

Visually Impaired Runner Guidelines

A visually impaired runner can run in a heat with a non-impaired runner. Meet Directors can set it up so the athlete can choose if they wish to compete in a para division or the traditional division.

These guidelines are for a tethered guide runner.

1. Guide-runners or Assistants must be clearly identified. (e.g. wearing a distinctively colored vest).
2. When competing with a Guide-runner, the method of guidance for athletes shall be the use of a tether of non-elastic material with a maximum length of 100cm. (The NFHS does not specify the maximum length of a tether).
 - a. The tether attachment shall only be established between the hand(s) and/or arm(s) of the pair.
 - b. In addition, the runner may receive verbal instruction from the Guide-runner.
 - c. The Guide is not allowed to use a bicycle or other mechanical means of transport.
 - d. The Guide-runner is not allowed to pull or propel the athlete to gain an advantage at any stage during the race.
 - e. The Guide runner may not pace the athlete.
 - f. The runner must cross the finish line first.
3. In the event of a breach of the rule committed by a Guide-runner resulting in disqualification or warning, the accompanying athlete shall be consequently disqualified or warned.
4. In track and field events run in lanes you should give two lanes to the athlete and the guide runner to utilize for the race.

In the past, typically visually impaired runners do not receive any special accommodation for lane assignment so they would start where they are assigned in a waterfall start. The visually impaired athlete and guide runner line up behind the start line, with the guide runner positioned slightly behind the visually impaired athlete.