



RULEBOOK

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Current updates highlighted in blue or ~~deleted with strikethrough~~

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1. General Information

1.1. Introduction

- 1.1.1. The rules, policies, and procedures outlined in this rulebook apply equally to all USA Powerlifting-sanctioned events.
- 1.1.2. The rules, policies, and procedures outlined in this rulebook are prescriptive in nature, describing what is allowed. As such, unless specifically listed as allowed, exceptions/variances/alternatives are not allowed. In other words, that which is not specifically identified in this rulebook as allowable/permissible/legal is assumed to be prohibited and not legal.
- 1.1.3. Questions about the rules, policies, and procedures outlined in this rulebook can be directed to the USA Powerlifting Technical Committee at the following email address: tc@usapowerlifting.com. Additional resources are provided on the [Technical Committee page of the USA Powerlifting website](#).
- 1.1.4. The [USA Powerlifting website](#) has numerous resources including national meet qualifying standards, membership purchase, organizational policies and by-laws, national calendar of events, records, links to state websites, and information published by various organizational committees. General questions not related to this rulebook should be directed to the [National Office](#).
- 1.1.5. All rules- and referee-related proposals (i.e., anything found in the Rulebook or related supplementary materials) passed at the NGB meeting are effective the following January 1.
- 1.1.5.1. The Executive Committee can, at its discretion, change the implementation date of any new rule or policy from the automatic January 1 start date to any date it sees fit, including making it effective immediately, if it is determined that the rule/policy change is time-sensitive and in the best interest of the organization.

1.2. Membership

- 1.2.1. In order to compete in any USA Powerlifting event, lifters must have a current USA Powerlifting membership. Several membership categories exist (open, master, junior, teen, youth, and Special Olympian). For more information about membership, including prices and how to purchase a membership, please visit the [Membership Section of the USA Powerlifting website](#).
 - 1.2.1.1. The non-compete membership category is reserved for those who will not compete but want to be entitled to all other benefits of membership (e.g., coaches, referees). Non-compete members are not subject to drug testing. Members who switch from the non-compete category to a regular membership category will be added to the registered testing pool (RTP), must submit a completed whereabouts form, and must declare which meet they will be competing in.
- 1.2.2. Annual membership covers the period of January 1 through December 31. All memberships expire on December 31 each year. Purchase of a membership on or after November 1 of each year will be valid until December 31 of the following year. For example, a membership purchased on November 1, 2023 would be valid until December 31, 2024 whereas a membership purchased on October 31, 2023 would be valid only until December 31, 2023.



- 1.2.3. The preferred method for obtaining a membership is an online purchase that can be made via the national website. Once the purchase is complete, the purchaser will receive, via separate emails, a payment receipt and a membership card. The membership card is what must be shown as proof of membership (either a hard copy or electronic copy of the membership card is acceptable). A payment receipt alone is not considered proof of membership.
- 1.2.3.1. Memberships can be purchased with a paper application but additional fees apply.
- 1.2.4. All lifters, referees, meet directors, committee members, and administrators participating in USA Powerlifting-sanctioned competitions, national meetings, and any other form of official USA Powerlifting business must maintain current USA Powerlifting membership.
- 1.2.5. At regional, national, international, and pro championships, coaches must have a current USA Powerlifting membership in order to access the lifter areas (e.g., warmup room, staging and on-deck area, and coaching area near the platform).

1.3. State Affiliation

- 1.3.1. At the time of membership purchase, members must indicate their state of residence for USA Powerlifting purposes. This is based on residence mailing address. Members may not claim residency in multiple states simultaneously. Outside of the United States, the term “state” may have different interpretations/meanings in different countries (e.g. province). Throughout this rulebook, the term “state” will be used.
 - 1.3.1.1. Out-of-state college students have the option of registering in either their home state or the state in which their college is located.
 - 1.3.1.2. Members of the Armed Forces have the option of registering in the state of their permanent residency or in the state of their base assignment.
- 1.3.2. A lifter who is registered in one state during the year and then moves to another state has the option to maintain the original state residency registration, compete in that state’s championships, and qualify for state records until December 31 of that year. If the lifter chooses to compete in the state championships of their new state, the lifter must re-register using the new state residency. The lifter will receive a new membership card with the new address at no additional charge and will then be able to compete in the state championships of the new state as well as qualify for setting state records in that new state.
 - 1.3.2.1. A lifter may compete in only one state championship per year. A lifter may only compete in the state championship of their USA Powerlifting residency and must be registered as a guest lifter if they want to compete in another state’s championship. This applies even if a lifter’s state does not have a state championship. Lifters who are [non-state resident] guest lifters are allowed to compete in state championships (at the discretion of the meet director) but they are not eligible for awards/placings other than awards/placings that the meet director may, at their discretion, offer specifically for a “guest lifter division.” Guest lifters may set state (for their home state) and national records and may earn a qualifying total for another event (e.g., national championship). When state championship results are submitted after the completion of the event and it contains guest lifters, the results will not be approved unless all guest lifters are classified/coded as “Guest Lifters.” Guest lifters are subject to all normal rules of competition and drug testing and must meet the same qualifying criteria to enter the meet.



- 1.3.2.2. State championships will have an exclusive registration period for state residents only. This period of time must be announced prior to the opening of registration and must specifically identify the opening of registration and the deadline to register. During this period, only state residents will be able to officially register. Concurrently, a separate application process will be available for guest lifters from other states, managed through a program of the meet director's choice (e.g., Google Sheets). After the registration deadline for state residents, the number of remaining open spots will be assessed. Any unfilled spots will then be allocated to guest lifters based on the order of application submission. Selected guest lifters will be notified and provided with instructions to complete their registration.
- 1.3.3. Lifters may not simultaneously set state records in two different states.
- 1.3.3.1. If a lifter re-registers in their new state, they could hold records in two different states with the respective records set during different meets.

1.4. Club/Team Affiliation

- 1.4.1. Any group of lifters competing as a team at any level of competition must be a team/club officially registered with USA Powerlifting. The following are the requirements to register a club/team:
- Complete the Club Registration Application (found at www.usapowerlifting.com).
 - Pay the annual registration fee.
 - Club must contain at least three USA Powerlifting members.
 - Club must identify a president and secretary.
- 1.4.1.1. The only exception to item 1.4.1 is that USA Powerlifting club registration is not required in order to receive team awards at any local/state level event in which "high school" and/or "collegiate" and their sub-divisions (such as junior varsity and varsity) are the only divisions offered (e.g., Georgia High School State Championship).
- 1.4.2. The USA Powerlifting registered club/team may be composed of registered lifters from any state.
- 1.4.3. Lifters will designate club/team affiliation and will be limited to competing for that specific club/team.
- 1.4.4. Each lifter may represent only one local/state team and/or one national championship team of his or her choice during the registration year. Lifters may be members of both a national championship team and a local/state team at the same time. A lifter may not change team affiliations in the middle of the registration year. Changes in club/team affiliations may only be made during the registration for the next year.
- 1.4.5. **State Championship.** Each USA Powerlifting registered club/team may compete as a team at only one state championship. This state championship will be the residence state of the club/team as established by the mailing address of the club/team president. During the state championship, only those club/team members with a residency in that state (as evidenced by the mailing address of their USA Powerlifting membership card) may be included on the team roster.
- 1.4.6. **Regional Championship.** Any USA Powerlifting registered club/team may compete as a team in the regional championship which includes the state of the registered team. During a regional championship, only those club/team members with residency in the contested region may be



included on the team roster.

- 1.4.7. **National Championship.** Any USA Powerlifting registered club/team may compete as a team in any national championship sanctioned by USA Powerlifting. During the national championships, the team roster may include USA Powerlifting lifters from any state as long as those lifters are registered with that USA Powerlifting club/team.

1.5. General Rules of Powerlifting

- 1.5.1. Competition takes place between lifters in categories defined by sex, bodyweight, and age.
- 1.5.2. Competition is restricted to the minimum age of 8 years old for youth divisions and 14 years old for the teen and open divisions.
- 1.5.2.1. There is no maximum age limit.
- 1.5.3. The following competition lifts are recognized and must be taken in the same sequence in all contests: 1) squat, 2) bench press, and 3) deadlift. The “total” is the sum of the heaviest successful attempt on each lift.
- 1.5.3.1. Each competitor is allowed three attempts on each lift. The lifter’s best successful attempt on each lift counts toward their competition total. If two or more lifters achieve the same total, the lighter lifter ranks above the heavier lifter.
- 1.5.3.2. If two lifters register the same bodyweight at the weigh-in and eventually achieve the same total at the end of the competition, the lifter making the total first will take precedence over the other lifter. Where awards are presented for best squat, bench press, and deadlift, or if a record is broken, the same procedure will apply.
- 1.5.3.3. A successful attempt in all three disciplines is required to earn a total. Should a lifter fail to make a successful attempt in the squat and/or bench press, they may continue to compete for the remainder of the contest but they will not earn an official total (their total will be recorded as 0). Lifters who fail to earn a total are not eligible to set records (including single-lift records).

1.6. National and Regional Championships

- 1.6.1. The following United States national championships are sanctioned by USA Powerlifting:
- Military/Police/Firefighter Nationals
 - High School Nationals
 - Collegiate Nationals
 - Equipped Nationals (includes all age divisions except youth)
 - Youth Nationals
 - Bench Nationals
 - Raw Nationals (includes all age divisions except youth)
 - **Special Olympian Nationals (to be run with Youth Nationals)**
 - Note: In any given year, USA Powerlifting may choose to combine two or more of the above national meets (e.g., Raw and Youth Nationals)
 - Note: Country-specific national championships in countries outside of the United States may be offered and will vary based on country.



- Note: Beginning in 2026, Masters Nationals will be run as its own standalone national championship. When this happens, masters divisions will no longer be offered at Raw Nationals or Equipped Nationals.

- 1.6.1.1. Qualifying totals for all national championships must be achieved on or after January 1 of the year before the championship. Qualifying totals for all national championships (except High School Nationals - see Item 1.6.3 below) must be achieved before the entry deadline.
- 1.6.1.2. For lifters in age-defined divisions (youth, teen, junior, masters), the qualifying total must be for the age (i.e., the age as defined by USA Powerlifting for competition purposes) they will be on the day they compete in the competition. [Note: The exception to this requirement is a situation in which the qualifying total for all weight classes is a minimal total (e.g., 75kg total for all master 3+ lifters at Raw Nationals) or simply "A Total in a USAPL Sanctioned Meet." In these cases, the lifter is not required to re-qualify in the new age division if their age division changes from the time the initial qualifying total is achieved and the deadline for submitting the qualifying total.] Examples below:
- A. Equipped Nationals begins on June 1, 2025. A teen 1 lifter competes in a local meet on February 15, 2025 and is 15 years old on the day of the local meet. At this local meet, the teen 1 lifter achieves the needed qualifying total to qualify for Equipped Nationals in the teen 1 division. The teen 1 lifter turns 16 years old on May 1, 2025 which means their age (as defined by USA Powerlifting for competition purposes) on the day they will compete at Equipped Nationals is 16 years old (i.e., the teen 2 division). In this case, the lifter must achieve the teen 2 qualifying total before the deadline to register for Equipped Nationals and submit an appropriate qualifying total. If the total achieved at the local meet on February 15, 2025 meets/exceeds the teen 2 qualifying total for Equipped Nationals, the lifter does not need to achieve a new qualifying total. If the total achieved at the local meet on February 15, 2025 does not meet/exceed the teen 2 qualifying total for Equipped Nationals, the lifter must achieve a new qualifying total that meets/exceeds the teen 2 qualifying total for Equipped Nationals by the deadline to register for Equipped Nationals and submit an appropriate qualifying total.
- B. Raw Bench Nationals begins on October 1, 2025. A master 1 lifter competes raw in a local meet on February 15, 2025 and is 49 years old on the day of the local meet. At this local meet, the master 1 lifter achieves the needed qualifying total to qualify for Raw Bench Nationals (the qualifying total requirement is a raw total in a USAPL sanctioned meet). The master 1 lifter turns 50 years old on July 1, 2025 which means their age (as defined by USA Powerlifting for competition purposes) on the day they will compete at Raw Bench Nationals is 50 years old (i.e., the master 2 division). In this case, the lifter does not need to achieve a new qualifying total since the qualifying total for the new division is the same as the qualifying total for the previous division.
- 1.6.1.3. For national meets, any change in nominated weight class must be made no later than 14 days prior to the first day of the meet. No weight class changes are allowed after the 14-day deadline. If a lifter fails to make weight for their nominated weight class at the meet, the lifter will be allowed to lift as a guest lifter and will lift with others in their originally nominated weight class.
- If a lifter wants to move up a weight class, their qualifying total in the lower class must be



equal to or greater than the qualifying total of the higher weight class.

- If a lifter wants to move down a weight class, they will need to re-qualify in the new weight class by the published 14-day weight-class change deadline. [Note: The exception to this requirement is a situation in which the qualifying total for all weight classes is a minimal total (e.g., 75kg total for all master 3+ lifters at Raw Nationals) or simply “A Total in a USAPL Sanctioned Meet.” In these cases, the lifter is not required to re-qualify in the new weight class but still must change their nominated weight class by the 14-day weight-class change deadline.]

- 1.6.1.4. Lifters competing in the raw division (full power or bench-only) of a national championship must qualify via a raw total.
- 1.6.1.5. Lifters competing in the equipped division of a national championship may qualify with an equipped or raw total.
- 1.6.1.6. The performances of lifters competing raw in a division that is designated equipped will be officially recorded in the results as an equipped performance and are not eligible for raw records or for raw qualifying totals.
- 1.6.1.7. Requirements and qualifying totals for national and regional championships can be found on the national USA Powerlifting website and/or the event-specific website.
- 1.6.1.8. Guest lifters are not allowed to compete at national championships unless they meet basic qualifications of the meet (age, sex, qualifying total).
- 1.6.2. The following United States Regional Championships (and the associated states) are sanctioned by USA Powerlifting (Note: Regions reorganized in 2024 as follows):
 - Midwest Region (IA, IL, IN, KS, MI, MN, MO, ND, NE, OH, SD, WI)
 - Northeast Region (CT, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT)
 - Southeast Region (AL, DC, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV)
 - Southwest Region (AR, AZ, LA, NM, OK, TX)
 - West Region (AK, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY)
 - Note: In any given year, USA Powerlifting may choose to combine two or more of the above regions into a combined meet (e.g., Southwest & West Regionals)
 - Note: Country-specific regional championships in countries outside of the United States may be offered and will vary based on country.
- 1.6.2.1. Only members from a state within the region can compete in their designated regionals.
- 1.6.2.2. Guest lifters (i.e., lifters from a state outside of the region) are allowed (at the discretion of the meet director) but they are not eligible for awards. Guest lifters may set state and national records and may earn a qualifying total for a national meet. Guest lifters are subject to all normal rules of competition and drug testing and must meet the same qualifying criteria to enter the meet.
- 1.6.3. For High School Nationals, competitors must enter/register prior to the entry deadline but may achieve (and officially submit) qualifying totals up to 14 days before the start of the championship (i.e., the first day of competition). If, prior to High School Nationals, a lifter competes in a meet with the goal of achieving a qualifying total but does not achieve the needed qualifying total, they are eligible for a refund of their entry fee, minus administrative fees.



- 1.6.3.1. Eligible High School Nationals lifters cannot turn 19 years old prior to September 1 of the academic school year. This also applies to lifters competing in the high school division in any event and is not specific to High School Nationals.
- 1.6.3.2. Eligible High School Nationals lifters must, at a minimum, be in the 9th grade. There is no minimum age as long as the lifter is, at a minimum, in the 9th grade. Youth-specific rules (e.g., youth-only weight classes, allowance for a lighter bar, etc.) do not apply to lifters under the age of 14 years competing in the high school division with the exception of the weigh-in requirements (Items 5.1.10.1 and 5.1.11.3). This also applies to lifters competing in the high school division in any event and is not specific to High School Nationals.

1.7. Age Divisions

- 1.7.1. Open (O): From the day the lifter turns 14 and upwards
- 1.7.2. Youth (Y): The following youth divisions are recognized:
- Youth 1 (Y1): From the day the lifter turns 8 to the day before they turn 10
 - Youth 2 (Y2): From the day the lifter turns 10 to the day before they turn 12
 - Youth 3 (Y3): From the day the lifter turns 12 to the day before they turn 14
- 1.7.3. Teen (T): The following teen divisions are recognized:
- Teen 1 (T1): From the day the lifter turns 14 to the day before they turn 16
 - Teen 2 (T2): From the day the lifter turns 16 to the day before they turn 18
 - Teen 3 (T3): From the day the lifter turns 18 to the day before they turn 20
- 1.7.4. Junior (J): From the day the lifter turns 20 to the day before they turn 24
- 1.7.5. Master (M): The following master divisions are recognized:
- Master 1 (M1): From the day the lifter turns 40 to the day before they turn 50
 - Master 2 (M2): From the day the lifter turns 50 to the day before they turn 60
 - Master 3 (M3): From the day the lifter turns 60 to the day before they turn 70
 - Master 4 (M4): From the day the lifter turns 70 to the day before they turn 80
 - Master 5 (M5): From the day the lifter turns 80 to the day before they turn 90
 - Master 6 (M6): From the day the lifter turns 90 to the day before they turn 100
 - Master 7 (M7): From the day the lifter turns 100 to the day before they turn 110
- 1.7.5.1. Master A/B subdivisions: National championships do not offer master age divisions that are subdivided into 5-year ranges. However, records are maintained in the master A/B subdivisions. Local, state, and regional meet directors may, at their discretion, offer master A/B subdivisions. The master A/B subdivisions are as follows:
- Master 1a (M1a): From the day the lifter turns 40 to the day before they turn 45
 - Master 1b (M1b): From the day the lifter turns 45 to the day before they turn 50
 - Master 2a (M2a): From the day the lifter turns 50 to the day before they turn 55
 - Master 2b (M2b): From the day the lifter turns 55 to the day before they turn 60
 - And so on throughout the rest of the master age divisions



1.8. Bodyweight Categories

- 1.8.1. If a weigh-in scale has the ability to measure body weight in kilograms, the kilogram unit of measure must be used. If a scale can only measure body weight in pounds, the pound equivalent weight class standard must be rounded to the next lowest 0.2 lb.
- 1.8.2. The **twelve (12)** ~~eleven (11)~~ female weight classes and their ranges/limits are listed in the table below:

USA Powerlifting Female Weight Classes and Ranges			
Class (kg)	Range (kg)	Class (lb)	Range (lb)
44	up to 44.00	97.00	up to 97.00
48	44.01 - 48.00	105.80	97.01 - 105.80
52	48.01 - 52.00	114.60	105.81 - 114.60
56	52.01 - 56.00	123.40	114.61 - 123.40
60	56.01 - 60.00	132.20	123.41 - 132.20
65	60.01 - 65.00	143.20	132.21 - 143.20
67.5	60.01 - 67.50	148.80	132.21 - 148.80
70	65.01 - 70.00	154.20	143.21 - 154.20
75	70.01 - 75.00	165.20	154.21 - 165.20
82.5	75.01 - 82.50	181.80	165.21 - 181.80
90	82.51 - 90.00	198.40	181.81 - 198.40
100	90.01 - 100.00	220.40	198.41 - 220.40
100+	100.01 and above	220.40+	220.41 and above

- 1.8.3. The twelve (12) male weight classes and their ranges/limits are listed in the table below:

USA Powerlifting Male Weight Classes and Ranges			
Class (kg)	Range (kg)	Class (lb)	Range (lb)
52	up to 52.00	114.60	up to 114.60
56	52.01 - 56.00	123.40	114.61 - 123.40
60	56.01 - 60.00	132.20	123.41 - 132.20
67.5	60.01 - 67.50	148.80	132.21 - 148.80
75	67.51 - 75.00	165.20	148.81 - 165.20
82.5	75.01 - 82.50	181.80	165.21 - 181.80
90	82.51 - 90.00	198.40	181.81 - 198.40
100	90.01 - 100.00	220.40	198.41 - 220.40
110	100.01 - 110.00	242.40	220.41 - 242.40
125	110.01 - 125.00	275.40	242.41 - 275.40
140	125.01 - 140.00	308.60	275.41 - 308.60
140+	140.01 and above	308.60+	308.61 and above



1.8.4. The three (3) youth-only (under 14) female weight classes and their ranges/limits are listed in the table below:

USA Powerlifting Youth-Only Female Weight Classes and Ranges				
Class (kg)	Range (kg)		Class (lb)	Range (lb)
30	up to 30.00		66.00	up to 66.00
35	30.01 - 35.00		77.00	66.01 - 77.00
40	35.01 - 40.00		88.00	77.01 - 88.00
Thereafter, female weight classes and their ranges/limits apply				

1.8.5. The five (5) youth-only (under 14) male weight classes and their ranges/limits are listed in the table below:

USA Powerlifting Youth-Only Male Weight Classes and Ranges				
Class (kg)	Range (kg)		Class (lb)	Range (lb)
30	up to 30.00		66.00	up to 66.00
35	30.01 - 35.00		77.00	66.01 - 77.00
40	35.01 - 40.00		88.00	77.01 - 88.00
44	40.01 - 44.00		97.00	88.01 - 97.00
48	44.01 - 48.00		105.80	97.01 - 105.80
Thereafter, male weight classes and their ranges/limits apply				

1.9. Team Competition at National Championships - General

- 1.9.1. Each team is allowed a maximum of twelve (12) competitors spread throughout the range of the **twelve (12)** ~~eleven (11)~~ bodyweight categories for females and twelve (12) competitors spread throughout the range of twelve (12) bodyweight categories for males. There must not be more than two competitors from any one team in any particular bodyweight category.
- 1.9.2. Each team must submit a team roster giving the name of each lifter and their bodyweight category. The exact process (including deadlines) for team roster submission will be published for each meet.
- 1.9.3. Point scoring for team championships is as follows: 12, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, and 2, for the first 9 placing in any bodyweight category. Thereafter, each lifter who makes a total in the competition shall be awarded one (1) point.
- 1.9.4. Only the point scores of the five (5) best placed lifters of each team will be counted for the team competition. In case of a tie in points scored, final team placing will be decided for team awards as described in Item 1.9.5 below. If a member of a team is found to have committed a violation of the anti-doping rules during an event where a team ranking is based on the addition of individual results (points), the points of the athlete committing the violation will be subtracted from the team result and may not be replaced by the resulting points of another team member.
- 1.9.5. Team awards will be given for the first three (3) places at national events. In the case of a tie for the classification of a team via the point system described in Items 1.9.3 and 1.9.4 above, the team having the greatest number of first places will be ranked first. In the case of a tie between



two teams having the same number of first places, the one having the greatest number of second places will be classified first, and so on through the placing of the maximum of five scoring lifters. Should teams finish equally after this procedure has been applied, then the team with the greater total number of DOTS points (of the five best placed lifters) will be declared the higher placed. [Note: DOTS stands for Dynamic Objective Team Rating System]

1.9.5.1. At the 2024 NGB meeting, approval was given to develop a formula that is superior to DOTS. This development will occur during 2025 (and possibly beyond). Until such a time that a new formula is approved, DOTS will continue to be the formula used.

1.9.6. Team awards and placing procedures may be done differently at local, state, and regional meets based on either organizational policy or meet director prerogative. Those interested in knowing the team awards and placing procedures for a local, state, or regional meet should contact the specific meet director for details.

1.10. Team Competition at Collegiate Nationals

1.10.1. Team scoring at Collegiate Nationals generally follows the procedures listed above in “Team Competition at National Championships – General.” Areas where there are differences are listed below.

1.10.2. For team competition, lifters must be on the official club roster to compete and score at Collegiate Nationals.

1.10.3. Teams may be registered in the following divisions:

- A. Collegiate Female - Raw
- B. Collegiate Male - Raw
- C. Collegiate Female - Equipped
- D. Collegiate Male - Equipped

1.10.4. Per division (female and male), each team is allowed a maximum of twelve (12) competitors spread throughout the range of bodyweight categories for females and males. There must not be more than two competitors from any one team in any particular bodyweight category.

1.10.5. Only the point scores of the seven (7) best placed lifters of each team will be counted for the team competition at Collegiate Nationals. In case of a tie in points scored, final team placing shall be decided for team awards as in Item 1.10.6 below. If a member of a team is found to have committed a violation of the anti-doping rules during an event where a team ranking is based on the addition of individual results (points), the points of the athlete committing the violation will be subtracted from the team result and may not be replaced by the resulting points of another team member.

