

**USA YOGA SPORTS FEDERATION**  
**COMPETITION RULES AND REGULATIONS**  
Updated 10/1/2022

**I. ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY**

1. Membership

All individuals who compete at a USA Yoga event must be members of the United States Yoga Federation (USA Yoga). Non-US citizens may register as members of USA Yoga and may compete at the qualifier level and at the regional level. Eligibility to compete in the National Championship, however, is restricted to US citizens.

2. Eligibility and Competition Categories

USA Yoga competitions are divided into 3 youth divisions (9–11, 12–14, 15–17) and 2 adult divisions (18+, 50+). Each division is divided into male and female categories. (See Section I.6 for method of determining age eligibility.)

3. Condition of Eligibility

As a condition of eligibility, each competitor must agree that the competitor assumes all risk of injury and neither USA Yoga nor any of its officers, directors, employees, agents, or volunteers will be liable for any injury or damages of any kind suffered by a competitor before, during, or as a result of the competition. Competitors will not be allowed to participate without submitting a waiver of liability.

4. Other Eligibility Restrictions

a) Good Conduct

Competitors are to maintain good conduct and proper discipline during competitions. Athletes are to refrain from using obscene language and gestures verbally and in writing, and are to be respectful to other athletes, officials, coaches, and judges. USA Yoga reserves the right to suspend a competitor at any time for improper conduct. (See USA Yoga's Code of Conduct on the USA Yoga website.)

b) Drug Use

If any competitor uses any stimulating drug or alcoholic beverage before or during a competition, such competitor must immediately be disqualified, and future eligibility will be subject to review.

- c) Pregnancy  
Pregnant athletes are not eligible to compete.
  - d) Injuries or Medical Conditions  
Competitors with injuries or serious medical conditions are not eligible to compete unless a licensed physician approves the competitor's participation in writing.
5. Good Faith  
USA Yoga is not required to investigate whether a competitor is eligible for a competition but may rely on the good faith representations of the competitor to establish eligibility. USA Yoga may require documentation to support a claim of eligibility at its sole discretion.
6. Age Determination
- a) Competition Season  
The competition season is defined as September 1–August 31. For all aspects of the program, an athlete's competitive age is determined by their age on September 1 at the beginning of the competitive season.
  - b) Minimum Age  
An athlete under the age of 9 will not be permitted to participate in any competition under any circumstance. They must turn 9 years old before they may begin competing.
  - c) Age Calculation  
An athlete is allowed to move up one year in age for competition. They may move up one year based only on their age as of September 1. For example, if an athlete is 16 years old on September 1 and turns 17 years old on September 2, they may compete as a 17-year-old, but the athlete may not compete as an 18-year-old because they were not 17 years old on September 1.
7. Attendance  
All competitors shall be present in the competition area in conformity with the event schedule. If a competitor is not present when their name is called to compete, the head judge may disqualify the competitor.

8. Presentation

When a competitor's name is called, they shall walk to the middle of the stage, face the judges, bring the hands to Namaskar (palms together in the center of the chest), bow to the judges and the audience, and then release the hands to the sides. Instructions will then be given by the words "Begin please" for the competitor to begin.

9. Attire

Competitors shall wear attire in conformity with the following rules:

a) Requirements

Attire should be elegant but modest and not overly revealing. Undergarments are not acceptable attire. Competitors should minimize accessories and should not wear headbands or bandanas. Unobtrusive jewelry is permissible, but it is preferred that no jewelry be worn. Judges are not required to give credit in any posture where the judges' view of the competitor's body is obscured by attire that does not conform to these rules.

b) Preferred Attire for Females

Leotard, 1- or 2-piece swimsuit (no bikinis), form-fitting exercise outfit with open arms and legs, or similar.

c) Preferred Attire for Males

Speedo-style swimsuit, tight-fitting shorts, or similar.

