

2024 Paris Games: Anti-Doping Policies and Testing

July 24, 2024

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) and International Paralympic Committee (IPC) were responsible for [establishing anti-doping policies and testing regimes](#) for the 2024 Summer Games in Paris. As they did for the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo, IOC has [delegated](#) management of the program to the [International Testing Agency](#) (ITA), while [IPC manages its own program](#). Other partners involved in the anti-doping program include the local organizing committee for the Games, Paris 2024, and France’s national anti-doping agency, the [AFLD](#). Prevention and detection of doping are a matter of long-standing concern across the sporting world, including in the Olympics.

While a variety of institutions, including the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), have been established to address doping, clean competition has remained an important issue, especially in international competition. In the leadup to the 2024 Paris Games, WADA’s [response](#) to test results for 23 swimmers competing for the People’s Republic of China has proven controversial, including with the [U.S. Anti-Doping Agency](#). It has also drawn the attention of Members of Congress interested in ensuring that athletes, including Team USA, can compete on a level playing field and that anti-doping programs have sufficient transparency. This issue was the subject of a hearing titled “[Examining Anti-Doping Measures in Advance of the 2024 Olympics](#)” in the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce on June 25, 2024.

This Insight provides a broad overview of international anti-doping rules and the testing procedures in place for the 2024 Paris Games.

Testing During the Games

The anti-doping rules for the Paris Games [apply to](#) “all Athletes entered in or preparing for the Olympic Games Paris 2024 or who have otherwise been made subject to the authority of the IOC in connection with the Olympic Games.” Additionally, a number of rules apply to other individuals, including coaches, trainers, and operations staff for the Games.

Athletes seeking to qualify for and participating in the 2024 Olympic Games were [subject to testing](#) under IOC’s anti-doping policy beginning in April 2024 and will continue to be so through the close of the Games. IOC’s anti-doping rules are “in accordance” with the [World Anti-Doping Code](#), which [includes](#)

Congressional Research Service

<https://crsreports.congress.gov>

IN12394

technical and procedural rules for the administration of anti-doping programs, the prohibited substances list, and standards for testing laboratories, among other things. In addition to testing and related requirements for athletes, other participants are barred from supporting doping, evasion of testing, and manipulation of test results.

As signatories to the Code, IOC and IPC are each [responsible](#) for ensuring that their events are conducted in compliance with WADA's anti-doping requirements. A principal component of that obligation is the collection of biological samples from athletes that can be tested for banned substances. While IPC administers its own testing program, IOC has delegated this responsibility to ITA for the 2024 Games. ITA is an independent organization created in 2018 by IOC and WADA to [manage testing programs](#) for international sports federations and major events.

IOC's [anti-doping rules](#) require athletes to submit to testing based on [WADA's International Standard for Testing and Investigations](#), which allows the collection of both blood and urine samples to test for prohibited substances. [According to the organizers](#), the anti-doping program for the Paris Games will include over 1,000 workers and an "anti-doping control space" at each venue where ITA and AFLD will collect samples. Following collection, AFLD will test samples.

What Happens If an Athlete Has a Positive Test?

It is possible that one or more athletes will test positive for a prohibited substance during the Paris Games. During the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games, WADA [reported](#) 10 "adverse analytical findings" (six of which were found to be violations) out of a total of 6,200 tests covering over 4,200 athletes. An [adverse analytical finding](#) is a lab result indicating the presence of either a prohibited substance or a [masking agent](#) in an athlete sample. Such a result triggers a review but does not necessarily mean that an athlete has violated the Code.

First, ITA investigates to determine whether there is a circumstance that would justify the presence of the banned substance or invalidate the testing result. If ITA's [review](#) finds any of the following, then there is no violation and the matter does not proceed:

- The athlete already has or is eligible for a "[therapeutic use exemption](#)" for the substance;
- There is an "apparent departure" from the [WADA standards for testing laboratories](#) that "caused" the adverse analytical finding; or
- The ingestion of the substance is allowed through certain "permitted routes" and it is "apparent" that the athlete ingested the substance in an allowed manner.

If ITA's review does not find that one of these circumstances applies, then the athlete and other stakeholders are notified, and the athlete is [provisionally suspended](#) in most cases. At this stage, the athlete may request that his or her "B sample" be tested, which may or may not confirm the original test results. At this point, the athlete also has the right to [appeal](#) the provisional suspension, including an expedited hearing before the [Anti-Doping Division](#) of the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS ADD). CAS ADD may lift the suspension if the athlete can [establish](#) that the test result was due to a contaminated product, that the athlete was not at fault, or that the alleged violation has "no reasonable prospect of being upheld."

Potential Consequences for Positive Tests

In addition to a provisional suspension, if an athlete tests positive for a prohibited substance during the Games, IOC is empowered to take the matter before the CAS ADD to establish whether an anti-doping rules violation has occurred. In these cases, IOC has the burden of proving to the "[comfortable satisfaction](#)" of a CAS ADD hearing panel that a violation occurred. Should that burden be met, the

athlete may be disqualified from the Olympic Games and forfeit his or her results, including any medals won. Additionally, an athlete may receive a [longer suspension](#), during which he or she is ineligible to compete.

Author Information

Ben Wilhelm
Analyst in Government Organization and Management

Disclaimer

This document was prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS). CRS serves as nonpartisan shared staff to congressional committees and Members of Congress. It operates solely at the behest of and under the direction of Congress. Information in a CRS Report should not be relied upon for purposes other than public understanding of information that has been provided by CRS to Members of Congress in connection with CRS's institutional role. CRS Reports, as a work of the United States Government, are not subject to copyright protection in the United States. Any CRS Report may be reproduced and distributed in its entirety without permission from CRS. However, as a CRS Report may include copyrighted images or material from a third party, you may need to obtain the permission of the copyright holder if you wish to copy or otherwise use copyrighted material.