1.10.6. Team awards shall be given for the first five (5) places at Collegiate Nationals. In the case of a tie for the classification of a team, the team having the greatest number of first places will be ranked first. In the case of a tie between two teams having the same number of first places, the one having the greatest number of second places will be classified first, and so on through the placing of the maximum of seven scoring lifters. Should teams finish equally after this procedure has been applied, then the team with the greater total number of DOTS points (of the seven best placed lifters) will be declared the higher placed.



- 1.10.7. For questions about team competition and scoring at Collegiate Nationals, please contact the [chair of the Collegiate Committee](#).

1.11. Team Competition at High School Nationals

- 1.11.1. Boys team scoring and girls team scoring at High School Nationals generally follow the procedures listed above in “Team Competition at National Championships – General.” Areas where there are differences are listed below.
- 1.11.2. The team scoring procedures described in Item 1.9.3 apply to team competition at High School Nationals. ~~Only the top ten (10) places in any one bodyweight category are scored; the points are as follows: 12, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1.~~
- 1.11.3. Combined team scoring will be based upon taking up to the top five (5) scoring males and up to the top five (5) scoring females from the male and female team rosters. A scoring member must place in the top 10. There must be a minimum of one member of each sex that places in the top 10 for the team to score.
- 1.11.4. Freshman and sophomores (grades 9 and 10, respectively) may choose to compete in either the junior varsity (JV) or varsity (V) division provided they have achieved the appropriate qualifying total for the division they enter. Juniors and seniors (grades 11 and 12, respectively) may only compete in the varsity division and must have achieved the appropriate varsity qualifying total.
- 1.11.5. For questions about team competition and scoring at High School Nationals, please contact the [chair of the Teenage/Junior Committee](#).

1.12. Individual Awards

- 1.12.1. At national championships, awards will be given to the top five (5) place finishers in each division.
- 1.12.2. At regional championships, the meet director has discretion on how many awards will be given for each division but must, at a minimum, give awards to the top three (3) place finishers in each division.
- 1.12.3. At local meets and state championships, the meet director has discretion over how awards will be given.



2. Competition Equipment

2.1. Scale

- 2.1.1. The scale must be of an electronic digital type and register in increments of 0.05kg or less for national and pro meets and 0.1kg or less (0.2lb or less if the scale only registers in pounds) for local, state, and regional meets.
- 2.1.2. The scale must have the capacity to weigh up to 180kg.
- 2.1.2.1. If a competitor exceeds the weight capacity of a scale, two scales must be used. The scales will be placed side-by-side and the competitor will simultaneously put one foot on each scale. The sum of the two weights will be the competitor's official bodyweight.
- 2.1.3. The scale must be placed on a level, non-compressible surface (i.e., placing a scale directly on carpet is not acceptable). Examples of non-compressible surfaces include tile, rubber, and hardwood flooring. A non-compressible surface (e.g., piece of plywood) must be placed under the scale if the weigh-in is to take place in a carpeted area.
- 2.1.4. All scales must be officially certified within two years of the date of the competition. The current certification of the scale must be documented by an official certificate and/or sticker affixed to the scale.

2.2. Platform

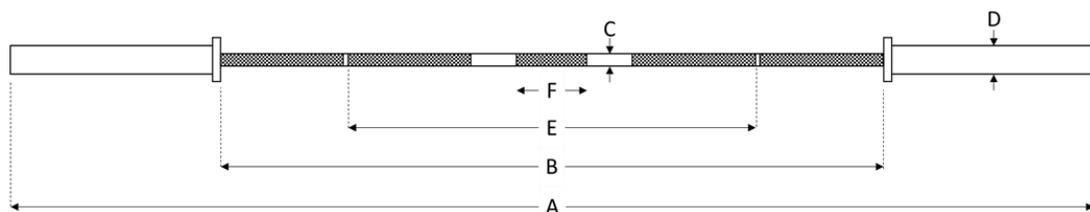
- 2.2.1. A platform must be used. A carpet laid on the floor is not considered a platform and is not allowable.
- 2.2.2. The platform must be at least 8ft x 8ft (2.4m x 2.4m).
- 2.2.3. Any platform that exceeds 10cm in height from the surrounding stage or floor must have a ramp that allows lifters to enter and exit the platform.
- 2.2.4. The surface of the platform must be flat, firm, and level and covered with a material of non-slip smooth carpet. The carpet must be free from irregularities and projections.
- 2.2.5. The platform must be made of a minimum of two layers of 0.75in plywood or similar material (e.g., particle board) that provides a consistent, firm surface under the carpet. The layers of plywood must be screwed together.
- 2.2.5.1. High-density rubber matting may be used as part of the platform construction and may be placed below the bottom layer of plywood, between the layers of plywood, and/or on top of the top layer of plywood. If rubber matting is placed on top of the top layer of plywood, the non-slip smooth carpet (Item 2.2.4) must be on top of (i.e., covering) the rubber matting.
- 2.2.5.2. If the platform is one that is professionally made (e.g., Eleiko or Rogue), then it is approved.
- 2.2.6. All platforms are required to have a USA Powerlifting branded backdrop.

2.3. Bar

- 2.3.1. Only plate-loaded bars are permitted.
- 2.3.2. Only those bars that meet all specifications may be used throughout the entire competition and

for all lifts.

- 2.3.3. The bar shall not be changed during the competition (except when permitted by the rules for youth and master 4+ lifters) unless it is bent or damaged in some way as determined by the jury or, in the absence of a jury, the chief referee.
- 2.3.4. Specialty bars (e.g., squat bar, deadlift bar) may not be used.
- 2.3.5. The weight of the bar must be 20kg (allowable range: 19.95 - 20.05kg)
- 2.3.5.1. The use of a 45lb bar (allowable range: 44.8875 - 45.1125lb) is permitted at local competitions provided it is used with pound plates and pound collars and the bar conforms to all other stated specifications.
- 2.3.5.2. Bars lighter than 20kg/45lb may be used when permitted by the rules for youth and master 4+ lifters. These bars do not need to conform to the dimensions defined in Item 2.3.8 with the exception of Item 2.3.8.D which is required for all bars.
- 2.3.6. Bars must not be chromed on the knurling.
- 2.3.7. The sleeves of the bar must rotate freely.
- 2.3.8. The bar must be straight, well-knurled/grooved and conform to the following dimensions:
 - A. Total overall length is not to exceed 2.2m.
 - B. Distance between collar faces is not to exceed 1.32m or be less than 1.31m.
 - C. For local meets, the diameter of the bar is not to exceed 29mm or be less than 28mm. For state championships and higher (regional championships, national championships, etc.), the diameter of the bar must be 29mm.
 - D. Diameter of the sleeve is not to exceed 52mm or be less than 50mm.
 - E. There must be a diameter machined marking (or the bar taped) so as to measure 81cm between markings (or tape).
 - F. The bar must have a center knurling; it is not to exceed 160mm or be less than 100mm.
- 2.3.8.1. Schematic of bar dimensions (image courtesy of Joe Marksteiner). Letters correspond to dimensions listed in Item 2.3.8 above:



2.4. Plates

- 2.4.1. The use of plates (also known as “discs”) that do not meet the specifications defined in this section will invalidate the contest and any records achieved. Only plates that meet all specifications may be used throughout the entire competition and for all lifts.
- 2.4.2. Only metal/steel/iron plates may be used. Rubber/bumper plates may not be used except when permitted by the rules for youth, master 4+, and Special Olympian lifters (see Item 2.12.2).
- 2.4.3. Kilogram plates must be used in state, regional, and national championships and pro events. It is recommended, but not required, that kilogram plates also be used in local meets. If kilogram



plates are not available for a local meet, pound plates are allowed.

- 2.4.3.1. The use of pound plates in denominations of 2.5, 5, 10, 25, 35, and 45lb is permitted at local competitions provided they are used with a 45lb bar and 5lb collars and the plates conform to all other stated specifications.
- 2.4.3.2. A combination of pound and kilogram plates may not be used. A combination of pound plates and a kilogram bar (and vice versa) may not be used. Kilogram collars (weighing 2.5kg each) must be used with kilogram bars and pound collars (weighing 5lb each) must be used with pound bars.
- 2.4.3.3. There are no requirements for the plates used for warmup/warmup room purposes. That is to say that, in the warmup area, pound plates may be used, kilogram plates may be used, and any combination of the two may be used regardless of the type of plates (pound or kilogram) used on the competition platform. Bumper plates, though not preferred, may also be used in the warmup area but the meet director/staff must be cognizant of the fact that barbells will not accommodate heavier loads when loaded with bumper plates due to the greater thickness of bumper plates.
- 2.4.4. All plates used in competition must weigh within 0.25 percent (for plates weighing 5.0kg/10lb and heavier) or 10 grams (for plates weighing less than 5.0kg/10lb) of their face value. Below is a list of allowable plate denominations and the acceptable range of weights for each:

USA Powerlifting Allowable Plate Denominations and Ranges			
Plate Denomination (kg)	Allowable Range (kg)	Plate Denomination (lb)	Allowable Range (lb)
25	24.9375 - 25.0625	55*	54.8625 - 55.1375
20	19.95 - 20.05	45	44.8875 - 45.1125
15	14.9625 - 15.0375	35	34.9125 - 35.0875
10	9.975 - 10.025	25	24.9375 - 25.0625
5	4.9875 - 5.0125	10	9.975 - 10.025
2.5	2.49 - 2.51	5	4.978 - 5.022
1.25	1.24 - 1.26	2.5	2.478 - 2.522
0.5**	0.49 - 0.51	1***	0.978 - 1.022
0.25**	0.24 - 0.26	0.5***	0.478 - 0.522

*Note: Though not required and relatively uncommon, 55lb plates may be used if available.

**Note: 0.5 and 0.25kg plates may only be used when attempting to break a national or world record or for attempts in the youth division (see Item 5.4.8).

***Note: National and world records can only be set in meets using kilogram plates therefore the only situation in which plates weighing 1lb and 0.5lb can be used is youth lifters in local competitions being run in pounds.

- 2.4.4.1. Plates less than 1.25kg may only be used for national and world record attempts or attempts made by youth lifters (see Item 5.4.8).
- 2.4.4.2. For national and world record purposes, the weight must be at least 0.5kg greater than the existing national or world record. Lighter plates may be used to achieve a weight of at least 0.5kg, 1.0kg, 1.5kg, or 2.0kg greater than the existing national or world record.



- 2.4.5. The hole size in the middle of the plate must not exceed 53mm or be less than 52mm.
- 2.4.6. Plates weighing 20kg and over must not exceed 6cm in thickness. Plates weighing 15kg and under must not exceed 3cm in thickness.
- 2.4.7. Plates must be circular and not be more than 45cm in diameter.
- 2.4.8. Kilogram plates must conform to the following color code:
- 10kg and under - any color
 - 15kg - yellow
 - 20kg - blue
 - 25kg - red
- 2.4.9. All plates must be clearly marked with their weight and loaded in the sequence of heavier plates innermost followed by the smaller plates in descending weight arranged so that the referees can read the weight on each plate.
- 2.4.10. The first and heaviest plate loaded on the bar must be loaded face in and the rest of the plates must be loaded face out.
- 2.4.11. Though recommended, the use of 25kg plates is not required in which case 20kg plates must be used as the heaviest plate and there must be enough 20kg plate pairs on hand to accommodate the heaviest attempt.

2.5. Collars

- 2.5.1. Collars must always be used unless the attempt is 20kg while using a 20kg bar.
- 2.5.1.1. The lightest attempt a non-youth, non-master 4+, or non-Special Olympian lifter may make is 20kg (empty 20kg bar with no collars). **If a non-youth, non-master 4+, or non-Special Olympian lifter submits an attempt of 22.5kg, lightweight collars (e.g., plastic collars or spring collars) must be used in place of 2.5kg collars and the weight of the collars will be assumed to be 0kg for the purposes of the official weight of the attempt. For any attempt of 25kg or more, 2.5kg collars must be used.**
- 2.5.2. Collars must weigh 2.5kg each (allowable range: 2.49 - 2.51kg).
- 2.5.2.1. Lightweight clips may be used for youth, master 4+, and Special Olympian lifters (as allowed by the rules in Item 2.12.4) and the weight of the clips will be taken to be zero (0) for official bar load purposes.
- 2.5.2.2. The use of 5lb collars (allowable range: 4.978 - 5.022lb) is permitted at local competitions provided they are used with a 45lb bar and pound plates.

2.6. Squat Racks

- 2.6.1. Squat racks must be designed to adjust from a minimum height of 1.00m in the lowest position to extend to a height of at least 1.70m. Squat rack height must be adjustable in 5cm increments or less.
- 2.6.2. Squat racks must have an adjustable “out” (default upright position) and an “in” (uprights angled inward to allow for a wide bar grip) position.
- 2.6.2.1. Lifters may choose to have both sides “out,” both sides “in,” or only one side “in.” The default



position is racks “out.” Lifters requiring one or both sides be moved “in” must make this known either when they officially submit their rack heights (prior to the start of lifting) or to the scoring table (prior to or after the commencement of lifting).

2.7. Bench

- 2.7.1. The length of the bench must not be less than 1.22m and must be flat and level.
- 2.7.2. The width of the bench must not be less than 29cm and must not exceed 32cm.
- 2.7.3. The height of the bench must not be less than 42cm and must not exceed 45cm (measured from the floor to the top of the padded surface of the bench without it being depressed or compacted).
- 2.7.4. The height of the uprights, which must be adjustable, must not be less than 75cm and must not exceed 110cm (measured from the floor to the bar rest position). Bench press rack height must be adjustable in 5cm increments or less.
- 2.7.5. The minimum width between the insides of the bar rests must be 1.10m.
- 2.7.6. The head of the bench must extend 22cm beyond the center of the uprights with a tolerance of 5cm either way.
- 2.7.7. Attached safety bars (i.e., bench safeties) must be used with the competition bench(es). Since the numbering/height of bench safeties differs by manufacturer, the jury, or in the absence of a jury the chief referee, has discretion on what the minimum bench safety height must be.
- 2.7.8. The bench specifications in Items 2.7.1 and 2.7.2 do not apply for lifters in the para bench division.

2.8. Clocks

- 2.8.1. Timing clocks should be visible to the platform referees and the jury (if one is present).
- 2.8.2. Clocks must operate continuously up to a minimum of 20 minutes and display elapsed time.
- 2.8.3. A clock displaying time left in which to enter the next attempts should be visible to the coach and/or lifter in the vicinity of the scoring table.

2.9. Referee Lights

- 2.9.1. A system of lights must be used whereby the referees make known their decisions.
- 2.9.2. Each referee will control a white and a red light. These two colors represent a “good lift” and “no lift” respectively.
- 2.9.3. The lights must be arranged horizontally to correspond with the positions of the three referees.
- 2.9.4. The light system must be designed in such a way that the lights turn on simultaneously and not separately when activated by the three referees.
- 2.9.5. Referees must not activate their light until a lift is completed (i.e., bar is returned to the rack in the squat and bench press and the bar is returned to the floor in the deadlift).
- 2.9.6. For emergency purposes (i.e., a breakdown in the light system), referees will be provided with small white and red flags, paddles, or cards with which to make known their decisions on the chief referee’s audible command “flags,” “paddles,” or “cards.”



2.10. Failure Lights/Cards

- 2.10.1. When a no lift light (red light) has been activated and appears, a colored failure light system will be activated and appear (or colored failure card(s)/paddle(s) raised) to make known the reason(s) why the lift has been failed. See Appendix A for a condensed description.
- 2.10.2. The colors of the failure lights/cards are as follows:
- A. Red card
 - B. Blue card
 - C. Yellow card
- 2.10.2.1. The colored failure cards and associated infractions for the **squat** are as follows:
- A. Red card:
 - 1. Failure to bend the knees and lower the body until the top surface of the legs at the hip joint are lower than the top of the knees.
 - B. Blue card:
 - 1. Failure to assume an upright position with the knees locked at commencement and completion of the lift.
 - 2. Double bouncing or more than one recovery attempt at the bottom of the lift
 - 3. Any downward movement of the whole bar in its entirety during the ascent.
 - C. Yellow card:
 - 1. Stepping backward or forward or moving the feet laterally. (Note: rocking the feet between the ball and heel is permitted)
 - 2. Failure to observe the chief referee's signals at the commencement or completion of the lift.
 - 3. Contact with bar or lifter by the spotters/loaders between the chief referee's signals, in order to make the lift easier.
 - 4. Contact of the elbows and/or arms with the legs in such a way that is deemed to make the lift easier. Slight inadvertent contact that is of no aid to the lifter is permitted.
 - 5. Any dropping or dumping of the bar at any point before (i.e., before receiving the "Squat" command), during, or after (i.e., after receiving the "Rack" command) the lift.
 - 6. Failure to comply with any of the requirements contained in the general description of the lift.
 - 7. An obvious failure to complete the lift (e.g., spotters assist in replacing the bar).
- 2.10.2.2. The colored failure cards and associated infractions for the **bench press** are as follows:
- A. Red card:
 - 1. Bar is not lowered to chest or abdominal area (i.e., not reaching the chest or abdominal area, or is touching the belt).
 - B. Blue card:
 - 1. Any downward movement of the whole bar in its entirety in the course of being pressed out.
 - 2. Failure to press the bar to straight arms' length (i.e., elbows locked) at the commencement and completion of the lift.



C. Yellow card:

1. Heaving or sinking the bar after it has been motionless on the chest or abdominal area, in such a way as to aid the lifter.
2. Failure to observe the chief referee's signals at the commencement, during, or completion of the lift.
3. Any change in the elected lifting position during the lift proper (i.e., any raising movement of the shoulders or buttocks from their original points of contact with the bench, or lateral movement of the hands on the bar, or raising of the feet).
4. Contact with the bar or the lifter by the spotters / loaders between the chief referee's signals, in order to make the lift easier.
5. Any contact of the lifter's feet with the bench or its supports.
6. Deliberate contact between the bar and the bar rest supports and/or rack uprights and/or one or both bench safeties during the lift in order to make the lift easier. Incidental contact that is of no aid to the lifter is not a reason to disqualify the lift.
7. Any dropping or dumping of the bar at any point before (i.e., before receiving the start command), during, or after (i.e., after receiving the "Rack" command) the lift.
8. Failure to comply with any of the requirements contained in the general description of the lift.
9. An obvious failure to complete the lift (e.g., spotters assist in replacing the bar).

2.10.2.3. The colored failure cards and associated infractions for the **deadlift** are as follows:

A. Red card:

1. Failure to lock the knees straight at the completion of the lift.
2. Failure to stand erect with the shoulders back.

B. Blue card:

1. Any downward movement of the whole bar in its entirety before it reaches the final position. (Note: if the bar settles as the shoulders come back, this is not a reason to disqualify the lift)
2. Supporting the bar on the thighs during the performance of the lift. (Note: if the bar edges up the thighs but is not supported, this is not a reason to disqualify the lift)

C. Yellow card:

1. Lowering the bar before receiving the chief referee's signal.
2. Allowing the bar to return to the platform without maintaining control with both hands (i.e., releasing the bar from the palms of the hand).
3. Forcefully and deliberately slamming/pushing the bar downward onto the platform after receiving the "Down" command.
4. Stepping backward or forward or moving the feet laterally. Rocking the feet between the ball and heel is permitted. (Note: lateral foot movement after the "Down" command is not a reason to disqualify the lift but the lifter must maintain their balance and may not take a step forward or backward until the bar has been returned to the platform)
5. The lifter and/or bar making contact with the spotter in such a way that is deemed to make the lift easier. Slight inadvertent contact that is of no aid to the lifter is permitted.



6. Failure to comply with any of the requirements contained in the general description of the lift.
7. An obvious failure to complete the lift (e.g., bar fails to leave the ground on deadlift).

2.11. Scoreboard

- 2.11.1. A proper detailed scoreboard in the platform vicinity and visible to the platform referees and jury (if one is present) must be provided. It is required for regional, national, and pro events (recommended for state and local events) that similar scoreboards be placed in such a way so as to be visible to lifters/coaches in the warmup room and staging area.
- 2.11.2. If possible, the current record should be displayed and updated as necessary.

2.12. Equipment Amendments for Youth, Master 4+, and Special Olympian Lifters

- 2.12.1. Youth (13 years old and younger), master 4+ (70 years old and older), and Special Olympian lifters may use bars that are less than 20kg. If a bar lighter than 20kg is to be used, it must be weighed (by a meet official) using the certified meet scale and the official weight of the bar must be rounded down to the nearest 2.5kg (or 5lb if the meet is being run in pounds). If a lighter bar is to be used at a meet, all youth, M4+ and/or Special Olympian lifters must have access to the same bar.
- 2.12.2. In the deadlift, youth, master 4+, and Special Olympian lifters may use lightweight (less than 20kg) rubber bumper plates or training plates in order to allow them to pull from the regular height from the floor.
 - 2.12.2.1. If used, the bumper/training plates must not exceed 45cm in diameter.
 - 2.12.2.2. If the bumper/training plates are not part of a calibrated set of plates, the bumper plates must be weighed (by a meet official) using the certified meet scale and the official weight of each plate must be rounded down to the nearest 1.25kg (or 2.5lb if the meet is being run in pounds).
- 2.12.3. For youth lifters, the weight of the barbell may be any multiple of 0.5kg (or 1.0lb if the meet is run in pounds) for any attempt on any lift even if the attempt is not for a national or world record.
- 2.12.4. Lightweight clips may be used for youth, master 4+, and Special Olympian lifters when the attempt is less than 25kg. The weight of these clips will be taken to be zero (0) for official bar load purposes.



3. Personal Apparel and Equipment

3.1. General

- 3.1.1. All items worn on the platform must be clean, untorn, and in a good state of repair.
- 3.1.2. Obscenities or profanities are not allowed on any attire worn in the competition area (including the weigh-in area, equipment check area, warmup room, staging area, and platform area). This applies to anyone in these areas including lifters, coaches, and handlers.
- 3.1.3. Religious and medical exemptions for personal apparel/equipment requirements may be granted at the discretion of the Technical Committee. Any request for an exemption must be made via the appropriate application form found on the [Technical Committee page of the USA Powerlifting website](#) at least 60 days prior to the intended competition and prior to registering for the competition. Submission of an exemption request does not guarantee that it will be granted.
- 3.1.4. Raw (also known as “unequipped” or “classic”) lifting is defined as using only the following apparel/accessories while competing (required specifications of each defined later in this section):
 - A. Undergarments (briefs/underwear, bra)
 - B. T-shirt
 - C. Non-supportive singlet
 - D. Shoes
 - E. Socks
 - F. Belt
 - G. Wrist wraps
 - H. Knee sleeves
- 3.1.5. Equipped (also known as “geared”) lifting is defined as using any of the following supportive apparel and wraps while competing (required specifications of each defined later in this section):
 - A. Squat suit
 - B. Deadlift suit
 - C. Bench press shirt
 - D. Knee wraps
- 3.1.6. Wraps and sleeves may only be worn on specific parts of the body as defined in Items 3.11, 3.12, and 3.13.

3.2. Inspection of Personal Apparel/Equipment (“Equipment Check”)

- 3.2.1. The equipment check must be performed by one or more referees. When the equipment check is performed in conjunction with the weigh-in, the referees assigned to perform the equipment check (and weigh-in) are typically the referees assigned to work the corresponding session of lifting to include the platform referees, the technical controller, and the jury members (if a jury is to be present during the session). Additional referees may be assigned as needed.
 - 3.2.1.1. All referees scheduled to work equipment check must be properly attired in the referee uniform and arrive no later than five (5) minutes before the scheduled start time for equipment check.



