

Participants with Disabilities – How to Request an Accommodation

It is AKC's desire to make reasonable accommodations in order that exhibitors with disabilities may participate with their dog in AKC events. This process starts by sending a request for accommodation to Heather McManus in AKC's legal department (HRM@akc.org or (212) 696-8284). The request should specify what accommodation is being requested for which type of event and what rule, regulation or policy needs to be modified in order to participate. The legal department will provide a form which needs to be completed by a physician and returned to the AKC.

The AKC considers these requests on a case-by-case basis. When reviewing the request, the AKC is guided by consideration of whether or not the accommodation fundamentally alters the event and does the accommodation provide a significant advantage or disadvantage anyone participating in the event.

If an accommodation is provided, the AKC writes a letter to the participant specifying the nature of the accommodation. In essence the accommodation letter waives the normal Rules or Regulations and provides accommodations, and the conditions applying to the accommodations, in order for the individual to handle their dog. Accommodations are specific to the individual involved depending on the nature of the request and the sport. It should not be assumed others can automatically apply these accommodations without an AKC accommodation letter.

In order to communicate this information to the host club, the participant must provide the accommodation letter to the event chairperson or secretary. This can be done when entries are submitted or at the start of the event. This allows the club/judges to anticipate the accommodation and facilitates the smooth running of the event.