

SPORT RULES, REGULATIONS & FORMAT

The following are the qualifying procedures and rules of competition governing the 2015 National Senior Games. These games will be held in Bloomington/Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota July 3 through July 16, 2015.

A. QUALIFYING DATES

The qualifying period for the 2015 National Senior Games will run from January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014.

Competition completed after December 31, 2014, will not be considered for qualifying for the 2015 National Senior Games.

B. QUALIFICATION OPTIONS

An athlete may qualify for the 2015 National Senior Games presented by Humana in several ways. The options include Qualify by Place; Qualify by Minimum Performance Standard (MPS); Qualifying Down; Reciprocal Qualification; Bonus Events and Limited Events. See Appendix A.

C. AGE FOR COMPETITION AT QUALIFYING SITES

Age divisions for all competition at qualifying sites shall be established by the Member Organization, within the following guidelines. A date later than December 31 of the qualifying year may not be used to determine the age division in which an athlete competes at the qualifying site.

Athletes must compete in a qualifying event and be 50 years of age on or before December 31, 2014, to be eligible for the 2015 National Senior Games.

D. AGE FOR COMPETITION AT THE 2015 NATIONAL SENIOR GAMES

Age division for all singles competition at the 2015 National Senior Games will be determined by the athlete's age as of December 31, 2015. Age division for all doubles and mixed doubles competition will be determined by the younger age of the two players as of December 31, 2015. Age division for all relay competition will be determined by the age of the youngest relay team member as of December 31, 2015.

Age division for all team competition will be determined by the age of the youngest team player as of December 31, 2015. For example, a team consisting of eight players ages 65 or older and one player age 63 will compete in the 60+-age division.

The following age divisions will apply to both men and women for all individual, doubles and relay competitions: 50-54; 55-59; 60-64; 65-69; 70-74; 75-79; 80-84; 85-89; 90-94; 95-99; and 100+.

All team sports are divided into the following divisions for both men and women: 50+; 55+; 60+; 65+, 70+, and 75+. In addition, 3-on-3 basketball shall have an 80+ age division.

Individual athletes may not use their performances at a qualifying event to qualify for a higher age bracket using the minimum performance standards of the higher age bracket.

E. QUALIFICATION FOR "LIMITED" EVENTS

The NSGA defines a "limited" event as one in which an athlete can qualify in ways other than by participating in a NSGA qualifying games. Events that are considered "limited" are 20K and 40K cycling, hammer throw, pole vault, triathlon and the following non-ambulatory sports - bowling, horseshoes and shuffleboard. The rules for qualifying for these events are as follows.

1. If a "limited" event is offered at the NSGA qualifying games in an athlete's home state, the athlete *must* qualify for that event by participating in a NSGA qualifying games and by satisfying the qualifying requirements for that event for athletes who compete in a NSGA qualifying games.

2. If a "limited" event is *not* offered at the NSGA qualifying games in an athlete's home state, the athlete may qualify for that event by meeting the following criteria:
 - a. For 20K or 40K cycling road race an athlete must submit verification of having completed two cycling road races of the event length or better between January 1 and December 31, 2014. Cyclists who complete two 40K or longer events may qualify for both events.
 - b. For pole vault an athlete must submit verification of having met the NSGA minimum performance standard for pole vault in any USA Track & Field sanctioned competition between January 1 and December 31, 2014.
 - c. For hammer throw an athlete must submit verification of having competed in two USA Track & Field sanctioned competitions between January 1 and December 31, 2014.
 - d. For triathlon an athlete must submit verification of having completed two triathlons between January 1 and December 31, 2014.
 - e. For non-ambulatory bowling, horseshoes and shuffleboard an athlete must submit verification of having competed in one non-ambulatory competition between January and December 31, 2014.
 - f. Athletes must submit to the NSGA office by no later than April 15, 2015, a Limited Event Verification form, available from the NSGA office, along with a copy of the official results or other public document illustrating the results.

F. DOUBLES PARTNERS

Doubles partners who qualify together are not required to play together at the 2015 National Senior Games. All participants must have qualified for the sport in which they intend to participate, with one partner having qualified in the event in which they intend to participate. The NSGA and LOC **will not** assign partners at the Games. Badminton, bowling, pickleball, racquetball, table tennis and tennis doubles partners must be of the same gender. Note: Badminton, bowling, pickleball, racquetball, table tennis and tennis also have a separate mixed doubles event. Shuffleboard doubles may be of mixed gender. All doubles and mixed doubles pairs will compete in the age division of the younger partner as of December 31, 2015. **You cannot compete in an age division younger than the youngest partner.**

Athletes may compete with only one partner per event. **At a NSGA Qualifier, you may partner with someone who has already qualified at another NSGA Qualifier.**

All Doubles teams made up of one in-state and one out-of-state athlete will be designated as an out-of-state team.

