



The 2027 Code Companion for Athletes

UPDATED JUNE 2026

The Code

The Code exists to protect your health, support fair competition, and protect your right to compete on a level playing field. Every 6 years the Code is updated. The newest version comes into effect on January 1, 2027. This Companion is here to help you get ready!

The Code applies to you, and to other people too

The Code applies across all sports and countries around the world. Expand the boxes below to find out who the Code applies to.

- **Athletes:** Athletes at all levels, including international, national, talented, and recreational athletes must follow the rules of the Code.
- **Athlete Support Personnel (ASP):** The Code also applies to ASP, such as coaches, trainers, medical staff, team officials, and parents.
- **Anti-doping Organizations (ADOs):** International Federations (IFs), National Anti-Doping Organizations (NADOs), and Major Event Organizations (MEOs) are also required to follow the Code as they establish anti-doping rules and programs.

The International Standards

The Code is supported by International Standards, which provide detailed requirements for education, testing, results management, TUEs, data protection, investigations and more. These standards help ADOs build and manage their anti-doping programs. The International Standards have all been updated for 2027 too.

An athlete-centered system

The changes to the 2027 Code and International Standards make anti-doping fairer, more balanced, and more athlete centered. Changes have been made based on past experiences, developments in science, technology, and human rights, and based on feedback of more than 600 athletes and athlete commissions across over 60 countries and 70 sports.

Here is what Ryan Pini, WADA's Athlete Council Chair, has to say: "Code now further reinforces and emphasizes human rights, proportionality, due process, privacy, and athlete welfare. It's an evolution that recognizes athletes as whole people, not just competitors. Feeling that dignity and fairness are woven into the rules provides reassurance during stressful moments."

Human rights and well being

WADA worked with human rights experts to identify risks to athletes' rights and improve fairness, privacy, and due process in the 2027 Code.

Protected Persons

Under the 2027 Code, there are stronger protections for Protected Persons. These athletes are more vulnerable and need additional safeguards. If you are a Protected Person, the system focuses more on your safety and investigating those around you.

- **Note:** A Protected Person includes athletes under 16 and people who are not legally able to make decisions for themselves under national law. If you are between the age of 16 and 18, you are a protected person unless you are in a Registered Testing Pool (RTP).

The 2027 updates affect many parts of the anti-doping system. The next sections will explore these updates in more detail and explain what they mean for you as an athlete.

Education – What's new?

Education is important and is your right! You should be educated about anti-doping before you are tested (i.e., take part in doping control). You must make yourself available for education - this means showing up and participating whenever and however your Anti-Doping Organization (ADO) offers it.

The education journey

Education is important for everyone and needs to be delivered to athletes in whereabouts pools, minors competing internationally, Athlete Support Personnel (ASP) like coaches and medical professionals, and athletes dealing with potential Anti-Doping Rule Violations (ADRVs) or serving periods of ineligibility. Education should be delivered throughout your career as an athlete and when you are educated in person (either live or virtual), it needs to be by an educator - someone who has been specially trained to deliver education.

Unintentional doping

Along with other anti-doping topics, you need to be educated about the risks of unintentional doping. This means learning about the risks of supplement use and other kinds of contamination that can lead to an accidental positive test.

Event-specific education

A key change from 2027 is that athletes attending a major event should receive education related to that event (event-specific education). This ideally includes education about the anti-doping rules and program of the event provided in advance (pre-event education) as well as educational activities at the event itself (event-based education) to ensure athletes have access to relevant and helpful anti-doping information related to the event.

Data protection – What's new?

Anti-doping programs collect a lot of personal information. It's important and needed to run an anti-doping program effectively. Data protection in anti-doping protects your personal information with clear rules, strong safeguards and accountability.

Defending your data

ADOs have to apply data protection measures across everything that they do (like processing TUEs or Doping Control Forms (DCFs), or planning tests, or collecting whereabouts information).

Extra security

ADOs have to assess all their anti-doping processes and plan how they will protect the data and personal information they collect. Your information needs to be kept safe the

whole time your ADO has it. When information is extra sensitive, your ADO needs to apply even more security measures to make sure it's kept safe.

TUEs – What's new?

A TUE allows athletes to use a prohibited substance or method for a legitimate medical reason. The 2027 updates make the TUE process clearer, simpler and more consistent across organizations.

TUE information and processes

ADOs must now provide clear and easy-to-find TUE information on their website including TUE procedures and ways to apply. Once a complete TUE application or a request to recognize an existing TUE is submitted, a decision must be made within 21 days. What does this mean for you?

- **Timely decisions:** Clear timelines help ensure that applications are reviewed and resolved within a predictable timeframe. You are not left wondering whether your TUE is approved or how long the process will take.
- **More transparency:** You know where to find TUE information and what to expect from the process, including how long decisions will take.

When do TUEs apply?

