



WRESTLE-OFF PROCEDURES 2026

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1 - INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the procedures to be used by Wrestling Canada Lutte (WCL) to determine how and when sanctioned wrestle-offs will be held.

Wrestle-offs will be conducted for senior Olympic weight classes ONLY in Men's Freestyle (FS) & Women's Wrestling (WW). There will be no wrestle-offs for senior non-Olympic weight classes, or any weight classes for U23, U20, or U17-Cadet age categories as part of Team Selection Criteria.

2 - DECISION MAKING AUTHORITY

The High Performance Director (HPD), or their designate, is responsible for the development and implementation of a selection process that is fair and equitable for all candidates, The HPD retains ultimate decision-making authority regarding wrestle-offs conducted pursuant to these Wrestle-Off Procedures.

In the event of an injury provision wrestle-off request, the request will be reviewed by the WCL Chief Medical Officer. The WCL Chief Medical Officer will advise the HPD, who retains ultimate decision-making authority.

Oversight was provided by the Athlete Council and the High Performance Advisory Committee (HPAC – composed of coaches and athletes). Final approval of the policy was made by WCL's Board of Directors.

3 - ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Men's Freestyle (FS) & Women's Wrestling (WW)

Any athletes who are unable to compete at the 2026 Senior Canadian Wrestling Championships, or other WCL approved international selection events, due to injury or conflict with another approved and eligible event, may still be considered for nomination to a team through a wrestle-off, providing they meet the criteria and satisfy the conditions stated in Sections 3.1 and 3.2 below.

3.1 INJURY

The official WCL "Inability to Participate Medical Form" must be completed by an approved WCL physician and submitted to the HPD no later than the Coaches' Technical Meeting (i.e. Friday, May 29th, 2026). Upon request, the injured athlete may be subject to additional examination by the WCL Chief Medical Officer. The athlete must also clearly indicate, in writing, at the time of the submission, the weight class they are submitting an injury provision wrestle-off request for and, according to the approved WCL physician, when they will be able to realistically return to competition.

3.2 PERFORMANCE BENCHMARKS

Women's Wrestling (WW):

- a) Has placed in the top 8 at the 2024 Olympic Games or 2025 Senior World Championships (Olympic weight class) or top 3 at the 2024 or 2025 Senior World Championships (non-Olympic weight class), with a minimum of two wins (not by forfeit or those injury matches that never started).

OR

- b) Has placed top 3 in an Olympic weight class or top 2 in a non-Olympic weight class at the 2024 or 2025 U23 World Championships, with a minimum of two wins (not by forfeit or those injury matches that never started).

OR

- c) A minimum value of IPI of 2.5 in the qualification period 12 months prior to the selection event (i.e. May 29, 2025 – May 29, 2026 for the 2026 Senior Canadian Wrestling Championships).

Men's Freestyle (FS):

- a) Has placed in the top 8 at the 2024 Olympic Games or 2025 Senior World Championships (Olympic weight class) or top 5 at the 2024 or 2025 Senior World Championships (non-Olympic weight class), with a minimum of two wins (not by forfeit or those injury matches that never started).

OR

- b) Has placed in the top 5 in an Olympic weight class or top 3 in a non-Olympic weight class at the 2024 or 2025 U23 World Championships, with a minimum of two wins (not by forfeit or those injury matches that never started).

OR

- c) A minimum value of IPI of 2.0 in the qualification period 12 months prior to the selection event (i.e. May 29, 2025 – May 29, 2026 for the 2026 Senior Canadian Wrestling Championships).

Note: Any wrestler who meets the performance benchmark in an Olympic weight class may challenge the same Olympic weight class or may challenge one Olympic weight class above or below. Any wrestler who meets the performance benchmark in a non-Olympic weight class may challenge one Olympic weight class above or below.

4 - APPROVED WRESTLE-OFFS (SENIOR OLYMPIC WEIGHT CLASSES ONLY)

There will be no weight allowance for wrestle-offs.

