



U.S. Paralympics

National
Classification
Policies & Procedures

Classifier
Training & Education
Manual

Introduction

It is incumbent upon each National Paralympic Committee (NPC” that is a signatory of the Code to ensure that national classification policies and procedures are in compliance with the Code.

The responsibilities of the NPC, which in the United States is the Paralympic Division (U.S. Paralympics) of the U.S. Olympic Committee (USOC), as per the Code include:

- Promoting the development of a national classification strategy that includes education;

This manual addresses the classifier training and education process in the USA, in compliance with the Code.

Role of the Classifier

The IPC objectives for the Code are:

- To determine Eligibility to Compete
- To group Athletes for Competition

These IPC objectives of the Code are held as the core mission to the Code and to Paralympic sport.

The individuals that implement classification [i.e. sport classifiers] hold a critically important role in helping to ensure that the core integrity of a fair playing field in Paralympic competition is maintained. As a classifier, your role will be to uphold these tenets to the highest level, thereby representing U.S. Paralympics, the USOC and the International Paralympic movement.

The role of a classifier must always be to best serve the athletes of the entire Paralympic movement. Well-executed and professionally administered classification will best ensure a level playing field for competition.

Lastly, this manual is meant to be an introduction to national classification training and it is designed to create a framework of working knowledge to begin the classifier training process. The Code, however, is the standard by which all classification will be executed and measured. It is your responsibility, even as a classifier trainee, to read and be familiar with the Code and its components.

Methods for Classifier Certification and Classifier Competencies

This manual, used in conjunction with sport classification training and education courses/seminars, is intended to educate and train individuals within the U.S. to become national classifiers. Subsequently, through the education process individuals may become eligible for nomination to further classifier training at the international level.

Classifier Prerequisites

Each sport will require different academic and /or professional prerequisites to become a classifier. Determination of meeting prerequisites will be made on a sport-by-sport basis by the

Head Domestic Classifier(s) (HDC) for each sport in accordance with the Code and / or the International Federation (IF) requirements as applicable.

HDC's are those individuals who have an international classifier authorization (Level 2) for their respective sport and who will work at the direction of U.S. Paralympics to facilitate Code compliance for each sport. If there are no Level 2 classifiers in a given sport within the USA, then eligibility determination will be made by U.S. Paralympics sport staff in accordance with the specifications of the Code and the requirements of the IF.

Each sport may have different didactic/practical training, thus requirements will differ by sport. Meeting the competencies for each sport will be determined by the requirements of the Code, the requirements for competency at the IPC and IF level, and at the discretion of Head Domestic Classifier or lead classifier conducting a course.

Role and Responsibility of the HDC

When nominated in a particular sport, the HDC's role includes the following:

- Working with U.S. Paralympics to facilitate Code compliance for the sport by providing direction, coordination and implementation of IF classification
- Oversight of classifier education
- Assist with appointment of classification panels for competition
- Oversight of sport classifiers to ensure compliance with the Code and upkeep of the national sport classification database
- Oversight of classifier competency requirements and tracking of classifier competencies
- Assist U.S. Paralympics staff in updating the national sport classification database
- Provide information to U.S. Paralympics on any pertinent changes to IF sport classification rules and assist in disseminating information and updates to all national classifiers

Introduction to Levels of Classifier Competency

The minimum levels of international classifier competency, as outlined by the Code, are as follows:

Trainee

“An individual who is in the process of formal training by the IF, but who is not yet certified as a Classifier and may not be an appointed member of a Classification Panel at an international competition. This individual is unable to allocate an International sport class.”

Level 1

“An individual who has successfully completed the formal training of the IF and has been certified to be a member of a Classification Panel at an international competition. This individual may participate in the assignment of sport class with minimum supervision of more experienced classifiers.”

Level 2

“An individual, who has successfully completed the formal training of the IF and has demonstrated the appropriate level of experience as a Classifier in the relevant sport, as determined by the IF. This individual may participate in the assignment of sport class with no supervision from more experienced classifiers.”

For purposes of national classification education, a participant who successfully completes a national entry level training course for classification will be considered a USA Trainee. The successful completion of the course will be determined in accordance with the Code and the IF requirements, as well as through any additional observation requirements that may be mandated by the HDC (and which may extend beyond the initial USA Trainee course). An individual designated as a USA Trainee will be authorized to be part of a classification panel and may conduct national classifications only as part of a panel of two or more national classifiers.

At the discretion of the HDC and/or U.S. Paralympics, individuals who are USA Trainees may be designated to advance to IPC/IF trainee and/or Level 1 training courses internationally in the respective sport(s). Individuals must be a USA Trainee in order to be eligible to be nominated by the HDC and/or U.S. Paralympics for IPC/IF international classification education and training.

Duties of the Classifier and Classifier Trainee

The Code outlines classifier duties and responsibilities.