II. **COMPETITION FORMAT**

**Youth (9–11, 12–14, 15–17) and adult (18+, 50+) divisions follow the same format.**

Each athlete must choose 6 postures from the current posture guidelines and complete their performance within 3 minutes. The athlete must choose 1 posture from each of the following 6 compulsory posture groups demonstrating the basic range of motion of the spine and the skills of the athlete:

- 1) Backbends
- 2) Forward Compressions
- 3) Traction
- 4) Twists
- 5) Lifts
- 6) Inversions

The athlete is allowed to perform the postures in any order but must submit their chosen order at the time of registration and follow that chosen order in their performance. Failure to do so will incur a 1-point penalty taken by the judges from the first of any 2 postures demonstrated out of sequence. There can be a maximum of 3 points deducted if all 6 postures in a routine are out of sequence.

The athlete must execute the posture facing in the correct way as specified in the posture guidelines. Failure to do so will incur a 1-point penalty taken by the judges from the posture score(s).

The athlete must complete their routine within the allowed 3 minutes. Total routine time is assessed by the timekeeper. Judges shall deduct 1 point from the last posture of the routine if time expires after the athlete has reached the minimum expression in the last posture and/or they are exiting from the last posture as time expires. (See Section V.6 for details about routine timing.)

Posture timing is assessed by the time judge. Deductions are then calculated by the tabulation grid. (See Section V.5 and Section VII.6 for details about posture timing.)

A 1-point deduction from the overall score is given for each compulsory posture group missing from an athlete's performance. Such deductions are calculated by the tabulation grid.

A 1-point deduction from the overall score is given for each characteristic of balance, flexibility, or strength (as specified in the posture guidelines) missing from an athlete's routine. The athlete must demonstrate each of these characteristics at least twice during the performance. For example, if the routine does not include postures with the characteristic of flexibility, the athlete will automatically receive a 2-point deduction from their overall score, since flexibility must be demonstrated at least twice during the performance. Such deductions are calculated by the tabulation grid.

The judges score each posture out of 10, and the calculation with the degree of difficulty multiplier is carried out automatically in the tabulation grid.

### III. **REGISTRATION AND ADVANCEMENT IN COMPETITION**

#### 1. Qualifiers

Should there be video qualifiers, each athlete must register under their legal name when they submit their qualifier video, at which time they must declare their choice of all 6 postures, including any extra or less skills and the order of performance. The athlete will receive an email receipt that lists the postures submitted. The athlete should check this

receipt and email [info@usayoga.org](mailto:info@usayoga.org) immediately if there is a mistake in their posture submission. If the athlete performs the wrong posture in their video, they will receive a score of zero for that posture.

The athlete must have an active membership with USA Yoga and complete the registration requirements, which include paying the registration fee and signing the athletes' oath.

An athlete is eligible to compete for any state on the qualifier level provided that they have maintained their primary physical residence in that state for a minimum of 3 months prior to the competition and have not competed as a resident of a different state during that competition season. Evidence of residency may be required. In cases of hardship, an athlete may apply to USA Yoga for an exception to the residency rule.

## 2. Regional Competitions

USA Yoga will hold multiple regional qualifying events each competition season, which are open to all qualified athletes. There will be live in-person events and at least 1 live online event. In order to qualify to compete at the National Championship event, an athlete must compete in at least 1 regional competition, but they may compete in as many additional events as they would like.

All athletes must register by the established deadline. Each athlete must declare their choice of all 6 postures, including any extra or less skills and the order of performance, at the time of registration. The athlete will receive an email receipt that lists the postures submitted. The athlete should check this receipt and email [info@usayoga.org](mailto:info@usayoga.org) immediately if there is a mistake in their posture submission. The athlete may change their postures 1 time via email no later than 1 week before the competition. During an in-person event, the athlete may also change any posture during the performance of the routine by audibly calling out the name of the posture in English before executing the posture. If the athlete cannot be heard clearly by the judges and executes a posture different from those listed in their registration, they will receive a score of zero for that posture. If the athlete performs the wrong posture on stage, they will receive a score of zero for that posture.

Athletes should not announce the postures during the routine unless calling out a posture different from those submitted when registering.

The athlete must have an active membership with USA Yoga and complete the registration requirements, which include paying the registration fee and signing the athletes' oath.

