

Adaptive Equipment in Powerchair Hockey Classification

Information for Teams, Athletes, and Coaches

What Is Adaptive Equipment?

Adaptive Equipment means any device, aid, or technical modification that helps an athlete reduce the impact of their impairment during play.

Examples include:

- Straps, harnesses, or belts for trunk or limb stability
- Modified hand sticks or stick holders
- Arm, wrist, or hand supports
- Seat or positioning adaptations

*Eyeglasses or other vision correction devices are **not** considered Adaptive Equipment.*

*Hearing aid or hearing implants devices are **not** considered Adaptive Equipment.*

(microphones, headsets are if allowed subject to the Games and Competition regulations)

Suggestion:

always disclose the use of assistive or adaptive equipment (including those who may not be considered as such to both classifiers and during equipment control)

Why Adaptive Equipment Matters in Classification

- Classification aims to assess **how an athlete's impairment affects their ability to perform Powerchair Hockey tasks.**
- Therefore, assessments must be done **as the athlete competes** — that is, using the **Adaptive Equipment they intend to use in games.**
- Adaptive Equipment (if permitted by IPCH rules) is considered an **integral part of the athlete's functional ability.**

Before or during classification:

- **Classifiers** assess the **functional impact** of any Adaptive Equipment used by the athlete. Their role is to determine **how and to what extent the equipment affects the athlete's functional abilities in Powerchair Hockey**.
- Classifiers may discuss with the athlete whether certain equipment is functionally necessary, and decide whether or not it should be considered in the Sport Class evaluation.
- **Classifiers will record any Adaptive Equipment used on the athlete's classification form, and this information will be shared with the Jury and the Technical Delegates (TD).**
- **Referees and Jury are responsible for checking all equipment for safety and to ensure that it complies with IPCH Game Rules.** Their approval determines whether the equipment can be used in competition, but does not influence the classification outcome.

Consistency After Classification

Once classification is completed:

- Athletes must compete **using the same Adaptive Equipment** if it was part of their assessment; or
- **Without** it, if they were classified in that condition.

Any changes in equipment should be **reported to IPCH**, as they may affect classification.

If some equipment is **used conditionally** – for example, **only in certain situations such as fatigue, pain, or during multiple matches in a day** – **Inform the Classification Panel in advance.**

This allows classifiers to understand when and why the equipment is used and to ensure the sport class accurately reflects the athlete's functional profile.

Advice from the Athletes and Coaches Committee

To ensure fair and accurate evaluation:

Classifiers **may ask athletes to perform certain tests both *with and without* their Adaptive Equipment**, particularly those tests that are most relevant to Powerchair Hockey function.

This helps classifiers understand **how much the equipment supports the athlete's performance** and ensures that the sport class reflects the **athlete's true functional ability**, not the advantage provided by equipment.

Teams and coaches are encouraged to:

- Support athletes in performing these tests confidently and safely.
- Bring all relevant Adaptive Equipment to the classification session.
- Communicate clearly with classifiers about how and when the equipment is normally used.

Key Reminders

- ✓ Use the same equipment in competition as in classification.
- ✓ Ensure all equipment is approved and safe.
- ✓ Report any changes to IPCH.
- ✓ Cooperate with classifiers when tests are repeated with and without equipment.

Extract from Classification Manual:

Use of Adaptive Equipment

- 1.1 Adaptive Equipment means any implement, apparatus, and/or technical aid adapted to the special needs of an Athlete to reduce the impact of their impairment and that is allowed according to the sport rules, - refractive or optical correction (such as eyeglasses or corrective lenses) are not considered to be Adaptive Equipment.
- 1.2 When conducting the Sport Class Assessment, the Classification Panel must evaluate the Athlete when they are using the Adaptive Equipment that they will use in competition (if any). The use of Adaptive Equipment permitted by the rules of IPCH (whether mandatory or optional) is an integral component of the athlete's ability to execute the specific tasks and activities required by the sport. Therefore, the Sport Class Assessment must take into account the optimal use of such equipment (such as strapping) during competition, whether an Athlete chooses to use it or not.
- 1.3 IPCH, whether through the Classification Panel or otherwise, may assess whether any Adaptive Equipment proposed to be used by the Athlete in competition complies with the sport's Classification and/or other rules on the use of Adaptive Equipment. If the Athlete's equipment does not comply with such rules, the Athlete will not be permitted to use that equipment as part of the Sport Class Assessment, and the Classification Panel will not take use of that equipment into consideration when making its determination as to the Athlete's Sport Class.
- 1.4 If an Athlete's choice to use (or not use) Adaptive Equipment could affect their allocated Sport Class, IPCH must record this information and ensure that:
 - a) the Athlete uses the same Adaptive Equipment (if they were allocated a Sport Class on the bases that they would use such Adaptive Equipment), **or**
 - b) the Athlete does not use any or certain Adaptive Equipment (if they were allocated a Sport Class on the bases that they would not use such Adaptive Equipment).