



USA Climbing In-State Tuition Eligibility Policy

Last Updated: September 15, 2025

1. Purpose

This policy outlines USA Climbing's role in recommending athletes for in-state tuition consideration at select public institutions in Utah, Colorado, and California. The U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC) issues the final confirmation letter to each university, based on USA Climbing's recommendation and/or the Team USA eligibility definition.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Athletes seeking in-state tuition benefits at Utah public institutions
- Athletes seeking in-state tuition benefits at Colorado public institutions
- Athletes seeking in-state tuition benefits at California public institutions, under the USOPC Team USA definition (<https://www.usopc.org/TeamUSA-Eligibility>)

3. Eligibility Criteria

3.1 Utah & Colorado Schools (USA Climbing Criteria)

To be recommended for in-state tuition at Utah or Colorado institutions, an athlete must meet one of the following:

- Youth National Team (Boulder/Lead): Athlete has been a member of the USA Climbing Youth National Team in Boulder or Lead within the last two years.
- High-Performance Competitive Results (Boulder/Lead): Athlete has demonstrated consistent high performance at national-level or continental competitions by:
 - Reaching semifinals at USA Climbing National Championships and National Team Trials in Boulder or Lead, OR
 - Reaching finals at North American Cup Series (NACS) competitions in Boulder or Lead.
 - Speed: Athlete has demonstrated the ability to run an Elite Series Competition Start Benchmark time at a qualifying competition (e.g., USA Climbing National Championships, North American Cup Series, or another certified competition).

AND

- Ongoing Commitment: Athlete must maintain an annual commitment to train and compete with the goal of making the USA Climbing National Team and ultimately qualifying for the Olympic Games. Eligibility is reviewed annually.

3.2 California Schools (USOPC Team USA Criteria)

For California institutions, eligibility is determined by the USOPC in accordance with the Team USA eligibility definition: <https://www.usopc.org/TeamUSA-Eligibility>

4. Certification Process

1. Athlete Request: Athlete submits request to USA Climbing for review.
2. USA Climbing Review: High-Performance staff evaluate athlete eligibility against Section 3 criteria.
3. Recommendation to USOPC: If eligible, USA Climbing requests university student ID from athlete and upon its receipt, provides written recommendation to the USOPC.
4. USOPC Confirmation:
 - a. For Utah and Colorado schools, The USOPC issues the final letter to the university Registrar's Office confirming the athlete's in-state tuition eligibility.
 - b. For California schools, The USOPC will share the final letter with the athlete to be submitted with their residency questionnaire.

5. Duration & Renewal

- Approval is valid for one academic year.
- Athletes must reapply annually, demonstrating continued performance and commitment.
- Loss of eligibility (e.g., lack of competitive participation, failure to maintain good standing) may result in non-renewal.

6. Compliance & Notification

- USA Climbing will notify the USOPC and the institution if an athlete loses eligibility during the academic year.
- Misrepresentation may result in immediate withdrawal of benefits and further disciplinary action.

7. Review

This policy is reviewed annually by USA Climbing's High-Performance Department to ensure consistency with USOPC and state-level agreements.

8. Definitions

- **USA Climbing National Championships:** Annual national-level competition organized by USA Climbing to determine national champions in Boulder, Lead, and Speed disciplines.
- **National Team Trials:** Selection event organized by USA Climbing where athletes compete for placement on the USA Climbing National Team.

- **North American Cup Series (NACS):** A continental-level competition series organized in partnership with the International Federation of Sport Climbing (IFSC) Pan America, featuring elite athletes from the U.S., Canada, and other Pan-American nations.
- **Semifinals (Boulder/Lead):** The competition round following qualification, typically composed of the top 20–30 athletes based on qualification results, depending on field size and format.
- **Finals (Boulder/Lead, NACS):** The competition round following semifinals, typically consisting of the top 6–8 athletes based on semifinal performance.
- **Elite Series Competition Start Benchmark time (Speed):** A performance standard established by USA Climbing for Speed competitions that mirrors the minimum start time standard used at IFSC World Cup events. Running an Elite Series Competition Start Benchmark time demonstrates that an athlete is competitive at the international level.
- **Certified Competition:** A USA Climbing-sanctioned event (e.g., National Championships, NACS) or another event recognized by USA Climbing and/or the IFSC as meeting international standards for format, timing, and results validity.
- **Ongoing Commitment:** The athlete’s annual commitment to actively train and compete in pursuit of making the USA Climbing National Team and ultimately qualifying for the Olympic Games.