3. National Competition

The USA Yoga National Championship is an invitational competition. Eligible 1st-place winners of youth (9–11, 12–14, 15–17) and adult (18+, 50+) divisions for each state from the regional level are automatically invited to compete at the USA Yoga National Championship. A 2nd-place winner may act as an alternate if the 1st-place winner is unable to attend the National Championship. A 2nd-place winner may also be invited to the National Championship based on overall score. All other competitors in all divisions and categories may be invited based on the overall score a competitor receives. The National Championship organizers shall decide the number of invitations issued within a reasonable time prior to the competition.

An athlete who has qualified and/or been invited to participate at the National Championship will receive an official email of invitation. The athlete must officially submit their registration through the designated USA Yoga protocols. Each athlete must declare their choice of all 6 postures, including any extra or less skills and the order of performance, at the time of registration. The athlete will receive an email receipt that lists the postures submitted. The athlete should check this receipt and email [info@usayoga.org](mailto:info@usayoga.org) immediately if there is a mistake in their posture submission. The athlete may change their postures 1 time via email no later than 2 weeks before the competition. The athlete may also change any posture during the performance of the routine by audibly calling out the name of the posture in English before executing the posture. If the athlete cannot be heard clearly by the judges and executes a posture different from those listed in their registration, they will receive a score of zero for that posture. If the athlete performs the wrong posture on stage, they will receive a score of zero for that posture.

Athletes should not announce the postures during the routine unless calling out a posture different from those submitted when registering.

Registration must be completed by the designated deadline for the athlete to participate at the National Championship. The athlete must pay in full the required entry fee to complete the registration. Once paid, the registration fee is not refundable for any reason. The athlete must also sign the athletes' oath at the time of registration. The athlete must arrive at the event at the designated time and check in.

4. Qualification for International Competition

For the World Championships, which are held every other year, IYSF allows each national federation to send up to 6 qualified athletes per

division. There are 5 divisions in total: 3 youth (9–11, 12–14, 15–17) and 2 adult (18+, 50+). The top 3 athletes from each of the 2 years prior to the competition automatically qualify. If the same athlete(s) qualified in both years, then the 4th-place athlete from the later year and the 4th-place athlete from the earlier year are eligible for qualification based on their scores in their respective years. Subsequently the 5th-place athlete from the later year and the 5th-place athlete from the earlier year are eligible for qualification. Qualification continues in this manner until 6 qualified athletes per division have been chosen to represent their country at the forthcoming World Championship.

#### IV. **POSTURE SUBMISSION PROCEDURES**

1. Submission of Postures

Athletes must register with USA Yoga by the established deadline. Each athlete must declare their choice of all 6 postures, including any extra or less skills and the order of performance, at the time of registration.

At or before the published deadline for posture changes, the athlete must confirm their choice of all postures, including any extra or less skills, and make any desired changes to their choice or order of postures from the original submission.

2. Change of Posture

If, for whatever reason, an athlete decides to change a posture on the day of either a regional or a national competition, the athlete must audibly call the name of the posture in English before executing the posture during their performance. If the athlete cannot be heard clearly by the judges and executes a posture different from those listed in their registration, they will receive a score of zero for that posture. Only postures from the approved list of postures may be called during a last-minute change, and such postures must be correctly called. If the athlete calls a non-approved posture or miscalls the posture, the posture will receive a score of zero.

Athletes are permitted to change their routine if they qualify for the finals at the National Championship. The athlete has 3 hours after the qualifying results are announced in which to submit their new routine online.

#### V. **DEMONSTRATING THE POSTURE**

1. Minimum Expression

For any posture to be considered as having reached the minimum expression and to achieve a score, the athlete must demonstrate the

following criteria:

- a) The posture must be held in stillness for a minimum of 3 seconds.
- b) Breathing in the posture must be normal and comfortable.
- c) The minimum expression as specified in the posture guidelines must be achieved.

Stillness in the posture is achieved when the posture is performed without any movement and demonstrating perfect control for at least 3 seconds. The time judge assesses the length of time that the posture is held in stillness.

The slight natural and controlled movements that are required to maintain balance will not be used against the athlete when considering whether stillness has been achieved. These are the slight movements produced by the balancing limb in contact with the floor to maintain balance in the posture without affecting the rest of the body.