- 3.2.2. Equipment check is required for every competitor.
- 3.2.3. Either the lifter or the lifter's coach must present the apparel/equipment to be inspected.
- 3.2.4. All personal apparel/equipment that will (or might) be worn/used during competition must be inspected and approved at equipment check.
 - 3.2.4.1. Undergarments are not required to be inspected at equipment check but still must meet the required specifications defined later in this section. If a lifter/coach has a question about the legality of an undergarment (or any personal apparel/equipment item), they are encouraged to ask at equipment check.
 - 3.2.4.2. Items such as watches, jewelry, mouthpieces, eye wear, and feminine hygiene products are not required to be inspected at equipment check.
- 3.2.5. Any item considered unclean, torn, or in a state of disrepair will be rejected.
- 3.2.6. The deadline for equipment check is 30 minutes prior to the scheduled start of a lifter's session.
- 3.2.7. The normal time for equipment check is during the weigh-in period (i.e., two (2) hours prior to the scheduled start of a lifting session up until 30 minutes prior to the scheduled start of a lifting session). Meet staff/organizers may begin equipment check (not weigh-ins) earlier than two (2) hours prior to the scheduled start of a lifting session. Only lifters scheduled to compete in the next session of lifting may participate in this equipment check.
- 3.2.8. "Early equipment check" may be performed at any time prior to the normal equipment check period. Early equipment checks are common (not required) at multi-day events. The event organizer(s) will publish the schedule for any early equipment check period(s) as well as which lifters are eligible to participate.
- 3.2.9. It is preferred (not required) that lifters complete equipment check prior to being weighed in. If a lifter does not complete equipment check prior to weighing in, they must complete their equipment check prior to leaving the weigh-in/equipment check area.
- 3.2.10. A written record ("equipment check sheet") will be maintained by referees at equipment check to document who has and who has not performed equipment check.
 - 3.2.10.1. Successful completion of equipment check is confirmed by a signature from either the lifter or the lifter's coach on the equipment check sheet.
 - 3.2.10.2. Referees will make notes about rejected items and items that still need to be checked.
 - 3.2.10.3. The equipment check sheet is an official document and must be delivered to the appropriate individual (i.e., meet director for a local/state meet; technical secretary for a regional, national, or pro meet) following the conclusion of equipment check for a particular session of lifting.
- 3.2.11. If, after equipment check, a lifter appears on the platform wearing or using any illegal item, the lifter will immediately be disqualified from the competition.
 - 3.2.11.1. If a lifter appears on the platform wearing an illegal item that was mistakenly approved by a referee at equipment check, the lifter will not be disqualified from the competition. Any lifts performed while wearing the illegal item will be disqualified. If the illegal item was noticed prior to the commencement of the lift, the lifter may remove/replace the illegal item without penalty but this must happen off the platform and the 60-second clock to start the lift, if already running, will not be stopped.



3.3. Logos and Emblems

- 3.3.1. In this section, “Apparel” refers to anything worn by the lifter during competition.
- 3.3.2. Apparel may be plain (i.e., of a single/multi-color fabric with no logos or emblems).
- 3.3.3. Apparel may bear the logo or emblem (no size restriction) of:
- A. Lifter or coach’s nation
 - B. Lifter or coach’s name
 - i. The use of a nickname is permitted on apparel as long as it is:
 - a. Not derogatory or offensive in any way. This includes consideration of other countries, cultures, and languages.
 - b. Written in English, the common language for all officials.
 - c. Note: Athletes must be mindful of the impact of the nickname. If there is doubt by an official whether the nickname may be offensive, it will not be permitted on the platform.
 - C. Current USA Powerlifting event or any previous USA Powerlifting event
 - D. USA Powerlifting
 - E. USA Powerlifting corporate sponsors*
 - F. Lifter or coach’s registered USA Powerlifting club name or logo (Note: All club logos are subject to approval including variations of such logos)*
 - G. Lifter or coach’s registered USA Powerlifting affiliate gym (Note: All affiliate gym logos are subject to approval including variations of such logos)*
 - H. Official high school and collegiate logos
 - I. United States Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, Space Force, National Guard, and Reserves branch logos (or the equivalent in other countries).
 - J. Apparel manufacturer
 - K. Commodity sportswear brands (e.g., Nike, Adidas, Reebok, Asics, Champion)
- *Note: A regularly updated list with approved logos/emblems from Items E, F, G above will be maintained and made accessible via the [National Website](#).
- 3.3.4. A lifter may use masking tape generally consistent in color with the apparel it is applied to in order to obscure a non-approved logo or emblem so as to render the item in conformity with the rules.
- 3.3.5. Note: [Effective June 6, 2020](#) (by USA Powerlifting Executive Committee decision), all products manufactured by the company METAL are banned in USA Powerlifting. METAL products, logos, emblems, etc. may not be used/worn in competition.

3.4. Singlet

- 3.4.1. A singlet, for the purposes of this rulebook, is a form-fitting (but not supportive), one-piece garment consisting of “legs” that terminate above the knee, a sleeveless top, and two shoulder straps that is worn in powerlifting, Olympic weightlifting, and wrestling.
- 3.4.1.1. Leotards are not permitted.



- 3.4.2. A singlet must be worn in raw competition.
- 3.4.3. In equipped competition, the lifter has the option to wear a singlet or a supportive suit (i.e., squat suit or deadlift suit).
- 3.4.4. When a singlet is worn, both shoulder straps must be worn over the lifter's shoulders.
- 3.4.5. When a singlet is worn, the bottom of the singlet legs must not make contact with the knees, knee sleeves, or knee wraps.
- 3.4.6. The singlet must conform to the following specifications:
 - A. It must be one-piece and form fitting without any looseness when worn.
 - B. It must be constructed entirely of fabric or a synthetic textile material such that no support is given to the lifter by the singlet in the execution of any lift.
 - C. It must be constructed entirely of fabric or a synthetic textile and cannot consist, in whole or part, of any rubberized or similar stretch material that is deemed to make the singlet supportive.
 - D. The material shall be of a single thickness, other than a second thickness of material of up to 12cm x 24cm allowed in the area of the crotch.
 - E. There must be legs extending a minimum of 3cm and a maximum of 25cm from the top of the crotch down the inside of the leg as measured when worn by the lifter in a standing position.
 - F. It may not have rivets, zippers, or any form of metal on it.
 - G. It must be constructed of a single material with no additional straps, strapping, webbing, pieces, decorations, or adornments.
- 3.4.6.1. See Appendix B for examples of allowable and non-allowable singlet designs.
- 3.4.7. For religious reasons, female and male lifters may wear a form-fitting full-body unitard under the singlet that covers the entirety of the legs and/or arms. The full-body unitard may have a zipper. Alternatively, for religious reasons, lifters may wear a singlet with form-fitting leggings and/or a form-fitting long-sleeved shirt underneath - the leggings and shirt may cover the entirety of the legs and arms, respectively. When a full-body unitard or leggings are worn, knee sleeves or knee wraps may be worn over (i.e., on top of and in direct contact with) the full-body unitard or leggings. If a long-sleeved shirt is worn over the arms, wrist wraps may be worn over (i.e., on top of and in direct contact with) the shirt. Full-body unitards, leggings, and long-sleeved shirts must be constructed of a material that gives no support to the lifter in the execution of any lift. A waiver or special permission is not required for anything described in this section.
- 3.4.8. Singlets must comply with the policies on logos and emblems described in Item 3.3.

3.5. T-Shirt

- 3.5.1. A T-shirt must be worn under the singlet or suit by all lifters in the squat and bench press.
- 3.5.1.1. In the deadlift, a T-shirt is not required to be worn for females or males. A singlet must be worn regardless of whether or not a T-shirt is worn. If a T-shirt is worn in the deadlift, it must conform to all of the specifications as defined in the rulebook. Female lifters choosing not to wear a T-shirt in the deadlift must wear a bra or sports bra under the singlet.
- 3.5.1.2. In equipped competition, a supportive shirt is permitted to be worn instead of a T-shirt.



- 3.5.1.3. A combination of T-shirt and supportive shirt is not allowed.
- 3.5.2. The T-shirt must be constructed entirely of fabric or a synthetic textile and cannot consist, in whole or part, of any rubberized or similar stretch material that is deemed to make the shirt supportive.
- 3.5.3. The T-shirt cannot have any pockets, buttons, zippers, or reinforced seams.
- 3.5.4. The T-shirt must have a collar.
- 3.5.5. The T-shirt must have sleeves. Those sleeves must terminate below the lifter's deltoid and must not extend onto or below the lifter's elbow. The sleeves may not be pushed or rolled up onto the deltoid when the lifter is competing.
- 3.5.6. T-shirts known as "crop tops" are allowed provided they meet the requirements stated above and they are the original manufacturer's design (i.e., "homemade" cut-off shirts are not allowed).
- 3.5.7. T-shirts must comply with the policies on logos and emblems described in Item 3.3.

3.6. Supportive/Bench Press Shirt

- 3.6.1. A supportive shirt may be worn in equipped competition only.
 - 3.6.1.1. A supportive shirt may only be worn in the bench press. A supportive shirt may not be worn in the squat or deadlift.
- 3.6.2. Only supportive shirts listed on the [USA Powerlifting Approved List](#) may be worn.
- 3.6.3. Supportive shirts are limited to a single ply/layer of woven nylon (polyester) and must be constructed of a single material.
- 3.6.4. The supportive shirt must be constructed entirely of fabric or a synthetic textile and cannot consist, in whole or part, of any rubberized or similar stretch material.
- 3.6.5. The supportive shirt cannot have any pockets, buttons, zippers, Velcro, or straps.
- 3.6.6. The supportive shirt must have a collar that encircles the entire neck area when worn and cannot be an open-back design.
- 3.6.7. Any manipulation or altering of the supportive shirt from the manufacturer's original design will render the shirt illegal for use in competition.
- 3.6.8. The supportive shirt may be made tighter or looser in the form of pleats on the original manufacturer's seams only and may not be altered or reinforced beyond the manufacturer's original design. These pleats must be made on the inside of the shirt. Any alterations made on areas other than the manufacturer's seams will render the shirt illegal for use in competition. Pleats may not be sewn back onto the body of the garment.
- 3.6.9. The supportive shirt must have sleeves. Those sleeves must terminate below the lifter's deltoid and must not extend onto or below the lifter's elbow. The sleeves may not be pushed or rolled up onto the deltoid when the lifter is competing.
- 3.6.10. The whole deltoid must be covered when wearing the supportive shirt.
- 3.6.11. Supportive shirts must comply with the policies on logos and emblems described in Item 3.3.
- 3.6.12. A non-supportive singlet must be worn during the bench press.



3.7. Supportive/Squat/Deadlift Suit

- 3.7.1. A supportive suit may be worn in equipped competition only.
- 3.7.2. A supportive suit may only be worn in the squat and deadlift. A supportive suit may not be worn in the bench press.
- 3.7.3. Only supportive suits listed on the [USA Powerlifting Approved List](#) may be worn.
- 3.7.4. The suit straps must be worn over the lifter's shoulders.
- 3.7.4.1. When worn in competition, the suit straps may not be twisted.
- 3.7.5. Supportive suits are limited to a single ply/layer of woven nylon (polyester) and must be constructed of a single material.
- 3.7.6. The supportive suit must be constructed entirely of fabric or a synthetic textile and cannot consist, in whole or part, of any rubberized or similar stretch material.
- 3.7.7. The supportive suit cannot have any pockets, buttons, zippers, Velcro, or straps (this does not refer to the shoulder straps).
- 3.7.8. The supportive suit must have legs extending a minimum of 3cm and a maximum of 15cm from the top of the crotch down the inside of the leg as measured when worn by the lifter in a standing position.
- 3.7.9. When a supportive suit is worn, the bottom of the suit legs must not make contact with the knees, knee sleeves, or knee wraps.
- 3.7.10. Any manipulation or altering of the supportive suit from the manufacturer's original design will render the suit illegal for use in competition.
- 3.7.11. The supportive suit may be made tighter or looser in the form of pleats on the original manufacturer's seams only and may not be altered or reinforced beyond the manufacturer's original design. These pleats must be made on the inside of the suit. Any alterations made on areas other than the manufacturer's seams will render the suit illegal for use in competition. Pleats may not be sewn back onto the body of the garment.
- 3.7.12. Where a tightening has been made in the shoulder straps and the excess material is longer than 3cm, the material must be turned inside the suit and not sewn back onto the straps. No more than 3cm of excess material may protrude outside the suit.
- 3.7.13. Supportive suits must comply with the policies on logos and emblems described in Item 3.3.

3.8. Undergarments

- 3.8.1. For the purposes of this rulebook, "undergarments" refers to anything worn underneath the singlet in the pelvic region (underwear, briefs, athletic supporter) or a commercial or sports bra in competition.
- 3.8.2. Undergarments must be worn in competition. Females are not required to wear a bra except when required by the rules as described in Item 3.5.1.1.
- 3.8.3. Undergarments must be worn under the lifting singlet/suit.
- 3.8.3.1. Undergarments must be constructed entirely of fabric or a synthetic textile and cannot consist, in whole or part, of any rubberized or similar stretch material that is deemed to make the undergarments supportive.



- 3.8.3.2. Undergarments worn in the pelvic region may have “legs” but they must not protrude or be visible beyond the end of the legs of the singlet or supportive suit.
- 3.8.3.3. Compression or bike shorts are not permitted to be worn as undergarments.
- 3.8.3.4. Support briefs or support underwear (e.g., groove briefs) are not permitted in raw or equipped competition.
- 3.8.4. Females may wear a commercial or sports bra. Underwire bras are permitted.
- 3.8.5. Swimming trunks or any similar garment consisting of rubberized or similar stretch material (except in the waistband), cannot be worn.

3.9. Socks

- 3.9.1. Socks may be worn in the squat and bench press.
- 3.9.2. Shin length socks (i.e., must cover the entire shin to just below the knee) must be worn to cover and protect the shins while performing the deadlift.
- 3.9.3. Socks cannot come into contact with, or be worn over, the knee, knee wraps, or knee sleeves.
- 3.9.4. Full length leg stockings, tights, or hose cannot be worn except as noted in Item 3.4.7.
- 3.9.5. Socks must comply with the policies on logos and emblems described in Item 3.3.

3.10. Footwear

- 3.10.1. Footwear in the form of closed-toe indoor athletic shoes, powerlifting boots, or deadlift slippers must be worn on all lifts (squat, bench press, and deadlift).
 - 3.10.1.1. Dress shoes, hiking boots, sandals, cleated footwear, Crocs™ (or their like), water/aqua socks, and socks with a rubber outer sole lining cannot be worn in any lift. Note: Multi-toed shoes (e.g., Vibram® Five-Fingers Shoes) are allowed provided they meet all other specifications in this section.
- 3.10.2. Other than the allowance for a raised heel (maximum allowable height of heel = 5cm), the underside of the footwear must be flat (i.e., no projections or irregularities) and cannot be altered or manipulated from the manufacturer’s original design.
- 3.10.3. Loose inner soles (i.e., inserts, orthotics) that are not part of the manufactured shoe may be worn but are limited to a thickness of no more than 1cm.
- 3.10.4. Footwear must comply with the policies on logos and emblems described in Item 3.3.

3.11. Knee Sleeves

- 3.11.1. Beginning on January 1, 2026, only knee sleeves that are on the [USA Powerlifting Approved List](#) will be allowed in competition.
- 3.11.2. Knee sleeves may be worn in the performance of any lift.
- 3.11.3. Knee sleeves may only be worn on the knees and may not be worn on any other part of the body.
- 3.11.4. Knee sleeves cannot be worn with knee wraps.
- 3.11.5. Knee sleeves must be a cylindrical design and constructed entirely of a single layer/ply of



neoprene (i.e., synthetic rubber), or predominantly of a single layer/ply of neoprene plus a non-supportive single layer of fabric over the neoprene. The fabric may be stitched onto the neoprene.

- 3.11.5.1. Knee sleeves must be continuous cylinders, without holes in the neoprene or in any covering material.
- 3.11.5.2. Knee sleeves cannot have any additional strapping, Velcro, drawstrings, padding, or similar supportive devices in or on them.
- 3.11.5.3. The knee sleeves must not be constructed/constructed in a way that provides any appreciable support or rebound to the lifter's knees.
- 3.11.6. Knee sleeves may not be altered from the manufacturer's original design (e.g., addition of stitching, patches, embroidery, and/or coverings is prohibited).
- 3.11.7. Knee sleeves are limited to a maximum thickness of 7mm and a maximum length of 30cm.
- 3.11.7.1. Between January 1 and December 31, 2025, knee sleeves that are reasonably close to the thickness specification (i.e., 7mm) are allowed to be used and must be passed at equipment check. All other specifications as stated in this section (Section 3.11) are in effect.
- 3.11.7.2. Beginning on January 1, 2026, when knee sleeves are being measured for thickness by a referee using the established measurement protocol, there is an allowable measurement tolerance of 0.50mm. Knee sleeves will be allowed for use in competition if they measure 7.50mm or less using the established measurement protocol.
- 3.11.8. When worn, knee sleeves must not be in contact with the singlet, suit, or socks and must be centered over the knee joint. The knee sleeve may not extend beyond 15cm above or 15cm below the center of the knee joint. When being worn, the knee sleeves must be pulled up tight for a smooth appearing fit with no significant folding/bunching of the material.
- 3.11.9. Lifters may not have or use any form of assistance (e.g., another person, suit slippers, plastic bags, powder, etc.) to put on knee sleeves. If this is in question, the lifter may be asked to demonstrate they can put on their knee sleeves without assistance. Lifters may not be asked to demonstrate they can put on their knee sleeves without assistance once the bar has been called loaded for that lifter or within the 60 seconds immediately following the completion of that lifter's attempt.
- 3.11.10. Knee sleeves must comply with the policies on logos and emblems described in Item 3.3.

3.12. Wrist Wraps

- 3.12.1. Wrist wraps may be worn in the performance of any lift in raw or equipped competition.
- 3.12.2. Wrist wraps must be made of one layer/ply of commercially woven elastic or fabric that is covered with polyester, cotton, or a combination of both of those materials.
- 3.12.3. Wrist wraps are limited to 1m in length and 8cm in width. Any sleeves, Velcro patches, or tabs used for securing must be incorporated within the 1m length. A loop or string may be attached as an aid to securing and is not incorporated with the 1m allowable length. The loop or string may not be worn over/around the thumb or fingers during the actual lift. Note: If it is discovered during a lift that the thumb loops are around the thumbs or fingers (i.e., the technical controller and referees missed it prior to the lift commencing), this alone is not a reason for a referee to fail



a lift and the lifter should be given a warning and told to correct the problem after the lift is over.

- 3.12.3.1. Wrist wraps that exceed the maximal allowable length may be cut so as to make them in conformity with the rules.
- 3.12.3.2. The wrist wrap cannot be of a design that encircles the entire thumb or base of the thumb circumferentially.
- 3.12.4. The wrist wrap, when worn, cannot extend beyond 10cm above (toward the elbow) and 2cm below (toward the palm of the hand) the center of the wrist joint and cannot exceed a total covering width of 12cm. The center of the wrist joint is defined as the distal wrist crease (i.e., the skin crease formed in the wrist that is closest to the hand when the hand/wrist is flexed).
- 3.12.5. Standard commercial non-supportive sweat/wrist bands not exceeding 12cm in width may be worn on the wrists. A combination of wrist wraps and sweat/wrist bands is not allowed.
- 3.12.6. Wrist wraps must comply with the policies on logos and emblems described in Item 3.3.

3.13. Knee Wraps

- 3.13.1. Knee wraps may be worn in the performance of any lift in equipped or raw-with-wraps competition only.
- 3.13.2. Knee wraps must be made of one layer/ply of commercially woven elastic or fabric that is covered with polyester, cotton, or a combination of both of those materials.
- 3.13.3. Velcro may not be used on/with knee wraps.
- 3.13.4. Knee wraps are limited to 2m in length and 8cm in width.
- 3.13.4.1. Knee wraps that exceed the maximal allowable length may be cut by the lifter so as to make them in conformity with the rules.
- 3.13.5. When worn, knee wraps must not be in contact with the singlet, suit, or socks and must be centered over the knee joint. The knee wrap may not extend beyond 15cm above or 15cm below the center of the knee joint.
- 3.13.6. A combination of knee wraps and knee sleeves is not allowed.
- 3.13.7. Knee wraps must comply with the policies on logos and emblems described in Item 3.3.

3.14. Belt

- 3.14.1. A lifting belt may be worn in the performance of any lift in raw or equipped competition.
- 3.14.2. If a lifting belt is worn, it must be worn on the outside of the singlet or suit.
- 3.14.3. The lifting belt may not exceed a width of 10cm at any point along the entirety of the belt. This does not include the buckle which may be wider than 10cm.
- 3.14.4. Any manufacturer or non-manufacturer adornments added to the belt (e.g., stickers, patches, etc.) must comply with the policies on logos and emblems described in Item 3.3. Nothing may be added to the belt that could be damaging to the bench surface in the bench press.
- 3.14.5. The lifting belt must comply with the policies on logos and emblems described in Item 3.3.



3.15. Medical Tape

- 3.15.1. Two layers of medical tape (or its like) may be worn around the thumbs. If worn, the tape must be wrapped circumferentially around the thumb (i.e., in a circular fashion around the long axis of the thumb).
- 3.15.1.1. Two layers of medical tape, for the purposes of this rule, means that medical tape can be worn in one of the following three configurations:
 - A. One layer of tape directly on top of another layer of tape.
 - B. One layer of tape in one location and another layer of tape in a second location.
 - C. One layer of tape that overlaps, to a certain degree, another layer of tape.
- 3.15.2. Medical tape may not be used as aids to the lifter in holding the bar.
- 3.15.2.1. Medical tape must not have adhesive on both sides. The adhesive side must be facing the skin and must not be in direct contact with the bar.
- 3.15.3. Medical tape must not be worn anywhere on the body (other than the thumbs) without official approval of the jury or, in the absence of a jury, the chief referee.
- 3.15.3.1. Contingent upon approval by the jury, or in the absence of a jury the chief referee, medical tape (including Band-Aids and bandages) may be applied to bodily injuries such as cuts and abrasions in a fashion that does not grant the lifter an unfair advantage. With the exception of the thumbs (as described in Item 3.15.3), medical tape may never be applied on or around joints for the purpose of, or in a way that aids in, joint support.
- 3.15.3.2. KT/kinesio tape or its like may never be worn under any circumstances other than on/around the thumbs. If worn around the thumbs, the use of KT/kinesio tape or its like must adhere to all rules/specifications listed in Section 3.15.
- 3.15.4. The width of the medical tape must be less than the length of the thumb on which it is applied.

3.16. Miscellaneous

- 3.16.1. The only allowable headwear is a professionally made headband. Headbands must comply with the policies on logos and emblems described in Item 3.3.
- 3.16.1.1. Hats are not allowed.
- 3.16.1.2. Muslim females are allowed to wear a Hijab (head scarf) while lifting and do not need to obtain an exemption from the Technical Committee.
- 3.16.1.3. Any lifter who wishes to apply for a religious or medical exemption to the headwear requirements identified in this section must follow the procedures outlined in Item 3.1.3.
- 3.16.2. Sleeves may only be worn on the knees and may not be worn on any other part of the body.
- 3.16.3. Braces or their like may not be worn on any part of the body.
- 3.16.4. Implanted medical devices (e.g., insulin pump) that do not provide an unfair advantage are permitted.
- 3.16.5. Light protective guards (e.g., shin guards) between the sock and shin may be worn on any lift.
- 3.16.6. The use of oil, grease, or other lubricants on the body or personal equipment is strictly forbidden.
- 3.16.7. Baby powder/talc and chalk (e.g., magnesium carbonate) are the only substances that may be added to the body and attire. Adhesive substances or substances with adhesive properties are



strictly forbidden.

- 3.16.7.1. Liquid chalk is permitted provided it has no adhesive substances/properties.
- 3.16.7.2. No substance may be applied to knee sleeves for the purposes of putting them on.
- 3.16.8. No foreign substances, adhesives, or built-in adhesives (including chalk, resin, rosin, glass paper, emery cloth) may be applied to, or used on, the underside of the footwear. The only exception is that water may be applied to the underside of footwear.
- 3.16.9. No foreign substances may be directly applied to the platform equipment. In this context, an example of direct application would be taking a block of chalk and rubbing it on the competition bar or bench. Putting chalk on one's back or hands prior to performing the bench press is not a direct application and is permitted.
- 3.16.9.1. Substances that may be used as a sterilizing agent in the cleaning of the bar, bench, carpet, etc. are permitted.



