



NOTICE TO STATE CHAIRS

Updated Drug Testing Protocol

Effective: March 14, 2026

Greetings State Chairs,

As the leader in drug-free sport, USA Powerlifting has been working to improve our drug testing platform. We have developed a new protocol that goes into effect **March 14, 2026**. Please share this information with every meet director in your state. You may forward this notice directly.

As the use of performance enhancing drugs continues to evolve, we are implementing significant changes that will reduce the number of drug tests collected at each meet while increasing the scope of substances we test for at every level of competition.

We expect this to be a work in progress and welcome your questions and comments.

Major Changes

1. **New Testing Laboratory and Expanded Panel.** All samples, from local to National level, will be analyzed using a comprehensive custom panel developed in collaboration with our laboratory scientists. Samples will be sent to Sports Medicine Testing and Research Laboratory (SMRTL) in South Jordan, Utah. Redwood Toxicology will no longer receive samples. This custom analysis covers a significantly broader scope of performance enhancing substances and can be modified as PED use evolves.
2. **Increased Cost, Reduced Testing Percentage.** The expanded analysis increases the cost to \$140 per sample. To offset this, we are replacing the 10% testing requirement with a tiered table (see end of this document) that results in approximately 5% testing, particularly at the local and state level. This table will be included in every meet supplies package and approved sanction letters.
3. **Meet Director Reimbursement Discontinued.** We will no longer be offering meet director reimbursement for drug testing. However, the reduction from 10% to approximately 5% testing should result in overall meet costs remaining comparable to current levels. Meet directors must still meet all sanction obligations and submit results in a timely manner.
4. **New Chain of Custody Forms.** Beginning with March meets, meet directors requesting new supplies will receive orange Chain of Custody forms. Any meet director with orange forms falls under these new guidelines. All meets from March 14, 2026 forward are subject to these requirements.



5. **Dedicated Lead Doping Control Officer.** A dedicated Lead DCO is required at all meets at the State level and higher. Doping Control must be treated as a priority, not an afterthought. Requirements vary by meet level (see below).

Requirements by Meet Level

Use the attached table to determine the required number of drug tests based on the number of lifters. The following additional requirements apply:

Local Meets

- A DCO must be appointed to ensure tests are performed correctly, paperwork is complete, samples are sealed properly, and shipments are handled correctly.
- Ideally, the DCO does not have referee responsibilities.
- No dedicated Lead DCO is required.

State Meets

- **All Open National records must be tested** and count toward the required number of samples.
- **A Lead DCO must be assigned** by the Meet Director.
- DCOs must be scheduled and must not have conflicting referee responsibilities.

Regional Meets

- **All Open National records must be tested** and count toward the required number of samples.
- **A Lead DCO must be assigned** and is considered as critical as the Technical Secretary position.
- DCOs must be scheduled and must not have conflicting referee responsibilities.

National Meets

- **All National records must be tested.** This is in addition to the required number per the table, ensuring that record-holders are not the only athletes tested.
- **A Lead DCO must be assigned** and is considered as critical as the Technical Secretary position.



Arnold Sports Festival

- **All World and National records must be tested.** This is in addition to the required number per the table, ensuring that record-holders are not the only athletes tested.
- **A Lead DCO must be assigned** and is considered as critical as the Technical Secretary position.

Lead DCO Role

The Lead DCO is responsible for overseeing all aspects of drug testing at a meet. At Regional and National meets, this is a compensated position integral to the success of the drug testing program.

