

WNZ Draft Adaptive competition rules/guidelines

⚠ Note This document should be used as a guideline for owners and competition runners as a starting point. As of Jan/2025, the guidelines below are in a draft state. Any deviations necessary for specific athletes will serve as input to evolve this document.

Please send any feedback or questions to diogo@functionaladaptivemovement.com

The following sources were used as the basis for this document:

1. [USAW Adaptive Athlete Competition Requirements](#)
2. [WCHM - PARA WEIGHTLIFTING](#)
3. [International Masters Standards of Eligible Impairments – Adaptive Weightlifting in the Snatch and Clean & Jerk](#)

Intro

Weightlifting NZ aims to increase the participation of adaptive athletes in the sport.

The Rules and Regulations informing the standards for Adaptive Athletes in NZ are the same as IWF's, with the exceptions noted in this document. If any adjustment to the IWF rules or accommodation for para weightlifters is not described here, Technical Officials and Competition Directors should discuss it with coaches and officials to **prioritise fair standards and full inclusion** based on the athlete's ability.

💡 What this means for competitions: At this stage, inclusion is the priority. The usual regulations apply, but WNZ would like clubs and judges to focus on inclusion and connection with adaptive athletes and relaxing the applicable rules until we learn how to accommodate different requirements based on different disabilities.

Adaptive Weightlifters and their coaches are responsible for informing the Competition Director and officials of their need for accommodation which may include additional travel time to the platform after being called by the competition Announcer. In consultation with the Referees, the Competition Director retains the authority to prevent para-weightlifters from commencing their first or subsequent attempts if attempting that lift is considered potentially harmful to themselves or others.

💡 What this means for competitions: The Competition Director, in consultation with the referees, should discuss the requirements for adaptive athletes before the competition starts, ensuring that athletes, their coaches, referees, and other supporting staff are aware of the necessary accommodations.


All athletes and coaching staff are encouraged to contact the head judge or competition marshals and:

- Invite them to watch warm-up lifts to discuss specific requirements; or
- Review training videos so judges and competition staff can know the required allowances.

Guidelines for specific levels of ability

Athletes who are deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing


- Athletes compete in the able-bodied body weight category.
 - Deaf athletes are welcome and encouraged to join any adaptive showcase events and might have a specific adaptive category in the future.
- A coach or supporting person can stand behind the referees during lifts so that the athlete may see their communication.

 **What this means for competitions:** Allow and ensure visual cues are provided in situations where only sound is available (such as beeps on 30s marks or down signal beeps)

- The athlete should be able to clearly and easily see the countdown clock from the platform
- The centre referee must give a clear manual down sign, even if screens are present to display the down sign.

Athletes with visual impairment

- Athletes compete in the able-bodied body weight category.
 - Visually impaired athletes are welcome and encouraged to join any adaptive showcase events and might have a specific adaptive category in the future.
- Coaches should be allowed to walk their athletes onto the stage and the platform to assist with the start of the lift.
- The regulation clock starts to run as per current rules. When required, an additional minute should be allowed for athletes and coaches to complete the preparation to lift and for the coach to step off the platform.

 **What this means for competitions:** Athletes might require accommodations for getting into and off the platform. Clear and audible cues and signals must be given to the athlete.

Coaches should agree on how to communicate to athletes that they might be stepping off of the platform.

- Ensure the athlete can hear all sound markers from the platform.
- The centre referee must give a loud and audible down sign even if a beeping system isn't available at the competition.

Athletes with intellectual impairment

- Athletes compete in the able-bodied bodyweight category.
 - Intellectually impaired athletes are welcome and encouraged to join any adaptive showcase events and might have a specific adaptive category in the future.
- Coaches should be allowed to walk their athletes onto the stage and the platform to assist with the start of the lift.
- If required, a coach or supporting person can stand behind referees during lifts so athletes can clearly see them for communication.

What this means for competitions:

- The regulation clock starts to run as per current rules. When required, an additional minute should be allowed for athletes and coaches to complete the preparation to lift and for the coach to step off the platform.
- Ensure athletes can hear all sound markers and screens/clocks from the platform.
 - The athlete/coach may request that the centre referee give a more robust VERBAL or VISUAL down signal.
- Announcers may be required to request silence and compliance from attendance to help attenuate issues that arise from loud sounds depending on the athlete's requirements.

Intellectual and cognitive disabilities have many forms, and coaches and supporting staff should communicate requirements to referees and marshals ahead of time to ensure all accommodations are made.

Athletes with limb deficiencies

No prosthesis

This includes:

- Athletes performing single-arm snatches and clean and jerks.
- Athletes performing single-leg snatches and clean and jerks.
- Athletes performing a lift with a strap attached to the bar. Straps should be safely and appropriately connected to the athlete's torso or arm.
 - Athletes lifting with their disabled arm, without the prosthesis, will be allowed a press-out to stabilise the bar in its final but uneven position. In this example, athletes may perform the lift with a strap attached to the bar.

With prosthesis

This includes:

- Athletes performing a lift with an arm prosthesis.
- Athletes performing a lift with a leg prosthesis.

