



## U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Veteran Assistance Program for Para-Equestrian Dressage Athletes

The VA supports military veterans in their efforts to represent the USA at International equestrian competitions. Veterans who demonstrate exceptional sport skills and the commitment necessary to pursue elite-level competition are given guidance on securing the training, support, and coaching needed to qualify for Team USA and achieve their Para Equestrian dreams.

The VA Para Equestrian Program helps to provide a monthly assistance allowance for disabled Veterans of the Armed Forces, as authorized by section 703 of the Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2008.

Through the program, the VA will pay a monthly allowance to a Veteran with a service-connected or non-service-connected disability if the Veteran meets the minimum military standard or higher (i.e. Emerging, Talent Pool, National Team) in his/her respective sport at a recognized competition.

### **GENERAL PARA-EQUESTRIAN DRESSAGE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:**

In addition to meeting the military standard, athletes must:

- Be 17 years or older as of December 1, 2014.
- Be a U.S. citizen/Veteran.
- Must be a current member in good standing of USEF at the time that the Required Scores are achieved.
- Be medically eligible in accordance with the FEI Classification Manual for Para-Equestrian Competitions, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 2012 and Article 8422 of the Rules for FEI Para-Equestrian Dressage Events to compete in Para-Equestrian dressage competitions. To do so, riders shall have either a national or international Para-Equestrian classification and be assigned a Grade. For more information regarding classification, visit the FEI website at <http://www.fei.org/disciplines/dressage/about-para-equestrian-dressage>. To schedule a national or international classification, contact Laureen Johnson at the USEF at 908-326-1155.
- Ride independently (without side aides).

### **REQUIRED SCORES:**

- A total of one score for each must be submitted as follows for the current competition year:
  - One "Championship Team" test score;
  - One "Individual" test score;
- The minimum score of any Individual or Championship test submitted must be 60% or higher;
- Scores may be submitted from any horse/rider combination;
  - Submit one score of 60% or better from the current competition year;
  - Scores shall be achieved at the championship test of the rider's Grade level or at any test which is above the rider's Grade level. These levels are as follows:
    - For Grade I riders – USDF Walk Trot Test
    - For Grade II riders – USDF Walk Trot Test
    - For Grade III riders – First Level Test 4 or above
    - For Grade IV riders – Third Level Test 1 or above
- All test scores (both rider and/or horse) must be achieved at USEF or FEI Para-Equestrian licensed competitions. FEI PE tests must be scored by a USEF "R" rated judge or above, or an FEI PE recognized judge.

### **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

- Athletes are required to submit legible copies of all qualifying tests, clearly indicating the name of the judge and competition at which the scores were achieved to Laureen Johnson, USEF High Performance Director of Para-Equestrian Programs at the address below.

USEF

P.O. Box 83

Gladstone, NJ 07934

[lkjohnson@usef.org](mailto:lkjohnson@usef.org)

Attention: Laureen Johnson, High Performance Director of Para Equestrian & Vaulting Programs

USEF Fax: 908-719-7588

Once received by the USEF, the scores will be recorded and added to the USEF Para-Equestrian Dressage Ranking List. Eligibility Certification will then be forwarded to Michael Welch of the VA for consideration to the Veterans Assistance Program.

To learn more about the Para-Equestrian monthly assistance allowance, contact Laureen Johnson, USEF, at [lkjohnson@usef.org](mailto:lkjohnson@usef.org) or 908-326-1155 or Michael Welch, Paralympic Program Specialist, Office of National Veterans Sports Programs and Special Events at the Department of Veterans Affairs at [Michael.Welch5@va.gov](mailto:Michael.Welch5@va.gov) or 202-632-7136. Web: <http://www.va.gov/adaptivesports/>