Moving deeper into the posture does not count toward maintaining the posture in stillness. For example, continuously or intermittently kicking the top leg higher throughout the execution of Standing Bow Pulling is considered to be moving deeper into the posture, and the posture will receive zero points.

If stillness is not reached due to constant fidgeting, if the breathing is audible, or if the breath is held, the posture will automatically receive zero points.

2. Maximum Expression

For any posture to be considered as having reached the maximum expression and to achieve full marks, the athlete must demonstrate the following criteria:

- a) The posture must be held in stillness for a minimum of 5 seconds.
- b) Breathing in the posture must be normal and comfortable.
- c) The maximum expression as described in the posture guidelines must be reached.
- d) The posture must be exited with control by exactly retracing the steps of the athlete's entry into the posture.

If the posture is held in stillness for less than 5 seconds, the score will be deducted in 0.5-point increments depending on how long the posture was held. (See Section VII.6.) If stillness is not reached due to constant fidgeting, if the breathing is audible, or if the breath is held, the posture will automatically receive zero points.

3. Extra Skill/Less Skill

Extra/less skills, as listed in the posture guidelines, are aspects or elements of the posture that demonstrate either greater or lesser proficiency in the posture's execution. Extra/less skills do not change the characteristics of the posture but can carry rewards or penalties of 0.5, 1, 1.5, or 2 points. Every element of an extra skill must be successfully demonstrated as described in the posture guidelines to receive the extra point(s).

4. Accepted Flourishes

Athletes do not receive any extra points for performing accepted flourishes. Accepted flourishes do not carry any deductions unless the execution of the accepted flourish is faulty and/or causes errors in the posture. Deductions may be made for any flourishes not specified in the posture guidelines and for any additional movements between postures. The judges can only score the athlete's demonstration of their deepest expression of the posture in agreement with the posture guidelines.

5. Timing of the Postures

Athletes must hold each posture in stillness with normal breathing for at least 3 seconds to receive a score (otherwise the score will be zero). For a maximum score, they must hold the posture in stillness with normal breathing for at least 5 seconds. The time judge assesses the length of time that the posture is held in stillness.

6. Timing of the Routine

For all divisions and categories, an athlete must complete their routine and come back to a neutral standing position within 3 minutes. The timekeeper shall begin the 3-minute timing as soon as the athlete initiates their first move into the first posture. It is the duty of the timekeeper to make sure that the exact time of the athlete's routine is calculated and declared at the end of the athlete's routine. This information is passed on to the head judge, who inputs it into the score sheet or tabulation software. If time expires during the routine, the MC or timekeeper shall say "Time." The athlete must have exited their final posture comfortably before time expires or they will face deductions.

The deductions are as follows:

- a) If time expires prior to the completion of the posture, the score for the posture is zero.
- b) If time expires after the completion of the posture but before the athlete has held the posture for at least 3 seconds, the score for the posture is zero. For example, if a competitor enters Palm Tree and holds the balance for 1 second before time expires, the score is zero because the competitor did not have enough time within their routine to demonstrate that they could hold the posture in stillness for 3 seconds.
- c) If time expires after the athlete has held the posture for at least 3 seconds and has begun to exit the posture, but before they have returned to a neutral standing position, a 1-point deduction is taken from the posture for failure to complete the performance within the allotted time.

The head judge shall make a final determination as to whether the posture was held long enough to receive a score.

Even if time has expired, the competitor is required to exit the posture, and judges may make further deductions based on any errors in the exit.

Each athlete must leave the stage within 4 minutes or they may face disciplinary action.

## VI. **SCORING**

The rules regarding the judging of postures shall apply to all athletes at all levels of competition.

### 1. Posture Scores

Each posture will be judged on a scale of 0–10 points prior to the addition or subtraction of any point(s) for extra or less skills.

Judges shall arrive at a final score by starting with 10 points for each posture and then applying all relevant deductions, general and specific to the posture, and changes for any extra or less skills demonstrated.

Judges should be able to account for each specific deduction and demonstrate the calculation used to arrive at their final score.

