

2024 INDOOR PARA TRACK & FIELD FORMAT

For student-athletes with visual impairments and those with mobility/physical impairments

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 requirements for participation on their school indoor track and field teams, are eligible to compete in the Para track & field category at MIAA Championship meets.

EVENTS AND QUALIFICATION

Eligible and qualified student-athletes may compete in the 55m dash; the wheelchair 300m race; the Para Ambulatory or Blind/VI 1000m races, and/or the Shot Put.

Student-athletes eligible for Para Track & field competition must achieve the modified qualifying standard for their category in each event 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.

2023 Divisional Meet Qualification Standards

PARA	GIRLS			BOYS		
	Blind/VI	Para-Amb	WC/Seated	Blind/VI	Para-Amb	WC/Seated
55m		11.50			10.50	
300m						
1000m	3:50	3:50		3:10	3:10	
Shot	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.

**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 date for the meet.

SEEDING

Para Ambulatory and Blind/VI athletes will be seeded within the main field according to their actual qualifying marks. Wheelchair racers will be seeded at the discretion of meet management except that only one (1) wheelchair racer will be seeded in any given heat for races of 300m or longer. Seated throwers will be seeded at the front of a flight chosen by the meet officials and will make six attempts consecutively before standing athletes begin their rotation.

COMPETITION CATEGORIES

1. BLIND/VISUALLY IMPAIRED

1. 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.
2. Para track & field 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.

3. 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

1. Eligibility – Athletes must be affected by one of the following conditions/circumstances at the level described:
 - a. Amputation through the ankle, or another orthopedic/neuromuscular impairment resulting in a similar loss of running-related function.
 - b. 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.
 - c. Dwarfism – (achondroplasia or a variant) with height/arm/sum measurements all not more than: boys 145cm/66cm/200cm; girls 137cm/63cm/190cm
 - d. Cerebral Palsy, Traumatic Brain Injury or Stroke - must have diagnosis of CP or other non-progressive brain damage with locomotor dysfunction.
2. Para track & field 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 World Para Athletics rules.
3. 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

1. Eligibility – Athletes must be affected by one of the following conditions/circumstances at the level described.
 - 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.
2. Para track & field accommodations – *Throwing* – the throwing chair has maximum height and other specifications; some sport classes use lighter implements according to World Para Athletics 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.
3. Competition Format – Racing: Wheelchair racers will have an empty lane on either side of them. For races of 300m or longer, there will be only 1 wheelchair racer in any heat, and time-trial scoring will be used. There shall never be head to head wheelchair racing on the oval. *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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LINK TO WORLD PARA ATHLETICS RULEBOOK: <https://www.paralympic.org/athletics/rules>