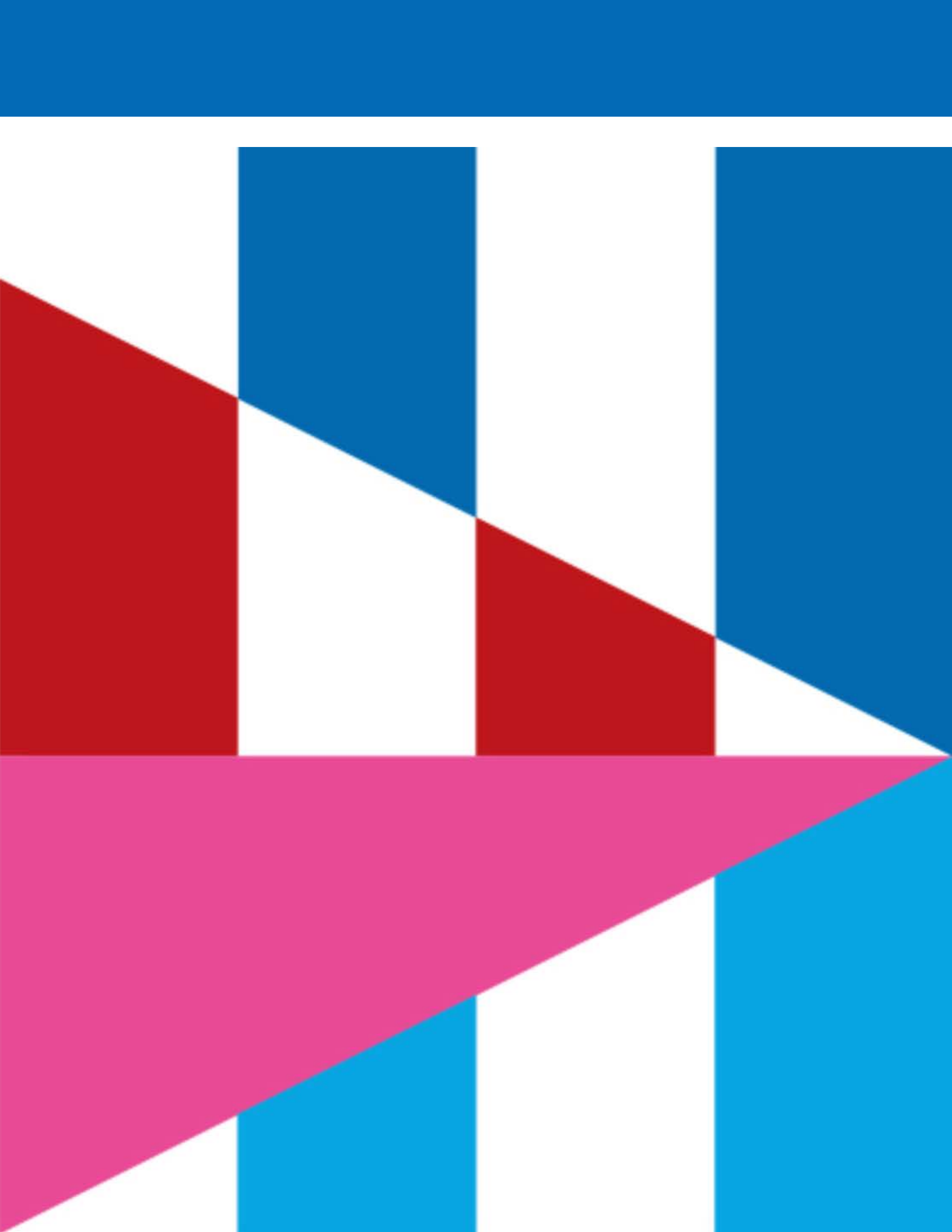


NEW TEAM PLAYBOOK



**MOVE
UNITED**

**USA WHEELCHAIR
FOOTBALL LEAGUE**



At the USA Wheelchair Football League, we're **redefining disability** and **pushing the boundaries of what's possible** in a competitive team setting, **allowing athletes to reach their highest potential** on the football field.

As a potential expansion team, you have the power to impact the lives of athletes with disabilities, helping them to **get off the sidelines, get in the game**, and build skills like **perseverance, teamwork, goal setting** and **fitness**. Your program is key in **preparing athletes to be at their best** both on and off the field.

Joining the USA Wheelchair Football League is a commitment to competing against teams from across the country at a minimum of two tournaments each year. To make sure teams can compete at the highest level, Move United will provide access to high-quality coaches training and opportunities to apply for grants to help cover the costs of equipment, travel, coaching costs, and more.

Included in this playbook you'll find answers to many of the questions teams and organizations have as they first start to plan for to include a competitive wheelchair football program to their offerings. This playbook is not designed to be an all-inclusive training for starting a program.

In addition to the items outlined in this book, the USA Wheelchair Football League encourages interested program representatives to sign up for an online or in-person training course through Move United. If your team is included in the League, required online training courses will include: Coaches Certification, Diversity and Inclusion training, and Coaching the Adaptive Athlete 101 to ensure your program is ready to work with athletes of all walks of life. The Move United Learning Platform will launch in early 2021.

