



Para Athletics Program: Guide and Support Runner Rules and Information

The following information pertains to Guide and Support Runners and ambulatory athletes in the Para Athletics Program who will request to utilize a guide or support runner.

Any classified, IPC-licensed athlete aiming to obtain a ranking or result for competition qualification or Games/World Championship consideration must be aware of and follow all applicable rules of World Para Athletics.

Guide Runners

A Guide Runner is a person who provides verbal cues and navigation support to an athlete with a vision impairment.

Selection

- Athletes in the Para Athletics Program (the “Athlete”) who possess a visual impairment are permitted to be accompanied by one (1) or two (2) Guide Runners during the race.
- It is the responsibility of the Athlete to select a guide runner if one is needed. The Athlete is responsible for selecting a Guide Runner who can perform all guide responsibilities and can run comfortably at the Athlete’s goal pace. It is strongly recommended that the Athlete select a Guide Runner with whom the Athlete regularly trains.

Registration

- Athletes in the Para Athletics Program with a visual impairment who wish to be accompanied by a Guide Runner must request to utilize a Guide Runner no later than Friday, August 14, 2026.
- All Guide Runners must complete the Bank of America Chicago Marathon registration form no later than Friday, September 11, 2026. There is no registration fee for a Guide Runner. Guide Runners will receive all participant amenities.
- A Guide Runner’s registration is contingent upon the registered Athlete’s participation. Should the registered Athlete cancel their registration, the associated Guide Runner’s registration will no longer be valid and will be cancelled.
- All Guide Runners must wear the numbered bib assigned by the event on the front of their shirt, singlet, or outermost layer. In addition, Guide Runners must wear two GUIDE

bibs provided by the event, one on the front of their shirt, singlet, or outermost layer and one on the back.

On the Course

- Guide Runners and guided Athletes will be assigned a starting position in Wave 1, Corral E, unless the Athlete has qualified for a faster seeded corral under the published corral qualifying standards.
- A Guide Runner must always stay with the athlete they are guiding.
- The Guide Runner is not allowed to push, pull, or otherwise propel an Athlete to gain an advantage at any stage during a race.
- A Guide Runner may assist an Athlete who has tripped or fallen to regain footing and/or orientation as long as such assistance does not provide any advantage to the Athlete's forward progression along the course.
- Guide Runners may collect refreshments for their Guided Athlete from the official stations, provided they are passed to the Athlete within the designated area from which refreshments can be received or collected. Guide Runners may not pass any refreshments to any Athlete outside the designated area.
- A Guide Runner may not block or interfere with the forward progression of other participants.
- A Guide Runner must advise the guided Athlete to stay or move to the side of the road when approached from behind by an official vehicle or other participants.
- Should a Guide Runner not be able to finish the event with the guided Athlete, the Guide Runner is required to drop out and exit the course. The Athlete may complete the event if able to do so safely.
- Should a guided Athlete be unable to finish the event and need to drop out, the Guide Runner(s) must also drop out and exit the course. Guide Runners may not continue or complete the event without the Athlete they were guiding. A Guide Runner continuing or completing the event without the guided Athlete will result in the Guide Runner's disqualification.
- The guide runner must adhere to all Bank of America Chicago Marathon Event Rules: <https://www.chicagomarathon.com/runners/rules-safety/event-rules/>

The Finish

- The Guide Runner(s) must cross the finish line with the Athlete. Discrepancies in the finish times of the Guide Runner(s) and the guided Athlete subject both the Guide Runner(s) and Athlete to Disqualification.
- A Guide Runner completing the event distance with their guided Athlete will receive an official finish time and finisher's medal.

Support Runners

A Support Runner is a person who provides verbal instructions, directions, and/or cues that support orientation and/or decision making for an athlete with a physical or intellectual impairment.

Selection

- Athletes in the Para Athletics Program (the “Athlete”) who possess a permanent physical or intellectual impairment are permitted to be accompanied by one (1) or two (2) Support Runners during the race.
- It is the responsibility of the Athlete to select a Support Runner if one is needed. The Athlete is responsible for selecting a Support Runner who can perform all support responsibilities and can run comfortably at the Athlete’s goal pace. It is strongly recommended that the Athlete select a Support Runner with whom the Athlete regularly trains.

Registration

- Athletes in the Para Athletics Program with a permanent physical or intellectual impairment who wish to be accompanied by a Support Runner must request to utilize a Support Runner no later than Friday, August 14, 2026.
- All Support Runners must complete the Bank of America Chicago Marathon registration form no later than Friday, September 11, 2026. There is no registration fee for a Support Runner. Support Runners will receive all participant amenities.
- A Support Runner’s registration is contingent upon the registered Athlete’s participation. Should the registered Athlete cancel their registration, the associated Support Runner’s registration will no longer be valid and will be cancelled.
- All Support Runners must wear the numbered bib assigned by the event on the front of their shirt, singlet, or outermost layer. In addition, Support Runners must wear two SUPPORT bibs provided by the event, one on the front of their shirt, singlet, or outermost layer and one on the back.

On the Course

- Support Runners and supported Athletes will be assigned a starting position in Wave 1, Corral E, unless the Athlete has qualified for a faster seeded corral under the published corral qualifying Standards.
- A Support Runner must always stay with the Athlete they are supporting.
- The Support Runner is not allowed to push, pull, or otherwise propel an Athlete in order to gain an advantage at any stage during a race.
- A Support Runner may assist an Athlete who has tripped or fallen to regain footing and/or orientation as long as such assistance does not provide any advantage to the Athlete’s forward progression along the course.

- Support Runners may collect refreshments for their supported Athlete from the official stations provided they are passed to the Athlete within the designated area from which refreshments can be received or collected. Support Runners may not pass any refreshments to any Athlete outside the designated area.
- A Support Runner may not block or interfere with the forward progression of other participants.
- A Support Runner must advise the Athlete to stay or move to the side of the road when approached from behind by an official vehicle or other participants.
- Should a Support Runner not be able to finish the event with the Athlete, the Support Runner is required to drop out and exit the course. The Athlete may complete the event if able to do so safely.
- Should a supported Athlete be unable to finish the event and need to drop out, the Support Runner(s) must also drop out and exit the course. Support Runners may not continue or complete the event without the Athlete they were supporting. A Support Runner continuing or completing the event without the supported Athlete will result in the Support Runner's disqualification.
- The Support Runner must adhere to all Bank of America Chicago Marathon Event Rules: <https://www.chicagomarathon.com/runners/rules-safety/event-rules/>

The Finish

- The Support Runner must cross the finish line with the Athlete. Discrepancies in the finish times of the Support Runner and the supported Athlete subject both the Support Runner and Athlete to disqualification.
- A Support Runner completing the event distance with their supported Athlete will receive an official finish time and finisher's medal.