance of the Nominated Entries by the USOPC and until the day of the Horse Inspection (unless an earlier date is specified in the Paralympic Definite Schedule), the USOPC has jurisdiction over the Team, at which time, in addition to any applicable NGB/HPMO Code of Conduct, the USOPC Code of Conduct and Grievance Procedures apply. the USEF has the ability to recommend to the FEI to replace athlete/horse combinations on the FEI Definite Entry for reasons set forth in Section III. B. During this time period, replacements may need to be replaced in accordance with FEI Rules for Para-Equestrian Dressage Events, [3<sup>rd</sup> edition, effective 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011, updates effective 1 January 2020], Article 8456. "A NF having obtained eligibility and qualification according to Paralympic Games Eligibility and Qualification Criteria, may enter a team composed of a minimum of three (3) and a maximum of four (4) Athletes. At the Team Championship three of the four entered Athletes will compete. Declaration of the team will take place after the Individual Championships. Each team must have at least one (1) Athlete in Grade I, II or III. A Team may not include more than two (2) Athletes from any one (1) Grade. The scores of all three (3) team members obtained at the Team Test count for the team result (no drop score)." Replacements may only be made by the FEI in accordance with FEI Rules for Para-Equestrian Dressage, [3<sup>rd</sup> edition, effective 01 January 2011, updates effective 1 January 2020], Article 8423 for veterinary or medical reasons, or for breach of the USEF Codes of Conduct, upon the recommendation of the Chef d'Equipe, and subject to the recommendation of the Selectors, the USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee, and the approval of the USEF Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors physically present at the Event venue. If it is not practical (time, physical presence or accreditation restrictions) to consult the Selectors and/or an Ad Hoc Selection Group, the U.S. Chef de Mission will approve a replacement in consultation with the Para Dressage Chef d'Equipe.

Any replacement for veterinary reasons must also have the approval of the Team Veterinarian approved by the USEF International Disciplines Council.

Any replacement for medical reasons must be documented by a physician(s) approved by the USEF International Disciplines Council or a medical practitioner accredited as part of the U.S. Team or 2020 Paralympic Organizing Committee.

**C. Group or committee that will be responsible for making athlete substitution/replacement determinations:**

- 1. Group or committee who determines the substitution/replacement pool:** USEF Para-Equestrian Selectors, USEF Team Veterinarian, USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee, and the USEF Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors (Attachment G).

**2. Group or committee who determines a substitution/replacement to the FEI Nominated Entry or FEI Definite Entry:**

- a. Prior to acceptance of nominations by the FEI:** USEF Para Equestrian Selectors, Chef d'Equipe, USEF Team Veterinarian, USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee, and the USEF Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors (Attachment G).
- b. After acceptance of the FEI Definite Entry and until the day of the Horse Inspection:** USEF Para Equestrian Selectors, Chef d'Equipe, USEF Team Veterinarian, USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee or its designees, and the USEF Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors (Attachment G) physically present at the Event venue.

**V. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS** – USEF will retain all approved Selection Procedures and all supporting documents, including evaluation forms and data from the selection process for six months past the date of the Closing Ceremonies of the Event.

**VI. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS** - The following documents are required to be properly executed by applicants and horse owners as a condition of nomination for the Event and are included as attachments:

- Application (Attachment A)
- Horse Loan Agreement (Attachment B)
- USEF Code of Conduct (Attachment C)
- USEF Release, Assumption of Risk, Waiver and Indemnification (Attachment D)
- USEF Athlete Agreement (Attachment K)

Applicants and horse owners will be required to certify by signing the Application (Attachment A), that they have received and read a copy of the USEF Code of Conduct and the Safe Sport Policy and that they understand them and agree to be bound by them.

In addition, all persons participating in any decision made pursuant to the Selection Procedures including but not limited to the Selectors, Team Veterinarian, Physicians, members of the USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee, and the Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors will be required to abide by the USEF Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policies (Attachment J) and the Safe Sport Policy.

Reference is made to the attached USEF Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policies for a full and accurate statement of the requirements of that policy. In particular, however, no individual may participate in a particular phase of the selection process if, after full disclosure, the individual is found by the applicable committee to have a disqualifying conflict of interest in the particular phase of the selection process in question per the attached USEF Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy.

**VII. ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS** - Applicants will be required to read the USEF Athlete Agreement (Attachment K) and are required to sign this document.

**VIII. PUBLICITY/DISTRIBUTION OF PROCEDURES** - The USEF approved Selection Procedures (complete and unaltered) will be posted/published by USEF in the following locations and will include the USEF approval date when known:

- USEF website: [www.usef.org](http://www.usef.org) - These procedures will be posted as soon as possible, but not more than 5 business days following notice of approval by the USEF and the USOPC.
- Other: The Selection Procedures and Application Packet will also be available by mail or email upon request.

**IX. DATE OF NOMINATION** - The FEI Nominated Entry will be submitted to the FEI no later than **July 5, 2021**. The FEI Definite Entry will be submitted to the FEI no later than **July 21, 2021**.



**X. MANDATORY TRAINING AND/OR COMPETITION** – It is tentatively planned that the final preparation for the Event will consist of Training and/or Competitions. The relevant details will be posted on the USEF website [www.usef.org](http://www.usef.org) and communicated to athletes named to the FEI Nominated Entry no later than 30 days before the first day of training and/or competition.

**XI. ANTI-DOPING REQUIREMENTS** - Athletes must adhere to all USEF, WADA, FEI, and USADA anti-doping protocols, policies and procedures. This includes participation in out-of-competition testing as required by WADA, FEI, and/or USADA Rules, if applicable.

