

# Get Involved in Para-Sport – Fact Sheet for Referrers



## What is Para-Sport?

Para-Sport is a term used for sports that have a pathway to the Paralympic Games. However, there are many opportunities for athletes from school age to get started in school sport and join clubs, social sport and for those more competitive to compete at state, national and international level. There are 28 para-sports at the Summer and Winter Paralympic Games.

**In order to be eligible to compete in Para-Sport, athletes must have a physical, vision or intellectual impairment from one of the following eligible impairments:**

Eligible impairments	Description
<b>Loss of limbs</b>	Partial or complete absence of bones or joints due to amputation or absence from birth.
<b>Muscle weakness/ Impaired muscle power</b>	Muscle weakness or paralysis from conditions such as muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, nerve damage, spinal cord injury or damage.
<b>Co-ordination impairments - Hypertonia, Ataxia or Athetosis</b>	Impairments from neurological conditions such as acquired brain injury, cerebral palsy and multiple sclerosis that affect co-ordination and smoothness of movement and balance.
<b>Restricted joint movement</b>	Restricted movement or tightness in a joint/s from conditions such as joint fusions and other restricting conditions.
<b>Short stature</b>	Reduced standing height and limb length from conditions such as achondroplasia or other conditions that affect growth.
<b>Leg length difference</b>	Significant difference in leg length from birth or trauma.
<b>Intellectual Impairment</b>	An IQ of 75, and impairments in adaptive behaviour (conceptual, social and practical skills) – that is observed before the athlete is aged 18.
<b>Vision Impairment</b>	Significant loss of vision in both eyes (ie at least legally blind) caused by conditions such as albinism, macular degeneration, macular or cone rod dystrophy and retinitis pigmentosa.

## What is classification?

Classification is an assessment process that determines which athletes can compete in each Para-sport and who they can compete against. Athletes are grouped with others whose impairments affect them in similar ways in their sport.

## What you can do to help?

- Encourage people you know who might be eligible and are interested in Para-sport to make an enquiry via the Paralympics Australia website: <https://www.paralympic.org.au/get-involved>
- Help athletes to seek a classification by contacting their sport of interest.
- Get involved in a sport or club as a volunteer, official, coach, physiotherapist.
- Explore local para-sport opportunities in your area
- Become a supporter, champion and fan of Para-sport

**For more information:** [www.paralympic.org.au](http://www.paralympic.org.au)