

United States *Luge* Association

NGB MONTHLY ATHLETE STIPEND PROGRAM: 2011-2012 Program Year

Luge athletes must be on the Sr. National “A” Team, Sr. National “B” Team Select, or Jr. National Team (but expected to travel with the Sr. National Team for more than half the upcoming season) to be eligible for this program. The NGB Stipend Program calculations will be based on the results from the most previous season, but will take into account the results from the previous four years worth of Olympic Games and World Championships in setting the starting point for the calculations.

STIPENDS

Those athletes specified above who qualify for this program will start with the stipend amount noted below. There will be two stipend levels. The first level will include Olympic or World Championship medalists from the immediate past four years, while the second level will include Potential Olympic Medalists. The stipends, as computed based on this policy, are what an athlete could *potentially* receive each year, and are the amounts the USLA will put forward to the USOC as part of its annual High Performance Plan funding request, but the decision on funding (to whom and how much) is entirely up to the USOC.

LEVEL 1

Gold Medalist	\$48,000/year
Silver Medalist	\$42,000/year
Bronze Medalist	\$36,000/year

LEVEL 2

Potential Olympic Medalist	\$24,000/year
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Percentage of Stipend Received

Stipends are re-evaluated every spring according to the most recent season’s race results. Generally speaking, the USLA will forward its desired athlete stipend request to the USOC in the Spring, with a decision resulting in a new year of stipend payments beginning every July 1. The percentage of the stipend received will be determined by categories as noted in the chart below. Athlete ranks will be computed by using the better result from the Overall (Senior) World Cup standings or the (Senior) World Championships, taking into account only the maximum size of any nation’s Olympic Team of three men’s singles athletes, three women’s singles athletes and two doubles teams. In the Olympic season, the Olympic result will be used in lieu of the (Senior) World Championships. If an athlete does not race in the World Championships or Olympic Games due to any reason, other than injury, then the athlete will receive no rank and is not eligible for any stipend. The ranks are divided into these categories:

Category	Women Ranks	Men Ranks	Doubles Ranks
1	1-3	1-3	1-3
2	4-6	4-7	4-6
3	7-9	8-11	7-9
4	10 or higher	12 or higher	10 or higher

The stipulations for the amount of the stipend received are as follows:

1. The USLA will submit a request to the USOC for a Category 1 athlete at 100% of their current stipend Level. Athletes in this class will be noted as the USLA's highest priority in its request to the USOC.
2. The USLA will submit a request to the USOC for a Category 2 athlete at 85% of their current stipend Level. Athletes in this class will be noted as the USLA's second highest priority in its request to the USOC.
3. The USLA will submit a request to the USOC for a Category 3 athlete at 50% of their current stipend Level. Athletes in this class will be noted as the USLA's third highest priority in its request to the USOC.
4. The USLA will not automatically submit a request to the USOC for a Category 4 athlete but the coaching staff will have the discretionary right to submit athletes at this level for the consideration of the USOC. Athletes in this class will be noted as the USLA's lowest priority in its request to the USOC. If the USLA chooses to submit an athlete's name for consideration under category 4, they will do so at 50% of their current stipend Level.
5. If an Olympic or World Championship medalist from the last four years drops to Category 4 at any point in the ensuing four-year period, or takes a year off from competition, they drop from a Level 1 athlete to a Level 2 athlete.
6. For athletes in Category 1 that are remaining in Category 1 for the following year, the USLA will submit a request to the USOC that is 5% higher than their current stipend Level. For athletes in Category 2 and 3 that are remaining in Category 2 and 3 for the following year, the USLA will submit a request to the USOC that does not include the additional 5%.
7. An injured athlete's rank will be computed using only those competitions in which the athlete competed, and then, in the case of the World Cup series, extrapolated out to assign a point total and ranking as if the athlete had competed in all of the races in the series. If the athlete missed all international competitions, then the previous season's rank will be used provided the athlete is expected to make a full recovery and return to competition. For an athlete to be defined as an injured athlete, the following points must be satisfied.
 - A medical doctor with experience in sports injuries must have evaluated the athlete. The USLA's Executive Director and Head Team Physician (collectively referred to as the USLA for this paragraph) and the athlete must agree on which doctor is to do the evaluation. If the USLA and the athlete can not agree after a period of fifteen days, then the USLA's Head Team Physician will have the right to request the athlete to see a doctor of his/her choice. The athlete will have fifteen days in which to fulfill the request of the USLA. If the athlete does not fulfill the request, the USLA's Executive Director will have the right to immediately terminate payment to the athlete. If the athlete agrees to see the USLA's doctor, the USLA's doctor's decision will be final. The injury must be declared by the medical doctor to be of a nature that will interfere with top-level athletic performance.

- The athlete must be rehabilitating in a rehabilitation program developed by either a USLA approved medical doctor with sports injury experience or a USLA approved certified athletic trainer (A.T.C.) to return to top-level performance.

If a doubles team splits up, each athlete brings their results status with them to their new partner, but the USLA will only submit the name of a new doubles team to the USOC if they are named to the Sr. National Team, Sr. National Team Select, or Jr. National Team (but expected to travel with the Sr. National Team for more than half the upcoming season). The other partner, if not carrying over a result of his/her own, would then enter the program as a Level 2, Category 4 athlete.

Statement of Intent

Before athletes participate in this program, they will be required to sign an agreement. The agreement will include, among other things, a pledge by the athlete to maintain a high level of physical condition, as well as state that the athlete is not contemplating retirement during the course of the season. If the agreement is broken, then the USLA will require the reimbursement of the money received in the year in which the agreement was broken. In the event the USOC presents the athlete with a similarly themed agreement, the USOC's agreement will be sufficient to satisfy the requirements spelled out in this paragraph.

Two situations may occur in which the agreement will not be considered broken in the eyes of the USLA. First, an athlete announcing retirement may do so after the fall trip, or after the winter trip, without any penalty. Second, any career ending injury would also warrant no penalty. In the case of a career ending injury, payment from this program will stop from the day a medical doctor, with experience in sports injuries, declares the injury to be career ending. Both the USLA and the athlete must agree which medical doctor will perform the evaluation.

As per Stipulation Seven found previously in this policy, if the USLA and the athlete cannot agree on a doctor, after a period of fifteen days, then the USLA will have the right to request the athlete to see a doctor of its choice. The athlete will have fifteen days in which to fulfill the request of the USLA. If the athlete does not fulfill the request, the USLA will have the right to immediately terminate payment to the athlete. If the athlete agrees to see the USLA's doctor, the USLA's doctor's decision will be final.