Should you have any questions after you've thoroughly reviewed the materials in this playbook, please don't hesitate to reach out.

See you on the field!



Karalyn Stott

Program Manager, Move United
Commissioner, USA Wheelchair Football League

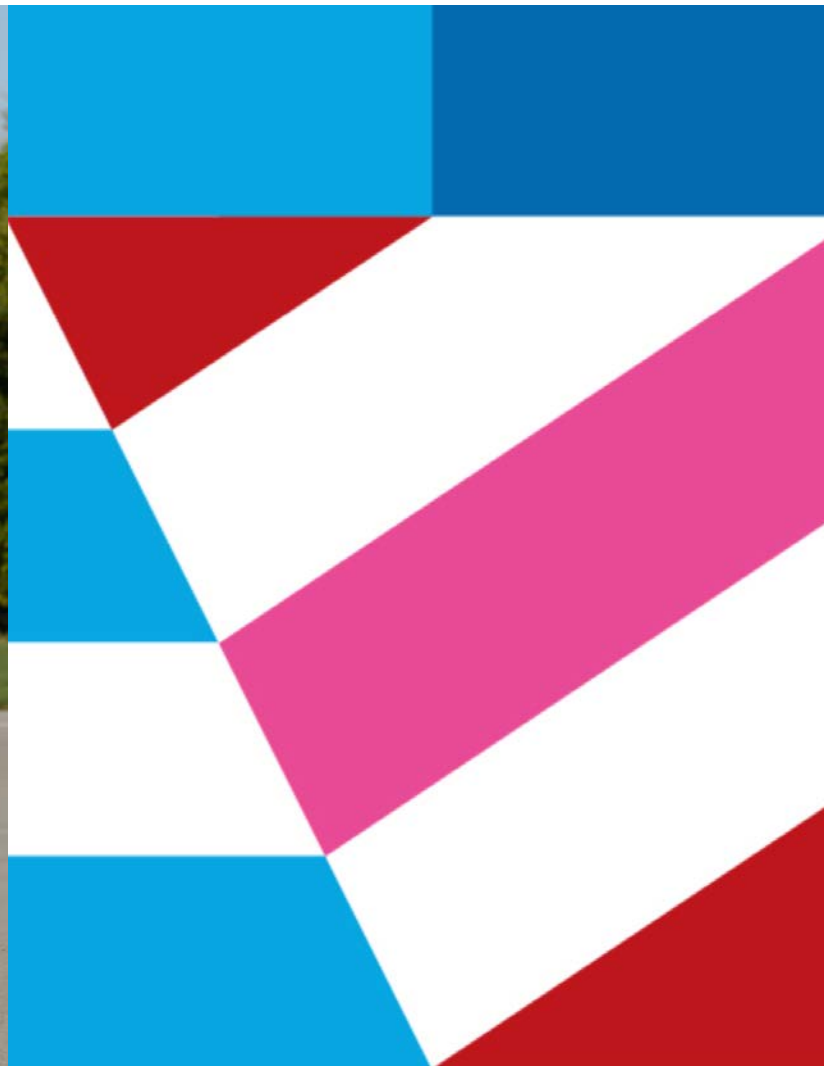
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GET IN THE GAME!
USAWFL.ORG



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OUR VISION



The USA Wheelchair Football League brings together **highly trained coaches** with **passionate athletes**, building skills and inspiring athletes to excel both on and off the field through **teamwork, dedication, and resilience.**

LEAGUE GROWTH

To see this vision through, we must first build a solid foundation for the League. Slow and steady growth allows Move United an opportunity to provide more funding to teams, while thoroughly vetting and evaluating League-wide programs to ensure the sustainability of The USA Wheelchair Football League for years to come. This foundation building ensures the USAWFL is prepared for rapid growth in the future.

HOW DOES YOUR TEAM FIT IN?

For the foreseeable future, expansion will be available to teams either by invitation only or through a small group application. Each fall, Move United will decide upon expansion goals, such as growth into new regions, teams that serve underrepresented groups, and more. Then we will contact teams from the interest list who match the year's goals about applying for admission.

Additionally, teams will be required to be Move United member organizations, and agree to all USA Wheelchair Football League requirements.

Show your interest in joining the USA Wheelchair Football League. Fill out the form under “Apply to Become an Expansion Team” at usawfl.org.



CREATING YOUR BUDGET

How much does putting together a wheelchair football program cost?

It is difficult to provide an exact budget, as many items, such as facility rental or coaching fees will vary by program and geographic location. Use this chart as a starting point for line items you'll want to include to start your budgeting process for your first year.

