



ATHLETE SPONSORSHIP AND ADVERTISING REGULATIONS

**Milano Cortina 2026
PARALYMPIC WINTER GAMES**

November 2025

INTERNATIONAL PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1. Context and Purpose

These Regulations address the key principles relating to the use of Athletes in Advertising as applicable to the Milano Cortina 2026 Paralympic Winter Games. They seek to put Athletes in a better position to work with their personal sponsors in a manner consistent with their rights and responsibilities as a Paralympic athlete. An Athlete's personal sponsor is referred to in these Regulations as the Athlete Sponsor.

The IPC recognises that many factors contribute to an Athlete's success, including the financial support an Athlete may receive from an Athlete Sponsor who provide funding and material assistance towards training and preparation.

Commercial funding is also critical to the IPC, NPC(s) as well as International and National Federations, as it enables them to deliver a range of athlete services and programmes, including taking those athletes to the Games. Through its own sponsorship and commercial programmes, the IPC seeks to raise funds that enable all teams to prepare for and compete at the Games and deliver services that benefit the entire Paralympic Movement.

During the period of the Games, it is necessary to strike a balance between acknowledging the individual commercial support from Athlete Sponsors that benefits some Athletes, and the role played by Games Sponsors in making the Games happen and sustaining the Paralympic Movement for the benefit of all Athletes.

The purpose of these Regulations is to address the responsibilities of Athletes in their relationship with their Athlete Sponsors. It aims to outline what Games sponsors, Media Rights Holders, and commercial organisations can do before and during the Games if they wish to use Athletes to promote and market their goods and services.

The key principles are outlined in the second section of these Regulations in order to provide Athletes and Athlete Sponsors with information so that they can work together for their mutual benefit and run well planned campaigns that do not seek to take undue advantage of the Games themselves.

2. Scope and Implementation

Every Athlete that is accredited to compete at the Games makes a commitment to abide by all rules and regulations applicable to the staging of the Games, including these Regulations. All Athletes are permitted to promote their own Athlete Sponsors, and every Athlete Sponsor is permitted to use Athletes in their Advertising, in accordance with these principles outlined by the IPC and those of the NPCs. Those key principles are set out below and in other applicable policies such as the IPC Social and Digital Media [Guidelines](#).

The commitment given by each Athlete as a condition of participation in the Games is also reproduced as part of the key principles to ensure that Athlete Sponsors understand what Athletes are expected to do and therefore how they may work with Athletes in a manner that allows them to comply with their obligations as Paralympians.

Each NPC is responsible for adopting these Regulations using their own discretion and reflecting their national laws, customs and arrangements (including funding models). As a result, the implementation of these Regulations may vary from country to country. The only exception to this is an International Campaign that targets more than one country, where the IPC will take responsibility.

3. Interpretation

The following terms are used throughout these Regulations:

Advertising: any form of commercial promotion, marketing campaign or events designed to promote the goods and/or services of a company or brand, or relating to a commercial relationship with such company or brand, including social media and social network posts (whether paid-for or not), paid-for advertising (such as press advertisements, billboards, television and radio advertisements and online advertising), direct advertising, PR (including personal appearances and press releases), product promotion, lending, or gifting of products to Athletes, on-product, and in-store promotions.

Athlete: any athlete, coach, official who receives an accreditation to participate in the Games.

Athlete Sponsor: a third party who isn't a Games Sponsor that sponsors or endorses an Athlete or wishes to use an Athlete in its Advertising.

Congratulatory Messages: supporting messages expressing encouragement to an Athlete or a National Paralympic Team or messages of congratulation acknowledging the achievements of an Athlete or a National Paralympic Team during the Games.

Games: the Milano Cortina 2026 Paralympic Winter Games to be held in between 6 and 15 March 2026.

Games Period: For the purpose of these Regulations, the period from 27 February to 17 March 2026, which are the dates from when the Paralympic Village opens until it closes.

Games Sponsors: the Worldwide Paralympic Partners and domestic sponsors appointed by Milano Cortina 2026, who all have rights to sponsor and associate with the Games.

International Campaign: Advertising that includes Athletes from two or more countries shown with equal prominence and is targeted with consistent messaging and a balanced promotional presence.

IPC: the International Paralympic Committee.

IPC Handbook: the IPC's rules and regulations, available on the IPC website (as updated from time to time and published at <https://www.paralympic.org/ipc-handbook>).

IPC Social and Digital Media Guidelines: enables athletes to share their personal experiences at the Paralympic Games while protecting the Paralympic Games Media Rights Holders.

Media Rights Holder(s): media companies that have been granted the right by Milano Cortina 2026 to broadcast the Games in one or more territories.

Milano Cortina 2026: the Milano Cortina 2026 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games Organising Committee.

National Campaign: Advertising that includes one or more Athlete(s) from the same country that is intended for publication or for delivery in that one country (including because it is in the local language of that country and/or is published in media outlets of that country) that requires a partnership agreement with that NPC and/or prior NPC approval.

NPC: the National Paralympic Committee of a country participating in the Games.