### 2. General Deductions

In addition to the examples of specific deductions already listed in the posture guidelines and rules, the following general deductions may be made for any posture in 0.5- or 1-point increments (up to a maximum 2-point deduction for any single element in that posture):

- a) Incorrect positioning of grip (differing from what is stated in the posture guidelines).
- b) Slipping of grip.
- c) Loss of muscle control resulting in intermittent contraction of muscles.
- d) Lack of abdominal muscle control or belly moving in and out while breathing.
- e) Entering posture without control.
- f) Exiting posture without control and/or without retracing the steps of the entry.
- g) Signs of forcing or struggling during the execution.
- h) Exhibiting signs of difficulty during the execution (readjusting, lack of fluidity in movement, slipping, visible strain).
- i) Exhibiting signs of confusion (deliberations, intermissions, inconsistency of tempo).
- j) Finishing off the X mark or center of the mat.
- k) Additional movements between postures.
- l) Touching the floor in an uncontrolled manner with any part of the body when touching the floor is required by the posture (up to 2 points deducted). This error includes making a loud noise against the floor during any part of the posture (e.g., Wheel; Tortoise – Full/Lifting).
- m) Degree of depth missing relative to the maximum expression as described in the posture guidelines.
- n) Visible misalignment relative to the maximum expression as described in the posture guidelines.

### 3. Falling During a Posture

Each of the following is considered a fall:

- a) Any premature and complete loss of a grip (e.g., losing the grip on the heel in Rabbit so that the hand separates from the foot and must be replaced).
- b) A limb or foot prematurely coming out of a tucked position (e.g., foot coming out of Bow Leg; leg coming out of Lotus).
- c) Any body part touching the floor either prematurely or when touching the floor is not a feature of the posture or its entry (e.g., toes retouching the floor when attempting to enter Peacock but before completing it; hand retouching the floor after lifting it to enter Mountain but before completing the posture).
- d) Any uncontrolled exit from a posture (e.g., dropping the held leg when coming out of Standing Head to Knee or Standing Bow Pulling; coming down from an inversion in the wrong direction or without landing on the feet).

If a fall occurs prior to completion of the posture, the athlete may have a second chance.

If the athlete falls a second time, the posture receives a zero and the athlete must move on to the next posture.

If a fall occurs after the completion of the posture, judges may deduct 0.5 to 2 points depending on the severity of the fall. For example, if an athlete is exiting Standing Head to Knee and has nearly completed the exit but loses the grip at the last moment before putting the foot down, the judge may make a 0.5-point deduction.

### 4. Second Chance

If an athlete falls out of a posture or fails to complete a posture, they are allowed a second chance to attempt the same posture. If a second chance occurs, the posture score is a maximum of 5 points, but the degree of difficulty does not change. If the athlete again falls or fails to complete the posture, the posture is scored a zero and they must move on to the next posture. The athlete does not need to announce the second attempt, as the judges will consider the posture a second chance if the athlete falls or fails to complete the posture and then re-attempts the same posture. It is not required that the competitor return to the starting position to attempt a second chance if the character of the posture remains intact. The head judge shall make a final determination as to whether an athlete

utilized a second chance if the remaining judges are not in agreement.

Judges shall score the posture as a second chance if the posture is re-attempted after the following errors during any part of the execution:

- a) A limb or foot prematurely coming out of a tucked position (e.g., One Legged Peacock).
- b) Any premature and complete loss of a grip (e.g., Rabbit).
- c) Any part of the body touching the floor either prematurely or when touching the floor is not a feature of the posture or its entry (e.g., Om).
- d) Entering a posture, losing balance, and then going back to the start of the posture before it is completed, even if no part of the body touches the floor (e.g., Standing Bow Pulling).
- e) Retouching the floor with any part of the body after the set-up of a posture has been completed (e.g., making a step with a hand in a Handstand posture; lifting the hand off the floor and touching it back on the floor in One Armed Peacock).

