



Program Access (Inclusion)

Making the Right Choice

What is Program Access?

Program Access, also referred to as “Inclusion”, within the Montgomery County Department of Parks is the means by which individuals with disabilities are welcome to participate in recreational programs and activities of their choice. Reasonable modifications are provided to enable an individual’s successful participation in a program. Some minimum eligibility requirements (age, level of participation) must be met in order to participate.

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

- Ongoing training provided for support staff
- An enhanced staff/participant ratio
- Sign interpretation for the deaf and hard of hearing
- Adaptive activity equipment and/or supplies
- Accessible transportation is provided with two weeks advance notice when transportation is provided as part of an activity or program

What are the minimum requirements for success?

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 modifications)
- 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 modifications, 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 included in when providing program access?

Program Access **does 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 modifications, 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

However, support staff may be provided to enhance the existing recreation program by providing adaptations and/or behavioral interventions.

Is this program the right choice and/or experience for me?

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

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

What other choices are available for individuals with disabilities?

The Montgomery County Department of Recreation offers specialized Therapeutic Recreation programs for individuals with disabilities. Some patrons prefer to participate in separate specialized programs designed specifically for participants with disabilities. For specialized program inquiries, please call Montgomery Recreation at 240-777-6870.

For information on program access opportunities and program modifications, call:

Genevieve Jennai, Countywide Program Access Specialist
301-495-2477