

The Bloomington Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts Department (BPRCA) encourages and supports the participation of individuals with disabilities in all programs and services. The Department provides inclusion support services to facilitate opportunities for people with and without disabilities to engage in leisure pursuits together. These services include, but are not limited to, the provision of support staff, sign language interpreters, and adapted equipment. To ensure the requested accommodation, please contact the Superintendent of Recreation **at least two weeks** in advance of a program start date for accommodations (i.e. support staff). Call the office at 309-434-2260 or TTY at 309-829-5115.

What is inclusion?

Inclusion within the Department means that individuals with disabilities are welcome to participate in the same recreation programs and activities as their non-disabled peers. Reasonable accommodations are provided to enable an individual's successful participation in a program. Some minimum eligibility requirements (age, level of participation, etc.) must be met in order to participate.

What are some examples of reasonable accommodations available to promote successful participation in a program?

- Ongoing training provided for inclusion support staff.
- An enhanced staff/participant ratio or inclusion companion
- A Sign language interpreter
- Adaptation of the rules and policies
- Accessible Golf Cart

What are the minimum requirements for successful inclusion?

The same minimum requirements which apply to a person without a disability also apply to a person with a disability. These include:

- Meeting the age and registration requirements of the program.
- Following the rules of conduct (with or without reasonable accommodation).
- Voluntary participation: recreation programs and activities are voluntary in nature. Participation will be encouraged and aided, but not forced.
- Level of participation: with or without reasonable accommodations, the participant will engage in scheduled activities for the majority of the program time.
- Ability to use a consistent form of communication to indicate basic needs and follow simple directions.
- Ability to tolerate and function, with assistance, as a member of a larger social group (12 or more people).

What services are not parts of an inclusive program?

Inclusion services do not include the following:

- Provision of a separate area or alternate activities for a significant portion (more than 25%) of the scheduled program.
- Exception to minimum compliance with the program's rules and regulations, with or without accommodations, established for the safety of all program participants and staff.
- Hiring, selection, or guaranteed assignment of a specific staff member.
- Individualized therapy within a program.
- Provision and/or purchase of personal custom devices.
- Invasive procedures including toileting, feeding tubes, etc. (see separate policy)

Inclusion Services p. 2

Is an inclusive recreation program the right choice and/or experience for me?

Observe the program first-hand and ask yourself these questions...

- Do your or your child's current activities or goals prepare you for an inclusive recreation experience?
- Have you or your child shown an interest in the program activity or subject matter?
- Are you comfortable and able to function appropriately, with or without assistance, in inclusive environments (malls, restaurants, parks, etc.)?

BPRCA recreation staff encourages everyone to get active:

- We meet family and individuals prior to the start of the program to identify appropriate program options and supports required to assist the participant
- We encourage parents and/or individuals to visit the programs
- We provide program orientation and training to staff

You can help make the Inclusion experience a success by:

- Assisting staff in identifying the recreational interests of you or your child
- Sharing relevant information that will promote a successful experience
- Completing the Inclusion Notification form and helping staff complete the Inclusion Questionnaire/Assessment Form. Forms should be returned at least two weeks prior to program start date
- Reviewing medical and behavioral policies
- Connecting with program staff at least two weeks prior to start of programs
- Assisting in the training of staff to meet the participant's need/requirements when applicable and appropriate within BPRCA policies and procedures
- Committing to open communication and problem solving with staff

We see inclusion as a partnership between BPRCA staff and families. We believe inclusive and accessible leisure services are essential to everyone's quality of life.