Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games

Information for families and friends of Olympic and Paralympic team athletes
Acknowledgments

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INTRODUCTION

The Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games are fast approaching.

The Australian Olympic Committee (AOC) intends to send a team of about 450 athletes to the Games, accompanied by 250 support personnel. Expectations for the 2016 Australian Olympic Team are high, with a goal to achieve a top-five finish on the medal tally.

The Australian Paralympic Committee (APC) will select a team of approximately 170 athletes with 140 support personnel. This is the largest team Australia has sent to a Paralympic Games. The Australian Paralympic Team finished fifth on the overall medal tally in 2012, and is hoping to achieve the same result, or better, in 2016.

Athletes from across the country are working hard to gain selection to the 2016 Australian Olympic and Paralympic Teams, and in so doing, many will realise a lifelong dream.

The AOC and APC recognise the importance of an effective support structure for athletes which can improve their ability to gain selection to an Australian Olympic or Paralympic Team and compete successfully on the international stage.

Australian athletes are surrounded by the very best coaching, sport science and medicine, and personal excellence personnel. However, their greatest supporters, are their families and friends - many of whom have been with them since the start of their sporting journey.

This information booklet is designed to enhance the support that families and friends provide Olympic and Paralympic Team athletes, regardless of experience level.

FAMILIES AND FRIENDS...WELCOME TO THE TEAM!
PRE-GAMES PREPARATION

Tickets

Organising tickets
Friends and family members who plan to attend the Games may have already booked or planned to book tickets and accommodation.

Athlete friends and family members are responsible for coordinating their own tickets and accommodation. It is not the responsibility of athletes or coaches.

Please note the AOC and APC do not have event tickets available for sale.

Purchasing tickets
Tickets to the Games are limited so purchase them early to avoid disappointment. Ticketing agents will try to support requests, but this may not always be possible.

Olympic Games and Paralympic Games

CoSport Australia is the Rio 2016 Authorised Ticket Reseller (ART) and the official provider in Australia. CoSport is working closely with the AOC and APC to ensure Australian Olympic and Paralympic Team supporters have the best access to Games tickets. Tickets are expected to sell out for most events so it may not be possible to secure tickets for all events.

CoSport details
Suite 304, Level 3
220 George Street
Sydney, NSW 2000
Australia
Telephone: 1800 668 5701
Website: cosport.com
Email: info@cosport.com.au

Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games
Athlete Family and Friends program

Olympic Games

Rio 2016 has set up an Athlete Family and Friends program for the Rio Olympics. This aims to provide each athlete with the opportunity to purchase two tickets for the event they are competing in. Only one ticket may be offered for Swimming events because of the high number of participating athletes. These tickets will be sold and distributed through Rio 2016 ticket box offices. Rio 2016 will confirm this process.

To find out more and for updates on the Rio Athlete Family and Friends program, visit rio2016.olympics.com.au/rio-games/tickets-for-fans

Paralympic Games

Rio 2016 has set up an Athlete Family and Friends program for the Paralympic Games in Rio. This aims to provide each athlete with the opportunity to purchase two tickets for the event they are competing in. This is with the exception of sessions in Swimming, where only one ticket may be offered because of the high number of participating athletes. Tickets will be sold and distributed through Rio 2016 ticket box offices. Rio 2016 will confirm this process.

To find out more and for updates on the Rio Athlete Family and Friends program, visit paralympic.org.au/game-events/

Accommodation

Olympic Games

CoSport can also assist with accommodation arrangements, or family and friends can make their own arrangements online. Check the CoSport website for information: cosport.com/olympics/ticketshotelpackages.aspx

Paralympic Games

CoSport can also assist with accommodation arrangements, or family and friends can make their own arrangements online. Check the CoSport website for information: cosport.com/paralympics/ticketshotelpackages.aspx

Tip

There may be other family members or friends from an athlete’s sport, or the broader Australian Team, who would be keen to share the cost of room hire, food, or even form a cheer squad.

Make contact with other parents before heading to the Games and develop your own parental support network.
Selection/non-selection

Many athletes are yet to be nominated or selected for the Olympic or Paralympic Teams. It is important family and friends are sensitive to their situation to ensure they don’t place undue pressure and expectations on them. It may be necessary to make plans independent of athlete selection.

For information on selection, visit:
> Paralympic Games: paralympic.org.au/event/rio-de-janeiro-2016/

Support available for Athletes

For any athletes seeking wellbeing support contact Personal Excellence: www.ausport.gov.au/ais/personal_excellence/contact_us, your national sporting organisation (NSO) or your State Academy/Institute of Sport (SIS/SAS) performance psychologist.

