

USFA Age Group Policy

The Executive Committee of the United States Fencing Association passed the following resolutions this week in order to clarify some misunderstandings regarding age group eligibility in sanctioned fencing competitions:

1. To reaffirm the motion of the Coaches Committee, approved by the USFA Board of Directors on September 21, 1996, regarding age eligibility in USFA competition, as per the attached.

2. That the age restrictions set forth in the motion of the Coaches Committee, approved by the USFA Board of Directors on September 21, 1996, regarding age eligibility in USFA competition, were based upon considerations of safety and pedagogy that apply with equal force at all levels of competition, and the restrictions set forth therein shall be enforced at all levels and in all sanctioned USFA competitions.

It is the hope of the Executive Committee that this clarification of previously adopted practices will eliminate any and all confusion regarding Age Group Eligibility in sanctioned competitions.

Thank you.
Dana Brown, USFA

MOTION RE: AGE ELIGIBILITY FOR USFA COMPETITIONS: CLARIFICATION OF PREVIOUS ACTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MOTION: For any USFA competition that is not specifically stated for a certain age category; e.g., Youth or Cadet or Junior or Veterans, the athlete must be at least 13 years old as of January 1 of the fencing season. The fencing season is the same as the membership year, August 1 through the following July 31.

The only exception to this rule is:

•An athlete under the age of 13 on January 1 of the fencing season who is on the Junior national point standings will be allowed to compete in any competition as long as the athlete meets any other criteria required for that competition, e.g., holding a certain classification.

With the rapid growth of fencing in the US, especially among the young developing athlete, it is imperative that the motion passed ten years ago be applied to all USFA competition, especially in light of the safety issue addressed in the Coaches Committee report...

•The age eligibility for juniors and cadets follows the rules of the FIE which state that as of January 1 of the fencing season athletes must be at least 13 years old and under 20 to compete in Junior World Cup competitions and Junior World Championships and at least 13 years old and under 17 to compete in Cadet World Championships.

Examples of non age restricted competitions are: "Unclassified", "A" competitions, "C" or under competitions, team competitions of any category unless specified for juniors or similar age restricted category.

It has been the rule of the USFA that age restrictions are applied to Junior, Cadet and Youth competitions such that athletes on an age category national point standings may fence one age above their age group even if they are younger than the minimum for the next age group. The specific exemptions are given below.

For all USFA Junior Competitions: athlete must be between ages of 13 and 19 years as of January 1 of the fencing season. The exception will be those athletes younger than 13 as of January 1 who are on the Cadet national point standings at the time of that USFA competition.

For all USFA Cadet Competitions: athlete must be between ages of 13 and 16 years as of January 1 of the fencing season. The exception will be those athletes younger than 13 as of January 1 who are on the Youth 14 national point standings at the time of that USFA competition.

For all USFA Youth 14 competitions: athlete must be between ages of 11 and 14 years as of January 1 of the fencing season. The exception will be those athletes younger than 11 as of January 1 who are on the Youth 12 national point standings at the time of that USFA competition.

For all USFA Youth 12 competitions: athlete must be between ages of 9 and 12 years as of January 1 of the fencing season. The exception will be those athletes younger than 9 as of January 1 who are on the Youth 10 national point standings at the time of that USFA competition.

For all USFA Youth 10 competitions: athlete must be between ages of 7 and 10 years as of January 1 of the fencing season. There are no exceptions for Youth 10 competitions.

No person who is under 7 years of age as of January 1 of the fencing season will be eligible to compete in any USFA competition.