



Race Walking

By Susan Heiser, USATF Race Walk Officials Chair

2026 New Rules & Procedures

The USATF Race Walk Committee had two productive sessions at the USATF Annual Meeting. In addition to selecting the RW crews for the USATF National Championships and other selection events ([2026 RW Officials Selections](#)), the Committee approved new RW Operating Procedures that converts two ad hoc subcommittees: the RW Officials Selection Committee and the World Athletics (WA) RW Judge Selection Committee, to standing subcommittees (Section 14).

The new RW Operating Procedures also provide criteria for the composition of these new standing subcommittees, as well as selection procedures and guidelines for their work. See [RW Operating Procedures Sections 12 and 13](#) in the USATF Annual Meeting Document Library.

Competition rule amendments important to Race Walking were also adopted to comply with new World Athletics Championship race distances and other clarifications adopted by WA. Starting January 1, 2026, the Half-Marathon and the Marathon are added as Outdoor Championship race distances for both men and women (Rule 25.1.a). These distances are also added to the list of race walk events in which records are recognized at both outdoor track and field and outdoor road events (Rule 267). In addition, Penalty Zone times for these distances were added to Rule 230.3.j. These are 2 minutes for the half-marathon and 4 minutes for the marathon.

Finally, two notes were added to clarify and reinforce existing WA practices: 1) Rule 143.1 - *NOTE: In Race Walking, competitors shall not wear clothing that prevents a clear and complete view of the knee area. Solid color, tight fitting garments are permitted*, and 2) Rule 147.2 - *NOTE: In Race Walking events, Men and Women may start together on the same start line*. The latter note now makes clear that simultaneous starts are permitted for men and women race walks.

For more details on the approved Competition Rule changes, see the [USATF Rules Committee final report](#).