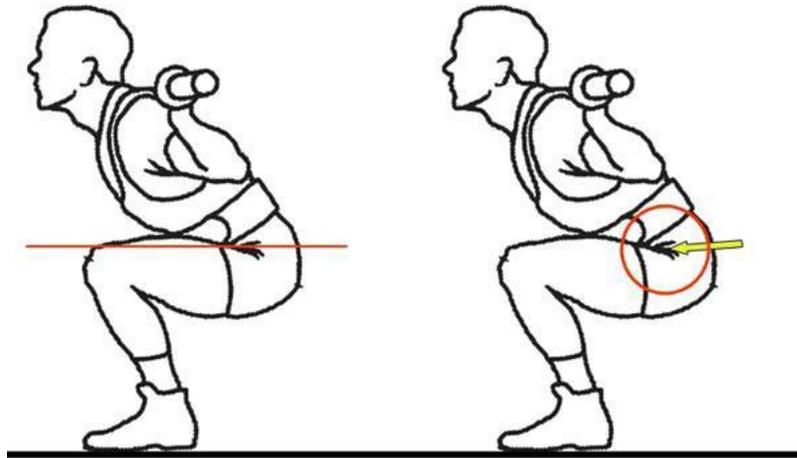
4. Powerlifts and Rules of Performance

4.1. Squat: Rules of Performance

- 4.1.1. The squat rack must be placed on the platform such that the lifter will face the front of the platform. The chief referee must be positioned in front of the rack in such a way so as to be visible to the lifter.
- 4.1.2. The lifter must face the front of the platform. The bar must be held horizontally across the shoulders/upper back (behind the head) with the hands and fingers gripping the bar. For the purpose of this rule, the thumbs are not considered fingers and a “thumbless” grip is allowed in the squat. All four fingers must be gripping/grasping the bar and are not required to be wrapped around the bar. A grip with one or more fingers on the underside of the bar, or not in contact with the bar, is prohibited. The hands may be positioned anywhere on the bar inside, and/or in contact with the inside surface, of the bar sleeve.
- 4.1.3. After removing the bar from the racks (the lifter may be aided in removal of the bar from the racks by the spotters), the lifter must move backwards to establish the starting position. When the lifter is motionless and erect/upright (slight deviation is allowable) with knees locked, the chief referee will give the signal to begin the lift. The signal consists of a downward movement of the arm and the audible command “squat.” Before receiving the signal to “squat,” the lifter may make any position adjustments within the rules without penalty. After the signal to “squat” has been given, the lift has officially started and any position adjustments that contravene the rules of performance will be a reason to disqualify the attempt. For reasons of safety, the lifter will be given the audible command to “replace the bar,” together with a backward movement of the arm, if, after a period of five seconds, the lifter is not in the correct position to begin the lift. The chief referee will then convey the reason why the “squat” command was not given. The lifter has the balance of time remaining on the 60-second clock to start the attempt over, get in the proper starting position, and receive the “squat” command.
- 4.1.4. Upon receiving the chief referee’s “squat” signal, the lifter must bend the knees and lower the body until the top/anterior surface of the legs at the hip joint (anatomically defined as the inguinal crease - depicted by arrow in Figure 1) is lower than the top surface of the knees. Only one attempt is allowed. The attempt is deemed to have commenced when the lifter begins to descend. After the attempt has commenced, any upward movement prior to achieving the required depth will disqualify the attempt. Slight unlocking and relocking of the knees prior to the descent that is clearly and obviously not part of the actual descent for the attempt is not a reason to disqualify the attempt.
- 4.1.5. After achieving the required depth, the lifter must recover to an erect/upright position with the knees locked. Double bouncing at the bottom of the squat attempt or any downward movement of the whole bar in its entirety is not permitted. When the lifter is motionless (in the apparent finished position), the chief referee will give the signal to rack the bar.

- 4.1.6. The signal to rack the bar will consist of a backward motion of the arm and the audible command “rack.” The lifter must then return the bar to the racks. Foot movement, regardless of direction, after the “rack” command will not be cause for failure. For reasons of safety, the lifter may request the aid of the spotters in returning the bar to, and replacing it in, the racks. The lifter must stay with the bar during this process and any dropping/dumping of the bar after receiving the “rack” command will disqualify the attempt.
- 4.1.7. Not more than five (5) and not fewer than three (3) spotters may be on the platform at any time. The jury (or the platform referees in the absence of a jury) can require more than five (5) spotters if they believe the current number of spotters to be insufficient to maximize lifter/spotter safety. Spotters must be official event staff members as designated by the event director(s).

Figure 1. Required depth for the squat.



4.2. Squat: Reasons for Disqualification

- 4.2.1. The following are the infractions in the squat. Infractions constitute a failure of the lift and are made known by the referees via a colored light system or raised card/paddle that accompanies the good lift (i.e., white light) or no lift (i.e., red light) decision by each referee. Each item is denoted by the color of the failure card/light (■Red, ■Blue, ■Yellow) that accompanies the infraction.
- 4.2.1.1. (■Red): Failure to bend the knees and lower the body until the top/anterior surface of the legs at the hip joint is lower than the top surface of the knees (as depicted in Figure 1).
- 4.2.1.2. (■Blue): Failure to assume an erect/upright position with the knees locked at the commencement and/or completion of the lift.
- 4.2.1.3. (■Blue): Any downward movement of the whole bar in its entirety during the ascent.
- 4.2.1.4. (■Blue): Double bouncing or more than one recovery attempt at the bottom of the lift.
- 4.2.1.5. (■Yellow): Stepping backward or forward or moving the feet laterally. Rocking the feet between the ball and heel is permitted as long as the feet remain in the same footprint.



- 4.2.1.6. (■ Yellow): The bar and/or lifter making contact with the spotter(s) and/or any portion of the rack (i.e., uprights, bar rest supports/hooks) during the attempt (i.e., between the chief referee's "squat" and "rack" signals) in such a way that is deemed to make the lift easier. Slight inadvertent contact that is of no aid to the lifter is permitted.
- 4.2.1.7. (■ Yellow): Contact of the elbows and/or arms with the legs in such a way that is deemed to make the lift easier. Slight inadvertent contact that is of no aid to the lifter is permitted.
- 4.2.1.8. (■ Yellow): Any dropping or dumping of the bar at any point before commencing the lift (i.e., before receiving the "squat" command), during the lift, or after completing the lift (i.e., after receiving the "rack" command). [Note: If, in the unanimous opinion of the jury (or the platform referees in the absence of a jury), the dropping/dumping of the bar was egregious (i.e., intentional and/or avoidable), the lifter will be immediately disqualified from the competition]
- 4.2.1.9. (■ Yellow): Failure to observe the chief referee's signals at the commencement and/or completion of the lift.
- 4.2.1.10. (■ Yellow): Failure to comply with any items outlined under Item 4.1: "Squat: Rules of Performance."
- 4.2.1.11. (■ Yellow): An obvious failure to complete the lift (e.g., spotters assist in replacing the bar).

4.3. Bench Press: Rules of Performance

- 4.3.1. The bench rack must be placed on the platform with the head of the bench facing the front of the platform. The chief referee must be positioned behind the head portion of the bench.
- 4.3.2. The lifter must lie on their back with their shoulders and buttocks in contact with the bench surface. The feet must be flat on the floor (as flat as the shape of the bottom of the shoe will allow). The lifter must use an overhand/pronated grip on the bar in which all four fingers grip the bar (i.e., all four fingers must be in contact with the bar) with a thumbs-around grip. The grip known as the "bulldog" grip (i.e., fingers gripping the top of the bar) is allowed. A thumbless/false grip as well as a reverse grip (i.e., underhand/supinated) are prohibited. This position must be maintained throughout the lift. Foot movement is permissible but the feet must remain flat on the floor.
- 4.3.3. To achieve firm footing, the lifter may use flat-surfaced plates or blocks (plates/blocks may not exceed 30cm in total height and must have a minimum top surface area that allows for the entire foot of the lifter to rest on the surface) to build up the surface of the platform. It is recommended that blocks in the range of 5cm, 10cm, 20cm, and 30cm in height be made available for all competitions and that the surface area of the blocks be a minimum of 60cm x 40cm. If plates/blocks are used, the entire bottom of the foot/shoe must be in contact with the plate/block surface - no portion of the foot/shoe may hang over the edge of the plate/block. The top surface of the blocks/plates must be a non-slip surface. The blocks may be positioned by the spotters/loaders or the lifter. If the blocks slide during the performance of the lift, it is permissible for one or two spotters/loaders to hold them in position during the lift. Once the bar is called "loaded/ready" and the 60-second clock has started, any repositioning of the blocks will occur on the lifter's time (i.e., the 60-second clock will not be stopped).
- 4.3.4. Not more than five (5) and not fewer than two (2) spotters may be on the platform at any time.



The jury (or the platform referees in the absence of a jury) can require more spotters (not to exceed a total of five) if they believe the current number of spotters to be insufficient to maximize lifter/spotter safety. Spotters must be official event staff members as designated by the event director(s). The lifter may enlist the help of a spotter or an officially designated hand-off person (i.e., lifters may not receive hand-offs from coaches, friends, other lifters, etc.) in removing the bar from the racks. Any hand-off must be to arms' length with arms/elbows fully extended.

- 4.3.5. The spacing of the hands may not exceed 81cm as measured between the index fingers (also known as forefingers or first fingers). Both index fingers must be within the 81cm marks and, if the maximum allowable grip is used, the whole index finger must be covering the 81cm marks (i.e., the entirety of the 81cm marks must be covered by the index fingers). A non-symmetrical grip may be used (i.e., hands not equidistant from the center of the bar) but neither index finger may be beyond the 81cm marks.
- 4.3.6. After removing the bar from the racks, with or without a hand-off, the lifter must wait, with their arms straight and elbows locked, for the chief referee's signal to begin the lift. The signal consists of a downward movement of the arm and the audible command "start." Before receiving the signal to "start," the lifter may make any position adjustments within the rules without penalty. The signal will be given as soon as the lifter is motionless and in the proper position. After the signal to "start" has been given, the lift has officially started and any position adjustments that contravene the rules of performance will be a reason to disqualify the attempt. For reasons of safety, the lifter will be given the audible command to "replace the bar," together with a backward movement of the arm, if, after a period of five seconds, the lifter is not in the correct position to begin the lift. The chief referee will then convey the reason why the "start" command was not given. The lifter has the balance of time remaining on the 60-second clock to start the attempt over, get in the proper starting position, and receive the "start" command.
- 4.3.7. After receiving the "start" command, the lifter must lower the bar to the chest or abdominal area (the bar may not touch the belt), hold it motionless on the chest, and wait for the chief referee's "press" command. Only one attempt is allowed. The attempt is deemed to have commenced when the bar begins to descend. After the attempt has commenced, any upward movement prior to receiving the chief referee's "press" command will disqualify the attempt. Slight unlocking and relocking of the elbows prior to the descent that is clearly and obviously not part of the actual descent for the attempt is not a reason to disqualify the attempt.
- 4.3.8. When the chief referee deems the bar is motionless on the chest, the audible "press" command will be given accompanied by an upward movement of the chief referee's arm. [If the bar is lowered to the belt or does not touch the chest or abdominal area, the chief referee will give the audible command "rack"] After receiving the "press" command, the lifter must then return the bar to a position in which the arms are straight and the elbows are locked. The bar may be pressed up unevenly and one arm may lock out before the other one provided there was no downward movement of the whole bar in its entirety at any point after receiving the "press" command. When the lifter is motionless (in the apparent finished position), the chief referee will give the signal to rack the bar.
- 4.3.9. The signal to rack the bar will consist of a backward motion of the arm and the audible command "rack." The lifter must then return the bar to the racks. Changes in body position after the "rack" command will not be cause for failure. For reasons of safety, the lifter may request the aid of the



spotters in returning the bar to, and replacing it in, the racks. The lifter must stay with the bar during this process and any dropping/dumping of the bar after receiving the “rack” command will disqualify the attempt.

- 4.3.10. In the case of a lifter who is hearing impaired, the three signals (“start,” “press,” and “rack”) may be given by the chief referee via hand taps on the lifter’s shoulder or by visually waving the hand over the lifter.

4.4. Bench Press: Reasons for Disqualification

- 4.4.1. The following are the infractions in the bench press. Infractions constitute a failure of the lift and are made known by the referees via a colored light system or raised card/paddle that accompanies the good lift (i.e., white light) or no lift (i.e., red light) decision by each referee. Each item is denoted by the color of the failure card/light (■Red, ■Blue, ■Yellow) that accompanies the infraction.
- 4.4.1.1. (■Red): Not lowering the bar to the chest or abdominal area (i.e., not reaching the chest or abdominal area) or making contact between the bar and belt.
- 4.4.1.2. (■Blue): Failure to press the bar to straight arms’ length and elbows locked at the commencement and completion of the lift.
- 4.4.1.3. (■Blue): Any downward movement of the whole bar in its entirety in the course of being pressed out.
- 4.4.1.4. (■Yellow): Any change in the elected lifting position (from the original points of contact) during the performance of the lift to include the following: raising the shoulders and/or buttocks from the bench surface; raising any portion of one or both feet from the surface of the floor (or plates/blocks if used); or lateral movement of hands on the bar. Foot movement is permissible provided the feet remain flat on the floor (as flat as the shape of the bottom of the shoe will allow).
- 4.4.1.5. (■Yellow): Heaving or sinking the bar into the chest or abdominal area after receiving the “press” command in such a way as to aid the lifter.
- 4.4.1.6. (■Yellow): Any contact of the lifter’s feet with the bench or its supports.
- 4.4.1.7. (■Yellow): The bar and/or lifter making contact with the spotter(s) and/or any portion of the rack (i.e., uprights, bar rest supports/hooks, bench safeties) during the attempt (i.e., between the chief referee’s “start” and “rack” signals) in such a way that is deemed to make the lift easier. Slight inadvertent contact that is of no aid to the lifter is permitted.
- 4.4.1.8. (■Yellow): Any dropping or dumping of the bar at any point before commencing the lift (i.e., before receiving the “start” command), during the lift, or after completing the lift (i.e., after receiving the “rack” command). [Note: If, in the unanimous opinion of the jury (or the platform referees in the absence of a jury), the dropping/dumping of the bar was egregious (i.e., intentional and/or avoidable), the lifter will be immediately disqualified from the competition]
- 4.4.1.9. (■Yellow): Failure to observe the chief referee’s signals at the commencement, during, and/or completion of the lift.
- 4.4.1.10. (■Yellow): Failure to comply with any items outlined under Item 4.3: “Bench Press: Rules of Performance.”



4.4.1.11. (Yellow): An obvious failure to complete the lift (e.g., spotters assist in replacing the bar).

4.5. Deadlift: Rules of Performance

- 4.5.1. The chief referee must be positioned in front of the platform in such a way so as to be visible to the lifter.
- 4.5.2. The lifter may request that a spotter stand behind them on the platform during the performance of the lift. In cases where a spotter has not been requested, a designated platform staff member will stand just off the platform and attempt to catch any lifter who falls backward during or after the lift. The platform staff must ensure that no equipment (deadlift jack, bench, etc.) is placed immediately behind the platform in order to reduce the chance of injury in the event a lifter falls off the back of the platform. The chief referee has the discretion to require a deadlift spotter if they believe the lifter is at risk of falling.
- 4.5.3. The lifter must face the front of the platform with the bar laid horizontally in front of the lifter's feet.
- 4.5.4. The lifter must grip the bar with both hands using any style of grip.
- 4.5.5. The lifter begins the lift whenever they are ready. No start/commencement signal is given by the chief referee.
- 4.5.6. Only one attempt is allowed. The lift is deemed to have commenced when the lifter makes a genuine/deliberate effort to raise the bar from the floor. Any rising of the bar or any deliberate attempt to do so will count as an attempt. Prior to the lifter's genuine/deliberate effort to raise the bar and commence the attempt, the lifter may roll the bar on the platform and/or shake the bar. It will be the referees' discretion to determine whether or not a genuine/deliberate attempt to raise the bar occurs.
- 4.5.7. The lifter must raise the bar until they are in the finished position standing erect with knees locked and shoulders back.
- 4.5.8. Once the attempt has begun, no downward movement is allowed until the lifter reaches the finished position and receives the chief referee's "down" command. If, upon reaching the finished position, the bar settles as the shoulders come back (slightly downward on completion), this is not a reason to disqualify the lift.
- 4.5.9. The chief referee's signal to return the bar to the floor consists of a downward motion of the arm and the audible command "down." The signal will not be given until the bar is held motionless and the lifter is in the apparent finished position.
- 4.5.10. Upon receiving the chief referee's "down" command, the lifter must maintain an obvious and controlled grip (with both hands) on the bar and return the bar to the floor under control. Forcefully and deliberately slamming/pushing the bar downward onto the platform after receiving the "down" command will disqualify the lift. Allowing the bar to descend rapidly while maintaining an obvious and controlled grip on the bar is not a reason to disqualify the lift.



4.6. Deadlift: Reasons for Disqualification

- 4.6.1. The following are the infractions in the deadlift. Infractions constitute a failure of the lift and are made known by the referees via a colored light system or raised card/paddle that accompanies the good lift (i.e., white light) or no lift (i.e., red light) decision by each referee. Each item is denoted by the color of the failure card/light (■Red, ■Blue, ■Yellow) that accompanies the infraction.
- 4.6.1.1. (■Red): Failure to stand erect with the shoulders back.
 - 4.6.1.2. (■Red): Failure to lock the knees straight at the completion of the lift.
 - 4.6.1.3. (■Blue): Any downward movement of the whole bar in its entirety before it reaches the finished position. If the bar settles as the shoulders come back, this is not a reason to disqualify the lift.
 - 4.6.1.4. (■Blue): Supporting the bar on the thighs during the performance of the lift. If the bar edges up the thigh but is not supported, this is not a reason to disqualify the lift.
 - 4.6.1.5. (■Yellow): Stepping backward or forward or moving the feet laterally. Rocking the feet between the ball and heel is permitted as long as the feet remain in the same footprint. Lateral foot movement after the “down” command is not a reason to disqualify the lift but the lifter must maintain their balance and may not take a step backward or forward until the bar has been returned to the platform.
 - 4.6.1.6. (■Yellow): Allowing the bar to return to the platform without maintaining an obvious and controlled grip (with both hands) on the bar and/or not returning the bar to the floor under control. Forcefully and deliberately slamming/pushing the bar downward onto the platform after receiving the “Down” command will result in a disqualification of the lift.
 - 4.6.1.7. (■Yellow): The lifter and/or bar making contact with the spotter in such a way that is deemed to make the lift easier. Slight inadvertent contact that is of no aid to the lifter is permitted.
 - 4.6.1.8. (■Yellow): Failure to observe the chief referee’s signal at the completion of the lift.
 - 4.6.1.9. (■Yellow): Failure to comply with any items outlined under Item 4.5: “Deadlift: Rules of Performance.”
 - 4.6.1.10. (■Yellow): An obvious failure to complete the lift (e.g., bar fails to leave the ground).

4.7. Adaptive Athlete ~~and Para Bench~~

- 4.7.1. Certain amendments to the Rules of Performance and Reasons for Disqualification (Items 4.1 to 4.6) exist for the adaptive athlete ~~and para bench~~ divisions.
- 4.7.2. Rules, policies, and procedures regarding the adaptive athlete ~~and para bench~~ divisions are defined and explained on the [Technical Committee page of the USA Powerlifting website](#).
- 4.7.3. **In order to compete in the adaptive athlete division, the lifter must be officially approved to be classified as an adaptive athlete prior to the event. This classification appears on the membership card. The process begins by submitting the Adaptive Athlete Application Form at least 30 days prior to the event. This form can be found on the [Technical Committee page of the USA Powerlifting website](#).**



5. Meet Protocol

5.1. Weigh-In

- 5.1.1. Weighing in of competitors must begin two (2) hours before the scheduled start of lifting for a given session and must last 90 minutes. There must be 30 minutes between the end of the weigh-in period and the start of lifting.
- 5.1.1.1. Early weigh-ins (i.e., weigh-ins beginning more than 2 hours before the scheduled start of lifting) are not allowed under any circumstances.
- 5.1.2. All lifters in the session must attend the weigh-in.
- 5.1.3. The weigh-in is conducted by one or two referees when the competitors being weighed in are 18 years of age or older. When competitors under the age of 18 are to be weighed in, two referees must be present in the weigh-in room.
- 5.1.4. It is the responsibility of the referees running the weigh-in to confirm that the identity of the lifter being weighed in matches that of the scorecard on which the official bodyweight is recorded.
- 5.1.5. The referees must be the same sex as the lifters they are weighing in.
- 5.1.5.1. If there is not a sufficient number of referees that are the same sex as the lifters who are to be weighed-in, two (2) opposite sex referees (or one opposite sex and one same sex referee if only a single same sex referee is available when two referees are required as in the weighing in of lifters under 18 years of age [Item 5.1.3]) will conduct the weigh-in but the lifters being weighed in must wear a singlet (they may also wear a T-shirt under the singlet) during the weigh-in. In order to correct for the added weight of the required weigh-in apparel, 0.5kg (or 1.0lb in local meets being run in pounds) will be subtracted from the scale weight and this corrected weight will be recorded as the official body weight for the competition. The lifter must be informed that they may have a 3rd party attend the weigh-in with them, if they wish. [Lifters under 14 years of age must be accompanied during the weigh-in by a parent, guardian, or coach as stated in Item 5.1.10.1.] The weigh-in room door (or tent flap or drape) must remain open when weigh-ins are conducted using this procedure. Importantly, this procedure is only to be implemented when there are no same sex referees to conduct weigh-ins. This procedure serves the important purpose of ensuring that only certified referees who are SafeSport™ trained and who have passed a background check (or its equivalent in countries outside of the U.S. as approved by USA Powerlifting) conduct weigh-ins. It is the responsibility of every meet director to make every effort to avoid needing to implement this procedure by having a sufficient number of referees of both sexes to conduct weigh-ins.
- 5.1.5.2. If there is not a sufficient number of referees that are the same sex as the lifters who are to be weighed-in but one or more same sex meet staff are present who are SafeSport™ trained and who have passed a background check (or its equivalent in countries outside of the U.S. as approved by USA Powerlifting), those staff members may conduct weigh-ins. It is the responsibility of the meet director to collect and retain irrefutable proof/documentation that any non-referee staff conducting weigh-ins are SafeSport™ trained and have passed a background check (or its equivalent in countries outside of the U.S. as approved by USA Powerlifting). This proof/documentation must be collected prior to any weigh-ins conducted by non-referee staff.



- 5.1.5.3. Lifters competing in the MX division must indicate to the meet director (or chief referee of their session) their preference regarding the sex of the referee(s) conducting their weigh-in. Ideally, this should be communicated prior to the event. In the event that no referee(s) of the requested sex is/are available, the procedures outlined in Items 5.1.5.1 and 5.1.5.2 must be followed.
- 5.1.6. Prior to the event, each competitor will randomly be assigned a lot number. Lot numbers serve two purposes:
- A. Determine the order of weigh-in.
 - B. Determine the order of lifting throughout the competition when two or more lifters require the same weights for their attempts.
- 5.1.7. Prior to the start of the weigh-in for a particular session, the referees assigned to perform the weigh-in must be provided with the official scorecards for all of the competitors entered in that session. The scorecards must already have the following lifter information entered prior to being delivered to the referees assigned to the weigh-in: name (first and last), date of birth, lot number, weight class, and division(s) entered. Entering this information on the scorecards and delivering them to the referees assigned to the weigh-in is ultimately the responsibility of the meet director (for local and state meets) or the technical secretary (for regional, national, and pro meets). These individuals may delegate this responsibility to someone else (e.g., scoring manager). It is preferable for the scorecards to be ordered by lot number prior to delivery to the referees assigned to conduct the weigh-in. Several blank scorecards should also be included in the event that a lifter's scorecard is missing or a new scorecard needs to be created. See Appendices C and D for examples of scorecards.
- 5.1.7.1. Lifters must never be given, must never handle, and must never write on the scorecard **with the exception of initialing it in the presence of a weigh-in official as described in Item 5.1.14 and Appendix C.** Scorecards are official event documents and must only ever be handled by meet officials.
- 5.1.8. Lifters are weighed in by lot number order from the lowest number to the highest number. The weigh-in order must be posted in a prominent location in the vicinity of the weigh-in room and must be accessible to all lifters and coaches.
- 5.1.8.1. Where there are multiple flights (i.e., groups) lifting in a session, flights will be weighed in based on the order in which they lift. The lot numbers assigned to the first flight must be lower than the numbers for the second flight and so on. All lifters in the first flight who are present when called will have one opportunity to weigh in before lifters in the second flight; all lifters in the second flight who are present when called will have one opportunity to weigh in before lifters in the third flight; and so on throughout all of the flights. Lifters who were absent for any reason when called to the scale will weigh in after all the lifters in the session who were present when their lot number was called had an opportunity to weigh-in. It is ultimately the lifter's responsibility to know where they are located in the order and to be in close enough proximity to the weigh-in room to hear when their name is called.
- 5.1.8.2. After the entire order of lifters has been called to weigh-in the first time, the process will be repeated from the top of the order following the procedures described in Items 5.1.8 and 5.1.8.1. This same process will be repeated continually until either all of the lifters have been weighed in or the 90-minute weigh-in period has come to an end. Lifters needing to re-weigh (see Item



- 5.1.13) are afforded no special privileges in terms of order and are subject to being called based on where they fall in the order (based on lot number) of the lifters who are present and still need to weigh in.
- 5.1.9. The weigh-in for each competitor will be carried out in a room with the door closed. Areas cordoned off (e.g., pipe and drape) are acceptable provided they are totally concealed from the surrounding area.
- 5.1.9.1. It is acceptable for more than one scale to be used for weigh-ins as long as each scale is housed in a separate room/area.
- 5.1.9.2. All lifters assigned to a given platform must be weighed on the scale assigned to that platform.
- 5.1.9.3. If possible, all lifters competing in a given division should be weighed in on the same scale.
- 5.1.10. The only individuals allowed in the weigh-in room during weigh-ins are the competitor, one coach (optional), and the referees conducting the weigh-in.
- 5.1.10.1. Lifters competing in the youth division (i.e., lifters 13 years of age or younger) must be accompanied during the weigh-in by a parent, guardian, or coach.
- 5.1.11. Lifters have the option to weigh in in the nude, wearing only their undergarments/underwear, or wearing a singlet and/or T-shirt. For reasons of hygiene, lifters may wear socks during the weigh-in and/or request that a paper towel be placed on the scale surface. Lifters may not weigh in wearing more than their undergarments/underwear, singlet, T-shirt, and socks. Shoes may not be worn during the weigh-in.
- 5.1.11.1. The weight indicated on the scale will be recorded as the lifter's official body weight for the competition and no modifications will be made to the body weight of those lifters choosing to wear the allowable weigh-in apparel described in Items 5.1.11 and 5.1.11.4 (or the required weigh-in apparel described in Item 5.1.11.3). An exception to this rule is described in Item 5.1.5.1.
- 5.1.11.2. The allowable weigh-in apparel described in Item 5.1.11 must conform to all of the requirements listed in Items 3.4, 3.5, and 3.8.
- 5.1.11.3. Youth lifters must be weighed in wearing a singlet **with a T-shirt optional** ~~and T-shirt~~.
- 5.1.11.4. Lifters wearing more than the standard singlet and T-shirt for religious reasons may wear the allowable apparel (described in Item 3.4.7) during the weigh-in.
- 5.1.12. Rules, policies, and procedures regarding weigh-ins for the [Adaptive Athlete](#) ~~and Para-Bench~~ divisions are provided on the [Technical Committee page of the USA Powerlifting website](#).
- 5.1.13. Each lifter may only be weighed once. Only those whose body weight is heavier or lighter than the class limits of the weight class entered are allowed to return to the scales.
- 5.1.13.1. Lifters requiring one or more re-weigh attempts must return to the scales and make weight within the limits of the 90 minutes allowed for the weigh-in.
- 5.1.13.2. A lifter can only be re-weighed as often as time and orderly progression by lot number allows.
- 5.1.13.3. A lifter may only be weighed in outside of the 90-minute time limit if they present themselves within the time limit but, due to the number of lifters trying to make weight, they are denied the opportunity to mount the scale. In this scenario only, the lifter is allowed a final re-weigh outside of the 90-minute time limit.
- 5.1.13.4. Lifters failing to make weight must follow the procedures outlined in Section 5.2.



