

2024 OUTDOOR PARA TRACK & FIELD FORMAT

For student-athletes who have a visual impairment or a mobility/physical impairment

Student athletes at MIAA member schools who have a visual or mobility impairment of the type and severity described below, who also meet all MIAA and school requirements for participation on their school track and field teams, are eligible to participate in Para track & field category competition at the MIAA Outdoor Track & Field Divisional and All-State Championships. Para track & field results will not count towards team scores. The eligibility criteria are drawn from the World Para Athletics (WPA) rules.

Eligible and qualified student-athletes may compete in Para track & field category 100m, 800m and Shot Put events.

- Standing athletes, both those with vision impairment and those with mobility impairment, will be seeded within the main field according to their actual qualifying marks.
- Seated throwers will be seeded at the front of a flight chosen by the meet officials. Each seated thrower will make six attempts consecutively.
- Wheelchair races will be conducted as separate events not overlapping with the running event of the same distance.

EVENTS AND QUALIFICATION

Student-athletes eligible for Para Track & field competition must achieve the modified qualifying standard for their category in the 100m, 800m or Shot Put to be entered in the Divisional Meet. Athletes may achieve a Divisional meet qualifying mark at any current season competition entered as a bona fide member of the school team. Athletes will advance to the All-State meet if they post a result in the Divisional meet or at the discretion of the MIAA.

2024 Divisional Meet Qualification Standards (All divisions)

PARA	GIRLS			BOYS		
Event	Blind/VI	Para-Amb	WC/Seated	Blind/VI	Para-Amb	WC/Seated
100m	20.00	25.00	30.00	17.00	21.00	24.00
800m	3:40	3:40	3:15	2:30	3:00	2:30
Shot (feet)	20	14	18	30	20	25

* An athlete eligible for Para track & field events is not restricted to the Para events if the athlete has achieved the qualifying mark(s) for other Championship events. Wheelchair races and running races of the same distance are not the same event.

**Schools may request that an athlete competing in one or more of the Para track & field events be entered in one additional event that does not have Para track & field category competition. MIAA will grant this request based on the athlete's performances in that event during the current season and meet management considerations. Participation in these events will be on an exhibition basis and no awards will be presented. Requests must be made to MIAA in writing by the final entry deadline for each meet.

COMPETITION CATEGORIES

1. BLIND/VISUALLY IMPAIRED

- a. Eligibility - Athletes must be registered with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind as legally blind. Legally blind is defined as having best corrected vision of 20/200 or lower in the better eye OR as having a field of vision of less than 20 degrees.
- b. Paralympic accommodations – *Running*: Athletes who are totally blind or with very low vision run with a guide, using a shoelace/tether held between the two runners to keep them stride for stride. The guide is generally a teammate or may be a coach (generally under the age of 26). The runner/guide pair gets two lanes, and uses the start line of the inside lane. Athletes with more vision run without a guide. *Throwing*: Athletes may be guided to the circle/runway by a coach or teammate and may receive initial orientation. The athlete or coach may place a towel or object outside the circle to provide additional orientation. No coaching is allowed during the attempt.
- c. Competition Format – Athletes are included in the most appropriate heats or flights based on the actual seed times/marks of each individual. This may mean that two blind athletes running the same event may race in different heats if their seed times warrant.

2. PARA-AMBULATORY

- a. Eligibility – Athletes must be affected by one of the following conditions/circumstances at the level described.
 - i. Amputation through the ankle, or another orthopedic/neuromuscular impairment resulting in a similar loss of running-related function.
 - ii. Amputation through the wrist of one (sprints only) or both arms; amputation of one/both arms through the elbow; limb deficiency/paralysis of one/both arms.
 - iii. Dwarfism – (achondroplasia or a variant) with height/arm/sum measurements all not more than: boys 145cm/66cm/200cm; girls 137cm/63cm/190cm
 - iv. Cerebral Palsy, Traumatic Brain Injury or Stroke - must have diagnosis of CP or other non-progressive brain damage with locomotor dysfunction.
- b. Paralympic accommodations – *Running*: Athletes may choose to start out of blocks or may not be able to place hands on ground; *Throwing*: Some sport class groups will use lighter implements based on WPA rules.
- c. Competition Format – Athletes are included in the most appropriate heats or flights based on the actual seed times/marks of each individual.

3. WHEELCHAIR/SEATED

- a. Eligibility – Athletes must be affected by one of the following conditions/circumstances at the level described. Athletes competing in track events must be able to self-propel a push-rim manual wheelchair.
 - i. Spinal Cord Injury, Spina Bifida, or other neuromuscular impairment resulting in loss of function in the lower extremities such that running is impractical.
 - ii. Above-knee amputation of one or both lower extremities, hip disarticulation, or similar impairments such that dynamic balance is severely compromised. *Note*: Amputees or athletes with similar impairments sometimes run in Para-ambulatory races and throw in seated events.
 - iii. Cerebral Palsy, Traumatic Brain Injury or Stroke - must have diagnosis of CP or other non-progressive brain damage with locomotor dysfunction such that running is impractical.
- b. Paralympic accommodations – *Wheelchair Racing*: Athletes must wear certified bike helmets whenever in the racing chair (on or off track); the racing chair has equipment specifications; *Throwing* – the throwing chair has maximum height and other

specifications; some sport classes use lighter implements according to WPA rules; a coach may assist the athlete getting to and setting up in the circle, and departing the circle at the conclusion of the attempts.

- c. Competition Format – Wheelchair racing: Wheelchair races and running races of the same distance are considered to be two separate events. If only one wheelchair racer is entered in an event, the wheelchair race may be conducted concurrently with one heat of the running race of the same distance. For such heats in laned races, the wheelchair racer shall be assigned lane 1 with runners assigned to other lanes; all lane rules and passing/obstruction rules apply. For 1 mile and 2 mile distances, a lone wheelchair racer shall start at the outside and/or behind the runners. If two or more wheelchair racers are entered, the event shall be held separately from the running event; in all instances wheelchair racing results shall be displayed separately from those of the comparable running event. *Throwing*: seated athletes can be placed at the front of an appropriate flight; if using a throwing chair, athletes make all six attempts consecutively, except at Divisional and All-State meets where they make 3 plus 3.

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