



AUSTRALIAN
FLYBALL
ASSOCIATION

Disability Action Policy

1 January 2022

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Whilst recognising that the safety of dogs and exhibitors is paramount, the **AFA** advocates a policy of encouraging all **AFA members**, regardless of any disability, to participate in **flyball events**, including as **officials**, to the best of their competency and ability.

Policy implementation Guidelines

The **AFA** takes the position that in general there should be no reason to disregard anyone from undertaking a role for which they are deemed to be fit and competent. Competency should be assessed by applying the following guidelines, recognising that in all cases the final decision as to fitness for role must be at the discretion of the **judges** and **AFA representative** officiating at the relevant **flyball event**.

Guidelines

The **AFA** accepts that both permanent and temporary disabilities will be recognised within this policy.

Dog Handling – A person with a disability must still be expected to exercise reasonable control over their dog to the levels required for safety of racing under the **rules**.

The disabled person will be working as part of their **team** and as such the **team** should take the disability into account and organise the **team** to minimise any potential danger or safety concern. As an example, the positioning of the dog in the running order should reflect optimum safety arrangements for all participants.

The **AFA** has recognised that certain types or levels of disability may require the disabled person to have a specific helper in the ring with them to safely run their dog. In these circumstances the helper shall not be counted as one of the two assistants allowed under the **rules**. The helper should recognise that their role is restricted to providing assistance as required to the disabled person and not as a third assistant to the **team**. Helpers must be **AFA members**. Where an **AFA member** with a disability is of the view that they require a helper's assistance this should be drawn to the attention of the **AFA representative** prior to entry to **ring** with the helper. The **AFA representative** should notify the **judge** of the request for assistance. The **judge** has the sole responsibility during the **race** of determining whether the helper arrangement is warranted and can be safely accommodated in the **ring**.

Stewarding – An **AFA member** with a disability wishing to steward should be competent to undertake the duties laid down in the **rules** and the Steward's Guidelines and have the ability to witness any transgression of the **rules** and react accordingly.

Timekeeping – In order to become a **registered timekeeper** there is a practical component. Through observation, a person with a disability will be assessed as to their competency to perform the timekeeping role during this process.

Judging – A person with a disability must still undergo the current **judge's** competency assessment.

The assessor will sympathetically take into consideration the person's disability and whether this is likely to significantly affect their ability to perform the functions of a **judge**. A disabled candidate will still need to be assessed as reasonably self-sufficient in their ability to manoeuvre around the **ring** in order to safely discharge the responsibilities of the **judge's** role.

Ring Layout – Organisers are requested to take into consideration reasonable mobility requirements for both able bodied and disabled persons when setting up **rings**. This is particularly relevant in the layout and size of entry/exit gates and the space between side of **ring** and the

backboards. **Judges** may request an adjustment of the **ring** where it is clear that insufficient space has been allowed for reasonable access by any participant and their dog.