If you are granted a retroactive TUE, this will only apply to the past use of a substance or method and cannot be used for future treatment. If you are granted a prospective TUE, it can be set to begin at a future date. For example, before your current TUE expires.

Automatic recognition

Starting in 2027, TUEs granted by a NADO will be automatically recognized by the relevant IF or MEO if athletes become international-level or compete at a major event. If you have a valid national-level TUE, you do not need to apply for a new TUE to the IF or MEO. Instead, you will need to send a request for your TUE to be automatically recognized. Some IFs or MEOs may choose not to automatically recognize certain TUEs. This information will be available online, so it's important to always check their website. If your TUE is not automatically recognized, you will need to apply to your IF or MEO as soon as possible for recognition. If you have any questions about TUE recognition, you can contact your NADO or IF.

Key changes

- **Education:** Education now plays a larger role in anti-doping, with earlier guidance, event-specific education, trained educators, and a greater focus on unintentional doping risks.
- **Data protection:** Stronger privacy rules improve how your information is collected, stored, shared, and protected.
- **TUEs:** The TUE process is now clearer, with predictable decision times and improved recognition across organizations.

Now that you've explored how the 2027 Code and International Standards help to keep you informed and protected, let's look at how the updates apply to your testing experience.

Testing – What's new?

Testing is one of the most direct experiences athletes have with anti-doping. It helps detect doping, deter cheating, and protect fair competition. Testing can happen anytime and anywhere, both in-competition and out-of-competition. Athletes may be tested at competitions, training facilities, hotels, or even at home.

Updates to notification

The 2027 Code introduces clearer and more transparent notification procedures to ensure fairness and consistency. So, what does this mean for you?

No shower rule

Athletes may be granted short delays for valid reasons, such as attending a medal ceremony, fulfilling media commitments, receiving necessary medical treatment, or cooling down after competition, but they must remain under observation by the chaperone or Doping Control Officer at all times. Once you have been notified, you must remain under observation and go straight to the Doping Control Station (DCS). If you have to provide a urine sample, you cannot request a delay for a shower beforehand because it can affect the integrity of the testing process.

Gender neutrality

In mixed-gender or “open” events, you will be asked to state your sport gender. This is the gender that you compete in under the sport's rules. If the sport does not specify, or

you are unsure, you can choose the gender (i.e., female or male) of the DCO observing your sample provision. Once chosen, your preference is recorded and will apply to future tests.

Minors and representation

A parent or representative should be present when a minor is tested. However, if one is not available, the test will still proceed and will not be canceled. This is because participation in sport includes acceptance of anti-doping rules and sample collection procedures.

Where possible, a representative may participate remotely (e.g., by video call) to support the athlete and observe the process. This helps protect your rights and allows the process to move forward smoothly.

Whereabouts requirements – What's new?

Being in a whereabouts pool comes with specific responsibilities. The 2027 updates aim to make those responsibilities clearer and more predictable. Here's what's changing.

- **Types of whereabouts pools:** for 2027, the 3 kinds of whereabouts pools have been clarified
 - **A Registered Testing Pool (RTP)** – made up of the top tier of athletes who are subject to the most thorough testing standards out-of-competition
 - **An individual Testing Pool (TP)** – includes individual athletes from sports that pose a lower risk than those Athletes on a RTP
 - **A team Testing Pool (TP)** – requires teams to submit joint location and training schedules, rather than forcing individual players to report

The consequences of not submitting whereabouts are different from one pool to another. You will be notified in writing if you are in any of these whereabouts pools.

- **Whereabouts filing deadline:** From 2027, if you are in an RTP or an individual TP, the deadline for submitting your quarterly whereabouts information will be the 15th of the month before each quarter begins. This means:
 - Q1 (January–March) submit by December 15
 - Q2 (April–June) submit by March 15
 - Q3 (July–September) submit by June 15
 - Q4 (October–December) submit by September 15

If you are in a team TP, then these quarterly filing deadlines might apply but there might also be some differences. Your ADO should explain these to you as needed.

- **Proportionate testing and notification of RTP athletes:** for 2027, the number of tests an RTP athlete will need to undergo has been clarified, and will be proportionate to how long they are in the RTP. For example:
 - Full year: at least 3 out-of-competition tests
 - About 6 months: at least 2 out-of-competition tests
 - 3 months or less: at least 1 out-of-competition test

In exceptional circumstances, a DCO may make a "last chance" phone call if they are unable to locate you for out-of-competition testing during the final 5 minutes of your 60-minute time slot.

Additionally, all efforts to locate you must now be documented. This creates a clear and transparent record of what happened, reducing disputes and improving consistency across cases.

Adams and athlete identification

ADAMS (the Anti-Doping Administration & Management System) is the secure online platform used by ADOs and athletes to manage key information related to testing. ADAMS is where you submit your whereabouts, receive important updates and manage your anti-doping profile.