Athletes whose doubles partners are unable to compete may be replaced after the official registration deadline for valid medical reasons only. Determining valid change requests are at the discretion of the NSGA and may be made after the advertised registration deadline. The new partner must have qualified in the sport they wish to enter, at a qualifying state game.

G. TEAMS

A maximum number of players may be added to team rosters following qualification in accordance with the chart below:

Basketball:	3
Volleyball:	4
Softball:	5

Any player or any player/coach must have been listed on the roster of a team **as a player** that participated in a NSGA qualifying games in that sport to be eligible for addition to a roster. Documentation of player registration must be provided by the State Coordinator to the NSGA. All other team and qualifying rules apply. **Non-player(s) added to a roster are not subject to player addition limits.**

Team roster participants who are unable to compete may be replaced after the official registration deadline for valid medical reasons only. Determining valid change requests are at the discretion of the NSGA and may be made after the advertised registration deadline. The new team member or partner must have participated in the sport they wish to enter, at a qualifying state game.

All registration and team rules apply to non-playing coaches, non-playing captains and non-playing bench personnel with the following exceptions:

1. Non-playing coaches, non-playing captains or non-playing bench personnel may represent more than one team in the same sport, each of which must be in different age divisions.
2. Non-playing coaches, non-playing captains or non-playing bench personnel are not subject to age and gender requirements.
3. Athletes may compete with only one team per sport. Athletes who compete in a team sport may serve as a non-playing coach, non-playing captain or non-playing bench representative for additional teams in the same sport, provided the teams are in different age divisions. The athlete may not serve as a non-playing coach, non-playing captain or non-playing bench representative for a team in the same age division.
4. Non-playing coaches, non-playing captains or non-playing bench personnel are not required to meet qualifying standards for their sport. However, they must be listed on a team roster at the state level.

Age divisions for all team competition will be determined by the age of the youngest team player as of December 31, 2015.

H. RESIDENTS OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES

Individuals and teams from foreign countries may qualify for the national competition in the following ways:

1. By competing in an NSGA qualifying event and meeting the NSGA qualifying criteria for the event/sport.
2. By meeting the NSGA qualifying criteria in a "limited" event.

Sufficient information shall be submitted to the NSGA to document the athlete's accomplishment.

1. All results must be translated into English.
2. Athletes must be 50 years old on or before December 31, 2014.
3. Athletes must provide accurate contact information, including mailing address, email address, phone number and copies of photo identification. Photo identification must include date of birth.
4. Athletes must adhere to all rules and regulations of the NSGA, including entry deadlines.
5. Qualifying must take place between January 1 and December 31, 2014.
6. Residents of foreign countries who compete at the National Senior Games shall be eligible for all awards.

I. DETERMINING WHO QUALIFIES

NSGA qualifying games are responsible for determining qualifiers at their games and for advising the NSGA who has qualified. NSGA qualifying games that permit and encourage participation by out-of-state residents are classified by the NSGA as "open." (Note: This should not be confused with "limited" events.)

Each event allows for a specific number of qualifiers. If out-of-state residents qualify at an "Open" qualifying games, they will not take away a qualifying spot from a state resident. "Open" games may qualify the number of state residents specified for each event in addition to the out-of-state qualifiers. The NSGA definition of an athlete's state of residence is that state in which the person resides for at least six months out of the year.

All Doubles teams made up of one in-state and one out-of-state athlete will be designated as an out-of-state team.

Competition must take place to determine qualifiers. If there is only one individual entered in an age group, that athlete must enter and complete the event in order to be given the gold medal and to qualify for the National Senior Games. Athletes should be placed in the age division nearest their own in order to compete. Competition for the athletes in this "closest age division" shall be considered exhibition.

If there is only one team entered in an age division, that team should be given exhibition opportunities with the closest age division. No team shall be qualified without participating in a qualifying game.

The NSGA shall determine whether an athlete has met the qualifying criteria for "limited" sports events.

Athletes may also qualify by meeting or exceeding the Minimum Performance Standards (MPS) in Archery, Golf, Race Walk, Road Race, Swimming and Track & Field at a 2014 qualifying games. Athletes must meet or exceed the MPS based on their age in the 2014 qualifying year. In general, the MPS is based on the time, distance or score of the 6th place finisher from the previous National Senior Games, plus or minus 10% (Plus 10% for timed events; minus 10% for distance and scored events). If this formula would relax the MPS, a change will not be made and the previous MPS will continue to be used. An MPS will not be changed by more than 10% per Games. MPS shall decrease or be equal in difficulty as age division's increase. The NSGA reserves the right to use judgment based on experience when setting the standard, therefore, a standard may not always match the formula if applied to the results of the most recent National Games.