The date, time, and location for the wrestle-off will be determined by the HPD taking into consideration the following factors:

- The wrestle-off will take place as early as possible, but no later than six (6) weeks prior to the start of the 2026 Senior World Championships;
- The wrestle-off will be held in the defending champion's city OR the most economical and cost-effective location, preferably in conjunction with another event;
- The injury status and any other restrictions of the athletes involved (if applicable);
- Nomination requirements and deadlines for selection;
- Appropriate preparation time for the athletes concerned;
- The athlete requesting a wrestle-off will be required to pay a fee of \$3,500 CAD within seven (7) days of receipt of confirmation of the wrestle-off. This fee contributes to covering associated costs with the wrestle-off (venue, officials, staff). Due to the exceptional nature of wrestle-offs, there is no guarantee that WCL will be able to cover all costs for affected athletes.

4.1 SENIOR CANADIAN WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIPS OR ANY INTERNATIONAL SELECTION EVENT WITH AAP RANKING IMPLICATIONS

The wrestle-off will be conducted as follows:

- The athlete requesting the wrestle-off (challenger) will wrestle the true second ranked athlete in a single match;
- If the challenger is successful against the true second ranked athlete, the wrestle-off will then continue between the number one ranked athlete from the Senior Canadian Wrestling Championships and the challenger in a best two (2) of three (3) matches. The number one ranked athlete from the Senior Canadian Wrestling Championships will be credited with one match up.

Final Ranking and Carding Points for All Involved Athletes

- Ranking and carding points for all affected athletes will be determined upon completion of the wrestle-off.
- For a challenger to receive ranking or carding points, they must win over, at a minimum, the current true second ranked athlete (i.e., if they do not win a match they will not be ranked).

4.2 INTERNATIONAL SELECTION EVENT WITHOUT AAP RANKING IMPLICATIONS

The wrestle-off will be conducted between the number one ranked athlete from the International Event Selection and the challenger in a best two (2) of three (3) matches. The number one ranked athlete from the International Event Selection will be credited with one match up.

4.3 GENERAL

Once the date of any wrestle-off is set, if any wrestler misses the wrestle-off, the wrestler who has missed the match will forfeit that match. If all wrestlers miss the wrestle-off, the number one ranked athlete from the selection event will be nominated for team selection.

If more than one wrestler is eligible for a wrestle-off in the same weight class then those eligible for the wrestle-off must first compete against one another, in a single elimination, one match wrestle-off, before having the opportunity to challenge the designated athletes as defined above.

4.4 COMMUNICATION

Once a wrestle off has been approved, the HPD will communicate this to the affected parties via email, along with the details of the wrestle-off as specified above.

5 - APPEALS PROCEDURE

The decision by WCL to grant an athlete a wrestle-off may be appealed in accordance with the procedures set out in the WCL Appeal Policy, as amended from time to time (<https://wrestling.ca/policy-manual/>).

6 - COMMUNICATION

This document will be circulated via email to all PTSOs as well as posted on the WCL website. WCL respectfully requests that the PTSOs share this document to their constituents by posting on their respective websites and email distribution. The responsibility of reading and understanding the policy lies with individual participants.

The policy will also be presented to the Athlete Council and athletes in general via a Town Hall Zoom Meeting.

Should any subsequent amendments be made to this policy, they will be circulated via email to all PTSOs as well as posted on the WCL website.

7 - MODIFICATION OF THIS DOCUMENT/UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES

In the event that circumstances beyond the control of WCL arise, including, but not limited to force majeure events, pandemics, changes made by UWW or WCL that prevents the fair implementation of this policy as written, the HPD reserves the right to determine an appropriate course of action, which may include the right to review and change any part of the document.

This clause shall not be used to justify changes after a competition or selection event which formed part of this document unless it is related to an unforeseen circumstance as described immediately above. This also allows for changes to this document that may become necessary due to a typographical error or a lack of clarity in a definition or wording before it has an impact on athletes.

In the event of a change to this document, WCL shall inform the membership of the changes and the reasons for those changes as soon as possible.

Further, situations may arise that do not allow this policy to be modified or applied as written due to time constraints or other exceptional and unforeseen circumstances. In such situations, any decision will be made by the individual(s) with decision-making authority, as stated in this policy, in consultation with the relevant individual(s) or committee(s) (as applicable), and in accordance with the stated objectives, philosophy and approach as stated herein. Should it be necessary to make any decision in this manner, WCL will communicate with all affected individuals as soon as possible.