



Policy for Adaptive and Accessibility Equipment

Updated: March 2026

Para athletes can compete alongside able-bodied athletes, using assistive devices as permitted on their Para classification card. This policy outlines requirements for archers using a wheelchair, adaptive equipment, hearing assistive technology, shooting assistant, arrow agent, interpreter, personal care assistant or service animal at a USAA sanctioned event.

Para Classification Information

Archers **are not required** to be classified as a Para archer to shoot from a wheelchair or stool, due to injury or disability while competing in a **non-Para division** at a USAA sanctioned event. Likewise, archers using temporary mobility aids such as a knee scooter, crutches, etc. or a service animal are not required to be classified.

Archers who want to compete in a Para division must have at minimum a current Para classification and have their classification card with them at events where they are registered to compete in a Para division. More information on Para classification may be found [here](#).

USA Archery (USAA) Event Registration Options

Through the USAA event registration process, archers will be asked to indicate the type of adaptive equipment they require at an event and will also be provided the option to request to stay on the shooting line at an event.

This information will help event organizers to pre-plan lane assignments for the event.

Wheelchairs and Other Adaptive Equipment

The following rules will apply at USAA sanctioned events for non-classified archers who use adaptive equipment when competing in a non-Para division:

1. To comply with World Archery rules archers should utilize a wheelchair that is 1.25m (49") or shorter in length. If the archer has a wheelchair that is longer than the length permitted by World Archery rules, they will need to indicate they have an oversized chair during the event registration process. Please note, oversized wheelchairs cannot always be accommodated by the event organizer within the field of play dimensions. Please be advised that the standard minimum shooting lane width for indoor events is 80cm and 90cm for outdoor events.

2. While an archer is shooting, no part of the wheelchair, stool or other adaptive equipment can support the archers bow arm.
3. In the barebow division, a mouth tab may be used if it is permanently attached to the bowstring.
4. A release aid system may be used in any compound bow division.
5. All other equipment used by the archer shall conform to World Archery rules for their division. Archers should always review [World Archery rules](#) prior to competing to avoid any issues at equipment inspection. Please note, if an archer uses equipment that is permitted by USA Archery but NOT permitted by World Archery rules, they will not be eligible to set World Records or be eligible for USAT, high performance programs, athlete stipends or other support programs.
6. As in all USA Archery events, if methods of shooting are deemed unsafe in the opinion of the Judge, an athlete may be advised to change their technique or equipment. If an athlete does not comply, the athlete may be asked by the Chair of Judges to stop shooting immediately and/or leave the field.

Shooting Assistants, Agents, Interpreters and Personal Care Person (i.e. support personnel)

It is the responsibility of archers (Para classified and non-classified) who require a shooting assistant/coach, agent, interpreter and/or personal care person to bring this person with them to each event at their own expense. USAA and/or the event organizer is not required to provide individual archer support personnel.

All support personnel will be required to complete and clear a USAA Background Screen and complete the U.S. Center for SafeSport training, as well as register for proper credentials to access the field of play. Please see the [Athlete Safety Procedures for Event Organizers](#) Section 2. for more information about each role, field of play access requirements and other rules. All credentialed support personnel must adhere to the competing athlete terms and conditions in the [Personal Coach Policy](#), as applicable, and are subject to credential revocation as outlined in the [Personal Coach Policy](#).

Shooting Assistant/Coach: Para classified athletes who have a shooting assistant specified on their classification card may utilize a shooting assistant/coach. The shooting assistant must register as a personal coach, but will not be required to purchase a personal coach credential. A Shooting Assistant/Coach who will also serve as an agent and/or interpreter must also register for an agent credential. Please see the [Personal Coach Policy](#) for more information.

Agents: Agents may assist both Para classified and non-classified archers with arrow retrieval. Agents may not serve as personal coaches. Agents will be required to register for an agent credential to access the field of play.

Interpreters: Interpreters may assist both Para classified and non-classified archers with translation of communications. Interpreters may not serve as personal coaches. Interpreters will be required to register for an agent credential to access the field of play.

Personal Care: Archers who require an agent to retrieve arrows and also an individual to provide personal care (i.e. hydration, snacks, medical care or other comfort items) to the archer, must register both support personnel as agents. Accredited personnel may only provide personal care to an archer on the shooting line after all archers are done shooting and have proceeded to score arrows.

Hearing Assistive Technology (HAT)

USAA recognizes that the use of electronic devices on the field of play is prohibited. USAA also recognizes that this could pose safety risks for archers with hearing impairments participating safely in our sport. Consistent with ADA recommendations and USAA's DEIA Strategic Plan, USAA permits the use of hearing assistive devices with a medical provision use, both electronic and non-electronic (passive), to assist hearing impairments to include a partial or total inability to hear, which can be categorized as mild, moderate, severe, or profound to complete hearing loss (deafness), as well as those who have other medical hearing conditions such as tinnitus.

Devices, electronic or non-electronic (passive) ear plugs or similar noise reduction equipment that do not have a medical provision, are generally **not** permitted for reasons of safety. Non-electronic devices worn in the ear to change noise frequency and reduce harsh noises are legal. However, such devices may not be electronic and must not reduce the decibel level of safety signals and instructions issued whilst shooting.

The use of these devices must be reviewed and approved by the Chair of Judges at each event.

Service Animals

Service animals are defined as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Examples of such work or tasks include guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, or alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications, calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack, or performing other duties. Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. Dogs or other service animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Note: Per USAA Policy, Emotional Support Animals, which differ from Service Animals, do not enjoy the same legal status as service animals per the ADA, and are not allowed on the field of play.

Where Service Animals Are Allowed

Per the ADA, State and local governments, businesses, and nonprofit organizations that serve the public generally must allow service animals to accompany people with disabilities in all areas of the facility where the public is normally allowed to go. At USAA events, service animals are allowed in the archers' area, which is defined as any place the archer is allowed. Archers needing accommodation outside of these guidelines are to be managed on a case by case basis.

Service Animals Must Be Under Control

Per the ADA, service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.

Service animals should always demonstrate the following behaviors:

- Be focused on their handler
- Have a stable, even temperament
- Remain quietly by their handler's side
- Ignore distractions
- Keep their nose to themselves
- Respond promptly to handler's cues and direction

Inquiries, Exclusions, Charges and Other Specific Rules Related to Service Animals

- When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, only limited inquiries are allowed. Staff may ask two questions: (1) Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability? and (2) What work or task has the dog been trained to perform? Staff cannot ask about the person's disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the dog, or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task.
- Allergies and fear of dogs are not valid reasons for denying access or refusing service to people using service animals. When a person who is allergic to dog dander and a person who uses a service animal must spend time in the same room or facility, for example, in a school classroom or at a homeless shelter, they both should be accommodated by assigning them, if possible, to different locations within the room or different rooms in the facility.
- A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove their service animal from the premises unless: (1) The dog is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it or (2) The dog is not housebroken. When there is a legitimate reason to ask that a service animal be removed, staff must offer the person with the disability the opportunity to obtain goods or services without the animal's presence.
- Establishments that sell or prepare food must allow service animals in public areas even if state or local health codes prohibit animals on the premises.
- People with disabilities who use service animals cannot be isolated from other patrons, treated less favorably than other patrons, or charged fees that are not charged to other

patrons without animals. In addition, if a business requires a deposit or fee to be paid by patrons with pets, it must waive the charge for service animals.

- If a business such as a hotel normally charges guests for damage that they cause, a customer with a disability may also be charged for damage caused by themselves or their service animal.
- Staff are not required to provide care or food for a service animal.

For more information, please contact USAA at events@usarchery.org.