J. NSGA DEFINITION OF A PROFESSIONAL

Professional athletes shall not be eligible to compete in the National Senior Games in the sport in which they are a professional until 20 years after the date they last competed as a professional. They may compete in other sports in which they have not competed professionally.

A professional is someone who competes in a sport for money as a primary source of personal revenue. People who compete in a sport in which minor amounts of money are given as prizes are not deemed professionals. Individuals whose primary activity is teaching a sport but occasionally play for a minor amount of money are also not deemed professionals.

The NSGA shall have the final authority to determine who is deemed a professional for the purpose of competing in NSGA events. The NSGA reserves the right to determine professional status based on established National Governing Body (NGB) standards and professional competition history.

K. UNIFORMS AT THE NATIONAL SENIOR GAMES

PARTICIPANTS: All athletes must wear athletic-type clothing and shoes that are usual and customary for the sport in which they are competing. Street-type clothing and shoes that are inappropriate may cause disqualification. Competition Managers have been given authorization by the NSGA to make this determination.

TEAM UNIFORMS: Team clothing (shirts, pants, and shorts) must be of like design and color. Jerseys that are numbered on the front and back are highly recommended. Refer to each sport for specific details.

Uniforms shall be free of inappropriate symbols or wording.

L. PROTEST POLICY

Any person desiring to make a protest with regard to any aspect of competition at the National Senior Games shall make such protest to the Competition Manager of the competition in question. All protests must be written and submitted to the Competition Manager within 30 minutes of the conclusion of the game, match, heat, or event under protest. The Competition Manager will evaluate the protest and render a decision. If the Competition Manager's response to a protest is such that a further hearing is desired, a hearing may be requested with the NSGA Director of Events and Programs. This request must be made to the Competition Manager or NSGA Director of Events and Programs within 30 minutes of the initial protest denial. All decisions by the NSGA Director of Events and Programs are final and not subject to further appeal.

M. EVENT ENTRY LIMITS

Athletes may enter no more than two individual sports at the 2015 National Senior Games. Individual sports are as follows:

- Archery
- Badminton
- Bowling
- Cycling
- Golf
- Horseshoes
- Pickleball
- Race Walk
- Racquetball
- Road Race
- Shuffleboard
- Swimming
- Table Tennis
- Tennis
- Track & Field
- Triathlon

Except as noted below, there is no restriction to the number of events within an individual sport an athlete may enter. For example, in track & field the events are: 50, 100, 200, 400, 800 and 1500 meters; discus; hammer throw; high jump; javelin; long jump; pole vault; shot put and triple jump. Athletes may enter all the events within track & field for which they are qualified.

The exceptions are:

1. In **archery**, an athlete may enter only one event.
2. In **swimming**, an athlete may enter a maximum of six events, including bonus events.
3. In **tennis**, which has singles, doubles and mixed doubles events, athletes may enter only two events.

In addition to two individual sports, athletes may compete in **two team sports** (basketball, softball or volleyball). Athletes may compete in more than one team sport but may only be a player on one team roster per team sport. For example, an athlete may be on one basketball and one softball team but not two basketball teams.

The Local Organizing Committee (LOC) and the NSGA may place a cap on the total number of entries for any and/or all sports and/or events in the best interest of games management. At the time this rulebook was printed, the necessary caps had not been determined. Therefore, these rules will serve as a guideline for both the LOC and the NSGA. However, additional modifications may be made in order to meet the necessary caps. Member Organizations will be notified any time a cap or modification is necessary.

The NSGA and the LOC will not accommodate individual scheduling requests.

N. REQUIRED CREDENTIALS

Any player unable to provide the required credentials on the playing field shall be declared ineligible to compete until he/she can produce them. An opposing team manager may request verification of a player's eligibility. Should a player play and be unable to provide the required credentials he/she or his/her team will forfeit all games in which the player participated. A valid, government issued photo identification card, such as a driver's license shall be the only age and residency proof accepted.

For team sports, all non-playing coaches, non-playing captains and non-playing bench personnel must be credentialed for access to the field of play.

Medals and ribbons will only be issued to properly credentialed personnel.

The NSGA reserves the right to revoke any credential at any time.

O. SEEDING

All seeding shall be random except as follows.