- 5.1.14. The lifter's official body weight will be registered on the lifter's scorecard by one of the referees conducting the weigh-in. The bodyweight must be recorded exactly as it was registered on the scale's digital display (i.e., rounding up or down is not permitted). The official bodyweight on the scorecard must be initialed by one of the referees conducting the weigh-in. Additionally, the lifter or their coach (or their parent/guardian in the case of youth lifters), must write their initials next to the indicated bodyweight (see Appendix C). The initials must not be written on the card until the bodyweight and opening attempts are written on the card by the referee (see Item 5.1.15 below). Importantly, by virtue of writing the initials on the scorecard, the lifter (or their coach or parent/guardian) is confirming that all information is correct so it is in the best interests of the lifter that they (or their coach or parent/guardian) read the scorecard details very carefully to ensure that all important information (e.g., name, date of birth, body weight, opening attempts, rack heights [if applicable]) is correct. Lifters will have no grounds to protest and seek corrective action on a scorecard mistake they reviewed and signed off on.
- 5.1.15. Opening attempts for each lift to be contested (i.e., a full power event requires opening attempts for the squat, bench press, and deadlift whereas a lifter competing in a single-lift bench press division only needs to submit an opening attempt for the bench press) must be submitted at the weigh-in and will be registered on the lifter's scorecard by one of the referees conducting the weigh-in. It is important for referees to recognize and correct attempt selections that are not valid (e.g., for an open division lifter not attempting a national or world record in a meet using kilogram plates, any attempt that is not a 2.5kg increment is invalid) or are in the wrong unit of measure. In meets being run in kilograms, it is recommended that a kilogram conversion chart be made available in the weigh-in room to minimize the chances of invalid attempts being submitted. If an invalid attempt is submitted and not immediately recognized and corrected by the referee(s) at weigh-in, the procedures described in Items 5.3.16.1 and 5.3.16.2 must be followed.
- 5.1.16. At the discretion of the event organizer, rack heights for all lifts to be contested (squat rack height, squat racks "in" or "out," bench rack height, bench safety height) may either be submitted to one of the referees conducting the weigh-in or be submitted by another means (e.g., rack height sheet, electronic/online submission). Competitors must be made aware of how rack heights are to be submitted at an event.
- 5.1.16.1. If foot blocks are to be used for the bench press, the lifter's required block height details must be submitted with the rack height information.
- 5.1.17. Prior to exiting the weigh-in room after successfully making weight and submitting opening attempts (and rack heights, if applicable), the lifter and/or their coach (if a coach is present) must confirm that all information on the scorecard is correct. The completed scorecard must be signed by either the lifter or the lifter's coach (or a parent/guardian in the case of a youth lifter). This signature is attestation that all of the information on the scorecard is correct. Additionally, the referee who recorded the official body weight must put their initials next the lifter's body weight on the scorecard.
- 5.1.18. The lifter's official body weight and opening attempt(s) must not be made public until all lifters competing in the particular session have been weighed in. It is important for referees recording lifters' opening attempts to be aware of their surroundings and ensure that no one but the referee(s) working the weigh-in can hear the attempt selection(s).



- 5.1.19. Upon the conclusion of the weigh-in period for a given lifting session, all completed scorecards (and rack height sheets, if applicable) are to be delivered to the scoring official(s). All other official documents (e.g. equipment check sheet) are to be delivered to the meet director (for local and state meets) or the technical secretary (for regional, national, and pro meets).

5.2. Weight Class Changes

- 5.2.1. Weight class change procedures/policies for national meets are described in Item 1.6.1.3.
- 5.2.2. Weight class change procedures/policies for pro meets are event-specific and may follow the procedures for national meets (see Item 5.2.1 above) or local/state/regional meets (see Item 5.2.3 below). Event organizers will publish the weight class change policies for specific pro events.
- 5.2.3. Weight class change procedures/policies for local/state/regional meets are described in Items 5.2.4 - 5.2.6 below.
- 5.2.4. Lifters have the option of changing weight classes (up or down) from the one they originally entered. If a lifter knows they need to change weight classes prior to the day of the event, it is courteous to let the meet director know as early as possible so appropriate changes to the lifting schedule and flight configurations can be made. The rest of the information that follows in this section deals specifically with the procedures involved with weight class changes that occur on the day of the event.
- 5.2.5. Lifters who are outside the limits of the weight class they originally entered have the option to change weight classes during the weigh-in. If the weigh-in for the new weight class is occurring at that time, the referee conducting the weigh-in will make note of the change on the lifter's scorecard and follow all other normal weigh-in procedures. The weigh-in referee must promptly make this change known to the meet director, scoring manager, or technical secretary (if one is present).
- 5.2.5.1. If the weigh-in for the new weight class occurs in a later session, it is at the discretion of the meet director whether to move the athlete to the later session or keep them in the original session. If the meet director chooses to move them to the later session, the lifter must report to the weigh-in referee 10 minutes prior to the start of that weigh-in and inform them of the weight class change. The referee conducting the weigh-in will make note of the change on the lifter's scorecard and follow all other normal weigh-in procedures.
- 5.2.5.2. If the weigh-in and lifting session for the new weight class have already occurred, the lifter may still compete but only as a guest lifter. As a guest lifter, the competitor is not eligible for awards at the meet but is eligible to set records and achieve qualifying totals based on their performance at the meet.
- 5.2.6. A lifter changing weight classes on meet day must always have the lowest lot number of the group.
- 5.2.6.1. When a lifter moves up a weight class, they keep the lower lot assigned in the lighter weight class.
- 5.2.6.2. If a lifter moves down a weight class, a new lot number will be assigned. The new lot number must be the lowest lot number of the lifter's new group.



5.3. Order of Competition

- 5.3.1. Opening attempts for all lifts must be submitted at the weigh-in as described in Section 5.1.
- 5.3.1.1. Lifters are permitted one change of weight on the first attempt of each lift. The change of weight may be higher or lower (but must be a valid/allowable attempt selection as described in Section 5.1) than that originally submitted attempt. Once submitted, the order of lifting in the first round will change accordingly. Official changes to opening attempts may only be made by the lifter or their coach and must be submitted to a scoring table official. If the lifter is in the first flight, this change may take place at any time up to 3 minutes before the start of the first round of that lift. Lifters in the following flights are accorded the same privilege up to 3 attempts prior to the end of the previous flight's last round of that lift (i.e., the deadline to submit a change is when the bar is called loaded/ready for the final attempt of the third-to-last lifter in the preceding flight). Prior notice of these deadlines must be made known by the announcer. If proper notice of these deadlines is not given, then an announcement authorizing such changes must be made and lifters may make a change within 1 minute of such announcement.
- 5.3.2. Lifters will be arranged into flights (groups) based on a configuration that best allows for lifters competing against one another to be grouped together. If lifters competing against one another must be distributed across multiple flights and qualifying totals/scores are required for the event, lifters must be grouped based on qualifying total/score with the first flight consisting of the lowest totals/scores, the second /flight with the next highest totals/scores, and so on throughout the flights so that the lifters with the highest totals/scores are in the last flight to compete. A flight may not exceed 15 lifters and must be at least 6 lifters.
- 5.3.2.1. If an unavoidable situation arises that results in a flight consisting of fewer than 6 lifters, compensatory time allowances must be added at the end of each round as follows:
 - A. A flight with 5 lifters must have 1 minute of compensatory time added at the end of the round.
 - B. A flight with 4 lifters must have 2 minutes of compensatory time added at the end of the round.
 - C. A flight with 3 or fewer lifters must have 3 minutes of compensatory time added at the end of the round.
- 5.3.2.2. For compensatory time where flights are involved, the bar will be unloaded at the end of the compensatory time period and then reloaded with the next weight to be attempted. The 1-minute clock to begin the attempt will be started after the bar is loaded with the next weight to be attempted.
- 5.3.3. Flights will be arranged into sessions. In the case where multiple platforms are being run simultaneously, each flight will be assigned to a platform. No session may contain more than 45 lifters per platform.
- 5.3.3.1. Single-lift (i.e., bench press-only, deadlift-only) and two-lift (i.e., bench press and deadlift) competitions need not adhere to the limit of 45 lifters per platform (Item 5.3.3) per session but must adhere to the flight size requirements stated in Item 5.3.2.
- 5.3.4. The "rounds system" must be used. This requires that each of the lifters' three attempts for each lift/discipline be taken in a separate round. For each lift/discipline (lift/discipline = squat, bench



press, deadlift), each lifter in a flight will take their first attempt in the first round, their second attempt in the second round, and their third attempt in the third round.

- 5.3.5. When the chief referee deems the bar is properly loaded and any platform equipment properly adjusted, they will announce “bar is loaded” or “bar is ready.” Immediately upon this signal, the announcer will say “bar is loaded” or “bar is ready” followed by the name of the next lifter in the order. Immediately following this signal from the announcer, a 60-second clock will be started. The lifter has this 60-second period of time to begin the lift which is defined as getting the chief referee’s “squat” command in the squat, getting the chief referee’s “start” command in the bench press, and making a genuine effort to raise the bar from the floor in the deadlift. If the 60-clock counts down to zero before the lifter begins the lift, the attempt will be forfeited/disqualified.
 - 5.3.5.1. If the announcer is temporarily unavailable or otherwise preoccupied, the 60-second clock will start on the chief referee’s announcement that the “bar is loaded” or the “bar is ready.”
 - 5.3.5.2. The 60-second clock will be started either by a member of the scoring table staff or the chief referee (if the chief referee’s light controller has this capability).
 - 5.3.5.3. The 60-second clock must always be visible to the referees and jury (if a jury is present).
 - 5.3.5.4. The 60-second clock can only be stopped by the chief referee if they determine that the load or platform configuration (rack heights, foot block placement) does not match what was submitted by the lifter and/or coach. Any other change will be completed with the clock running.
- 5.3.6. Upon completion of an attempt, the lifter has 30 seconds to leave the platform. Failure to comply with this rule may result in disqualification of the attempt at the discretion of the referees (or jury if one is present).
- 5.3.7. Other than initial removal of the bar from the racks, the lifter cannot receive any help from the spotters in positioning themselves for an attempt.
- 5.3.8. Three unsuccessful attempts in any discipline/lift will automatically eliminate the lifter from the overall competition and their total will be registered as zero (0). The lifter may still participate in the remainder of the competition for their own purposes but they are not eligible to set any records (including single-lift records).
 - 5.3.8.1. If a lifter fails to get a successful attempt for any discipline/lift, they must inform the scoring table staff as to their intention to either withdraw from the competition or participate in the remainder of the competition. If the lifter/coach has not informed the scoring table as to the intention of the lifter to continue or not continue in the competition by the time the lifter’s flight starts the next discipline, the lifter will be withdrawn by the scoring table staff. The official deadline to inform the scoring table staff will follow the same procedures as opening attempt change deadlines described in Item 5.3.1.1.
- 5.3.9. After the first flight has completed all three rounds of a given lift/discipline, the second flight will follow and perform all three rounds of the given lift/discipline and so on until all of the flights have completed the lift/discipline (i.e., all lifters in flight A will perform three rounds of squats followed by all lifters in flight B performing three rounds of squats, etc.). All flights in a given session (on a given platform if multiple platforms are in use) must complete all three rounds of a given lift/discipline prior to beginning the next lift/discipline (i.e., all squats must be completed prior to start of the bench press and all bench presses must be completed prior to start of the deadlift).
 - 5.3.9.1. If there are multiple flights in a session, there will be no break between the end of one flight and



the beginning of the next flight for a given lift/discipline. For example, there is no break taken between the completion of the last attempt in the third round of flight A squats and the commencement of the first attempt in the first round of flight B squats other than the time necessary for the scoring table staff to shift to the second flight in the scoring program and for the loaders to change the bar load/rack heights. It is the responsibility of the lifter/coach to keep track of the progress of the meet in an attempt to best gauge when a lifter in a succeeding flight will be called to the platform for their opening attempt.

- 5.3.10. When transitioning from one discipline/lift to another (i.e., from squat to bench press and from bench press to deadlift), an intermission is required as defined below:
- A. If the session consists of one flight, an intermission of 20 minutes must be taken.
 - B. If the session consists of two or more flights, an intermission of 10 minutes must be taken.
- 5.3.10.1. The intermission clock must be visible somewhere in the platform vicinity and is to be started immediately after the platform/equipment has been properly arranged for the next discipline/lift and the first attempt has been loaded.
- 5.3.11. If unsuccessful with an attempt, the lifter may not follow themselves, but must wait until the next round before they can attempt that weight again. Exceptions to this rule are covered in Items 5.4.9 - 5.4.13.2.
- 5.3.12. The weight on the bar must be loaded progressively (from lightest to heaviest) during each round on the “rising bar” principle. At no time may the weight on the bar be lowered within a round except for errors as described in Item 5.4.9, and then only at the end of a round.
- 5.3.13. Lifting order within each round will be determined by the lifter’s choice of weight for that round. In the event of two or more lifters choosing the same weight, the lifter with the lowest lot number will lift first.
- 5.3.13.1. The same procedures above (Items 5.3.12 - 5.3.13) apply to third round deadlift attempts (or third round attempts in single-lift bench press or deadlift competition) whereby the weight may be changed twice (see Item 5.3.17.1), subject to the bar not having already been loaded to the lifter’s originally chosen weight and the lifter having been called to the bar and the 60-second clock started. Examples below from the third round of deadlifts:
- A. Lot number always determines order when two or more lifters request the same weight.
 - Lifter Y with lot number 5 submits an attempt of 250.0kg
 - Lifter Z with lot number 2 submits an attempt of 252.5kg
 - Lifter Y fails with 250.0kg
 - **Question:** Can Lifter Z drop the weight to 250.0kg to win?
 - **Answer:** No, because allowing Lifter Z to drop to 250.0kg would result in a situation where both lifters had an attempt of 250.0kg but the lifter with the higher lot number (Lifter Y) went first (which violates Item 5.3.13). If Lifter Z had a higher lot number than Lifter Y, then Lifter Y would be allowed to drop their attempt to 250.0kg because the lot number order rule would not be violated.
 - B. The weight of the bar may not be decreased from one attempt to another in a given round.
 - Lifter Y with lot number 5 submits an attempt of 250.0kg
 - Lifter Z with lot number 2 submits an attempt of 252.5kg



- Lifter Y fails with 250.0kg
 - **Question:** Can Lifter Z drop the weight to 247.5kg to win?
 - **Answer:** No, because allowing Lifter Y to drop to 247.5kg would result in a situation where the weight of the bar was decreased from one attempt to the next (i.e., the bar went from 250.0kg to 247.5kg) in a given round (which violates Item 5.3.12).
- 5.3.14. A lifter must submit their second attempt within 1 minute of completing their first attempt and they must submit their third attempt within 1 minute of completing their second attempt. The 1-minute clock starts when the referee lights are activated.
- 5.3.14.1. A lifter may never submit an attempt that is lower than the previous attempt in a given discipline/lift. A lifter may (but is not required to) submit the same attempt as the previous attempt in a given discipline/lift when the previous attempt was unsuccessful.
- 5.3.14.2. If the next attempt is not submitted at all or is not submitted within the 1-minute time allowance, the score table official must enter an increase of 2.5kg (or 5lb in meets being run in pounds) for the next attempt (if the previous attempt was successful) or the weight of the previous attempt will be entered for the next attempt (if the previous attempt was unsuccessful). **For youth lifters only (in line with Item 2.12.3), if the next attempt is not submitted at all or is not submitted within the 1-minute time allowance, the score table official must enter an increase of 0.5kg (or 1lb in meets being run in pounds) for the next attempt if the previous attempt was successful; if the previous attempt was unsuccessful, the weight of the previous attempt will be entered for the next attempt.**
- 5.3.15. At regional, national, international, and pro events, all attempts must be submitted via attempt cards. These attempt cards will be distributed at weigh-in and/or will be made available at the scoring table. At local and state events, attempt cards are recommended, but not required.
- 5.3.16. An attempt is deemed to have been officially submitted when either of the following occurs before the 60 second clock expires:
- A. The lifter or coach has verbally indicated to the scoring table staff the attempt selection (in events where attempt cards are not being used).
 - B. The completed attempt card (i.e., lifter name and attempt selection written legibly on card) has been placed on the scoring table or in the hand of the scoring table staff by the lifter or coach (in events where attempt cards are being used).
- 5.3.16.1. In situations where an invalid attempt selection has been made, the score table staff will automatically reduce the attempt submission to the next lowest possible valid attempt (Example A below). If the next lowest possible valid attempt was already achieved by the lifter, the score table staff will automatically increase the attempt submission to the next highest possible valid attempt (Example B below).
- A. Example A: An open division lifter (not attempting a national or world record) in a meet using kilogram plates submits an [invalid] second round attempt of 131.5kg having successfully achieved 125.0kg on their previous first round attempt. The scoring table staff must automatically submit the next lowest possible valid attempt of 130.0kg for the lifter's second round attempt.
 - B. Example B: An open division lifter (not attempting a national or world record) in a meet using kilogram plates submits an [invalid] second round attempt of 131.5kg having



successfully achieved 130.0kg on their previous first round attempt. The scoring table staff must automatically submit the next highest possible valid attempt of 132.5kg for the lifter's second round attempt.

- 5.3.16.2. In situations where an attempt has obviously and clearly been submitted in the incorrect unit of weight measurement, the lifter/coach will be consulted by scoring table staff to confirm this and, following confirmation, that attempt will be forfeited. The lifter/coach will be permitted to submit future valid attempts provided they are in the correct unit of measurement. Note: It is not the responsibility of meet staff to identify these errors.
- A. Example A: In a local meet being run in kilograms, a lifter successfully achieves their opening attempt of 130kg (286.6lb). The lifter's coach submits a round 2 attempt of 300 thinking the attempt was to be for 300lb. Since the meet is being run in kilograms, the submitted attempt is for 300kg (661lb). Upon confirming that the submission was in the incorrect unit of measurement, the scoring table staff will mark the lifter's round 2 attempt as a failed lift. The lifter is eligible to submit a third attempt provided it is at least 132.5kg.
 - B. Example B: In a local meet being run in kilograms, a lifter submits an opening attempt of 300 thinking the attempt was to be for 300lb. Since the meet is being run in kilograms, the submitted attempt is for 300kg (661lb). The lifter realizes the mistake but not before the deadline to change their opening attempt. Upon confirming that the submission was in the incorrect unit of measurement, the scoring table staff will mark the lifter's opening attempt as a failed lift. The lifter is eligible to submit a second attempt for any amount provided it is in kilograms and is a multiple of 2.5kg.
 - C. Example C: In a local meet being run in kilograms, a lifter fails their opening attempt of 130kg (286.6lb). The lifter's coach submits a round 2 attempt of 300 thinking the attempt was to be for 300lb. Since the meet is being run in kilograms, the submitted attempt is for 300kg (661lb). Upon confirming that the submission was in the incorrect unit of measurement, the scoring table staff will mark the lifter's round 2 attempt as a failed lift. The lifter is eligible to submit a third attempt provided it is at least 130kg. Note: The attempt cannot be less than 130kg because that would violate Item 5.3.14.1.
- 5.3.16.3. In cases where the attempt selection made via an attempt card is either not clearly legible or can be interpreted as being any of multiple possible numbers, the procedure described in Item 5.3.14.2 will be applied. It is in the lifter's/coach's best interest that they write legibly and confirm that scoring table staff can correctly interpret what has been written.
- 5.3.17. Weights submitted for second and third round attempts cannot be changed once they are submitted (see Item 5.3.17.1 for the exception to this rule).
- 5.3.17.1. Weights submitted for third round deadlift attempts (or third round attempts in single-lift bench press or deadlift competition) may be changed twice. The change of the weight may be higher or lower than the previously submitted third attempt. These third-round attempt changes are subject to the rules listed in Item 5.3.13.1.
- 5.3.18. If a lifter submits an attempt of zero (0) or "pass," they will forfeit all future attempts for that discipline/lift and will be removed from the lifting order for the duration of that discipline. For the remainder of that discipline/lift, the lifter's name will not be called and a clock will not be run for that lifter. Lifters who want to intentionally skip an attempt but still remain eligible to take further



attempts in that discipline/lift should simply not show up on the platform when their name is called and let their 60-second clock run down to zero (otherwise known as “timing out”).

- 5.3.18.1. If a lifter passes on an attempt by submitting an attempt of zero (0) or “pass,” they remove themselves from the remainder of the competition in that discipline/lift but do not remove themselves from the remainder of the competition in the disciplines/lifts that follow. For example, if a lifter submits an attempt of 0 for their second squat attempt, they are not eligible to take a second or third attempt in the squat but they will still be considered an active competitor for the bench press and deadlift to follow.
- 5.3.18.2. Once a lifter (or their coach acting on their behalf) has passed an attempt or submitted an attempt of 0, this action cannot be undone.
- 5.3.18.3. On third round attempts where changes are permitted (third round deadlifts or third round attempts in single-lift competition), once a lifter (or their coach acting on their behalf) has passed an attempt or submitted an attempt of 0, this cannot be undone and they are not allowed to submit a change.
- 5.3.19. If a lifter wishes to withdraw completely from the competition (prior to the start or at any time during the competition), the lifter must make this known to the scoring table staff. This action cannot be undone. For the remainder of the competition, the lifter’s name will not be called and a clock will not be run for that lifter.

5.4. Miscellaneous Rules

- 5.4.1. The only individuals allowed in the vicinity of the platform during the execution of the lift are the lifter, the lifter’s coach (only one coach is permitted and this coach must remain in the designated coaching area), platform referees (including the technical controller), members of the jury, spotters and loaders, the announcer(s), and official media personnel.
 - 5.4.1.1. During the execution of the lift, only the lifter and the spotters are permitted to be on the platform. The referees will be positioned in close proximity to the platform as will any spotters/loaders not actively engaged in spotting. It is important that the spotters/loaders not actively engaged in spotting bear in mind the need to not obstruct the view of the referees, the jury (if one is present), the scoring table staff, and any photography and/or videography that is taking place.
 - 5.4.1.2. Coaches must remain within the designated coaching area which will be defined by the meet director (for a local/state meet) or the technical secretary (for a regional, national, or pro meet). The coaching area must be made so the coach can position themselves in such a way that allows for a good view of the lifter. Coaches must never obstruct the view of, or otherwise interfere with, a referee and their ability to successfully carry out their duties. Only one coach is allowed in the designated coaching area.
 - 5.4.1.3. The following are two exceptions to Items 5.4.1.1 and 5.4.1.2:
 - A. Coaches may assist lifters in walking on and off the platform and in setting up for any lift (to include placing hands and/or feet) when the lifter falls into one of the following categories/divisions: Special Olympian, visually impaired, adaptive athlete, and para bench.