## VII. **JUDGES AND JUDGING OF COMPETITIONS**

### 1. Judges' Qualifications

To be eligible to judge, one must be an active USA Yoga member and be a certified and active yoga teacher for at least 3 years before completing their first judges' assessment. To maintain certification, a judge must take judges' training annually, complete the judges' assessment annually, judge or shadow judge in a qualifying round annually, and (if a new judge with no prior judging experience) participate in shadow judging. Judges with these qualifications will be listed in the judge directory on USA Yoga's website. A head judge must be a certified USA Yoga judge, have at least 3 years of judging experience, and participate in a qualifier round in any season in which they serve as head judge. Head judges may not be coaches. USA Yoga must approve all judges prior to their participation in a competition.

### 2. Competitor and Judge

No competitor may participate as a judge or be listed as a judge in USA Yoga's directory during any season in which they are competing. An athlete who fulfills the requirements of Section VII.1 may serve as a

judge during any competition season if they have elected not to compete during that season.

3. Conflicts of Interest

A judge may not judge in a competition if a member of the judge's immediate family is competing. Judges who are also coaches may not judge in a competition division or category in which their athlete is competing for the duration of the season(s) in which their athlete is competing.

All judges must sign the judges' oath prior to the start of the competition.

USA Yoga may replace any judge at its sole discretion.

4. Judges' Panel

Each competition shall have a judges' panel consisting of 3, 5, or 7 judges, at the discretion of the event organizer.

Each judge shall score each performance directly on the score sheet form provided, making notes when possible to justify the score if called upon to do so later.

Judges shall not speak during a performance, but after a performance judges may consult each other in the event of a question or controversy regarding the performance. No person other than the judges of the competing division, time judge, and timekeeper may join in such consultation. Judges may not text or call on any device at the judges' table. Only judges, time judge, timekeeper, and tabulators for the competing division or group may sit at the judges' table during the performance.

5. Head Judge

USA Yoga shall select from the panel 1 judge with at least 3 years of judging experience to be the head judge for that competition. Each regional competition must have a head judge from outside of that region.

Each judge shall deliver their completed score sheet for each performance to the head judge. The head judge may question another judge as to whether the correct rule was applied to any score and may require that such judge change any score based upon an incorrect rule application.

The head judge shall review any score of zero or second chance given by another judge to determine whether the rules were properly applied and may require such judge to re-score the posture if the head judge deems a zero or a second chance score to be contrary to the rules.

The head judge shall review any score that deviates more than 2 points from the head judge's score for the posture and may request re-scoring from the judge(s) whose score deviation is deemed by the head judge to be contrary to the rules.

The head judge may not require another judge to change a score merely because of a difference in the evaluation of a competitor's performance or for any reason other than an incorrect rule application.

The head judge shall deliver the completed score sheets to the tabulator. Once delivered, the score sheets are final and may not be changed unless there is a successful scoring appeal.

6. Time Judge

A time judge is mandatory for regional and national competitions. A time judge is not mandatory for video submissions, for which the head judge will act as time judge and timekeeper. The role of the time judge is to assess the length of time that each posture is held in stillness in accordance with the timing requirements set out in Section V.

The time judge must assess with a stopwatch or software application the time each posture is held in stillness and note any relevant deductions as follows:

A hold of:

5 seconds or more: no time deduction

4–4.99 seconds: -0.5 point

3–3.99 seconds: -1 point

2.99 seconds or less: the posture is scored a zero

If time is called during the last posture, at that moment the time judge must mark the end of the last posture's stillness hold. If this happens after the completion of the posture but before the athlete has held it for at least 3 seconds, the score for that posture is zero.

The time judge notes the timing deductions of the postures on the time judge score sheet, the timekeeper keeps track of each athlete's total routine time, and the head judge records the total routine time on their judge score sheet. The tabulator then adds all time results to the grid.

Only the time judge makes timing deductions. The **exceptions** to this rule are as follows:

- a) For video submissions, the head judge acts as the time judge.
- b) Judges deduct 1 point from the last posture of the routine if time expires after the athlete has reached the minimum expression in the last posture and/or they are exiting from the last posture as time expires.
- c) Judges deduct 0.5 or 1 point for not holding the required 1 or 3 seconds in the execution before the minimum expression is reached as required in the recommended execution of some specific postures. These postures require demonstration of control (e.g., Tortoise – Full/Lifting; Om) or demonstration of characteristics of a transitioning posture (e.g., postures including a Headstand position in their execution; all variations of Handstand).

