

Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC for Individuals):

Note: Additional EECs specific to a sport or activity follow these general requirements

1. Lives with a long-term physical or visual impairment. (See Snowsports for additional impairment type EEC.)
2. Requires specialized instruction or adaptive equipment to participate.
3. Able to wear correctly fitted and adequately rated safety equipment (including but not limited to helmet, PFD, harness, etc.) throughout the duration of activities that require such equipment.
4. Is cleared by their doctor/medical professional to participate in designated activity.
5. Able to manage personal care needs independently or with the help of a companion*, including toileting, nutrition (eating), hydration, personal hygiene, and clothing management.
6. Possess the strength, fitness, balance, and agility to accomplish sport-specific tasks.
7. Understand and agree to follow all safety guidelines, procedures, and rules.
8. Can provide travel to and from activity sites.
9. Can safely conduct themselves, such as following established safety instructions and precautions and remaining substance-free while participating in PCAS activities. They shall refrain from risky behavior that poses a threat to themselves or others, including (but not limited to) aggressive behavior, ignoring safety precautions identified by instructors, inability to set boundaries about their physical ability, or verbal or physical abuse toward themselves or others, including volunteers and instructors.
10. Demonstrate respect for PCAS staff and volunteers. Harassment and abusive behavior will not be tolerated.
11. Be seizure-free for six months (see specific sports, as some have longer requirements).
12. Be able to effectively communicate basic needs and emergency issues to volunteers/instructors/staff with or without assistive devices.
13. Show signs of participation toward skill development goals, speed, or endurance.

In addition to the above general requirements, the following sport/program-specific EECs are in place.

Cycling (road)

1. Be at least 5 years of age.
2. Travel and navigate a bicycle over distances ranging from 1 or more miles per day, depending upon the program. This includes the ability to remain balanced while sitting on a bike or trike.
3. When riding on a single bike, the rider should be able to pedal, steer, stop, and negotiate a bike (or other adaptive equipment) independently and safely. Verbal directions and assistance may be used for safety and crossing intersections.

Cycling (MTB)

1. Be at least 15 years of age.
2. Travel and navigate a bicycle over a variety of uneven, steep, and challenging terrain, with travel distances ranging from 1 -10 miles per day, depending upon the program.
3. Have the ability to sit on, pedal, steer, stop, and negotiate a bike (or other adaptive equipment), with the ability to slow down or stop and keep an appropriate distance between yourself and other riders or trail users independently or with the assistance of a volunteer or companion*.

Water Sports

1. General
 - a. Able to independently maintain sealed airway passages while underwater.
 - b. Able to breathe independently without using a medical device to sustain breathing.
 - c. Able to independently turn from face down to face up in the water while wearing a lifejacket where required.
 - d. Can remain seated and balanced in a boat (with or without adaptive equipment) for the duration of the activity.
 - e. Able to transfer independently, with the assistance of a companion*, or with minimal to moderate assistance from a PCAS volunteer.
 - f. Be seizure-free for one year.

2. Kayak

- a. Can successfully execute a wet exit independently.
- b. Be at least 14 years of age.
- c. Able to wear a properly fitting, industry-standard PFD approved for this activity.
- d. Able to independently turn from face down to face up and remain floating while wearing industry-standard PFD.
- e. Able to effectively propel a boat for the duration of activity.
- f. Able to exit a capsized boat and grab onto another boat or rescue line independently if uninjured.
- g. Can re-enter a capsized boat independently or with reasonable assistance of others.
- h. Able to be exposed to direct sun and summer heat for extended periods.
- i. Able to sit in a wet kayak in wet shoes and clothing for extended periods.

3. Rowing

- a. Be at least 14 years of age.
- b. Able to effectively propel a boat for the duration of activity.
- c. Able to enter and exit a boat with minimal to moderate assistance to/from the dock.
- d. If rowing in a single, be able to turn the head enough to see and steer safely to avoid other people, boats, or obstacles.
- e. Able to exit a capsized boat and grab onto another boat or rescue line independently and aid in your recovery or self-rescue if uninjured.

Snowsports

1. Ski and Snowboard Lessons

- a. Live with a long-term physical, intellectual, or sensory (visual or hearing) impairment and require specialized instruction or adaptive equipment to participate.
- b. Be at least five years of age.
- c. Be seizure-free for six months. Able and willing to wear a safety harness with a retention strap while on the chair lift if any seizure activity occurs within 12 months before the lesson.

- d. Weigh under 200 pounds if using sit-down ski equipment or require minimal assistance from PCAS instructors to help stand up after falling (skier performs at least 75% of the work to stand after falling).
 - e. For stand-up skiers, be able to get up or learn to get up from the snow with no more than moderate assistance (the skier performs at least 50% of the work to stand after falling) from the instructor.
 - f. For the duration of the lesson, be able to move through the distance of the lift line independently or with assistance as equipment dictates.
 - g. Bi-skiers have a primary physical impairment that prohibits them from skiing and standing up.
2. Ski Camp
 - a. Have a permanent physical or visual impairment that is eligible for the Paralympics.
 - b. Be between the ages of 8-17
 - c. Be able to stay in a hotel room with other youth of similar age and ability and require no more than minimal assistance with ADLs.
 - d. All snowsports and general points also apply.

Climbing

1. Be at least 5 years of age.
2. Ability to properly wear a climbing harness and ropes throughout the event.
3. Understand and convey necessary communication and climbing signals to people on the ground.

Yoga

1. Have the ability to assume various positions to enhance strength and flexibility.
2. If more than minimal assistance is required to assume yoga positions, have a companion* provide assistance in achieving positions.

Sitting Volleyball

1. Able to reach overhead with one or both hands.
2. Able to sit on the floor, move, and balance with one or no hands.

Birding

1. Be able to walk, stand, or use w/c (or other mobility devices) for approximately 1.5-2 hours.

Track and Field and Swimming

1. Be between the ages of 8-23 years of age.
 2. Have a permanent physical or visual impairment that would make athletes eligible for the Paralympics.
 3. Be able to respond quickly to statements and instructions to avoid unsafe situations and to understand and follow instructions.
 4. Be able to participate in the program activities with minimal to no behavioral disruption of the practice.
 5. Be able to engage in self-directed activities and follow multi-step instructions without 1:1 supervision. (Guides and guide runners for visually impaired athletes will be provided.)
 6. For swimming, be able to swim one length of the pool (25 meters) independently and safely without assistance or floatation devices.
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Companion:

* For this document, a companion can be a personal support person, family member, or friend, and excludes any and all PCAS instructors or volunteers.

Seizure Descriptions:

- 1) Generalized seizure: Affects all extremities (whole body) and with loss of awareness
- 2) Focal (partial) seizure: This affects only part of the body and can be with or without loss of awareness.
- 3) Absence seizure: No motor activity but with loss of awareness (staring episodes and unresponsive to verbal or other stimuli during the seizure)

All PCAS programs require all participants to be seizure-free for at least 6 months. Retention straps on chairlifts will be used if a seizure occurs within 1 year before participation.

PA Drivers License is returned after 6 months. Based on this and discussion with physician experts, we will be consistent with this and apply additional safety measures for 1 year following a seizure.