- B. Coaches of Special Olympian lifters are allowed to stand outside of the designated coaching area to provide cues to their lifters. In the cases, coaches may not help the spotters and may not get in the way of, or impede the view of, spotters and referees.

- 5.4.1.4. Coaches are not allowed to wear hats (or tuck them into other items of clothing) while working in their official capacity in the designated coaching area (i.e., coaching box) near the platform, at the scoring table, or at the jury table. Any headwear worn by coaches must conform to the same headwear rules that apply to competitors (Item 3.16.1) and spotter/loaders (Item 6.4.7.1).
- 5.4.2. Lifters may not use ammonia, smelling salts, or the like within view of the venue audience/spectators. Likewise, coaches may not slap, smack, or otherwise strike lifters within view of the audience/spectators. Failure to adhere to these rules will result in a warning for the first offense. Multiple warnings may result in (at the discretion of the jury or, in the absence of a jury, the referees) disqualification of the lifter and/or removal of coaching privileges at the event.
- 5.4.3. Any lifter or coach who, by reason of their misconduct anywhere in the competition venue, violates the [USA Powerlifting Code of Conduct](#) and/or is likely to discredit USA Powerlifting will be officially warned. Multiple warnings may result in (at the discretion of the jury or, in the absence of a jury, the referees) disqualification of the lifter, removal of coaching privileges at the event, and/or removal from the competition venue. Depending on the seriousness of the misconduct, USA Powerlifting may impose additional penalties (e.g., suspension of membership, termination of membership, legal action, etc.). The lifter, coach, and/or team manager must be informed of any warnings or penalties (e.g., disqualification).
- 5.4.4. All appeals against referee's decisions, complaints regarding the progress or running of the competition, or complaints against the behavior of any person or persons taking part in the competition must be made to the jury (if a jury is present). The jury may require the appeal/complaint to be made in writing. The appeal/complaint must be lodged with the chair of the jury by the lifter, coach, or team manager. This must be done immediately following the action upon which the appeal/complaint is based. Appeals/complaints will not be considered unless these terms are met.
 - 5.4.4.1. If deemed necessary, the jury may temporarily suspend the progress of the competition and retire to consider its verdict. During their deliberations, the jury is not to be interfered with or otherwise disturbed by anyone (including the party who made the complaint or the party who is the target of the complaint). The jury may request additional information from involved parties in order to best inform their decision. After due consideration and upon reaching a verdict, the jury will return and the president of the jury will inform all parties involved as to the decision and any resultant actions that are to be taken. Any changes in scoring/results and/or the order of lifting must be made known to the scoring table staff. Importantly, only a unanimous jury decision may overturn the decision made by the platform referees. Both 2-1 and 3-0 platform decisions are eligible to be overturned. All other decisions/courses of action require a majority jury decision. The jury's verdict will be considered final and there will be no right of appeal to any other body. Upon recommencement of the competition which has been suspended, the next lifter will be given 3 minutes in which to commence their lift.
 - 5.4.4.2. At a local or state meet where a jury is not present, the aggrieved lifter/coach is encouraged to communicate with the meet director in an attempt to get a resolution. It is important to note that



a decision to overturn the call made by the platform referees is an authority uniquely granted to the jury. Other than a jury, no individual or group has the authority to overturn the decision made by the platform referees. In the absence of a jury, platform referees have the authority to grant a re-lift at the end of the round if they agree (by majority decision) that it is the correct course of action. Granting a re-lift and overturning a decision are distinctly different actions.

- 5.4.5. Once the lifter mounts the platform, the only adjustment that may be made is to the belt. All other adjustments to the lifter's apparel/equipment (wraps/sleeves, thumb loops, singlet/suit/shirt, socks, etc.) must be done off the platform.
- 5.4.6. To avoid contamination, a solution of 1 part household bleach to 10 parts water is recommended to clean blood or tissue from the bar or platform and in the warm-up area should "accidents" occur.
- 5.4.7. If, during warm up or competition, a lifter suffers injury or in any other way exhibits signs of a condition which may unduly or significantly jeopardize the competitor's health and well-being, the official doctor (if one has been appointed for the event) has the right to examination. If the doctor considers it inadvisable for the lifter to continue, the jury has the authority to require that the lifter retires from the competition. In the absence of an official event doctor, the jury (or the three platform referees if a jury is not present) has the authority to require that the lifter retires from the competition. In any case where a lifter is required to retire from a competition, the decision to take this action must be a unanimous one on the part of the jury or, in the absence of a jury, the three platform referees. The team manager or coach must be officially and promptly informed of such a decision. Note: This rule is in place for two reasons: 1) to safeguard the health and well-being of lifters and platform staff and 2) to minimize legal liability exposure risk to USA Powerlifting and its officials (e.g., meet directors, referees).
- 5.4.8. The weight of the barbell must always be a multiple of 2.5kg (or 5lb in meets being run in pounds). The following cases are exceptions to this rule:
 - A. For eligible national and world record attempts, the weight of the barbell must be at least 0.5kg in excess of the current record (see Items 7.2.7 and 7.3.8). As a result, the attempt may be any multiple of 0.5kg that exceeds the current record. If the attempt is successful, it will count toward the record and the competition total.
 - B. For youth lifters, the weight of the barbell may be any multiple of 0.5kg (or 1.0lb if the meet is run in pounds) for any attempt on any lift even if the attempt is not for a national or world record (see Item 2.12.3).
- 5.4.8.1. In the event of a national or world record attempt posted for the following round which is not a multiple of 2.5kg, the weight will be decreased or increased to the nearest multiple of 2.5kg (Items A and B below) or increased to the nearest 0.5kg (Item C below) should a fellow competitor exceed this weight in the previous round. The affected lifter must be informed of the change. See examples below involving national record attempts:
 - A. The current national record is 302.5kg. Lifter Y squats 300kg in the first round and then submits 303.5kg for their round two attempt. Lifter Z squats 305kg in the first round. Lifter Y's second attempt must be decreased to the nearest 2.5kg (302.5kg) because 303.5kg is no longer a national record attempt.



- B. The current national record is 300kg. Lifter Y squats 300kg in the first round and then submits 301kg for their round two attempt. Lifter Z squats 305kg in the first round. Lifter Y's second attempt must be increased to the nearest 2.5kg (302.5kg) because 301kg is no longer a national record attempt.
 - C. The current national record is 300.5kg. Lifter Y squats 300kg in the first round and then submits 301kg for their round two attempt. Lifter Z squats 301kg in the first round. Lifter Y's second attempt must be increased to the nearest 0.5kg (301.5kg) because 301kg is no longer a national record attempt.
- 5.4.9. The chief referee will be solely responsible for decisions in cases of loading errors or incorrect announcements by the announcer. The chief referee's decision will be given to the announcer who will make the appropriate announcement. Below are examples of errors in loading and the correct courses of action to be taken to resolve the issues.
- A. If the bar is loaded to a lighter weight than originally requested and the attempt is successful, the lifter may accept the successful attempt or elect to take the attempt again at the originally requested weight. If the attempt is not successful, the lifter will be granted an additional attempt at the originally requested weight. In both of the above cases involving the granting of an additional attempt (also called a re-lift), the re-lift may only be taken at the end of the round in which the error occurred.
 - B. If the bar is loaded to a heavier weight than originally requested and the attempt is successful, the lifter will be granted the attempt. However, the weight may be reduced again if required for the lifters who follow. If the attempt is not successful, the lifter will be granted an additional attempt at the originally requested weight that must occur at the end of the round in which the error occurred.
 - C. If the loading is not the same on each end of the bar or any change occurs to the bar, plates, and/or collars during the execution of the lift that effectively changes the overall weight, the lifter may, if the attempt is successful, accept the attempt or elect to take the attempt again with the correct weight. If the successful attempt is not a multiple of 2.5kg, then the nearest lower multiple of 2.5kg will be recorded in the results. If the attempt is not successful, the lifter will be granted an additional attempt at the originally requested weight that must occur at the end of the round in which the error occurred.
- 5.4.10. If the announcer makes a mistake by announcing a weight lighter or heavier than that requested by the lifter, the chief referee will follow the same procedures as described in Item 5.4.9.
- 5.4.11. If the wrong lifter takes an attempt, the following courses of action are available:
- A. If the weight lifted matches the weight requested by the out of order lifter, this will be conveyed to the scoring official who will mark the lift as good for the out of order lifter and the competition will resume with the correct lifter.
 - B. If the weight lifted does not match the weight requested by the out of order lifter and the out of order lift was caused by an error by the officials, follow the procedures as described in item 5.4.9.
 - C. If the weight lifted does not match the weight requested by the out of order lifter and the out of order lift was the mistake of the lifter and/or their coach:
 - i. If the weight was lighter than the lifter's prior attempt, the lift is forfeited and marked as "no lift".



- ii. If the weight was at least 2.5kg more than the prior attempt, the lifter is credited with the lift at the weight lifted.

Once these procedures have been followed, the competition will resume with the correct lifter.

- 5.4.12. If for any reason it is not possible for the lifter or their coach to remain in the vicinity of the platform in order to follow the progress of the competition and the lifter misses their opportunity to take their attempt because the speaker omitted to announce them at the appropriate weight, then the weight will be reduced as necessary and the lifter will be allowed to take their attempt, but only at the end of the round.
- 5.4.13. If an attempt is unsuccessful due to a wrongly loaded bar, spotter error, or equipment failure, the lifter will be granted an additional attempt (i.e., re-lift) at the correct weight. If the fault is a wrongly loaded bar and the attempt has not actually started, the lifter will be given the option to either continue at that time or take another attempt at the end of the round. In all other cases (except those described in Item 5.4.13.2), the lifter must take the additional attempt at the end of the round. If the lifter granted an additional attempt at the end of the round is among the last three lifters in the round, the following time allowances must be given:
 - A. If the lifter is the last lifter in the round, they must be given a time allowance of 3 minutes plus the usual 1 minute to begin the attempt. In this case, the clock will be set to 4 minutes (3 minutes of compensatory time plus 1 minute to begin the attempt). Once the bar is loaded to the correct weight for the additional lift at the end of the round, the 4-minute clock will be started and the lifter may begin the attempt at any time within the 4-minute period.
 - B. If the lifter is the second-to-last lifter in the round, they must be given a time allowance of 2 minutes plus the usual 1 minute to begin the attempt. In this case, the clock will be set to 3 minutes (2 minutes of compensatory time plus 1 minute to begin the attempt). Once the bar is loaded to the correct weight for the additional lift at the end of the round, the 3-minute clock will be started and the lifter may begin the attempt at any time within the 3-minute period.
 - C. If the lifter is the third-to-last lifter in the round, they must be given a time allowance of 1 minute plus the usual 1 minute to begin the attempt. In this case, the clock will be set to 2 minutes (1 minute of compensatory time plus 1 minute to begin the attempt). Once the bar is loaded to the correct weight for the additional lift at the end of the round, the 2-minute clock will be started and the lifter may begin the attempt at any time within the 2-minute period.
- 5.4.13.1. If a lifter is granted a re-lift at the end of the round and that lifter is one of the first three lifters in the following round, the same procedure as that described in Item 5.4.13 (A-C) will be followed. For example, if the lifter is the first lifter in the next round, they must be given a time allowance of 3 minutes plus the usual 1 minute to begin the attempt. In this case, the clock will be set to 4 minutes (3 minutes of compensatory time plus 1 minute to begin the attempt). Once the bar is loaded to the correct weight for the attempt, the 4-minute clock will be started and the lifter may begin the attempt at any time within the 4-minute period. The same procedures as outlined in Items 5.4.13B and 5.4.13C will apply if the lifter is the second or third lifter in the next round, respectively.
- 5.4.13.2. In the third round of deadlift (and third round of bench press in single-lift bench press events) or



in the case of a national or world record attempt (in squat, bench press, or deadlift) during any round of lifting, if a lifter for any reason gets granted an additional attempt (e.g., wrongly loaded bar, spotter error, equipment failure), the lifter will be granted a further attempt at the correct weight and the lifter must follow themselves. In this case, once the bar is loaded to the correct weight for the additional lift, a 4-minute clock will be started and the lifter may begin the attempt at any time within the 4-minute period.

5.5. Drug Testing and Anti-Doping

- 5.5.1. All members of USA Powerlifting are eligible to be drug tested for any reason at any time. The only exceptions are the following membership categories: Youth (drug testing is restricted to members aged 14 years old and older), Special Olympian, and “non-compete.”
- 5.5.2. Competition in USA Powerlifting is limited to members who have not used any form of strength enhancing drugs or hormones for 36 months prior to the specific meet date, and who have not used prescription diuretics or psychomotor stimulants during the 7 days prior to the specific meet date.
- 5.5.3. USA Powerlifting adheres to the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) in terms of defining what substances, medications, and methods are and are not allowed in-competition as well out-of-competition. Please visit the [USA Powerlifting Anti-Doping Committee page](#) on the national website for more information.
 - 5.5.3.1. Some banned substances/medications/methods are allowed under certain circumstances if a true medical condition exists and has been diagnosed, documented, justified, and overseen by a physician. If a banned substance/medication/method is prescribed by a physician for medicinal/therapeutic purposes, the athlete may apply for an exemption (applying in no way guarantees an exemption will be granted). Any application must be made at least 60 days before the intended competition. Exemptions will not be retroactively granted (i.e., after a drug test has been performed). Under no circumstances will exemptions be granted for anabolic androgenic steroids (e.g., testosterone, methyltestosterone), even if it involves hormone replacement therapy under the supervision of a physician. Please visit the [USA Powerlifting Therapeutic Use Exemption \(TUE\) Committee page](#) on the national website for more information.
- 5.5.4. It is the policy of the USA Powerlifting that the athlete is ultimately responsible for what they put in their body. Some common nutritional supplements and over-the-counter-medications can cause a positive drug test (i.e., drug test failure), resulting in suspension of the lifter. Suspensions vary in length (typically from 1-4 years) depending on several factors.
- 5.5.5. Only currently certified referees, doping control officers (DCOs), or contracted third-party DCOs are eligible to conduct drug testing. As part of the referee certification process, all potential referee candidates must have a background check completed and must successfully complete [SafeSport](#) training. Questions involving background check procedures, DCOs, and/or alternatives to SafeSport training in countries outside of the U.S. should be directed to the USA Powerlifting [National Office](#).
- 5.5.6. A minimum of 10% of the lifters in any competition must be drug tested.
 - 5.5.6.1. When determining the number of lifters to be tested, the number must always be rounded up. For example, if there are 41 lifters in a meet, 5 drug tests must be performed; if there are 40



lifters, 4 drug tests must be performed. Lifters not eligible for drug testing (i.e., youth lifters and Special Olympians) will not be counted in the 10% testing requirement calculation. Lifters who do not register a total (i.e., bomb out) may be tested.

- 5.5.7. The “Drug Testing Notification Form” must be signed by the lifters selected for drug testing immediately after they are informed they will be drug tested. Lifters chosen for testing will be notified only after they have finished lifting. Refusal to test, failure to show after notification, and leaving the venue to avoid notification are all considered drug test failures. Lifters who want to leave the venue before the end of the contest (bench only lifters in a 3-lift meet, lifters who bomb out, lifters who get injured, etc.) must check with the drug testing official(s) before departure. This responsibility rests solely with the lifter.
- 5.5.8. Athletes who are minors (not yet the age of 18 years) must be notified of their selection to be drug tested in the presence of an adult (any person age 18 or older) and accompanied by a chaperone or representative throughout the entire sample collection session. If the minor cannot produce an adult chaperone or representative, the drug testing official must have a third-party adult representative present during the process. The chaperone or representative must not witness the passing of the urine unless requested by the minor athlete but they will observe the drug testing official who is observing the sample collection.
- 5.5.9. USA Powerlifting-sanctioned competition must include drug testing using USA Powerlifting recognized testing procedures for drug detection (i.e., urinalysis) and all samples must be evaluated by a USA Powerlifting-approved laboratory. Meet directors are responsible for the cost of the drug testing but are eligible for a partial reimbursement provided all drug testing requirements and procedures are carried out. Failure to carry out all procedures correctly may result in a denial of reimbursement and/or denial of future event sanctions. Meet directors interested in knowing the reimbursement rates must contact the [National Office](#) to get the most current information. Meet directors can find more information on the drug testing requirements and procedures in the “Meet Director Resource Center” (accessible only to current members) under the “Forms” section of the national website.
- 5.5.10. A detailed description of USA Powerlifting’s anti-doping rules can be found on the [Anti-Doping Rules page of the USA Powerlifting website](#).



6. Referees and Officials

6.1. Referee Responsibilities and Procedures

- 6.1.1. Before the competition begins, the referees shall jointly ascertain the following:
- A. The platform and competition equipment comply in all respects with the rules. Equipment that is defective or not within required specifications must not be used. It is prudent to have a second competition bar and collars readily available in case of damage to the original bar or collars.
 - B. The weigh-in scales work correctly, are accurate, and have been certified within the past 24 months.
 - C. The lifters weigh in within the limits of weight and time for their bodyweight category.
 - D. The lifter's personal equipment/apparel has been inspected to comply with the rules in all respects. It is the duty of the lifter to ensure that all items they wish to wear on the platform have passed the scrutiny of the examining referees at equipment check. Lifters discovered wearing or using equipment/apparel that has not been checked in may be subject to penalty (e.g., disqualification of the last attempt).
- 6.1.2. Each lift will be adjudicated by three referees qualified for that level of competition (e.g., a national referee can adjudicate lifts at a national event but a state referee cannot). There must be two side referees (generally positioned on opposite sides from one another relative to the platform) and one chief referee (generally positioned in front of the platform but not necessarily directly in the center). The chief referee is responsible for giving the necessary signals for all three lifts. The signals are described in Section 4 of this rulebook
- 6.1.3. The three referees may sit wherever they believe they will have the best viewing positions around the platform keeping in mind that they may have to move to accommodate changing conditions on the platform (i.e., side referee can no longer see squat depth in their original position because the number of spotters has been increased from three to five) and that the best viewing position might be different for the squat, bench press, and deadlift.
- 6.1.3.1. In general, a referee should not get out of their chair to adjudicate a lift. If it is an immediate necessity in order to properly adjudicate the lift, such action is not prohibited. However, if a referee finds they regularly need to get out of their chair for proper viewing of lifts, they should move their chair to a position that allows them to view the lifts properly from the seated position.
- 6.1.3.2. The chief referee must always bear in mind the need to be visible to the lifter performing the squat or deadlift, and the side referees should always bear in mind the need to be visible to the chief referee so that the chief referee can observe their raised arms prior to the start of the squat and bench press.
- 6.1.4. For consistency purposes, referees should not change positions within a flight of lifting or within a session of lifting and the same three referees should adjudicate all of the lifts in a given session. For example, if a referee is assigned to be in the right side position, they should remain in that position for the duration of the session.
- 6.1.4.1. The following are legitimate situations that necessitate changing positions and/or referees within a session. The list below is not exhaustive and best judgment should be used when deciding



whether or not a change in referees and/or positions is justified.

- A. The chief referee loses their voice midway through a session and can no longer call out the audible commands. In this case, the chief referee must either be replaced or switch with a side referee who can carry out the chief referee duties.
- B. A state referee must be temporarily replaced by a national referee in order to adjudicate a national record attempt at a state championship meet.
- C. A referee needs to go to the bathroom and must be temporarily relieved by a reserve referee.
- D. A referee needs to depart the venue midway through their scheduled session and this was previously agreed upon with the meet director who has a reserve referee on standby to replace the departing referee.
- E. A referee needs to be pulled from their referee duties on the platform to oversee a drug test (or a weigh-in) in which they are the only same-sex referee available to perform the duties required.

6.1.4.2. With the exception of a short-term substitution (e.g., quick bathroom break, national record attempt), if a change in referees and/or a change in position on the platform must be made in the middle of a session, the change should, if at all possible, occur during the transition from one discipline/lift to next (i.e., between squat and bench press or between bench press and deadlift) and, if that is not possible, then during the transition from one flight of lifters to the next (e.g., after flight B has finished a lift but before flight C starts). If it is absolutely necessary to make a change in the middle of a flight in order for the competition to continue uninterrupted, then such an action is not prohibited.

6.1.5. During the competition, the three platform referees must jointly ascertain that the weight of the loaded bar agrees with the weight called out by the announcer. Referees may be issued with loading charts for this purpose. It is ultimately the responsibility of the platform referees to ensure the bar is correctly loaded.

6.1.6. During the competition, the three platform referees (and technical controller if one is present) must jointly ascertain that the lifter's personal equipment/apparel complies with the rules. If any referee has reason to doubt the legality of a lifter's equipment/apparel, the referee must bring this matter to the attention of the jury or, in the absence of a jury, the chief referee. The jury (or chief referee in the absence of a jury) will then examine the lifter's personal equipment/apparel. If the lifter is found to be wearing or using any illegal item other than that which may have inadvertently been passed in error by the examining equipment check referees, the lifter will be immediately disqualified from the competition. If wearing any illegal item passed in error by the examining equipment check referees, and the lift in which the discovery was made is successful, the lift will be rejected and the lifter will be granted a new attempt (having removed the illegal item) at the end of the round. It is the responsibility of the technical controller (if one is present) to scrutinize the lifter's equipment/apparel before the lifter is allowed onto the platform. If the lifter is found to be wearing illegal equipment/apparel prior to the commencement of the lift, the violation will immediately be brought to the attention of the lifter and the lifter may choose to remedy the violation and still make their attempt provided they do so within the 60-second time allowance (i.e., the 60-second clock will not be stopped for cases of illegal equipment/apparel discovered after the bar had been called loaded/ready).

6.1.7. Prior to the commencement of each squat and bench press attempt, the side referees must raise



their arms and keep them raised until the lifter is in the correct position to begin the lift. If there is a majority opinion among the referees that a fault exists and that the lifter is not in the correct starting position, the chief referee must not give the signal to commence the lift. If both side referees have put their arms down (indicating the lifter is in the correct starting position) prior to the start of a squat or bench press, the chief referee must give the start command even if the chief referee does not believe the lifter is in the correct starting position. In any case where one referee does not believe the lifter was in the correct starting position but the lifter was given the commencement signal because the other two referees believed the proper starting position had been achieved, the referee who thought there was a fault must lower their arm at the commencement of the lift and must give a red light at the end of the lift with the appropriate colored light/card that reflects the starting position fault.

- 6.1.7.1. The chief referee must bear in mind the need to be expedient in giving the commencement signal once there is a majority opinion that the lifter is in the correct starting position and must not impose any unnecessary delay. Ideally, the three referees should be positioned in such a way so as to allow the chief referee to see the raised arms of both side referees simultaneously in order to avoid the delay caused by the chief referee needing to turn their head to look at each side referee separately.
- 6.1.7.2. If a lifter appears to believe they are in the correct starting position but has been denied the commencement signal for a period of 5 seconds, the chief referee will give the command to “replace the bar” after which the lifter must return the bar to the rack. Once the bar is returned to the rack, the chief referee will indicate to the lifter what fault(s) existed. The lifter has the remainder of their unexpired time allowance in which to correct the fault(s) in order to receive the commencement signal (“squat” for the squat and “start” for the bench press).
- 6.1.7.3. Once a lifter has received the commencement signal, the side referees will not call attention to faults during the execution of the lift.
- 6.1.8. Upon completion of each lift, each of the three referees will make known their decision. The referees must choose between two decisions: good lift (i.e., lift is successful) or failed lift (i.e., lift is unsuccessful). A good lift is made known via a white light while a failed lift is made known via a red light. If the referee’s decision is a failed lift (red light), the referee must make known the reason(s) for the failure via a red, blue, and/or yellow light/card (see Items 4.2, 4.4, and 4.6). If multiple infractions occur represented by multiple colored lights/cards, the referee must indicate this by displaying multiple colored lights/cards (i.e., it is possible for a referee to display two or three different colored lights/cards).
- 6.1.8.1. Referees must not make known their decision until the lift is completed. The definition of “completed lift” for this purpose is as follows for each of the three disciplines/lifts:
 - A. Squat: When the bar is placed back in the rack.
 - B. Bench Press: When the bar is placed back in the rack
 - C. Deadlift: When the bar is placed on the ground.
- 6.1.8.2. Referees may never, under any circumstances, reverse their decision after the decision has been submitted. The only exception is when a referee mistakenly presses the wrong button or flips the wrong switch on their light controller in which case they must immediately make this known to the chief referee (or a jury if one is present) and the scoring table staff so that the



mistake can be corrected.