7. Judging of Competition

The rules regarding the judging of postures shall apply to all athletes at all levels of competition.

VIII. **COACHES**

All coaches endorsed by USA Yoga must hold an active USA Yoga membership and be 1 of the following before entering the coaches' training program and taking the coaches' assessment: a certified and active yoga teacher for at least 3 years, an active competitor for at least 3 years, or a winner of 1st, 2nd, or 3rd place in their division in a USA Yoga National Championship final. To maintain certification, a coach must undergo training and assessment annually. Training will be offered once per year. Coaches with these qualifications will be listed in the coach directory on USA Yoga's website.

All coaches may be in the warm-up area with their athletes, but a coach may not communicate in any way with their athlete or any other athlete during that athlete's performance. This rule includes video qualifier recordings and virtual live events.

IX. **TABULATION PROCEDURES**

USA Yoga follows the tabulation procedures and guidelines of the IYSF.

X. **TIE BREAKER PROTOCOL**

**Youth (9–11, 12–14, 15–17) and adult (18+, 50+) divisions follow the**

## **same tie breaker protocol.**

In the case of athletes having exactly the same number of points, the winner is the athlete with the highest percentage of execution. The percentage of execution is the ratio of the athlete's total average score divided by the maximum points (depending on degree of difficulty) that an athlete could have achieved in that routine.

If these percentages are the same, the tie breaker is awarded to the athlete who has the best total routine time (closest to 3 minutes without going over).

## XI. **APPEALING A SCORE**

An appeal may **ONLY** be made for the following reasons:

- a) Failure of the judges' panel to correctly apply a rule not relating to the judges' evaluation of the technical merit of a posture or routine.
- b) A computer error.
- c) A time judge error.

Under no circumstances may an appeal be based on the judges' failure to properly evaluate the technical merit of a posture or routine.

Athletes have 15 minutes in which to make appeals after their scores are posted at a live event or 24 hours in which to make appeals after receiving their scores via email for video qualifiers. Appeals initiated after the end of the appeal period will be rejected. An athlete can only appeal their own score, not the score of another athlete.

At a live event, the MC shall announce the beginning of the 15-minute appeal period, the last 5 minutes of the appeal period, and the end of the appeal period. During the appeal period, judges and officials (including the MC and timekeeper) must remain at the judges' table, and judges may not talk to any person who is not a judge or an official.

The athlete or the athlete's coach or representative must make the appeal formally **in writing**. Appeals via informal or oral communication will be rejected.

At a live event, a designated backstage assistant must give the written appeal to the head judge. This assistant must be designated prior to the start of the competition and must be introduced to all participants. **ONLY** this assistant may approach the judges' table and the head judge. Any intervention by any other

person, including (but not limited to) coaches and athletes, will be rejected and will not be taken into consideration. Once the appeal is received, the MC shall announce at the first possible opportunity that there is an appeal.

A US \$100 appeal fee must be given in cash or check with the written appeal to the head judge at a live event or sent electronically to USA Yoga for a video appeal. A separate fee must be paid for each specific issue that is being appealed (e.g., \$100 to appeal the score of one posture and another \$100 to appeal a timing deduction in another posture). If any appeal is decided in favor of the athlete, the fee will be returned. If any appeal is not decided in favor of the athlete, the fee will be given to USA Yoga.

The athlete's score may increase, decrease, or remain the same following analysis of the appeal. The head judge will change the score accordingly.

In the event of a score change following an appeal, the appeal period will be extended by an additional 5 minutes from the posting of the score change. The MC shall announce the score change, the 5-minute extension of the appeal period, and the end of that extension time.

The head judge's decision is final and will not be altered or overridden by any other person, including (but not limited to) coaches, athletes, other judges, USA Yoga board members, or IYSF Technical Committee members. Once a decision has been made on the appeal, the result is final.

## XII. **RULE CHANGES**

USA Yoga reserves the right to amend the rules and regulations at its sole discretion and without prior notice. If a rule is changed or amended, USA Yoga shall endeavor to inform athletes before the next competition date.