



Hobart Dog Training Club

Disability Inclusion & Reasonable Accommodation Policy

Purpose & Scope

This policy ensures all handlers, members, and visitors with disabilities have equitable access to Hobart Dog Training Club facilities, training classes, trials, and social events.

This policy applies to all physical venues, digital communications, and operational activities managed by the club.

Guiding Principles

- **Person-First Approach:** Focus on individual capabilities and collaborate directly with the participant on required modifications.
- **Safety First:** Accommodations will be implemented without compromising the safety, health, and welfare of humans or dogs on site.
- **Confidentiality:** All personal and medical details disclosed during the accommodation request process will remain strictly confidential.

What the Club Will Provide

The club commits to making proactive modifications where practically feasible:

Physical & Environmental Accessibility

- **Pathways:** Keeping main walkways, training areas, and spectator areas wide (minimum 1.2m where possible) and free of barriers or potential trip hazards.
- **Parking:** Reserving conveniently located, accessible parking spaces close to the training locations or club rooms.
- **Facilities:** Ensuring clear, well-signed paths to wheelchair-accessible restrooms and club main desk.
- **Sensory Adjustments:** Offering low-sensory options upon request, such as dimming high-glare indoor lights, scheduling sensitive handlers during quieter class blocks and providing 'quiet areas' at off-site trials.

Training, Coaching, & Event Modifications

- **Adapted Instruction:** Instructors will endeavour to modify their teaching styles and provide additional information to accommodate student needs (e.g., visual descriptions, physical demonstrations, or written training sheets).
- **Modified Ring Rules:** Allow modifications of ring behaviour as long as safety is not compromised e.g., allowing a handler to use a mobility scooter, sit on a chair while training, or use specialized adaptive leashes.

- **Alternative Assessment:** Offering extended time or adjusted environments for evaluating training milestones and club-level certifications.
- **Flexible Attendance:** Providing flexible attendance or catch-up material if a disability affects a member's ability to attend class consistently.

Assistance Animals on Club Grounds

The club explicitly distinguishes between **Accredited Assistance Animals** and companion/pet dogs.

- **Access Rights:** Fully qualified assistance dogs (e.g., Guide Dogs, Hearing Dogs, Medical Alert or Psychiatric Service Dogs) have full public access rights to all public club spaces. Assistance dogs in training will be given access appropriate to their level of training, as advised by the organisation responsible for the dog's training.
- **Proof of Status:** The club reserves the right to request appropriate verification if it is not obvious that the dog is an assistance animal (e.g., a state-issued handler ID card, a training organization vest, or medical documentation confirming the dog's trained task nexus).
- **Behaviour Standard:** Like all dogs on site, assistance dogs must be under full control, demonstrate appropriate public hygiene, and not pose a direct threat or nuisance to other dogs or humans.

Requesting modifications

- **Request:** Members may request modifications via the club/class enrolment form, or by contacting their class instructor, the Head Instructor or any Committee Member.
- **Consultation:** The Head Instructor will discuss options with the handler to find a practical, safe solution.
- **Implementation:** Approved accommodations will be communicated confidentially to the specific class instructors or event trial secretaries.

Limitations & Unjustifiable Hardship

The club is not required to make adjustments that cause "unjustifiable hardship" or present a safety hazard. This includes:

- Varying club rules if such variation is deemed to create a safety hazard.
- Altering rules for sports/trials regulated nationally by ANKC.
- Allowing any handler or dog to participate if they exhibit aggressive or unsafe behaviour.
- Undertaking major structural renovations that exceed the club's financial resources (in which case alternative workarounds will be explored).