1. Track and swimming heats will be seeded in accordance with standard national governing body procedures.
2. Table Tennis will use USATT rankings to assist in pool seeding if available.
3. Tennis will use USTA rankings to assist in seeding when available.
4. Racquetball will use USA Racquetball rankings to assist in the pool seeding.
5. Results of past National Senior Games will be used whenever possible.
6. Home state information will be made available to the Competition Manager. Every effort will be made to schedule preliminary round matches between players/teams of different geographic areas.

P. NATIONAL GOVERNING BODY RULES

All sports/events shall be governed by the rules of the NGB for that sport. The NSGA has modified some of these rules in the best interest of the participants. All rules shall apply as stated in the NGB and NSGA rulebooks. NGB rulebooks in effect the opening day of the National Games, shall govern the 2015 National Senior Games, unless otherwise noted.

In case of conflict between NGB and NSGA rules, NSGA rules shall govern.

Q. HOW TO SUGGEST A RULE CHANGE FOR SUBSEQUENT GAMES

Suggestions for rules changes may be made in writing to the NSGA up to 30 days after the 2015 National Senior Games. NSGA rules are reviewed and approved by the NSGA National Games Committee and Board of Directors and are normally published in February of qualifying years.

R. HOW TO SUGGEST THAT A NEW SPORT BE ADDED TO THE NATIONAL SENIOR GAMES

You may contact the NSGA if you would like to suggest that a new sport and/or event be added to the menu. You must include the following information:

1. An exact description of the sport/event.
2. The address, phone number and contact person for the national governing body for the sport/event.
3. The number of people ages 50 and older who participate in this activity.
4. The geographic distribution of people ages 50 and older that participate.
5. Anything else you think is important.

New sports and events are approved by the NSGA National Games Committee and Board of Directors.

S. DEFAULT DURING COMPETITION

Athletes or teams that forfeit during pool play rounds shall not be permitted to advance to the championship or consolation brackets except where such a forfeit is the result of a verified medical reason, or a good-faith effort was made to compete. Verification by a member of the Games' medical staff of an athlete's injury and capability to continue must be submitted to and subsequently approved by the Competition Manager and the NSGA prior to the athlete being permitted to continue. A good-faith effort to compete will be determined by the Competition Manager and the NSGA.

Athletes or teams that forfeit during championship or consolation play shall not be eligible for awards except where such forfeit is the result of a verified medical condition, or a good-faith effort was made to compete, and does not result in a Did Not Finish under NSGA or NGB rules. Their award spot will be left open and subsequent places will not be moved up. Verification by a member of the Games' medical staff of the athlete's injury must be provided to and subsequently approved by the Competition Manager and NSGA prior to receipt of any

awards. A good-faith effort to compete will be determined by the Competition Manager and the NSGA.

T. REPRESENTATION DURING NATIONAL GAMES

All athletes and teams must represent one of the Association's Member Organizations during competition at the National Games.

U. ADDITIONAL QUALIFIERS

The NSGA reserves the right to alter qualifying standards prior to competition.

V. POLICY FOR GOVERNING DETERMINATION OF GENDER FOR THE PURPOSES OF COMPETITION IN NATIONAL EVENTS

The following policy shall govern national competition sanctioned by the National Senior Games Association and serve as a guideline for Member Organizations.

The NSGA does not routinely require its participants to provide proof of gender. There may, however, be rare circumstances in which an athlete's gender may be called into question.

In these circumstances, an athlete shall be considered to have provided adequate proof of gender by presenting one of the following documents;

1. a valid photo identification card such as a driver's license, passport or green card that states the athlete's gender, OR
2. a copy of a valid in-force medical or health insurance policy that unequivocally states the athlete's gender.

Birth certificates shall not be acceptable.

W. NSGA Able Bodied Athlete Policy

The National Senior Games is comprised of nineteen sports for "able-bodied" athletes. At the discretion of the NSGA, athletes with physical disabilities may be allowed to compete insofar as any and all handicap devices used by the athlete falls within certain rules and regulations to ensure fairness in competition. The NSGA will abide by the rules of the National Governing Body of the athlete's sport to govern circumstances regarding athletes with disabilities in able-bodied competition for specific sport instances. The use of any technical device that incorporates springs, wheels or any other element that provides the user with an advantage over another athlete not using such a device will be prohibited in athletic competition.

X. NSGA Non-Ambulatory Athlete Policy

The National Senior Games is comprised of three "limited" non-ambulatory sports – bowling, horseshoes and shuffleboard. The NSGA will abide by the rules of the National Governing Body of the athlete's sport to govern circumstances regarding athletes with disabilities. The NSGA has the right to modify the rules depending on the abilities of the participants.

Y. NSGA Banned Substance Policy

The NSGA does not currently test for banned or performance enhancing drugs. If an athlete is found to be using drugs by any other agency they will also be banned from future NSGA competitions.