National Paralympic Team: the Paralympic team of a country selected by an NPC to take part in the Games.

National Paralympic Team Uniform/Kit: Any form of clothing including competition and non-competition wear and accessories that can be used to identify the members of a National Paralympic Team

Paralympic Stakeholder: the IPC, Milano Cortina 2026, Games Sponsors, Media Rights Holders and/or NPCs and their National Paralympic Team.

Paralympic Properties: Properties owned by the IPC as defined in the IPC Handbook and for the purposes of these Regulations which include but may not be limited to:

- the Paralympic Symbol;
- the Paralympic Motto;
- the terms "Paralympic", "Paralympiad" and Paralympian;
- any Games specific intellectual property, including the words Milano Cortina 2026 and 2026 Games, the Games emblem and the Games pictograms, graphics and mascot;
- any emblem of an NPC or the National Paralympic Team
- any content such as film, music, imagery, artwork, designs or graphics created by or for the IPC, Milano Cortina 2026
- any other symbols, designs, words or expressions that are translations of, or which are confusingly similar to, those listed above.

Paralympic Movement: means the movement of which the IPC is the worldwide governing body and which is comprised of the IPC, the IPC Members, the Recognised International Federations, and any other persons that participate in Para sport or are involved in the promotion, organisation and/or delivery of Para sport (as such terms are defined in the IPC Handbook).

Worldwide Paralympic Partner: any worldwide commercial partners of the Paralympic Movement (who are also part of The Olympic Partner Programme) as listed on the IPC's website (www.paralympic.org).

ATHLETE SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES KEY PRINCIPLES

1. Athlete Commitment

For the purpose of these Regulations and participation in the Games, Athletes make the following commitment

not to allow his/her name, image, likeness, sport performance or other individual attributes to be used in Advertising if such use directly or indirectly creates or implies an association with the Games, the Paralympic Movement and/or a Paralympic Stakeholder when no such association or relationship exists.

The concept of "association" means in particular any kind of contractual, commercial or corporate relationship or structural connection between the Athlete Sponsor and the Games, the Paralympic Movement or a Paralympic Stakeholder or the provision by the Athlete Sponsor of financial or other support for or in connection with the Games or a Paralympic Stakeholder.

2. Honouring the Athlete Commitment

I am an Athlete: what can I do?

- **Key Principle:** All Athletes are permitted and encouraged to secure Athlete Sponsors. The IPC aspires to promote the ability of and opportunities for athletes to leverage opportunities to generate income from their sporting career.
- An Athlete may feature in Advertising, whether through personal appearances or licensing his or her image rights, provided the Athlete commitment is respected and the Advertising does not suggest there is any association between the Athlete Sponsor and the IPC, the Paralympic Movement, the Games and/or a Paralympic Stakeholder.
- During the Games Period an Athlete may continue to give recognition to his/her Athlete Sponsor (whether a Games Sponsor or not) on the Athlete's personal websites and personal social media accounts by issuing a message of thanks that references their Athlete Sponsor(s). Any such message must respect the following principles:

- it shall not contain any statement or give any impression that the Athlete Sponsor and its products or services enhanced the Athlete's performance;
 - it must not suggest there is any association between the Athlete Sponsor and the IPC, the Paralympic Movement, the Games and/or a Paralympic Stakeholder including by using any of the Paralympic Properties;
 - must comply with the [IPC Social and Digital Media Guidelines](#) published on IPC website.
 - it must be consistent with any social media guidelines issued by the Athlete's own NPC that apply during the Games Period and whilst the Athlete is a member of their National Paralympic Team; and
 - it shall not contain or be linked to any Advertising, including through use of any hashtags, mentions, pre-rolls or other similar functionality, that serves to promote or advertise the Athlete Sponsor or otherwise use language that connects the Athlete Sponsor to the Games.
- Each NPC shall determine how many messages may be posted by an Athlete thanking his/her Athlete Sponsor during the Games Period. A single identical message, posted at the same time on several social media platforms, should be counted as one (1) message for these purposes. Should an NPC not specify the maximum number of messages that may be posted during the Games Period the maximum shall be one (1). This restriction does not apply before 12am on the first day of the Games Period or after 12am following the last day of the Games Period.
 - During the Games Period, Athletes are encouraged to repost or share content from the IPC, Milano Cortina 2026 or their NPC's official social media accounts. However, such reposts or sharing **must not** add any references to their Athlete Sponsors.

I am a Games Sponsor: what can I do?

- Games Sponsors may at any time use an Athlete in Advertising (whether a National or International Campaign) and issue Congratulatory Messaging.
- In each case, a Games Sponsor shall ensure it:
 - is acting in accordance with the terms of its sponsorship agreement, including any requirement to comply with country specific guidelines for National Campaigns and, if required, securing prior approval for the proposed Advertising from either the IPC, Milano Cortina 2026 or the NPC;
 - obtains any necessary consents from the Athlete(s);
 - for National Campaigns it has a sponsorship agreement with the applicable NPC;
 - does not make any claim or reference that its goods or services enhance sporting performance; and

- only uses the image of an Athlete in his/her National Paralympic Team uniform, kit if the Games Sponsor has been granted rights by the applicable NPC to do so and/or unbranded clothing.