The duties of the Classifier may include, but are not limited to:

- “Work as a member of a Classification Panel to allocate Athlete’s Sport Class and Sport Class Status according to the International Standard for Athlete Evaluation.”
- “Work as a member of a Protest Panel as required according to the International Standard for Protest and Appeals.”
- “Attend classification meetings at Competitions.”
- “Assist in Classifier Training and Certification (for example being involved in organizing and teaching at classification seminars) as requested by the Head of Classification or the Classifier appointed to be in charge of training at the Competition.”

The duties of the Trainee include:

- “Active participation and observation to learn Classification Rules and to develop competencies and proficiencies for Certification.”
- “Attend classification meetings at events.”

During USA national classifier education, individuals participating in the classification training (as a USA trainee or instructor) shall have no additional responsibilities at the competition during the period when classification training and practical classification are being conducted. The individual(s) need to participate fully in the classification training and athlete evaluation panels.

USA Trainee designated classifiers shall have no additional responsibilities at a competition where they have been assigned to a classification panel [i.e. coach, official, competition management]. This enables the classifier to focus solely on the conducting of classification at the competition.

Additional duties of the USA Trainee will be to collect and maintain all documentation compiled during classification sessions. This documentation must be forwarded to U.S. Paralympics to assist in the maintenance of the national sport classification database.

Continuing Education for US Classifiers

Each IF is responsible for determining requirements for ensuring that classifier competencies are maintained and up to date.

Within the USA continuing education and requirements for maintaining recognized USA Trainee status will be outlined on a sport-by-sport basis and classifier competencies will be evaluated by the HDC and / or U.S. Paralympics.

Classifier Training and Certification

Each individual pursuing education/training to become a USA Trainee classifier must meet the prescribed prerequisites as established by the sport IF, without modification. All classifiers (USA Trainee, IPC/IF Trainee, Level 1, Level 2) who conduct classification nationally must have a current background check on file with U.S. Paralympics.

Each USA Trainee will be required to maintain certification competencies. These requirements may include the requirements as listed in Article 3.5, International Standards: Classifier Certification and Training as well as other sport specific competencies. Each sport, under the direction of the HDC and/or U.S. Paralympics, will include sport-specific requirements in the sport appendices section of the Policies and Procedures manual.

Each USA Trainee will have access, upon request, to their certification competency progress.

U.S. Paralympics has the oversight and ability to evaluate ALL USA classifiers via the Responsibilities and Duties of Classification Personnel, described in Article 5 of the International Standards: Classifier Certification and Training. It is U.S. Paralympics' responsibility to ensure that classification be conducted in accordance with the Code, and the elements in this Article may also be used as an evaluative tool to measure classifier performance.

U.S. Paralympics will provide, upon request by the IPC or IF, evaluative information on USA Level 1/2 international classifiers when they perform classification domestically. Only the HDC and/or those who have international certification appropriate for this role [as determined by the IPC or IF] will be allowed to provide this evaluation. However, all USA Level 1/2 international classifiers must be aware that they are subject to evaluation while conducting national classification.

Athlete Evaluation

Each IF will have specific evaluation criteria that will be used to assess athletes for classification. The process by which the evaluation will be conducted will be implemented by the International Standard: Athlete Evaluation document. Changes to sport evaluation criteria will be made by the IF. Communication of any sport evaluation criteria changes, along with any changes to the International Standard: Athlete Evaluation will be disseminated to USA national classifiers by U.S. Paralympics.

The specific process of athlete evaluation must follow the Code as specified by the International Standard: Athlete Evaluation. Allocation of the National Sport Class and National Sport Class Status will be as described above in this document.

Code of Conduct & Grievance Procedures

It is incumbent upon U.S. Paralympics to enforce the IPC Classifier Code of Conduct for all national classification activities. It is also incumbent upon ALL USA Classifiers to uphold the U.S. Paralympics Code of Conduct [in order to continue to receive endorsement from U.S. Paralympics]. The U.S. Paralympics Code of Conduct is attached (Attachment A). Determinations on violations of the Code of Conduct as pertaining to domestic classification situations will be managed by U.S. Paralympics.

All participants in the classification process have the right to a fair hearing if they feel they have been aggrieved in any manner. This process will be implemented through the U.S. Paralympics Grievance Procedures (Attachment B).

**UNITED STATES OLYMPIC COMMITTEE
CODE OF CONDUCT
FOR
U.S. PARALYMPIC NATIONAL TEAMS
AND
U.S. PARALYMPIC PROGRAMS
*March 3, 2006***

ATHLETE PLEDGE AND AGREEMENT

I pledge to uphold the spirit of this Code of Conduct (the “Code”), which offers a guide to my conduct as a member of a U.S. Paralympics National Team or a U.S. Paralympics Team to international competition (the “Team”). This Code applies to those Paralympic sports in which the USOC has not recognized a National Governing Body or a Paralympic Sport Organization to govern the sport. I acknowledge that I have a right to a hearing if my opportunity to compete is denied or if I am charged with a violation of this Code.

