

Program Accessibility Guidelines for Persons With Disabilities In 4-H Horse Events

When exploring reasonable accommodations for participants with disabilities, one needs to consider several factors. This fact sheet will provide guidelines for determining the possibility of reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities for 4-H horse events and activities.

1. The following accommodation statement must be used on all announcements for 4-H horse activities or events:

Penn State encourages persons with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation or have questions about the physical access provided, please contact _____ (*list name and phone number of county extension agent.*) Requests for accommodation should be made to the extension agent at least three weeks in advance of the event.

2. Extension agents should use the following example when exploring possible reasonable accommodations for participants with disabilities:

Situation:

A person registers for one of the divisions for a horse show OR requests to participate in classes other than those included in current rules for the Therapeutic Riding Division. You become aware that the person has a disability by one of the following ways: the person tells you that she/he has a disability, the person has a visible disability, you become aware that the person has a disability by information that has been provided on the medical release forms, entry forms or Therapeutic Riding Division (TRD) forms.

The extension agent should then do the following:

1. Ask the person to tell you if she/he has any functional limitations as a result of the disability. Examples of functional limitations might be blindness, inability to walk, inability to use hands, inability to stand for long periods of time, inability to hear, etc. Once you gather that information then...
2. Ask the person if the functional limitations would interfere with or prevent participation in the program. If the answer is no, then the usual registration process would continue. If the answer is yes then...
3. Ask the person if there are any accommodations that could be considered which would enable the individual to participate. Examples of possible accommodations are modifications to rules and policies, elimination of architectural barriers, providing interpreters, modifying equipment, etc. After you gather this information then...
4. Determine if any of the suggested accommodations are reasonable. If you have any questions if the accommodations are reasonable or if accessibility should be provided, contact the Extension Horse Specialist (Youth) (Pat Comerford), Extension Horse Program Assistant (Brian Egan), the chair of PA 4-H Horse Program Development Committee, or OR Youth Program Coordinator (Christy Kohler Bartley) to discuss. One of these people will then consult with the Affirmative Action Office at Penn State or Coordinator, ADA Programs to determine if any of the suggested accommodations are reasonable and if accessibility should be provided.

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Accommodations are considered reasonable if they do not change the fundamental nature of the program or alter the essential criteria for participation. If the accommodations do not alter the fundamental nature of the program, then that reasonable accommodation will be provided.

For example, youth with disabilities participating in a driving class may modify the reins if needed but will still be expected to perform the requirements of the class. We are not required to alter the essential criteria of the class for persons with disabilities. Participants with disabilities will be judged by the same criteria as other participants in the class.

Functional limitations with or without reasonable accommodations that pose a “direct threat” to the exhibitor with a disability or to other exhibitors do not have to be made. If you feel that the suggested accommodations are not reasonable, OR if you feel that *even with* reasonable accommodations the health and safety of the individual or others are at stake, please discuss these concerns with the Affirmative Action Office at 814-863-0471.

If someone has a programmatic question, such as what might be an accommodation related to ADA or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, contact the Affirmative Action Office at 814-863-0471.

If someone has a compliance question related to ADA or the Rehab Act, please contact Coordinator, ADA Programs, 814-863-0471 v/tty. If coordinator is not available then please request to talk with another staff member in the Affirmative Action office, at the same number

- 3. The volunteer or agent should NOT make the final decision to refuse accommodation.**
Allowing or refusing accommodation is done on a case-by-case basis.

If a volunteer or agent is considering refusing accommodation, the agent should contact the Extension Horse Specialist (Youth) (Pat Comerford) at 814-863-3657 or VIA E-MAIL (pcomerford@psu.edu) AND Affirmative Action Office at 814-863-0471 at least three weeks prior to the event.

In the event that Extension Horse Specialist is unavailable, the agent must contact Extension Horse Program Assistant (Brian Egan) at began@psu.edu or 814-863-3957 OR the chairperson of the PA 4-H Horse Program Development Committee OR Youth Program Coordinator (Christy Kohler Bartley) at cek4@psu.edu or 814-863-3828.

- 4. BEFORE contacting Extension Horse Specialist, the extension agent should obtain necessary information and complete the attached “Program Accessibility Checklist”.**

(Checklist on next page)

4-H Horse Program Accessibility Checklist

This checklist should be used when exploring possibilities for reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities in 4-H horse events or activities.

Please complete this checklist before contacting Extension Horse Specialist or Affirmative Action Office.

Please provide answers to the following questions:

1. What is the disability of the 4-H member? (Describe disability.)

2. What are functional limitations?

3. Do functional limitations limit or prevent participation of the 4-H member in the 4-H activity?

4. IF functional limitations limit or prevent the 4-H member's participation, are there any reasonable accommodations that will allow the 4-H member to participate?
 - a.) If yes, please describe the accommodations that are requested.
(Ask parent and leaders to suggest accommodations.)

 - b.) If NO or if you have questions, please contact Extension Horse Specialist (Youth) and Affirmative Action Office.

Key points to consider:

Do not have to alter fundamental nature of program or essential criteria for participation.

Participants with disability will be judged by same criteria as other participants.

Functional limitations with or without reasonable accommodations should not pose a direct threat to person with disability or others.

Direct threat = significant risk of substantial harm.

Must consider whether direct threat can be eliminated or reduced below level of "direct threat" by "reasonable accommodation".

Criteria for determining direct threat, reasonable accommodation, and program accessibility are available from the Affirmative Action Office at Penn State (814-863-0471).