Planning for communication during the Games

Family members and friends should be prepared that communicating with athletes during the Games will be difficult. It is recommended that communication ‘rules of engagement’ with athletes are discussed and planned before the Games start.

Topics that should be discussed and agreed with athletes include:
> Nominate one contact point – one family member or friend should be the main point of contact for the athlete.
> Leaving messages – determining whether to leave messages or not.
> Establish a contact plan – outline who contacts whom, when and how. For example, an athlete rings one family member or friend, and they pass on messages to others.
> Agree on the timing and duration of calls – an athlete’s preparation, recovery and sleep are critical to performance so it is best to plan the most suitable times for communicating.
> Agree on which subjects are taboo – some athletes prefer not to talk about their preparation, performance or their sport at all.

Other considerations that may affect communication during the Games include:
> phone access may be difficult in the village
> athlete’s mobiles may be turned off at certain times
> unreturned calls
> limited computer or email access could make immediate responses from athletes to your emails difficult
> different time zones
> athletes may be distracted and not as attentive as usual.

Family and friends should consider maintaining usual behaviour and communication used for previous national or international sporting events.

The Olympic and Paralympic Games can also be stressful for family and friends. It is recommended a support network independent of athletes is planned so no undue pressure is placed on athletes during the Games.

Tips for communicating

> Consider when you call – calls and text messages from a mobile phone can be highly distracting when an athlete and/or their roommate is trying to rest.
> Check your time zone before you call – it might be useful to pre-arrange call times.
> Avoid late-night calls where possible.
Communicating family-related issues

It is important to establish a plan for dealing with, and communicating, family-related issues with athletes during the Games. This should be included in the communication ‘rules of engagement’ plan. Family members should discuss their athlete’s preferences, the nature of the issues they wish to be notified of, and the appropriate procedure for doing so.

Some examples of issues that might arise include:

- a family pet dies
- a death in the family
- a family member wins the lottery
- a car accident (major or minor)
- family accommodation in Rio is not good
- tickets are lost
- luggage is lost
- seats at the venue are average
- children are ill

Key contacts

The AOC and APC will distribute a list of important numbers (such as emergency contacts) closer to the Games. Athletes are encouraged to share these with family and friends. Team Leaders are another point of contact for family and friends.
**DURING THE GAMES**

**Minimising potential distractions**

Family members and friends will likely be excited by the Olympic or Paralympic Games and watching athletes perform. Minimising distractions will ensure athletes’ preparations stay on track and they have the best possible opportunity to achieve their best.

Sometimes family and friends can have an unintended negative effect on an athlete’s performance by ‘over-involving’ themselves or inadvertently distracting athletes from their task.

Things that may cause distraction or unintentional pressure on athletes include:

- requesting athletes or coaches to obtain event tickets
- interrupting an athlete's optimal performance focus or routine
- requesting an athlete to ‘spend time with the family’
- acting differently than at other events
- requesting access to Team housing ‘just to visit’
- late-night phone calls
- stress about family and friends accommodation and/or travel issues
- being unaware of athlete commitments to the Olympic or Paralympic Team.

**Team policies**

The AOC and APC have various policies regarding communications such as mobile phones and village visits. Family and friends are asked to take these policies into consideration when making plans with athletes.

**Opening Ceremonies**

The Opening Ceremony for the Rio 2016 Olympic Games will be held on the evening of Friday 5 August in the Maracanã Stadium.

The Paralympic Games Opening Ceremony will be at 6pm on 7 September and coincides with Brazil’s Independence Day which is a national holiday.

Athletes may choose to miss their Opening Ceremony depending on their competition schedule. Some sports place restrictions on marching in ceremonies, for example athletes competing in the first three days of the Games may be restricted from marching. Many athletes who miss the Opening Ceremony enjoy participating in the Closing Ceremony at the end of the Games.

While the ceremonies may only last three hours, the entire process can take more than eight hours.

**Event schedules**


Transport to venues

While some family and friends are veterans of attending and supporting an athlete at the Olympic or Paralympic Games, others are first timers. Whichever the case, it is useful to plan your travel well ahead of time. What normally takes 30 minutes may take two hours or even longer during the Games. So be prepared.

Olympic Games
Rio 2016 Olympic Games tickets also include access to public transport.

Paralympic Games
Your Rio 2016 Paralympic Games ticket does not include public transport and you will be required to pay for your public transport ticket.

Plan now!