I have familiarized myself with the Code and understand that acceptance of its provisions is a condition of my membership on the Team.

As a Member of the Team, I hereby promise and agree that I:

- will abide by all rules related to the Team selection procedures as approved by the USOC;
- have acted and will act in a sportsmanlike manner consistent with the spirit of fair play and responsible conduct;
- will maintain a level of fitness and competitive readiness that will permit my performance to be at the maximum of my abilities;
- will submit to a physical examination by USOC medical personnel if my ability to compete is compromised due to physical injury, illness or incapacity and I understand that such physical injury, illness or incapacity may be cause for my not being selected to the Team, being removed from the Team, or not being allowed to participate if I remain on the Team.
- will not commit a doping violation as defined by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA), the International Paralympic Committee(IPC) or USOC rules;
- am not currently serving a doping violation and/or do not have a pending or unresolved doping charge;

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- will not engage in any conduct that is criminal under any laws applicable to me, including, but not limited to laws governing the possession and use of drugs and alcohol and providing of drugs to any person and of alcohol to minors;
- am eligible to compete under the rules of the IPC and its pertinent committees, and its pertinent member organizations and under the rules of the USOC;
- will refrain from conduct detracting from my ability or that of my teammates to attain peak performance;
- will respect the property of others whether personal or public;
- will respect members of my Team, other teams, spectators and officials, and engage in no form of discriminatory behavior nor in any form of verbal, physical or sexual harassment or abuse;
- will follow the Team rules, whether set by Team leadership or adopted by consensus, including by way of example, rules regarding curfew and required attendance at Team meetings;
- agree to wear the uniforms approved by the USOC at official activities sponsored by the USOC as directed by USOC Paralympics Division staff, and I agree to compete in the USOC-approved Team uniform, where such a uniform is provided, in competitions at which I am supported by the USOC through its Paralympics Division. I agree to wear the names and logos of USOC Paralympic Team sponsors, suppliers and licensees on Team competition wear, other uniforms and casual wear as provided by the USOC through its Paralympics Division. I agree to not alter any Team uniform, either by removing or obstructing the names or logos of USOC Paralympic Team sponsors, suppliers and licensees or by adding patches, stickers, or other means of displaying unauthorized names, logos or messages;
- agree to not demean or defame the USOC or its sponsors, their names, logos, marks, products or services. I acknowledge that endorsing and supporting USOC Paralympic Team sponsors through my actions and words reflects well on the team and on those supporting the team.
- agree to be filmed, videotaped and photographed, and to have my image and voice otherwise recorded, in any media, during the any event I am attending under the auspices of the USOC, by the USOC's official photographer(s), film crew(s) and video crew(s), and by any other entity authorized by the USOC, under the conditions specified by the USOC. I hereby grant the USOC the irrevocable, perpetual, fully paid-up, worldwide right and license to use, and to authorize third parties to use, in all media, my name, picture, likeness, voice and biographical information for: (1) news and information purposes, (2) promotion of the Paralympic movement and the specific competition(s) in which I compete, (3) promotion of the Team, and (4) promotion of the USOC; in no event may the USOC use or authorize the use of my name, picture, likeness, voice and biographical information for the purpose of trade, including any use in a manner that would imply an endorsement of any company, product, or service, without my written permission.;
- will not use or authorize the use of photographs, films or videos of myself in my USOC or Paralympic Team apparel or equipment or the use of any USOC logo (including, without limitation, any Paralympic logo) for the purpose of trade, promotion, fund raising or on merchandise, without the prior written consent of the USOC;

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- will act in a way that will bring respect and honor to myself, my teammates, the Team, the UOSC, and the United States; and
- will remember that at all times I am an ambassador for my sport, my country and the Paralympic Movement.

ATHLETE OMBUDSMAN

I may contact the USOC Athlete Ombudsman, toll free at 888.ATHLETE (888.284.5383), John.Ruger@usoc.org or www.888athlete.org for further information regarding my rights under this Code that are not answered by US Paralympics.

PARTICIPANTS' AFFIRMATION

I have read and accept this Code of Conduct. I agree to the rules, guidelines, jurisdiction and procedures stated in these documents as a condition of being a member of the Team.

**UNITED STATES OLYMPIC COMMITTEE
COMPLAINT PROCEDURES
FOR
U.S. PARALYMPIC NATIONAL TEAMS
AND
U.S. PARALYMPIC PROGRAMS
March 3, 2006**

Section 1. Jurisdiction.