General guidelines

- Athletes will weigh in as per IWF rules. Amputees using their prostheses must weigh in with their prostheses and demonstrate that the artificial limb is not powered or able to store energy.
- Myoelectric arms, which are needed to open and close the hands, are permitted as long as releasing the bar is safe in case of a missed lift.
- Athletes with two prosthetic legs should be allowed to lift the bar from a raised starting position.
- Single-arm and single-leg lifts will follow the same rules as two-handed lifts.
 - One arm examples: [C&J](#), [Snatch](#), Strapped: [C&J](#), [Snatch](#)
 - One-leg examples: [Snatch](#) (with and without prosthesis), [Clean](#) (with and without prosthesis)
- Single-leg athletes may request and use a foam plyo box for safety ([example](#))

💡 **What this means for competitions:** Where possible, judges should attempt to observe athletes lifting prior to the competition (e.g., during the athlete's warm-up) or review videos of the athletes' lifts (provided by the athlete) and note any variations in:

- Lockouts - especially for one-arm athletes using straps
- Full extension - Some one-leg athletes using prostheses might have their prosthetic leg to the side of their body when standing up in a stable position.

Bar loaders must ensure all change plates are secure on the bar, as the bar might be uneven when the lift is complete.

- All change plates must be secured inside the collars.

Athletes with limited range of motion or joint instability

- Athletes who do not fall within the above-mentioned categories or may have limited motion bending or extending at the knee should discuss their requirements with the head judge or competition marshal.
- Athletes who cannot fully extend their elbows are still expected to adhere to the current IWF regulations regarding elbow extension.
- Athletes who cannot fully lower their torso to reach the height of the bar may be permitted to lift their attempted weight from blocks no higher than the knee cap.
 - Athletes with Parkinson's disease or Cerebral Palsy may have additional modifications permitted to some movements depending on their medical condition.
- Athletes are encouraged to provide the competition director with a sample of the two lifts using a lightweight bar to illustrate their range of motion.
- The Jerk may be replaced with a Push Press. The lift shall be deemed a good lift as long as the athlete performs the lift without pausing during the extension of the arms.

- The Snatch may be replaced with a Muscle Snatch. The lift shall be deemed a good lift as long as the athlete performs the lift without pausing during the extension of the arms.

💡 **What this means for competitions:** WNZ recommends that the current IWF rules be relaxed and adapted to meet the needs of each individual where possible. Initially, situations will need to be handled on a case-by-case basis until broader rules governing Adaptive Weightlifting can be established. To ensure clarity and consistency in expectations:

Coaches should always strive to discuss specific needs with competition staff.

Competition staff should always strive to reach out to athletes that have specific needs.

Athletes competing with the use of a wheelchair

- The athlete may be assisted by a support person during weigh-in.
- An adaptive performance weightlifting belt may be used. This belt might be wider than 12cm.
- The use of a lap mat or blocks is permitted. If using blocks, the resting bottommost part of the barbell, with plates on the barbell, may be no more than 5 cm (2 inches) above the lap or pad (if applicable)
- The athlete can readjust the barbell on their lap or blocks if needed.
- Athletes must engage their chair breaks before the lift commences.
- The wheelchair may be placed directly in front of the platform to avoid the wheelchair rolling back. If not possible, bumper plates should be positioned behind the wheels.
- Spotters should be in place to help securely lower the bar to the platform after the full extension is reached and after the robust audible down signal from the centre referee.
- Coaches can come to the platform to help athletes establish their lifting position but can not remain on the platform during the lifts.
- Wheelchair athletes will have a 3-minute clock for their attempts. This also applies when they are following themselves.
- Athletes must ensure their wheelchairs can sustain the total combined body weight and the bar being lifted.

💡 **What this means for competitions:** Wheelchair athletes are likely to perform a muscle snatch and a clean and press. Judges should be aware of the specific requirements for these lifts before the competition

When performing these movements, time accommodations may be required to securely position the wheelchair and start and finish the lift.

Snatches

- A muscle snatch will be acceptable if the bar does not stop or descend on its way to full extension.

Clean and press

- The barbell is allowed to start on blocks or a lap mat
- The barbell can touch the chest before it stops at the final position.
- Following the lap clean, the barbell must contact the shoulders to begin the press.
- A strict press or seated version of the push press may be permitted as long as a fully locked-out finished position is achieved.
- Athletes may shrug or bounce their shoulders to get the press movement started. The press must be completed in one fluid motion.
- The athlete's arms should be fully extended at the top of the press. If this is not possible, the final lockout position should be shown to the referees before the lift.
- Although the barbell may pause on its way up, it cannot be lowered and then raised. Once the barbell descends, it is considered a no lift.

Weigh-in Procedure for Athletes Using Wheelchairs

- Wheelchair athletes can have their weigh-done up to 36 hours before the end of the weigh-in time for the competition.
- Wheelchair athletes can have support or medical staff assisting their weigh-in.
- Guidelines around weight classes for wheelchair users are still in development and will continue to be updated by WNZ in the future.

Athletes of Short Stature

Athletes compete in the able-bodied body weight category.

- Short-stature athletes are welcome and encouraged to join any adaptive showcase events and might have a specific adaptive category in the future.
- Short-stature athletes have a reduced length of the bones in the upper limbs, lower limbs, and trunk caused by an underlying health condition such as achondroplasia, growth hormone dysfunction, and osteogenesis imperfecta.
- Men can use the 15kg or 20kg bar when competing in this category. For Men choosing to compete in the able-bodied category, the 20kg bar must be used.
- Athletes are expected to indicate to the referees, in adherence to the IWF rules, if they cannot fully extend their arms. The same indication will be required in this category if full extension of the legs is not possible. All other IWF rules and regulations will apply during WNZ Competitions.