The Rio 2016 website has information on transport options: rio2016.com/en/rio-de-janeiro/maps/transport-map

For information on the venues, visit: rio2016.com/en/venues-map

To learn more about Rio visit: visit.rio/en/home-2

More information in regards to transport can be found at: rio2016.com/en/rio-de-janeiro/maps/transport-map

Preparation tips

- Plan to arrive early and enjoy the atmosphere of the Games.
- Allow time for security checks on the way into venues.
- Arrive in time for the commencement of the match or event.

Travel tips

- Venues will be very busy so allow time for airport-style security and ticket checks.
- Plan and book transport – allow plenty of time for the journey.
- Avoid driving to venues.
- Plan the return journey.
- Follow instructions from transport staff on the day of events.
- Bring Rio 2016 event tickets when travelling on public transport.

Security

Rio 2016 has pledged a safe and secure Olympic and Paralympic Games which everyone can enjoy.

The AOC, APC and the Australian Government will work together with Rio 2016 to ensure the Australian Team remains safe and secure during the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Family and friends are encouraged to register their details on the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade website before they travel to the Games. Travel advice is also provided on this website: smarttraveller.gov.au

Tips

- Be vigilant
- Try not to wear or carry expensive items
Athlete village

During the Games, the Olympic and Paralympic Village will comprise of residential apartments for about 17,000 athletes and officials, along with shops, restaurants, medical, media and leisure facilities and large open spaces.

Under the AOC Team Membership Agreement and APC Athlete Team Membership Deed, an athlete is not allowed to stay outside the village, even after competing, without permission from the Chef de Mission.

As athletes must stay in the village, they may at times feel confined by these restrictions. It is important family and friends encourage the athlete and support them in adhering to Team requirements. Village life is an important part of the Olympic or Paralympic Games experience and allows the athlete to meet other competitors and watch their performances. Friends and family can support them to enjoy this incredible experience.

Village guest passes will not be available for family and friends in Rio. All guest passes will only be allocated for performance and operational needs.

Family and friends meeting point(s)

Olympic Games

There will be an opportunity for family and friends to meet their athletes at The Edge, the Australian Olympic Team’s off-site hub 1.5km from the Olympic Village. The Edge will be a welcoming and secure environment for athletes to relax and meet up with their loved ones. There will be an outdoor undercover lounge area including televisions with the Channel 7 coverage.

The Edge is located at Rua Estelita, 607, Barra da Tijuca, which is approximately 15 minutes by taxi from the Village. Bookings are required and athletes may request bookings through their Team Leader. Family and friends will need to show photo identification. Access hours will be advised closer to the games. Please be aware performance and Team commitments over the course of the Games will determine when athletes can meet up with their loved ones.

Paralympic Games

Paralympic athletes will have the opportunity to meet with Family and Friends at the Metropolitano Shopping Centre in Barra (Av. Embaixador Abelardo Bueno, 1300 - Barra da Tijuca). This shopping centre has a large number of specialty shops, cafes and restaurants, and is a safe and friendly environment where athletes can relax with loved ones. The shopping centre is approximately 5km from the Athlete Village and approximately 10-15 minutes travel time.

All accredited athletes and officials can access a shuttle from the village directly to the shopping centre. Family and friends can use Rio’s bus system, BRT, and get off at the stop Centro Metropolitano.

Team members based in Ipanema during training and competition can meet family and friends at Armazem Devassa (Rua Vinicius de Moraes, 49 Ipanema Rio de Janeiro) and Kraft Cafe (Rua Aníbal de Mendonça, 55 - Ipanema). These locations are within 100m of each other and will serve as meeting points, offering a great selection of meals and drinks.
POST-EVENT AND POST-GAMES

Athletes may be required to participate in post-event and post-Games activities, such as team sponsor appearances and celebration parades, and may not be able to return home immediately after their Closing Ceremony.

The AOC and APC will charter flights to bring the Team home after the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Please check with AOC and APC websites for further details closer to the event.

Athletes may also be involved in a number of welcome home functions that involve touring around the country. They may not be aware of these requirements until after they have competed. The AOC and APC will notify athletes at the Games of their participation requirements and appreciate the support of family and friends in allowing this time commitment.

After the natural high of competition at the Games, there is typically a letdown period. Returning to everyday activities after the excitement of the Olympic or Paralympic Games may be difficult and it is normal for athletes to feel this way. Any concerns friends or family members have regarding an athlete’s behaviour can be raised with their coach or support staff. The Personal Excellence program network and sport psychologists across the country are available to assist athletes through this process.

