



Xcel Sapphire - Frequently Asked Questions

*This document includes various questions that the Xcel Committee has received. The official rules for the Sapphire Pilot Program may be found on the USA Gymnastics [Xcel Page](#). The Sapphire Pilot Program Rules are the official rules for Sapphire. Information contained in this document is for informational purposes. **The [Sapphire Rules](#) take precedence over any content or discrepancy within this document.***

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GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

Q: What is Xcel Sapphire?

A: An extension to the existing Xcel program that will offer athletes an opportunity to grow in the sport, to get rewarded for their abilities that are superior to the current Diamond Division, and to continue to train and compete all through high school in a fun and safe environment.

Q: Who is Xcel Sapphire for?

A: The Xcel Sapphire Division may have gymnasts from a variety of areas including:

- Xcel gymnasts who started in the Xcel Program who have already successfully met the challenges presented within Diamond.
- Gymnasts coming from other leagues and programs who have skills beyond the Diamond Division.
- Former Developmental Program Level 8, 9 and 10 athletes
- Gymnasts who want to stay in the sport and allow them prepare for college opportunities including:
 - College Intramural
 - Club Sports
 - Collegiate Gymnastics Walk-on or Event Specialist
 - Collegiate Acrobatics & Tumbling

Q: Why might a gymnast/gym consider participating in the Xcel Sapphire Division?

A:

- To promote longevity in the sport.
- Allow athletes to experience progressive gymnastics with reasonable commitment.
- Continue to experience fun and success within the sport.
- Prepare for college sport opportunities.
- To have an opportunity for more score differentiation.

Q: Why are we doing a Pilot Program and not just starting a new Division nationally?

A: A Pilot program allows USA Gymnastics to test the Division. This test allows for assessment in a variety of areas including:

- Rules and special requirements
- Start Values/Bonus/etc.
- Participation Interest

By doing a Pilot year, the National Xcel and Technical Committees can review the results and potentially make rule and value changes, and better understand participation in advance of making any formal decisions on the future offerings of the Sapphire Division.

Xcel Sapphire Pilot Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q: What Regions are participating in the Pilot Program for 2022-23?

A: Regions 3, 6, 7, and 8

Q: How were these regions selected?

A: Not all areas of the country use the Xcel Program in the same way. Some regions experience a more recreational culture, while other regions have greater numbers of athletes that are more competitive in nature. Some regions do not have a great need for the Sapphire Division right now, but recognize that they might in the future. In accordance with both perceived and surveyed needs, the Xcel committee members from these four regions (3,6,7,8) volunteered to implement the Sapphire Division in 2022-23. These regions volunteered at the May 2021 Xcel Committee meeting.

Q: How can I find the Rules for Xcel Sapphire?

A: The rules posted on the USA Gymnastics website within the Xcel Page. You may quickly access the rules by clicking this link: [Sapphire Rules](#)

Q: How can I stay up to date as new Sapphire information becomes available?

A: All Sapphire information will be posted on the USA Gymnastics website within the [Xcel Page](#). Additionally, you can submit your contact information using the following [form](#). As information is posted you will be notified.

Q: What happens after the Pilot Year?

A: Following the Pilot Year, both the National Xcel and Technical Committees will assess the program at their annual meetings in May. At that time the committees may make determination on next steps for the Division. At this point, it is not possible to predict the outcome following the Pilot year which could include formal roll out of the Division nationally, extending the Pilot program, or a determination not to move forward with this Division. Those decisions would also ultimately need approval from USA Gymnastics leadership.

Q: We don't yet have athletes that are at this level of competition but think we might in the next couple of years. How can we support the Pilot Program?

A: It will be very beneficial for your Regional Xcel Committee member to know of your interest in the program and anticipation of competition in future years. Particularly as the Xcel and Technical Committee review the Division following the Pilot Year. The Xcel Committee suggests you reach out to your Regional Xcel Committee member directly. You may also stay up to date on Sapphire news by providing your contact information in this [survey](#). We will keep you updated as new information becomes available.

COMPETITIONS

Q: Which meets may host a Sapphire Division session or competition?

A: Any meet located within the Pilot Regions (3,6,7,8) may have a Sapphire session/s at their meet. Any meets outside of the Pilot Region (1,2,4,5) may not have a Sapphire session at their meet.

Q: Which athletes may compete in the Sapphire Pilot Program?

A: Please refer to the Sapphire Rules for further information related to who may compete. In general:

- **Athlete From a Pilot Region (Regions 3,6,7,8):** May compete as a Sapphire within any meet in the Pilot Regions. They may NOT compete as a Sapphire outside of the Pilot Region but could compete at another Division or Level for meets outside of the Pilot Regions (in accordance with applicable state declaration dates).
- **Athlete from outside of a Pilot Region (Regions 1,2,4,5):** May NOT compete as a Sapphire at a meet within their Region but MAY compete as a Sapphire at a competition in one of the Pilot Regions (3,6,7,8).

Q: Will there be State and Regional Championships for Sapphire in the Pilot Regions?

A: Within the Rules & Policies, State Championships are under the total jurisdiction of the State Administrative Committee and the State Administrative Committee Chairman. Regional Championships are under the total jurisdiction of the Regional Administrative Committee. Please contact your state and region to verify if there will be state/regional championships. Multiple states and regions have reported their intent to offer championship opportunities.

Xcel Sapphire Pilot Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

REGISTERING ATHLETES/MEETS

Q: How do I register my gymnasts on the USA Gymnastics website for Sapphire?

A: Sapphire has been added as a Division on the USA Gymnastics system. You will register these gymnasts like you do all others within USA Gymnastics. A “Sapphire (PILOT)” is listed as the last item on the list. Please scroll to the bottom of the list.

Q: I am taking my gym to a meet, but Sapphire isn't listed as a Division for the meet, what should I do?

A: Please contact the Meet Director to verify if they intend to offer Sapphire. The Division was added to the USA Gymnastics Meet Reservation System August 1 after some Meet Directors had already submitted sanctions. The Meet Director will need to edit the sanction to add the Division (Sapphire (Pilot) is located at the bottom of the list).

MEET DIRECTORS

Q: Can my meet have a Sapphire Division session?

A: It depends on your meet location:

- Meets in Pilot Regions (3,6,7,8): **Yes**
- Meets outside of the Pilot Regions (1,2,4,5): **No**
- Meets outside of the United States: **No**

Q: I want to include a Sapphire Session in my upcoming meet (located in a Pilot Region), how do I do this on the USA Gymnastics website?

A: **Sapphire (Pilot)** has been added on the Meet Reservation System as a Division/Level. **This is listed at the bottom of the list.** You will select the Division like you would any other Xcel Division within the system. If you already have a sanction for your meet, you will need to edit the sanction to add Sapphire.

JUDGES

Q: What rating does a judge need to judge Sapphire?

A: A judge needs a minimum of a Level 9 Rating or have an Xcel Only (XR) rating which is available to retired Development Program Level 9/10 judges. Xcel Only rated judges must complete the J110 Course (which is presently being updated to reflect the new code) and complete the [Application](#). Refer to the Xcel Sapphire rules for further information.

Q: Where can someone judge a Sapphire division?

A: Meets within the pilot regions (3,6,7,8) may host a Sapphire Division. Any judge assigned to the meet that also has the minimum rating may judge that session, regardless of where they are from (either in the Pilot or outside the Pilot region). Refer to the Xcel Sapphire rules for further information.