**XII. DEVELOPMENT OF SELECTION PROCEDURES** - The following committees/groups were responsible for creating these Selection Procedures: USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee, USEF International Disciplines Committee, Board of Directors or an Ad Hoc Committee approved by the Board of Directors. See Attachment G for list of USEF committees, their roles, and list of members.

**XIII. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES** - Athletes wishing to file a grievance challenging a denial or threatened denial to participate in competition, please see the [Athlete's Guide to Filing a Grievance Regarding Opportunity to Participate and Grievance Form](#). For procedural guidance for filing a grievance, please contact **Emily Pratt** at [epratt@usef.org](mailto:epratt@usef.org). Please contact the USOPC Athlete Ombudsman Office at (719) 866-5000, or [ombudsman@usathlete.org](mailto:ombudsman@usathlete.org), or visit [www.athleteombudsman.org](http://www.athleteombudsman.org) for guidance as to the USOPC grievance processes.

**XIII. INTERNATIONAL DISCLAIMER** - These procedures are based on FEI rules and regulations as presently known and understood. Any change in the selection procedures caused by a change in FEI rules and regulations will be distributed to the affected athletes immediately. The selection criteria are based on the latest information available to USEF. However, the selections are always subject to unforeseen, intervening circumstances, and realistically may not have accounted for every possible contingency.

If any force of nature, or force majeure, should cause the alteration or cancellation of any of the selection events listed in this document, these selection procedures will be revised, pursuant to their resubmission to the USEF.


**XIV. ATHLETE OMBUDSMAN** - Athletes who have questions regarding their opportunity to compete that are not answered by USEF may contact the USOPC Athlete Ombudsman: by:


- a. Telephone at (719)866-5000
- b. Toll free telephone at (888) ATHLETE (1-888-284-5383)
- c. E-mail at [ombudsman@usathlete.org](mailto:ombudsman@usathlete.org)
- d. [www.athleteombudsman.org](http://www.athleteombudsman.org)

**XV. FUNDING DISCLAIMER** - Selection to the Team does not guarantee that funds will be available to send a team.

**XVI. DISCLAIMER** - See Attachment D – USEF Release, Assumption of Risk, Waiver and Indemnification.

**XVII. NGB SIGNATURES** - I certify that I have read, understand and incorporated our IF standards/criteria into our Selection Procedures and that the information provided herein regarding these Selection Procedures represents the method approved by the United States Equestrian Federation.

Position	Print Name	Signature	Date
USEF President	Murray Kessler		

USOPC Athletes' Advisory Council Representative	Allison Brock		
USEF Para-Equestrian Director	Laureen Johnson		

Any questions regarding these Selection Procedures should be addressed to Laureen Johnson, USEF Director, Para Equestrian Programs, United States Equestrian Federation, PO Box 83, Gladstone, NJ 07934, Phone (859) 225-7693, Email: lkjohnson@usef.org.

Approved by the USEF Para Dressage Sport Committee on  
 Approved by the USEF International Disciplines Council on  
 Approved by the USEF Board of Directors on

## **DEFINITIONS**

**USEF PARA-EQUESTRIAN DRESSAGE SELECTORS** - Four individuals (the “Selectors”) will be appointed by the USEF Board of Directors upon the recommendation of the USEF Para-Equestrian Sport Committee and the USEF International Discipline Council. The Selectors are subject to the USEF Code of Conduct (Attachment C) and Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy of the USEF (Attachment J). The Selectors are Senior Active Members in good standing of USEF, who are also members of the Para Equestrian community and who are knowledgeable and experienced in Para Representative as defined by the USOPC but who is not an applicant for the Team (the "Eligible Athlete Representative Selector"). In making their decisions, the Selectors will consult with the Chef d'Equipe, the Team Veterinarian and when appropriate, the Veterinary Panel. A minimum of one Replacement Selector will also be named. A Replacement Selector will take the place of a Selector who has a conflict of interest or a substantial appearance of a conflict of interest. There will be a minimum of 20% Eligible Athlete Representation on the panel of the Selectors.

**PARA-EQUESTRIAN ELIGIBLE ATHLETE REPRESENTATIVE** – An athlete will be considered a Para-Equestrian Eligible Athlete Representative if they meet the following criteria as defined by the USEF in Part IV-Athletes, Bylaw 401 of its Bylaws and the United States Olympic Paralympic Committee in Article XVII.17.7, B.3 of its Bylaws as eligible for membership on a “designated committee”:

- i) within the past ten (10) years, represented the United States in the Paralympic, Olympic or Pan American Games, or an Operation Gold event, or a World Championship recognized by the United States Olympic Paralympic Committee for which a competitive selection process was administered by the USEF/USET and/or
- ii) within the past twenty-four (24) months, demonstrated that they are actively engaged in amateur athletic competition by finishing in the top half of the NGB’s national championship or a team selection competition for the events specified in paragraph (i) above.

**SUBSTITUTE** –Substituting an athlete/horse combination prior to the submittal of the Final Entry.

**REPLACEMENT** – Replacing an athlete/horse combination after the Final Entry has been submitted.

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment A	2020 Paralympic Games Para-Dressage Application
Attachment B	USEF Horse Loan Agreement
Attachment C	USEF Code of Conduct
Attachment D	USEF Release, Assumption of Risk Waiver and Indemnification
Attachment E	Safe Sport Policy
Attachment F	Athlete Memo
Attachment G	USEF Committee Members
Attachment H	FEI Regulations for Equestrian Events at the Paralympic Games
Attachment I	Veterinary Treatment Request Form
Attachment J	USEF Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy
Attachment K	USEF Athlete Agreement
Attachment L	USOPC Code of Conduct
Attachment M	USOPC Background Check Policy