Elite Athlete Brief Counselling Support (EABCS) program

Preparing for and coping with the unique challenges of training, selection and participating in an Olympic or Paralympic Games can be a test for even seasoned elite athletes.

To ensure athletes are supported on their journey to and beyond the Games, the Australian Government has committed additional funding for an extended network of personal excellence and psychological support to all AOC or APC shadow squad athletes.

This is in addition to the support services already offered by Personal Excellence and sport psychology networks that athletes may be accessing within their home institute or academy of sport, or through the Team psychologist appointed by their NSO.

Athletes can arrange a referral by contacting their home institute or academy of sport psychologist, their Personal Excellence consultant, or their NSO-appointed team psychologist, who will support them to identify their needs and the most suitable support service consultant to address those needs. More information on this program can be found at: ausport.gov.au/ais/personal_excellence
ANTI-DOPING

Drugs in sport is a serious issue and one that all elite athletes must understand and accept. Anti-doping procedures in place for the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games will be in accordance with the World Anti-Doping Code and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and International Paralympic Committee (IPC) Anti-Doping Rules. Athletes must be aware of policies and agreements applicable to them. Family and friends are asked to assist with this process. If there is ever a question about the status of a substance, contact the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority (ASADA). Athletes must also comply with Athlete Whereabouts requirements. If they are experiencing any difficulties with compliance, they should speak to their NSO, or check the ASADA or World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) websites.

Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority

Website: asada.gov.au/
Email: asada@asada.gov.au
Hotline: 13-000-ASADA; (13-000-27232)
Athlete Whereabouts: whereabouts.asada.gov.au/

Check your Substances: checksubstances.asada.gov.au/
Anti-Doping Administration and Management System login: wada-ama.org/en/adams
WADA: wada-ama.org/

Hypnotics

Be aware there is an AOC policy in place regarding the use of particular hypnotic medications. Support your loved one by directing them to Team medical professionals for assistance with sleep if they are experiencing difficulties before or during the Games.
THINGS TO REMEMBER

For most athletes, this is their opportunity to realise an important personal dream. Family and friends have an important role to play as their support network. Some tips to provide the best level of support for athletes include:

Pre-Games

› Organise tickets and accommodation early, remembering it is not the athlete’s responsibility.
› Develop and agree on communication ‘rules of engagement’.
› Nominate a single contact person to make it easier on athletes.
› Establish a plan for dealing with, and communicating, family-related issues with athletes during the Games.

During the Games

› Establish a support system outside of the athletes – family and friends may also find the Olympics or Paralympics stressful and need to talk to someone about these issues.
› Keep to established routines as much as possible.
› Treat the Olympic or Paralympic experience the same as any other overseas international tournament.
› Accept that athletes may need to say ‘no’ due to the pressure of performance or other Games commitments.
› Families and friends may be contacted by members of the media. Only discuss topics that are familiar. If assistance is required, the media liaison officers working with the Australian Olympic and Paralympic Teams may be able to assist.
› Take care, and have a plan with your loved one regarding your social media use during the Games. The AOC and APC encourage responsible use of social media so support your athlete in their approach to social media.
› Remember to not place too much pressure on athletes in regard to performance expectations.
› Most importantly, enjoy the experience of the Games and be proud of the athlete/s you are supporting.

Post-Games

› Athletes may be required to participate in post-event and post-Games activities, and may not be able to return home immediately after their Closing Ceremony.
› Returning to everyday activities after the excitement of the Olympic or Paralympic Games may be difficult and it is normal for athletes to feel this way.
› If family and friends are concerned about their athlete’s behaviour, they can reach out to the athlete’s coach and support staff for support.
› The unique challenges of being an elite athlete can test even the greatest of champions. Athletes should look to seek support if they are feeling the emotional highs and lows of selection, non-selection, planning for retirement and life’s other demands.
› The Personal Excellence program network and sport psychologists across the country are available to assist athletes.
› The Elite Athlete Brief Counselling Support (EABCS) program is an additional support service available to AOC and APC shadow squad athletes.
KEY CONTACTS AND USEFUL WEBSITES

Australian Olympic Committee:
olympics.com.au

Australian Paralympic Committee:
paralympic.org.au

Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games:
rio2016.com/en

International Olympic Committee:
olympic.org

International Paralympic Committee:
paralympic.org

National Personal Excellence network contacts:
ausport.gov.au/ais/personal_excellence/contact_us

Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade:
smarttraveller.gov.au

Lonely Planet information for Rio:
lonelyplanet.com/brazil/rio-de-janeiro

Currency information:
ofx.com/en-au/