Passport-style photo

Under the 2027 International Standard for Testing (IST), athletes in a RTP or individual TP are required to upload a passport-style photo in ADAMS. This will help DCOs correctly identify you during testing, especially in out-of-competition situations.

Key changes

- **Testing:** Testing procedures now provide more clarification around athlete notification, sample collection, and athlete rights during the testing process.
- **Whereabouts:** Whereabouts requirements are now better defined, with respect to deadlines, proportionate testing expectations, and updated ADAMS requirements.

Now that you've explored the changes to your testing experience, the next section will look at what happens when you face a potential rules violation.

Results management – What's new?

Results management begins when there is a potential anti-doping rule violation (ADRV). This may include a positive test result, refusal of a test, or tampering. Any of these could lead to ADRV which could affect your eligibility, reputation, and career. The 2027 Code places a stronger focus on fairness, transparency, and independence related to the results management process.

Notification

If you test positive (i.e., receive an Adverse Analytical Finding (AAF)), you will be notified within 21 days of the lab reporting the AAF. You will also receive clearer explanations about your rights, and whether you are entitled to apply for a retroactive TUE. In your notification letter, you will be offered the opportunity to provide substantial assistance or other valuable information. If you do, up to 15% of the period of ineligibility could be suspended.

Provisional suspensions and appeals

From 2027, there will be more reasons and ways that an ADO can lift a provisional suspension and there will be information in your ADO's rules on how to appeal provisional suspension decisions. You will be provisionally suspended if your AAF involves a substance that is classified as non-specified on the List (e.g., EPO or testosterone).

Simplified case resolution

To help move the process along and make things more efficient, some sanctioning processes have been simplified.

- **Early admission:** If you accept the ADRV and all its consequences within 20 days of the notice of charge and provide an explanation, you can receive a 25% reduction in the period of ineligibility.
- **TUE-related cases:** If you have a legitimate medical condition that meets the TUE criteria, but you did not apply for a TUE, are not eligible for a retroactive TUE, and test positive for a prohibited substance, you will likely receive a two-month period of ineligibility.

Independent hearings

The 2027 Code strengthens the independence of the hearing process. People from national sports governing bodies or other national sports organizations are not allowed to be involved in results management activities. They cannot sit as hearing panel members in a case involving an athlete from their same sport and country as this is a conflict of interest. Hearing panels must remain independent and objective. Decisions should be issued within two months of the hearing, helping reduce delays and uncertainty for you, the athlete.

Hearing process for athletes with impairments

ADOs need to consider and implement any reasonable adjustments or modifications that can help the hearing process accommodate athletes with impairments. If you are an athlete with an impairment, your ADO should communicate with you to determine what you need.

Intelligence and Investigations – What's new?

Anti-doping is not only about testing. Intelligence and investigations also help detect doping, identify patterns, and protect clean sport. Under the 2027 rules, ADOs must use intelligence and investigations more effectively to guide testing and their anti-doping activities. This helps make anti-doping programs more informed and targeted.

Evidence-based investigations

Investigations must now be based on reasonable cause. ADOs cannot begin investigations without good reason to suggest a possible ADRV or breach of the Code or International Standards have occurred. Investigations must also remain objective and impartial. Investigators are expected to keep an open mind and look for evidence both supporting and disproving a possible violation.

Focus on ASP

The updated rules place greater attention on Athlete Support Personnel (ASP).

ADOs must now investigate any ASP (e.g. coaches, trainers, medical professionals) who has provided support to more than one athlete found to have committed an ADRV and the results of these investigations need to be reported to WADA right away. This places

responsibility beyond individual athletes and creates greater accountability within the athlete's environment.

Protection for minors and athlete rights

Explore the key protections, rights, and responsibilities for minors, and other athletes involved in intelligence and investigations.

- **Protections for minors and protected persons:** Investigations involving minors and protected persons must include additional safeguards. These investigations focus more on the adults around the athlete while also protecting athlete privacy and wellbeing. If an ADRV case involves a minor or protected person, the ASP supporting that athlete must be investigated.
- **Athletes rights:** You are expected to cooperate during investigations, but you also have important rights. You cannot be forced to admit wrongdoing and may receive legal representation at your own expense.

Confidentiality

All information and evidence obtained in an investigation is treated confidentially and only shared on a need-to-know basis.

Key changes

- **Results management:** Results Management now places greater focus on fair outcomes, timely communication, independent hearings, and stronger athlete appeal rights
- **Intelligence and Investigations:** Intelligence and Investigations are now more evidence-based and athlete-focused, with greater accountability for ASP and stronger protections for minors and protected persons

You've now explored key updates in the 2027 Code and International Standards, what these mean for you and how they ensure fairness in sport. Return to this Companion any time to refresh your understanding of the changes and stay informed about your role in protecting clean sport.