Responsibilities:

- A. Schedule DCOs, coordinating with the Meet Technical Secretary if necessary
- B. Coordinate with the USA Powerlifting Anti-Doping Coordinator
- C. Review rosters and existing National records to determine potential test count, allowing for additional supplies
- D. Determine DCO staffing needs; recruit and secure DCOs for the event
- E. Ensure the Doping Control Station has private bathrooms, water, tables, and chairs
- F. Select candidates for testing, confirming records with the Jury
- G. Assign athletes to DCOs, noting platform and flight
- H. Meet with DCOs before each session to review procedures and expectations
- I. Oversee all drug testing procedures and paperwork
- J. Prepare samples for shipment and deliver to shipping facility
- K. Organize and upload paperwork to the National Office and Anti-Doping Coordinator



Qualifications and Selection:

Meet Level	Lead DCO Qualification	Selected By	Compensation
Local	No Lead DCO required; DCO ideally has no referee duties	Meet Director	Meet Director discretion
State	State Referee or higher; no referee duties during meet	Meet Director	Meet Director discretion
Regional	National Referee or higher (State Referee with 5+ years acceptable)	Meet Director	Meet Director discretion
National	National Referee or higher	Anti-Doping Coordinator	See compensation schedule below

Lead DCO Compensation (National Meets):

Event	Lead DCO Stipend
Arnold Sports Festival	\$500/day
High School Nationals	\$500/day
Collegiate Nationals	\$500/day
Masters Nationals	\$500/day*
Raw Nationals	\$500/day*
Bench/Equipped/Adaptive Nationals	\$300-\$400/day

**Same Lead DCO used if Masters and Raw Nationals are held at the same location concurrently.*

Lead DCOs at National Meets will also be reimbursed for travel expenses (airfare or mileage) and hotel fees.

Doping Control Officers (DCOs)

- Any referee who qualifies for a USA Powerlifting meet may serve as a DCO.
- DCOs at National Meets are compensated at \$75 per session. Compensation at Local, State, and Regional meets is at the Meet Director's discretion.
- DCOs must not accept assignments that conflict with DCO duties. They take direction from the Lead DCO and must be available from the last flight of bench press until testing is complete (which extends beyond Awards Ceremonies).

Interested in Serving as Lead DCO? Any qualified referee interested in serving as Lead DCO for a National Meet should contact Joanne Craig at jcraig@usapowerlifting.com. Lead DCOs for 2026 National Meets will be appointed; an application process may be implemented after the first year.



Questions?

A webinar for State Chairs and Meet Directors will be held **Wednesday, February 11, 2026 at 7:30 PM EST**. Details will be distributed separately. In the meantime, please direct questions to Joanne Craig at jcraig@usapowerlifting.com.

Thank you for your continued commitment to drug-free powerlifting.

Sincerely,
Paulie Steinman

President, USA Powerlifting



Drug Testing Requirements Table

Use this table to determine the minimum number of drug tests required based on the number of lifters at your meet:

Lifters	Tests	Lifters	Tests	Lifters	Tests
Up to 20	1	601-620	31	1201-1220	61
21-40	2	621-640	32	1221-1240	62
41-60	3	641-660	33	1241-1260	63
61-80	4	661-680	34	1261-1280	64
81-100	5	681-700	35	1281-1300	65
101-120	6	701-720	36	1301-1320	66
121-140	7	721-740	37	1321-1340	67
141-160	8	741-760	38	1341-1360	68
161-180	9	761-780	39	1361-1380	69
181-200	10	781-800	40	1381-1400	70
201-220	11	801-820	41	1401-1420	71
221-240	12	821-840	42	1421-1440	72
241-260	13	841-860	43	1441-1460	73
261-280	14	861-880	44	1461-1480	74
281-300	15	881-900	45	1481-1500	75
301-320	16	901-920	46	1501-1520	76
321-340	17	921-940	47	1521-1540	77
341-360	18	941-960	48	1541-1560	78
361-380	19	961-980	49	1561-1580	79
381-400	20	981-1000	50	1581-1600	80
401-420	21	1001-1020	51	1601-1620	81
421-440	22	1021-1040	52	1621-1640	82
441-460	23	1041-1060	53	1641-1660	83
461-480	24	1061-1080	54	1661-1680	84
481-500	25	1081-1100	55	1681-1700	85
501-520	26	1101-1120	56	1701-1720	86
521-540	27	1121-1140	57	1721-1740	87
541-560	28	1141-1160	58	1741-1760	88
561-580	29	1161-1180	59	1761-1780	89
581-600	30	1181-1200	60	1781-1800	90