These Complaint Procedures are applicable to those Paralympic sports in which the USOC has not recognized a National Governing Body or a Paralympic Sport Organization to govern the sport. Only matters concerning those Paralympic sports fall within the jurisdiction of these Complaint Procedures.

Section 2. Designation of Complaints.

The following kinds of complaints may be filed with the USOC:

- a. Administrative Grievance. The USOC or any aggrieved individual may file a complaint pertaining to any matter relating to the cognizance of the USOC, including but not limited to any alleged violation of or grievance concerning any USOC rule, regulation or code of conduct.
- b. Right to Compete. Any athlete, coach, trainer, manager, administrator or official may file a complaint pertaining to any alleged denial, or alleged threat to deny, of that individual's opportunity to compete in a USOC sponsored competition.

Section 3. Manner of Filing.

The complainant shall file the complaint with the USOC Chief Executive Officer. The complaint shall set forth in clear and concise language, preferably in numbered paragraphs: (i) the alleged violation, grievance, denial or threat to deny and (ii) the remedy requested. The complainant shall sign the complainant.

Section 4. Statute of Limitations.

A complaint filed under these Complaint Procedures shall be filed within one hundred and eighty (180) days of the occurrence of the alleged violation, grievance, denial or threat to deny.

Section 5. Field of Play Decisions.

The final decision of a referee during a competition regarding a field of play decision (a matter set forth in the rules of the competition to be within the discretion of the referee) shall not be reviewable through the procedures for, or the subject of, Administrative Grievances or Right to Compete Complaints unless the decision is: (i) outside the authority of the referee to make or (ii) the product of fraud, corruption, partiality or other misconduct of the referee. For purposes of this Section, the term "referee" shall include any individual with discretion to make field of play decisions.

Section 6. Hearing Panel.

Upon the filing of a complaint, the USOC Chief Executive Officer shall appoint a hearing panel consisting of three (3) individuals to hear the complaint. The Chief Executive Officer shall also appoint a chair of the hearing panel from among the three individuals appointed. At least one member of the hearing panel shall be an athlete.

The Hearing Panel shall be responsible to ensure that all complaints are heard in a timely, fair and impartial manner.

Section 7. Administration.

The USOC General Counsel's Office shall generally administer and oversee all administrative grievances and right to compete matters filed with the UOSC.

Section 8. Conduct of the Proceeding.

The hearing panel shall rule on all motions and other matters raised in the proceeding. If the complaint is not dismissed, the hearing panel shall hold a hearing on the complaint. The hearing panel shall set such timelines and other rules regarding the proceeding and the conduct of the hearing as it deems necessary. The hearing shall be informal, except that testimony shall be taken under oath.

The hearing may be conducted by teleconference, if necessary or convenient to the parties. Each party shall have the right to appear personally or through a legal representative. All parties shall be given a reasonable opportunity to present and examine evidence, cross-examine witnesses and to present argument. Members of the hearing panel shall have the right to question witnesses or the parties to the proceeding at any time.

Any party may have a record made of the hearing. A court reporter may be present at the hearing at the request of a party. The court reporter shall be paid for by the party requesting the court reporter, or if mutually agreed, the cost may be equally divided. Any transcript shall be paid for by the party requesting the transcript.

Section 9. Expedited Procedures.

Upon the request of a party, and provided that it is necessary to expedite the proceeding in order to resolve a matter relating to a competition that is so scheduled that compliance with regular procedures would not be likely to produce a sufficiently early decision to do justice to the affected parties, the USOC Chief Executive Officer is authorized to order that the complaint be heard and decided within forty-eight (48) hours of the filing of the complaint. In such a case, the hearing panel is authorized to hear and decide the complaint pursuant to such procedures as are necessary, but fair to the parties involved.

Section 10. Complaints Involving Selection to Participate in a Competition.

Where a complaint is filed involving selection of an individual to participate in a competition, the complainant shall include with the complaint a list of all other individuals, together with their contact information, that may be adversely affected by a decision rendered on the complaint. The hearing panel shall determine which additional individuals must receive notice of the complaint. The complainant shall then be responsible for providing appropriate notice to these individuals. Any individual so notified then shall have the option to participate in the proceeding as a party. If an individual is notified of the

complaint, then that individual shall be bound by the decision of the hearing panel even though the individual chose not to participate as a party.

Section 11. Decision.

A decision shall be determined by a majority of the hearing panel. The hearing panel's decision shall be in writing, shall state the reasons for the decision and shall be distributed to the parties.

Section 12. Arbitration.

Any party may appeal a decision of the hearing panel to the American Arbitration Association. The arbitrator appointed by the American Arbitration Association shall have the authority to hear the matter anew or if requested by a party to render a decision on a more limited review. Either party may submit the decision of the hearing panel to the arbitrator for the arbitrator's consideration. The arbitrator may give whatever weight or authority to the hearing panel's decision as the arbitrator deems appropriate.