- 6.1.8.3. The collective decision of the three platform referees cannot be overturned by any individual or authority with the exception of a jury. A jury solely has this authority. In an event without a jury, the collective decision of the three platform referees is final and cannot be overturned under any circumstances.
- 6.1.8.4. Each of the three referees must make an independent judgment of each lift performed. Referees must never allow their judgment to be influenced by anyone (coaches, lifters, jury members, etc.), including the judgments of the other platform referees, nor must referees attempt to influence the judgments of other referees. Referees must never make a decision based on the decision of another referee nor must a referee ever attempt to determine how another referee will rule on a lift for the purpose of influencing their call. If a referee demonstrates behavior that calls into question their impartiality, objectivity, and/or competence as a referee, they may be removed from their role as referee. Removal of a referee is a serious matter and typically would be preceded by a warning.
- 6.1.9. All referees should be conscious of the need to always uphold the following core principles in the performance of their referee duties:
 - A. The benefit of doubt must always go to the lifter. If a referee is not 100% certain that a rule was not adhered to, the benefit of doubt must always go to lifter. Example: A referee's view of a lifter was obscured by a spotter during the squat and the referee was unable to determine with 100% confidence if the proper depth was achieved. In this case, the referee must not fail the lift based on squat depth and the benefit of doubt goes to the lifter.
 - B. The lift is a good lift until the lifter gives a reason for it to be a failed lift. Example: A lifter is performing the bench press. The referee should not be thinking to themselves that the lift is a red light until the lifter proves to them that it should be a white light. The referee should be thinking that the lift is good until the lifter gives them a reason to fail the lift (i.e., makes an infraction).
 - C. When making a decision that results in the failure of a lift (i.e., a red light), the referee must be able to cite the specific rule(s) that was/were not adhered to. Example: A lifter performs a lift with very poor technique and the referee believes some rule had to be violated based on how the lift looked. In this case, if the referee cannot cite a specific rule that was violated, the referee must pass the lift.
 - D. Judgments by a referee must be consistent with the rules as written in the rulebook and must be consistently applied to all performances. Example: A referee cannot apply one squat depth standard to one lifter and apply a different squat depth standard to another lifter.
 - E. When a lift is failed by a referee and the referee is questioned as to why they failed the lift, the referee must cite the rules as written. Example: A referee fails a deadlift attempt and cites "re-bending of the knees" midway through the lift as the infraction. The rulebook does not list re-bending of the knees as a reason for disqualification in the raising portion of the deadlift. Re-bending of the knees is often accompanied by lowering of the bar and/or supporting on thighs, both of which are specifically identified as infractions in the deadlift and should be cited as the infraction(s) if one or both occurred. However, re-bending of the knees alone is not a reason for disqualification in the previous example.
 - F. "Adherence to the rules as written" and "lifter-friendly" are not mutually exclusive ideas.



Example: A first-time lifter competing at a local meet arrives at the score table to submit their second attempt for the bench press but the 60-second clock to submit the attempt expired 5 seconds earlier. The score table official must not accept the attempt because that would violate the written rule. The score table official should not be dismissive and simply say "Sorry, that's the rule - you should have known - it's in the rulebook - there is nothing else to discuss" because that is not particularly lifter-friendly. The score table official should politely explain the rule, inform the lifter that they, as an official, must adhere to all of the rules in fairness to all competitors, and perhaps make a suggestion that would help the lifter to avoid the same mistake in the future. "Adherence to the rules" and "lifter-friendly" coexist in the last scenario.

- G. Impartiality should be the norm and conflicts of interest should be avoided. Example: A different, more lenient judging standard should not be applied when the referee is adjudicating a lift performed by someone they consider a friend or by someone they admire (e.g., an elite lifter). Conversely, conflicts of interest should be anticipated and avoided. For example, if a referee does not believe they can be 100% impartial in adjudicating lifts performed by their spouse or child, they should see to it that they are not put in a position to have to adjudicate those attempts.
 - H. There is one standard of technical performance for all lifters in all divisions at all levels. Regardless of whether a lifter is competing raw or equipped, is novice or elite, or is competing at a local meet or national championship, the technical rules of performance are to be applied and enforced equally and consistently.
 - I. Professionalism in all aspects of refereeing at all times. Example: Referees must not check/use their phone and/or smartwatch while actively working as a platform referee; the same applies to jury members and technical controllers with the exception of using such technology for competition-specific purposes (e.g., jury member looking up a current record, technical controller looking up lifter order). Example: Referees must adhere to the stated dress code for the assignment and level of competition. Example: Referees should act professional in all interactions (with lifters, coaches, staff, and other referees) while on duty. Example: Referees should be punctual for all assignments.
- 6.1.10. During the competition, platform referees should abstain from unnecessary discussion with other referees and/or the platform staff. Any unnecessary distractions must be eliminated.
 - 6.1.10.1. The referees may consult with one another, the jury (if one is present), and/or any other officials/staff as needed in order to expedite the competition. Such discussion should never occur during the performance of a lift.
 - 6.1.11. The chief referee is solely responsible for giving the audible and visual commands at the commencement and completion of each lift (and during the lift in the bench press).
 - 6.1.11.1. Squat commands:
 - A. Commencement: A visual signal consisting of a downward movement of the arm together with the audible command "squat."
 - B. Completion: A visual signal consisting of a backward movement of the arm together with the audible command "rack."



- 6.1.11.2. Bench press commands:
 - A. Commencement: A visual signal consisting of a downward movement of the arm together with the audible command “start.”
 - B. During: A visual signal consisting of an upward movement of the arm together with the audible command “press” after the bar is motionless on the chest.
 - C. Completion: A visual signal consisting of a backward movement of the arm together with the audible command “rack.”
- 6.1.11.3. Deadlift command:
 - A. Commencement: No signal given. Lifter commences lift when ready.
 - B. Completion: A visual signal consisting of a downward movement of the arm together with the audible command “down.”
- 6.1.11.4. If a lifter misses a squat or bench press attempt and the chief referee wants the spotters/loaders to aid the lifter and get the bar back into the rack, the audible signal is “rack.”
- 6.1.12. The chief referee may, at their discretion, ask that the bar and/or platform be cleaned. If the lifter or coach request the bar and/or platform to be cleaned, the request must be made via the technical controller (or the chief referee if a technical controller is not present) - the request may not be made via the spotters/loaders.
 - 6.1.12.1. In any round of any lift, the coach or lifter may request that the bar be cleaned. The chief referee may, at their discretion, deny the request if it is deemed to be of a frivolous nature (e.g., giving the lifter more time before the bar is called ready/loaded). If the chief referee denies the request, the bar can still be cleaned but it will be done while the 60-second clock to begin the attempt is running.

6.2. Referee Ranks/Requirements, Exam Procedures, and Uniform

- 6.2.1. The [Referee Testing Requirements and Procedures Manual](#) contains detailed requirements and procedures for referee ranks and exams. This document, along with additional information can be found on the [Technical Committee page of the USA Powerlifting website](#).
- 6.2.2. The referee uniform is subdivided into two categories: the state referee uniform and the national referee uniform. Requirements for the state and national referee uniforms can be found in Appendices E and F, respectively.

6.3. Jury Responsibilities and Procedures

- 6.3.1. At regional and national championships and pro and international (e.g., world cup) events, a three-member jury will be appointed to preside over each lifting session. Under no circumstances may a jury be composed of fewer than three members or more than three members. Of the three jury members, one will be appointed the president of the jury. The president of the jury is typically (though not required to be) the most senior member (in terms of years of referee experience) of the jury.
 - 6.3.1.1. If, due to an insufficient number of available and qualified referees, a jury cannot be appointed for one or more sessions (or an entire event), the requirement for a jury may be waived by the Executive Committee of USA Powerlifting. In the absence of the Executive Committee, this



waiver may be granted by the president of USA Powerlifting. The decision to grant this waiver must be made at least 7 days prior to the start of the event and all registered athletes must be made aware at least 7 days prior to the start of the event via the email address they submitted with their registration/entry for the event.

- 6.3.2. The jury must consist of, in order of priority, category 1, category 2, and national referees. Ideally, juries should be entirely comprised of category 1 and 2 referees (all category 1 if possible) but there is an allowance for national referees if there is not a sufficient number of category 1 and 2 referees available. The event technical secretary(ies) must be mindful when assigning national referees to the jury and should take into consideration experience level when making these assignments. Under no circumstances may a state referee be assigned to a jury.
- 6.3.3. One jury is to be assigned to one competition platform.
- 6.3.3.1. In the case of an insufficient number of qualified referees to staff a 1:1 jury:platform ratio, it is allowable for one jury to be assigned to oversee two platforms provided the configuration of the competition area allows for placement of the jury in a location that allows for optimal and simultaneous viewing of both platforms by the jury. In no cases may a single jury oversee three or more competition platforms.
- 6.3.4. The function of the Jury is to ensure that the technical rules are correctly applied.
- 6.3.5. The members of the jury must be positioned to ensure an unimpeded view of the competition.
- 6.3.6. Before each session, the president of the jury must be satisfied that the members of the jury have a complete knowledge of their role and any new rules/procedures that amend or supplement those contained in the current edition of the handbook.
- 6.3.7. If music accompanies the lifting, the jury will determine the volume. If a jury is not present, this responsibility falls to the chief referee.
- 6.3.8. During the competition the jury may, by a majority vote, replace any referee whose decisions in its opinion, prove the referee in question to be incompetent. In general, the referee concerned must have received a warning prior to any action of dismissal. In extreme and egregious cases, a referee may be removed for a first offense.
- 6.3.8.1. The impartiality of referees cannot be doubted, but a mistake in refereeing can be committed in good faith. In such a case, the referee shall be allowed to explain their decision which is the subject of the warning.
- 6.3.9. It is imperative that the jury not put unnecessary stress on platform referees.
- 6.3.10. If a serious mistake occurs in the refereeing which is contrary to the technical rules, the jury may take appropriate action to correct the mistake. The jury may, at their discretion, grant the lifter a further attempt.
- 6.3.11. Only in extreme circumstances when the jury unanimously agrees there has been an obvious, blatant, and/or egregious mistake in the refereeing will the jury, in consultation with the platform referees, reverse the decision. Both 2-1 and 3-0 decisions by the platform referees can be overturned by the jury.



- 6.3.11.1. A lifter or coach may protest a 2-1 or 3-0 decision made on their own lift or a competitor's lift (i.e., a lifter may protest a 2-1 or 3-0 decision from the platform referees that their competitor's lift was good).
- 6.3.11.2. A lifter or coach protesting a unanimous 3-0 platform decision must submit \$20 in cash (20 USD or its equivalent in competitions held outside of the United States) at the time of the protest. If the jury decides to overturn the unanimous decision of the platform referees, the \$20 will be returned to the person who submitted it. If the jury decides not to overturn the unanimous decision of the platform referees, the \$20 will be retained by the jury and given to USA Powerlifting to use at its discretion.
- 6.3.11.3. The authority to overturn/reverse the decision of the platform referees lies solely with the jury. No other official or group within USA Powerlifting has the authority to overturn/reverse the decision of the platform referees.
- 6.3.11.4. In cases where the platform referees' decision is under consideration to be overturned, all three jury members must have witnessed the attempt in question. This highlights the caution that should be used when assigning one jury to oversee two platforms.
- 6.3.11.5. Coaches or lifters must be mindful of the need to seek remediation (e.g., protest of referees' decision) from the jury in a timely manner. This typically means before the next lifter is called to the platform. Lifters or coaches who are delayed in seeking remediation run the risk of the jury being unwilling to consider the request owing to the fact that details from individual attempts are not remembered for very long.
- 6.3.11.6. In situations where a decision by the platform referees is overturned by the jury, the affected lifter will be given an additional 60 seconds to submit their next attempt (or change their next attempt if it had been submitted prior to the protest). This 60-second period begins when the lifter/coach is informed of the overturned decision.
- 6.3.12. The jury is required to use the "USA Powerlifting Jury Decision Sheet" to document their reasons for granting a new attempt, overturning the decision of the platform referees, replacing a referee, and/or disqualifying/removing a lifter or coach. The jury decision sheet is part of the technical secretary's forms and is to be placed with all official meet paperwork at the conclusion of the event. The USA Powerlifting Jury Decision Sheet can be found in Appendix G and on the [Technical Committee page of the USA Powerlifting website](#).

6.4. Other Officials

- 6.4.1. **Announcer.** The announcer (sometimes called the "speaker") is responsible for the efficient running of the competition. They announce the weight required for the next attempt and the name of the lifter. When the bar is loaded and the platform cleared for lifting, the chief referee will indicate this fact to the announcer. When the announcer announces that the bar is ready and calls the lifter to the platform, the clock will begin and the lifter is committed to the attempt. Attempts announced by the speaker must be displayed upon the scoreboard erected in a prominent position, with the lifters' names in order of lot number. In the absence of an announcer (either temporarily or for the whole session/meet), the chief referee's signal of "bar is loaded/ready" will serve as the official signal to begin the 60-second attempt clock.



- 6.4.2. **Technical Secretary.** The technical secretary (TS) is the head referee in charge at a competition. All regional and national championships and pro and international (e.g., world cup) events must have a TS appointed; a co-TS may be appointed for larger events. The TS position carries with it a very high level of authority and responsibility and a significant workload. As such, to be considered for a TS or co-TS position, the candidate must have a demonstrated mastery of the technical rules and referee responsibilities, exceptional organizational skills, the highest level of professionalism, and exceptional interpersonal communication and conflict management skills. A detailed TS job description can be found on the [Technical Committee page of the USA Powerlifting website](#). Technical secretaries are not mandated at state/local competitions. For meets without a TS, the meet director and/or state chair will assign the officials and their duties.
- 6.4.3. **Time Keeper.** The time keeper is responsible for accurately recording the lapse between the announcement that the bar is ready and the lifter starting their attempt. They are also responsible for recording time allowances whenever required (e.g., after an attempt the lifter shall leave the platform within 30 seconds). Once the clock is running for a lifter, it can only be stopped by the completion of a time allowance, by the start of the lift, or at the discretion of the chief referee or jury. Consequently, it is of great importance that the lifter or their coach check the height of the squat and bench racks prior to being called, as once the bar is announced as being ready, the clock will be started. Any further adjustments to the racks must be made within the lifter's one-minute allowance, unless the lifter has nominated a rack height that has been incorrectly set by the spotters/loaders. It is therefore essential that the rack height sheet be signed or initialed by the lifter or coach. This is an official document, which should verify in any dispute. The lifter is allowed one minute in which to start their attempt after the announcer calls the lifter to the bar. If the lifter does not start their attempt within this time allowance, the time keeper (or chief referee) will give the audible command "time." If a lifter chooses to intentionally "time out" (i.e., purposely not show up on the platform and forfeit the attempt), the one-minute clock must be run in its entirety. When the lifter starts the lift within the prescribed time allowance, the clock will be stopped. The definition of the start of an attempt depends upon the particular lift being performed. In the squat and bench press, the start is to coincide with the chief referee's commencement signal. In the deadlift, the start is when the lifter makes a genuine attempt to raise the bar.
- 6.4.4. **Expeditor.** The expeditor is responsible for collecting the weight of required attempts from the lifters or their coaches and passing the information without delay to the scorer(s). The lifter is allowed one minute between completing their last attempt (defined as the moment the referee decision lights are illuminated) and submitting their next attempt to the expeditor.
- 6.4.5. **Scorer.** The scorer is responsible for accurately recording the progress of the competition both in hard copy form (lifter scorecards) and electronically (computer scoring program). Duties of scorers include the following: entering attempt selections, make attempt changes where allowed by the rule (e.g., third attempt deadlifts), recording attempt outcomes (good lift or no lift), managing re-lifts in the scoring program, and determining final placings.
- 6.4.6. **Note:** The time keeper, expeditor, and scoring responsibilities can be combined and managed by one or two people provided these people can handle the combined responsibilities. Though not required, it is recommended that staff assigned to the time keeper, expeditor, and scoring roles be certified referees owing to the fact that a thorough understanding of the rules is imperative to successfully carrying out these duties.



6.4.7. **Spotters/Loaders.** Spotters/loaders are responsible for loading and unloading the bar, adjusting squat racks and benches as required, cleaning the bar or platform at the request of the chief referee, retrieving and placing foot blocks (in the bench press), and generally ensuring that the platform is well maintained and presents a neat and tidy appearance at all times. At no time shall there be fewer than two or more than five spotters/loaders on the platform. When the lifter prepares for their attempt, the spotters/loaders may assist them in removing the bar from the racks. They may also assist in replacing the bar after the attempt. However, they shall not touch the lifter or the bar during the actual attempt (i.e., during the period of time that elapses between the commencement and completion signals). The only exception to this rule being that if the lift is in jeopardy and likely to result in injury to the lifter, the spotters/loaders may, either at the request of the chief referee or the lifter themselves, step in and relieve the lifter of the bar. In this case, it is imperative that the lifter stays with the bar until it is back in the racks. If the lifter is deprived of an otherwise successful attempt by the error of a spotter/loader and through no fault of their own, they will be awarded another attempt at the discretion of the jury (or the platform referees in the absence of a jury) at the end of the round.

6.4.7.1. Spotters and loaders are not allowed to wear hats while working in the official capacity of a spotter and/or loader. Any headwear worn by spotters and loaders must conform to the same headwear rules that apply to competitors as described in Item 3.16.1.

6.4.8. **Technical Controller.** The technical controller must be a certified referee. Regardless of the level of competition, any referee rank is eligible to serve as a technical controller (e.g., a state referee is eligible to serve as a technical controller at a national or pro meet). Though not mandated by the rules, a technical controller should be assigned to the competition platform if referee availability allows for this staffing. The technical controller has the following five (5) primary responsibilities:

- A. Ensure the correct lifter mounts the platform.
- B. Ensure lifters are properly attired with legal equipment/apparel worn in the manner prescribed by the rules.
- C. Ensure the lifter/staging area near the platform is clear and not overly crowded.
- D. Ensure each lifter has fair and equal access to the platform.
- E. Ensure the limit of only one (1) coach per lifter is in the designated coaching area (refer to Item 5.4.1.2).



7. Records

7.1. State Records

- 7.1.1. The individual state records are to be maintained by the state chair or by a record keeper assigned by the state chair. If there is a state chair vacancy in a state, USA Powerlifting will appoint one or more people to manage the state records until the state chair vacancy is filled.
- 7.1.2. State records may be set in any USA Powerlifting-sanctioned event.
- 7.1.3. In order to set a state record, the lifter must be registered with USA Powerlifting in that state. This registration is evidenced by the lifter's mailing address on the USA Powerlifting membership card.
 - 7.1.3.1. State records for a particular state can be broken in any meet, regardless of whether or not that meet is being held in the same state. For example, a Florida resident may break a Florida state record in a Texas meet. No additional paperwork/applications need to be completed in these cases nor are there any requirements for the rank of the adjudicating referees above and beyond the normal requirements. For example, in the scenario above, three Texas state referees may adjudicate the Florida state record attempt at the Texas meet.
- 7.1.4. The state record attempt must exceed the existing listed record in order for the lifter to be credited with the record.
- 7.1.5. Plates weighing less than 1.25kg (or 2.5lb) may not be used for setting state records. All state record attempts must be a multiple of 2.5kg (if using kilogram weights) sets or 5lb (if using pound weight sets).
 - 7.1.5.1. Because a kilogram-based attempt may be made to break a pound-based record and vice versa, a lifter that succeeds with an attempt that exceeds the existing state record by at least 0.5kg/1.1lb may claim that record. Examples below:
 - A. The current record is 200lb (set at a prior meet run in pounds). A lifter makes their attempt of 92.5kg (203.9lb) at a meet run in kilograms. This lifter becomes the new state record holder because their attempt exceeded the current record by at least 0.5kg/1.1lb.
 - B. The current record is 225lb (set at a prior meet run in pounds). A lifter makes their attempt of 102.5kg (226.0lb) at a meet run in kilograms. This lifter may not claim the new record because the current record was not exceeded by 0.5kg/1.1lb.
 - C. The current record is 205kg (set at a prior meet run in kilograms). A lifter makes their attempt of 455lb (206.4kg) at a meet run in pounds. This lifter becomes the new state record holder because their attempt exceeded the current record by at least 0.5kg/1.1lb.
 - D. The current record is 217.5kg (set at a prior meet run in kilograms). A lifter makes their attempt of 480lb (217.7kg) at a meet run in pounds. This lifter may not claim the new record because the current record was not exceeded by 0.5kg/1.1lb.
 - 7.1.5.2. Exception allowed for youth bench press: Increments as small as 1kg/2.5 lb are allowed.
- 7.1.6. In the event of two lifters breaking either a current individual lift or total record with the same weight, the same procedure outlined in Item 7.2.14 in Section 7.2 (National Records) will apply.
- 7.1.7. Three-lift (i.e., full power) state records may only be set in full power meets.



- 7.1.8. Single-lift state records (e.g., bench-only, deadlift-only) may be set in single-lift, two-lift or full powerlifting meets. To receive credit for a single-lift state record the lifter must register a total.
- 7.1.9. A bench press record achieved in a single-lift bench-only meet counts for the single-lift bench press record but not the three-lift (full power) bench press record. The same applies to deadlift records. Squat records are not applicable as the current rules do not allow for single-lift squat-only events.
- 7.1.10. A bench press record achieved in a three-lift (full power) meet counts for the three-lift (full power) bench press record and the single-lift bench press record if the attempt exceeded the single-lift bench press record. The same applies to deadlift records. Squat records are not applicable as the current rules do not allow for single-lift squat-only events.
- 7.1.11. If a lifter is competing in the equipped division, they are ineligible to set raw records even if they perform one or more attempts raw.

7.2. National Records

- 7.2.1. National records are maintained by one or more officials appointed by USA Powerlifting.
- 7.2.2. National records can only be set at state, regional, national, **international**, and pro meets. National records cannot be set at local meets.
- 7.2.3. National record attempts must be adjudicated by any combination of three national, category 2, or category 1 referees with the following exceptions noted in Items 7.2.3.1 and 7.2.3.2.
 - 7.2.3.1. Regional referees are eligible to adjudicate national record attempts in the side chair position only and only at national championships.
 - 7.2.3.2. The only situation in which a state referee may adjudicate a national record attempt is during a national championship in which the state referee is sitting in the side chair position as part of their national referee practical exam and a jury is actively monitoring that platform.
 - 7.2.3.3. In the case of national records in the total set at a state or regional championship (where state referees may be adjudicating attempts), each of the three successful attempts that comprise the record total must be adjudicated by any combination of three national, category 2, or category 1 referees, regardless of whether or not one or more of the individual lifts is a national record.
- 7.2.4. At state and regional championships, it is the lifter's responsibility to inform the scoring table staff of any national record attempt so that the appropriate referees can be in place to adjudicate the attempt. This must be done when the attempt for the national record is submitted to allow enough time to coordinate any reconfiguration of the platform referees. There will be no recourse for lifters who successfully break a national record but failed to ensure the appropriate referees adjudicated the attempt. Under no circumstances will a national record be validated if it was not adjudicated by the appropriate referees.
 - 7.2.4.1. Though strongly encouraged, it is not a requirement that state and regional championships have three national, category 2, or category 1 referees in attendance to adjudicate national records. That being the case, lifters who think they may be capable of breaking a national record at a state or regional championship should contact the meet director well in advance of the event to request that referees eligible to adjudicate national records be present at the event. Making this request does not guarantee that it will be done.