I am a Media Rights Holder: what can I do?

- A Media Rights Holder may:
 - use an Athlete in a National Campaign at any time in order to publicise their forthcoming coverage of the Games; and
 - publish supporting messages on its digital platforms expressing encouragement to an Athlete or the National Paralympic Team or issue Congratulatory Messaging.
- A Media Rights Holder shall ensure it:
 - is acting in accordance with the terms of its broadcast agreement, including any requirement to secure prior approval for the proposed National Campaign from the NPC;
 - obtains any necessary consent from the Athlete;
 - only uses the image of an Athlete or of the National Paralympic Team in the territory in which the Media Rights Holder has been granted rights;
 - if it has permission to do so from the NPC, only uses Athletes in their National Paralympic Team uniform or unbranded clothing.
 - does not directly or indirectly create or imply an association between a third party (such as a broadcast sponsor or content partner) and an Athlete, the Games or a Paralympic Stakeholder when no such association exists.

I am an Athlete Sponsor: what can I do?

- An Athlete Sponsor may use an Athlete in Advertising (as part of a National or International Campaign) provided the Advertising meets the following conditions:
 - it respects the Athlete Commitment such that the only connection between the Games and/or a Paralympic Stakeholder and the relevant marketing activity is the fact that the Advertising features the Athlete;
 - is in market prior to **5 December 2025** (three months prior to the Games Period). Exceptions to this will be considered on a case-by-case basis as part of any notification process, including where an Athlete may not have secured their participation in the Games prior to this date;
 - does not use any of the Paralympic Properties;

- only uses the Athlete in generic, unbranded clothing and not the Athlete's National Paralympic Team uniform or kit (whether from a previous Paralympic Games or the Games) when the Athlete Sponsor is not an NPC Sponsor; and

complies with relevant national legislation, **Key Principle**: if the Advertising complies with the above conditions, it may be maintained throughout the Games Period provided there is no material change in the Advertising whether such change is to content, messaging, visibility, frequency or places of publication.

- For all International Campaigns, the Athlete Sponsor must notify the IPC of its Advertising plans at least fifteen (15) days prior to first publication and demonstrate how it meets (and will continue to meet) the above conditions
- For National Campaigns the Athlete Sponsor shall notify and comply with all requirements issued by the NPC (including any requirement for prior consent and any timeframes required to secure that consent). If an NPC has not published any such requirements the Athlete Sponsor shall notify the IPC at least fifteen (15) days prior to first publication and comply with the provisions of these Regulations.
- The principles outlined in these Regulations must be respected and, in notifying the IPC or the NPC, the Athlete Sponsor should demonstrate (amongst other factors) that it has a long-term relationship with the Athlete. For social media Advertising it is not necessary to provide advance notice of each individual post, but notice should be given of the overall social media plan including the nature and planned content of the posts.
- During the Games Period an Athlete Sponsor:
 - shall not issue any Congratulatory Messaging unless expressly permitted by an NPC; but
 - may repost, share or like an Athlete's thank you message (see above) provided the Athlete Sponsor does not add any additional content or branding to the Athlete's original thank you message (and the Athlete Sponsor may only repost, share or like each thank you message once).

3. Athlete Story Telling and the WFSGI Project:

In order to recognise and ensure the continuity of their long-standing support of Athletes, NPCs and to the wider Paralympic Movement, the IPC and the World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry (WFSGI) have agreed that certain sporting goods brands will be able to promote their Athletes and NPCs before and during the Games Period subject to specific conditions.

4. Who should I contact for further information?

At a national level, it shall be the responsibility of each NPC to oversee compliance with these Regulations, either by incorporating the Key Principles into their own rules and regulations or by ensuring their Athletes understand these Regulations. For International

Campaigns, the IPC will publish further information about how to submit Advertising for the IPC's advance review and approval.

Each Athlete shall ensure that their Athlete Sponsor is also aware of these Regulations. It is the Athlete's responsibility to comply with these Regulations.

In the event there are questions regarding these Regulations the relevant stakeholder should be contacted. If you are:

- **an Athlete:** please contact your NPC;
- **a Worldwide Paralympic Partner:** please contact by email partnerships@paralympic.org
- **a Media Rights Holder:** please contact the IPC broadcast@paralympic.org
- **an NPC Partner:** please contact your NPC or, in the case of NPC Italy, Milano Cortina 2026
- **an Athlete Sponsor:** where the enquiry and request for permission relates to:
 - **a National Campaign:** please contact the NPC of the country where the National Campaign is targeted or, in the case of NPC Italy, please contact Milano Cortina 2026.
 - **an International Campaign:** please contact the IPC (who will liaise with any NPC or Milano Cortina 2026, as relevant) by emailing partnerships@paralympic.org.
 - **WFSGI:** please contact by emailing aoneal@wfsgi.org.

For a contact list of NPCs please see [here](#).

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