- 7.2.5. National record attempts may take place on any of the three attempts, regardless of the degree of success or the amount of weight used on previous attempts.
- 7.2.5.1. Attempt increments less than a multiple of 2.5kg may not be taken for the sole purpose of breaking a national total record. Attempt increments less than 2.5kg may only be taken for national record attempts in the squat, bench press, and deadlift.
- 7.2.6. National records can only be set using kilogram plates.
- 7.2.7. A national record attempt must exceed the existing listed record by a minimum of 0.5kg in order for the lifter to be credited with the record.
- 7.2.7.1. Lifters attempting to break a master, teen, or junior record may only take an attempt that is not a multiple of 2.5kg if they are competing in the division for which the record applies.
- A. Example A: a 46-year old lifter (i.e., Master 1) who is competing in the *open* division may not attempt to break a *master's* record with an attempt that is not a multiple of 2.5kg.
- B. Example B: a 46-year old lifter (i.e., Master 1) who is competing in the *master's* division may attempt to break a *master's* record with an attempt that is not a multiple of 2.5kg.
- C. Example C: a 46-year old lifter (i.e., Master 1) who is competing in the *open* division may attempt to break an *open* record with an attempt that is not a multiple of 2.5kg.
- D. Example D: a 46-year old lifter (i.e., Master 1) who is competing in the *master's* division may attempt to break an *open* record with an attempt that is not a multiple of 2.5kg.
- 7.2.7.2. In the event a mistake or oversight occurs and a lifter was allowed to take a national record attempt that is not a multiple of 2.5kg and they were not eligible to do so (Item 7.2.7.1) and the attempt was successful, the lifter's official attempt will be reduced to the nearest 2.5kg in the scoring program, meet results, and record database (if the corrected attempt still qualifies as a national record). This procedure is to be applied regardless of when the mistake/oversight is discovered (at the event or any time thereafter).
- 7.2.7.3. In competitions sanctioned as international events (i.e., World Cup events, World Championships), all national (e.g., American, Korean, etc.) record attempts must be multiples of 2.5kg. In other words, national record attempts at international events cannot be "chipped." Note: World records can be chipped at international events in accordance with Item 7.3.8.1 in the rulebook.
- 7.2.8. Items 7.1.5 - 7.1.9 in the State Records section apply equally to national records.
- 7.2.9. A lifter successful in setting an open national record (equipped or raw) must be drug tested to be credited with the record.
- 7.2.10. Immediately after the successful completion of a national record, the lifter may be inspected by the technical controller, one of the adjudicating referees, or a jury member (if a jury is present) to assure legality of the lifting attire and equipment.
- 7.2.11. National records set at national or pro meets do not require that a formal application be submitted. The records will be taken from meet results. However, verification of age and/or collegiate status is required for age-based and/or collegiate records (see Items 7.2.13.1 and 7.2.13.2 below). Proof of age and/or full-time student status must be submitted by the athlete to the USA Powerlifting National Office within 30 days of the event for the record to be valid.
- 7.2.12. At national or pro events, the lifter must present themselves to the technical secretary and/or doping control officer to get credit for the national record.



- 7.2.13. For national records set at state or regional championships, a National Record Application must be completed and submitted by the meet director within 30 days of the event. It is the lifter's responsibility to inform the meet director of any successful national record attempt and to request that the meet director complete and submit the National Record Application. This must be done at the event because various signatures are required from several officials at the event. The "National Record Application" and "Procedures for Submitting National Record Applications (Local & State Meets)" can be found on the USA Powerlifting national website in the Meet Director Resource Center under "Meet Day Forms/Procedures/Scoring."
- 7.2.13.1. For national records set within age constraints (youth, master, teen, junior), a copy of the lifter's birth certificate (or a copy of the lifter's government-issued I.D.) must be part of the record package.
- 7.2.13.2. For national records set within the collegiate division, a notarized letter from the University/College Registrar indicating that the lifter is/was, on the meet date, a full-time student and in good standing with that institution must be part of the record package. Collegiate records may not be considered for students enrolled in Vocational or Trade Schools.
- 7.2.14. In the event of two lifters breaking either a current individual lift or total national record with the same weight, the lighter lifter will be declared the new record-holder. If both lifters were of identical weight at the weigh-in, the lifter setting the record first will be declared the record holder. If two lifters in different meets held on the same day achieve the identical new record, the record will go to the lighter lifter. In the case of equal body weights for lifters breaking the same record at different meets on the same day, both lifters will hold the record if it cannot conclusively be determined who set the record first (e.g., via time stamp in scoring program).
- 7.2.15. In the event two or more lifters request the same weight for a new squat, bench press, or deadlift national record, and if the first lifter by lot number succeeds, 0.5 kg will be added by the scorer (if the attempt is not a multiple of 2.5 kg) to the following lifter's (or lifters') attempt to claim the record. Where the question is of the record in total, the record holder is determined in accordance with Items 1.5.3.1 and 1.5.3.2 under Item 1.5 (General Rules of Powerlifting).

7.3. World Records

- 7.3.1. World records are maintained by one or more officials appointed by USA Powerlifting.
- 7.3.2. World records can only be set at national championships, international events, and pro meets. World records cannot be set at local, state, or regional meets.
- 7.3.3. World records can only be set if a jury is present.
- 7.3.4. World record attempts must be adjudicated by any combination of three category 2 or category 1 referees. State, regional, and national referees are not eligible to adjudicate world record attempts.
- 7.3.4.1. In the case of world records in the total set at a pro meet or national championship (where national referees may be adjudicating attempts), each of the three successful attempts that comprise the record total must be adjudicated by any combination of three category 2 or category 1 referees, regardless of whether or not one or more of the individual lifts is a world record.
- 7.3.5. At pro meets and national championships, it is the lifter's responsibility to inform the scoring table



- staff of any world record attempt so that the appropriate referees can be in place to adjudicate the attempt. This must be done when the attempt for the world record is submitted to allow enough time to coordinate any reconfiguration of the platform referees. There will be no recourse for lifters who successfully break a world record but failed to ensure the appropriate referees adjudicated the attempt (see Item 7.3.3). Under no circumstances will a world record be validated if it was not adjudicated by the appropriate referees.
- 7.3.5.1. Though strongly encouraged, it is not a requirement that pro meets and national championships have three category 2 or category 1 referees in attendance to adjudicate world records. That being the case, lifters who think they may be capable of breaking a world record at a pro meet or national championship should contact the meet director well in advance of the event to request that referees eligible to adjudicate world records be present at the event. Making this request does not guarantee that it will be done.
 - 7.3.6. World record attempts may take place on any of the three attempts, regardless of the degree of success or the amount of weight used on previous attempts.
 - 7.3.6.1. Attempt increments less than a multiple of 2.5kg may not be taken for the sole purpose of breaking a world total record. Attempt increments less than 2.5kg may only be taken for world record attempts in the squat, bench press, and deadlift.
 - 7.3.7. World records can only be set using kilogram plates.
 - 7.3.8. A world record attempt must exceed the existing listed record by a minimum of 0.5kg in order for the lifter to be credited with the record.
 - 7.3.8.1. Items 7.2.7.1 - 7.2.7.2 in the National Records section apply equally to world records.
 - 7.3.9. Items 7.1.5 - 7.1.9 in the State Records section apply equally to world records.
 - 7.3.10. A lifter successful in setting an open world record (equipped or raw) must be drug tested to be credited with the record.
 - 7.3.11. Immediately after the successful completion of a world record, the lifter may be inspected by the technical controller, one of the adjudicating referees, or a jury member (if a jury is present) to assure legality of the lifting attire and equipment.
 - 7.3.12. World records set at national, international, or pro meets require that the jury document that three category 2 or category 1 referees adjudicated the attempt. Juries will be provided with a form to provide this documentation. This documentation is to be given to the event technical secretary who will ensure the documentation is forwarded to the individual(s) responsible for maintaining the world record database. Verification of age is required for age-based records. Proof of age (i.e., a copy of the lifter's birth certificate, a copy of the lifter's government-issued I.D., or a copy of the lifter's passport) must be submitted by the athlete to the USA Powerlifting National Office within 30 days of the event for the record to be valid.
 - 7.3.13. The lifter must present themselves to the technical secretary and/or doping control officer to get credit for the world record.
 - 7.3.14. In the event of two lifters breaking either a current individual lift or total world record with the same weight, the lighter lifter will be declared the new record-holder. If both lifters were of identical weight at the weigh-in, the lifter setting the record first will be declared the record holder. If two lifters in different meets held on the same day achieve the identical new record, the record will go to the lighter lifter. In the case of equal body weights for lifters breaking the same record



at different meets on the same day, both lifters will hold the record if it cannot conclusively be determined who set the record first (e.g., via time stamp in scoring program).

- 7.3.15. In the event two or more lifters request the same weight for a new squat, bench press, or deadlift world record, and if the first lifter by lot number succeeds, 0.5 kg will be added by the scorer (if the attempt is not a multiple of 2.5 kg) to the following lifter's (or lifters') attempt to claim the record. Where the question is of the record in total, the record holder is determined in accordance with Items 1.5.3.1 and 1.5.3.2 under Item 1.5 (General Rules of Powerlifting).

7.4. Records - Miscellaneous

- 7.4.1. Open records may be set by lifters in any age division (excluding Youth).
- 7.4.2. Records in the Master 2 division that exceed Master 1 records will count for both Master 2 and Master 1 records. Records in the Master 3 division that exceed Master 2 records will count for both Master 3 and Master 2 records (and Master 1 records if applicable). This procedure (i.e., Master records “flow down”) applies for all of the Master age divisions - not just the specific examples listed. This procedure also applies for the Master A/B subdivisions.
- 7.4.3. Records in the Teen 1 division that exceed Teen 2 records will count for both Teen 1 and Teen 2 records. Records in the Teen 2 division that exceed Teen 3 records will count for both Teen 2 and Teen 3 records (and Junior records if applicable). This procedure (i.e., Teen records “flow up”) applies for all of the Teen divisions as well as the Junior division - not just the specific examples listed.
- 7.4.3.1. Due to important differences in Youth division rules (i.e., no drug testing), Youth records do not “flow up” among the various Youth divisions, nor do they “flow up” into the Teen divisions.
- 7.4.4. All of the above (Items 7.4.1 - 7.4.3.1) applies equally to state, national, and world records.

Appendix A: Colors of the Failure Lights/Cards

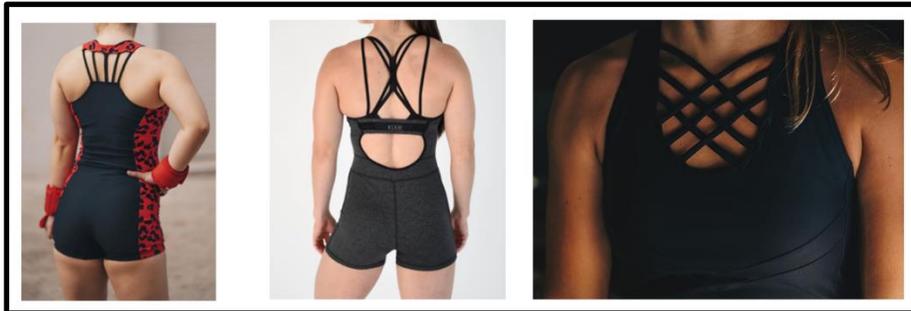
		
SQUAT	BENCH PRESS	DEADLIFT
Red	Red	Red
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <u>1.</u> Failure to bend the knees and lower the body until the top surface of the legs at the hip joint are lower than the top of the knees. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <u>1.</u> Bar is not lowered to chest or abdominal area (i.e., not reaching the chest or abdominal area, or is touching the belt). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <u>1.</u> Failure to lock the knees straight at the completion of the lift. <u>2.</u> Failure to stand erect with the shoulders back.
Blue	Blue	Blue
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <u>1.</u> Failure to assume an upright position with the knees locked at commencement and completion of the lift. <u>2.</u> Double bouncing or more than one recovery attempt at the bottom of the lift. <u>3.</u> Any downward movement of the whole bar in its entirety during the ascent. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <u>1.</u> Any downward movement of the whole bar in its entirety in the course of being pressed out. <u>2.</u> Failure to press the bar to straight arms' length (i.e., elbows locked) at the commencement and completion of the lift. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <u>1.</u> Any downward movement of the whole bar in its entirety before it reaches the final position. (Note: if the bar settles as the shoulders come back, this is not a reason to disqualify the lift) <u>2.</u> Supporting the bar on the thighs during the performance of the lift. (Note: if the bar edges up the thighs but is not supported, this is not a reason to disqualify the lift)
Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <u>1.</u> Stepping backward or forward or moving the feet laterally. (Note: rocking the feet between the ball and heel is permitted) <u>2.</u> Failure to observe the chief referee's signals at the commencement or completion of the lift. <u>3.</u> Contact with bar or lifter by the spotters/loaders between the chief referee's signals, in order to make the lift easier. <u>4.</u> Contact of the elbows and/or arms with the legs in such a way that is deemed to make the lift easier. Slight inadvertent contact that is of no aid to the lifter is permitted. <u>5.</u> Any dropping or dumping of the bar at any point before (i.e., before receiving the "Squat" command), during, or after (i.e., after receiving the "Rack" command) the lift. <u>6.</u> Failure to comply with any of the requirements contained in the general description of the lift. <u>7.</u> An obvious failure to complete the lift (e.g., spotters assist in replacing the bar). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <u>1.</u> Heaving or sinking the bar after it has been motionless on the chest or abdominal area, in such a way as to aid the lifter. <u>2.</u> Failure to observe the chief referee's signals at the commencement, during, or completion of the lift. <u>3.</u> Any change in the elected lifting position during the lift proper (i.e., any raising movement of the shoulders or buttocks from their original points of contact with the bench, or lateral movement of the hands on the bar, or raising of the feet). <u>4.</u> Contact with the bar or the lifter by the spotters/loaders between the chief referee's signals, in order to make the lift easier. <u>5.</u> Any contact of the lifter's feet with the bench or its supports. <u>6.</u> Deliberate contact between the bar and the bar rest supports and/or rack uprights and/or one or both bench safeties during the lift in order to make the lift easier. Incidental contact that is of no aid to the lifter is not a reason to disqualify the lift. <u>7.</u> Any dropping or dumping of the bar at any point before (i.e., before receiving the "Start" command), during, or after (i.e., after receiving the "Rack" command) the lift. <u>8.</u> Failure to comply with any of the requirements contained in the general description of the lift. <u>9.</u> An obvious failure to complete the lift (e.g., spotters assist in replacing the bar). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <u>1.</u> Lowering the bar before receiving the chief referee's signal. <u>2.</u> Allowing the bar to return to the platform without maintaining control with both hands (i.e., releasing the bar from the palms of the hand). <u>3.</u> Forcefully and deliberately slamming/pushing the bar downward onto the platform after receiving the "Down" command. <u>4.</u> Stepping backward or forward or moving the feet laterally. Rocking the feet between the ball and heel is permitted. (Note: lateral foot movement after the "Down" command is not a reason to disqualify the lift but the lifter must maintain their balance and may not take a step forward or backward until the bar has been returned to the platform) <u>5.</u> The lifter and/or bar making contact with the spotter in such a way that is deemed to make the lift easier. Slight inadvertent contact that is of no aid to the lifter is permitted. <u>6.</u> Failure to comply with any of the requirements contained in the general description of the lift. <u>7.</u> An obvious failure to complete the lift (e.g., bar fails to leave the ground).

Appendix B: Allowable and Non-Allowable Singlet Designs

Examples of Allowable Singlet Designs



Examples of Non-Allowable Singlet Designs





Appendix C: Scorecard Example - Weigh-In Procedures

Official body weight registered on scale

Initials of lifter or coach

Initials of referee conducting weigh-in

USA Powerlifting National Championship				Flight/Group: 2A		
Name & Mbr #:		Mary Johnson		999999		
DOB:		9/11/1998		Team: USA Powerlifting		
Body Weight:		59.2		Events Entered: PL		
Lifter/Coach Initials:		M.J.		Division(s): FR-O		
Event	Rack Hts	1st Attempt	2nd Attempt	3rd Attempt	Best Attempt	Place
Squat	16	100				
Bench Press	10-4	52.5				
				Subtotal		
Deadlift		107.5				
DOTS Coeff		DOTS Points		Total		

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Rack heights*

Opening attempts

Procedures:

- All data on the scorecard written by referee(s) working weigh-in.
- Lifter or coach writes their initials AFTER all data has been written on card; by initialing the card, the lifter or coach is confirming all of the data is correct as written.
- Referee writes their initials next to the body weight; this documents the referee who conducted the weigh-in and wrote the data on the card in case any of the data is in question at a later time.
- * Rack heights submitted by lifters electronically do not need to be written on the scorecard.
- Important note: No one but meet officials may possess, handle, or write on lifter scorecards.



Appendix D: Scorecard Example - Scoring Procedures

Session 1 - Platform 1 - USA Powerlifting National Championship				
Name: Mike Smith		Member #: 9999999		Lot #: 1032
Flight: A	DOB: 09/01/1991		Team:	
Squat Rack Height: 20		Bench Rack Height: 13-6		
BW: 98.6 g.w.		Lifter/Coach Initials: M.S.		
Div1: Men's Equipped Open 100			Div2:	
	1st Attempt	1st Change	2nd Attempt	3rd Attempt
Squat	250		260	260
Bench	130		135	135
Deadlift	250		270	280
 9999999				

Attempts

Procedures:

- Scoring table staff write all second and third attempts (and changes to openers if applicable and as allowed by the rules) on the lifter scorecard so a written record of the results is maintained.
 - Note: Weigh-in official writes the opening attempts on the scorecard.
- Attempts that are good lifts are designated as such by circling the attempt on the scorecard.
- Attempts that are failed lifts are designated as such by putting a line (or X) through the attempt on the scorecard.
- At the conclusion of the meet (or session if multiple sessions occur), all scorecards are given to the meet director (local and state meets) or the event technical secretary (regional and higher meets).
- Scorecards are to be saved for at least one year in case the meet results are questioned later.



Appendix E: State Referee Uniform

Either the national or state referee uniform must be worn when a referee is actively working at a local or state event. All components of the referee uniform must be clean and in a state of good repair without significant wear and tear (i.e., shoes that are dirty and/or have holes in them, pants that are frayed at the bottom or tattered, etc. are not acceptable). A USA Powerlifting nametag (provided by the National Office upon attaining a particular referee rank) must always be worn when working. The components of the state uniform are as follows:

1. Navy blue USA Powerlifting referee polo shirt.
 - a. The referee polo shirt is purchased directly through the [USA Powerlifting eStore](#).
 - b. In colder environments, ~~one or both~~ any of the following may also be worn:
 - i. A long-sleeved shirt may be worn underneath the referee polo and must be a solid color and plain with no visible designs or logos.
 - ii. A zip-up jacket or hoodie with the USA Powerlifting logo (must be purchased from USA Powerlifting).
 - iii. A solid black or gray jacket which zips up so that the collar and polo can be seen.
 - c. The USA Powerlifting nametag must be worn on the referee polo shirt (or zip-up jacket/hoodie if one is worn ~~and it obscures the nametag on the referee polo shirt~~) in the right breast area.
 - d. No additional adornments may be worn on the referee polo shirt (or zip-up jacket/hoodie if one is worn).
2. Gray dress pants.
 - a. Pants must be professional-looking and made of a linen/non-denim material.
 - b. Pant types that are not allowed include cargo-style/tactical pants (i.e., pants with pockets on the legs), workout/athletic pants, leggings/yoga pants, jeans, sweat pants, capri-style pants, and shorts.
 - c. Skirts are not allowed to be worn.
3. Black dress shoes.
4. Black socks or hose (socks must cover the ankle at a minimum).
5. Any type of headwear (hats, bandanas, etc.) is strictly prohibited while serving as a referee/official unless there is a genuine need for religious or medical reasons (prior Technical Committee approval needed)



Appendix F: National Referee Uniform

The national referee uniform must be worn when a referee is actively working at a regional, national, pro, or international event, or other events as determined by USA Powerlifting. All components of the referee uniform must be clean and in a state of good repair without significant wear and tear (i.e., shoes that are dirty and/or have holes in them, pants that are frayed at the bottom or tattered, etc. are not acceptable). A USA Powerlifting nametag (provided by the National Office upon attaining a particular referee rank) must always be worn when working. The components of the national uniform are as follows:

1. Navy blue blazer.
 - a. The blazer must be a solid navy blue color (non-solid color designs like pinstripes or other patterns are not allowed).
 - b. For national and higher referees, the blazer must have a referee patch sewn (or otherwise affixed in a professional-looking manner) to the left breast area of the blazer that denotes the referee's rank. Patches are provided by the National Office upon attaining national, category 2, or category 1 rank. The patch color is defined by rank as follows: national - navy blue, category 2 - blue, category 1 - red. The USA Powerlifting nametag must be worn on the blazer in the right breast area.
 - c. Other than the official referee patch and nametag, the only other allowable adornment on the blazer is a maximum of two (2) lapel pins worn on the lapel. Lapel pins are limited to the national flag of the referee and/or an official lapel pin produced by USA Powerlifting that contains the USA Powerlifting logo (e.g., USA Powerlifting logo lapel pin, USA Powerlifting Lift Clean lapel pin).
2. Necktie or scarf.
 - a. The necktie or scarf must be a solid color and plain with no designs or logos; the tie/scarf color required is defined by rank as follows: national - gray/silver, category 2 - blue, and category 1 - red. For state and regional referees wearing the national referee uniform, the tie/scarf color is the same as national referees (gray/silver). Note: It is the referee's responsibility to obtain a tie or scarf that conforms to the standards above (i.e., they are not provided by the National Office).
3. White button-down dress shirt or blouse (long-sleeve or short-sleeve is acceptable).
4. Gray dress pants.
 - a. Pants must be professional-looking and made of a linen/non-denim material.
 - b. Pant types that are not allowed include cargo-style/tactical pants (i.e., pants with pockets on the legs), workout/athletic pants, leggings/yoga pants, jeans, sweat pants, capri-style pants, and shorts.
 - c. Skirts are not allowed to be worn.
5. Black dress shoes.
6. Black socks or hose (socks must cover the ankle at a minimum).
7. Any type of headwear (hats, bandanas, etc.) is strictly prohibited while serving as a referee/official unless there is a genuine need for religious or medical reasons (prior Technical Committee approval needed).
8. Exceptions to the above requirements:
 - a. Referees *may* wear the state uniform when working as a score table official or equipment check official only.
 - b. For technical controllers, all elements of the national uniform are required except the following:
 - i. Navy blue blazer is not required.
 - ii. **Men All referees** working this position must wear a tie/scarf.
 - iii. ~~Women working this position are not required to wear a tie/scarf.~~



Appendix G: Jury Decision Sheet

Jury Decision Sheet for Event Sanction # ____ - ____ - ____

Date: ____/____/____ | Session #: ____ | Platform #: ____ | Lift: SQ BP DL | Attempt #: 1 2 3

Name of lifter who is subject of protest/action: _____ Attempt: _____ kg

Name of athlete/coach/official filing protest: _____ [if N/A, check box(es) below]

check this box if the jury acted independently (i.e., there was no formal protest filed by a coach or lifter)

check this box if the jury did anything other than overturn the platform referees' decision

Explanation of protest/reason for jury action. Note: Jury may act to correct a mistake even if no protest filed.

Explanation:

Platform Referees' Names and Decisions*:

Chief: _____ white / red circle failure card(s): R B Y

Side (R): _____ white / red circle failure card(s): R B Y

Side (L): _____ white / red circle failure card(s): R B Y

*Was \$20 in cash (20 USD or its equivalent outside U.S.) collected for 3-0 protest? (circle one) Y N N/A

Jury Members' Decisions:

Overturn: Y N _____ (chief) _____

Overturn: Y N _____

Overturn: Y N _____

Affected athlete(s)/coach(es)/official(s) notified of jury decision: (circle one) Y N N/A

Scoring table officials notified (if referees' decision overturned): (circle one) Y N N/A

All three platform referees notified (if referees' decision overturned): (circle one) Y N N/A

\$20 returned to lifter/coach (if 3-0 was overturned due to protest): (circle one) Y N N/A

(Use reverse side for additional comments if necessary)

Note: A printable version of the Jury Decision Sheet can be downloaded from the [Technical Committee page of the USA Powerlifting website](#).



Appendix H: Record of Rulebook Updates

Appendix H contains an ongoing record of changes/updates/clarifications to the rulebook beginning with the January 1, 2024 (v2024.1) rulebook update which is the first update following the major rulebook revision and reformatting that was released on September 25, 2023 as v2023.1. Following the description of each change/update/clarification is the place it is found (i.e., item number) within the version in which it occurred and the body within USA Powerlifting that authorized and approved the change (either the National Governing Board [NGB] or Executive Committee [EC]). **As of January 1, 2025, the rulebook updates have been moved to separate online files linked below.**

- [January 1, 2024 \(v2024.1\) Update](#)
- [January 1, 2025 \(v2025.1\) Update](#)



Appendix I: Supplement to the USA Powerlifting Rulebook

In 2024, the Executive Committee approved the creation of the Supplement to the USA Powerlifting Rulebook. With the plan to only update the rulebook once per year, this document serves as an official extension of, and supplement to, the USA Powerlifting Rulebook. This document contains recent changes to rules and policies that are not yet in the rulebook and will not be until the next update. Changes to rules and policies that appear in this document are official and should be treated the same way as those found in the rulebook. Unless stated otherwise, the rules and policies in this document are currently in effect.

Note: The content of written referee exams comes exclusively from the rulebook and does not include any new rules/policies contained in this document.

The Supplement to the USA Powerlifting Rulebook exists as an online document and can be accessed at the link below.

[Current Version of the Supplement to the USA Powerlifting Rulebook](#)