LINE ITEM	MINIMUM QTY NEEDED	RECOMMENDED QTY
EQUIPMENT		
WHEELCHAIRS	7	14
REPLACEMENT WHEELS, TUBING, ETC.		
HELMETS	7	14
HELMET FACE SHIELDS		<i>For Covid Prevention</i>
FOOTBALLS	3	7-10
BALL PUMPS	1	1
JERSEYS	7	7
PRACTICE SUPPLIES		<i>Practice Supply Quantities Determined by Athlete Numbers</i>
CONES		
TAPE		
WHISTLES		
CLIPBOARDS		
SUNSCREEN (IF PRACTICES ARE OUTSIDE)		
WATER/HYDRATION SYSTEM		
FIRST AID MATERIALS		
FACILITIES		
PRACTICE FACILITY RENTAL	1	1
TOURNAMENT TRAVEL		
	2 TOURNAMENTS/SEASON	
TEAM FLIGHTS/GROUND TRAVEL	7 Players	10-14 Players
COACH FLIGHTS/GROUND TRAVEL	1 Coach	2 Coaches
TEAM LODGING	7 Players	10-14 Players
COACH LODGING	1 Coach	2 Coaches
TEAM MEALS/PER DIEMS		
COACHING		
COACHING PAYMENTS/FEES	1 Volunteer	1-2 Coaches
COACHING CLINIC FEES	1 Coach	1-2 Coaches
BACKGROUND CHECKS	<i>Only required if including athletes 17 and Under</i>	
OFFICIATING		
OFFICIATING FEES	0	4-6 Officials
OFFICIATING CLINIC FEES	0	4-6 Officials
BACKGROUND CHECKS	<i>Only required if including athletes 17 and Under</i>	
INSURANCE		
TEAM INSURANCE		

FINDING FUNDING



CAN MOVE UNITED HELP?

Every year, Move United plans to provide funding for USAWFL teams to assist with purchase of equipment, travel to tournaments, and other team-related costs. Grant awards may vary by year and have other restrictions, such as minimum number of veterans served. Teams will be notified each year when the grant period opens.

NFL INVOLVEMENT

The USAWFL is proud that this program is made possible in part thanks to an NFL-BWF Salute to Service partnership. This partnership provides teams the opportunity to partner with their local franchise team.

NOTE: Partnerships require approval through NFL League Offices in New York and cannot be negotiated at the local level. Please DO NOT reach out to your local NFL franchise team to start this process. This outreach could adversely affect the USAWFL and your team's chances at acceptance as an expansion team.

Move United can work with you on partnership agreements after you've been accepted as an expansion team. Some restrictions apply.



YEAR 1 TIMELINE



JANUARY

- Confirm Coaching Staff
- Confirm Practice Venues
- Draft Practice Schedule

FEBRUARY

- Receive Tournament Schedule for the Year
- Create Team Recruitment Materials
- Start Team Recruitment

MARCH

- Order All Personal Equipment
Wheelchairs, Helmets, Footballs

APRIL

- Host Team Tryouts
Recommend a Minimum of 2
- Coaches Register for Move United Trainings
DEI, Coaching the Adaptive Athlete, Etc.

MAY

- Order All Additional Team Equipment
- Create Team Guidelines & Expectations
- Team Practice Roster Finalized

JUNE

- Start Team Practices
- Confirm Classification Dates

YEAR 1 TIMELINE



- Team Travel Roster Finalized
- All Paperwork Submitted to Move United
Roster, Coaches Training Paperwork, Proof of Insurance

JULY

- Season Play Begins (Tournament Travel)
Recommend booking travel a minimum of 4 weeks prior to each tournament

AUGUST

- Continue Season Practices & Tournament Play

SEPTEMBER

- Season Play Ends
- Team Awards/Wrap Up Meetings

OCTOBER

- Submit Post-Season Feedback to Move United
- Apply to Continue Playing in the League for Following Year
- Apply to Host a Tournament the Following Year

NOVEMBER

- Receive Rules Updates for Following Year

DECEMBER

TRAINING FACILITY



FULL FIELD VS. PARTIAL FIELD

Find full field dimensions
in the USA Wheelchair
Football League Rulebook
at usawfl.org

At 76 yards long by 22 yards wide, a wheelchair football field might feel large and difficult to come by. While it is true that many indoor facilities might not be large enough to set up a full field, we encourage you to get creative in your practice planning and remember that not every practice needs to utilize the full length of the field.

As you'll learn in your coach's training, many drills should be run using half a field length, or working the field sideline to sideline versus end zone to end zone, particularly during skill building portions of the season. In general, if coaches are creative in how they structure their practices and drills, a regular-sized basketball court would likely be acceptable for the majority of practices.

If you plan to host to apply a tournament at your venue, please review the field dimensions in the USAWFL Playbook to ensure it meets the full field requirements. Year 1 Teams will not need to host a tournament.



TRAINING FACILITY



INDOOR VS. OUTDOOR

The USA Wheelchair Football League allows teams to choose their own venues, and as in the collegiate and professional game, indoor and outdoor venues are both acceptable. A venue choice can even provide home field advantages should you host a tournament.

Indoor Ideas:

- Schools
- Town Rec Centers
- YMCAs or Boys & Girls Clubs
- Local Fitness Facilities

Outdoor Ideas:

- Parking Lots
- Top Levels of Parking Garages
- Miracle Fields

CEILING HEIGHT

If your team is leaning towards an indoor venue, or a covered outdoor location, in addition to the floor space, take into account the height of the ceiling in order to ensure athletes are able to properly throw a ball inside. We recommend a height of no less than 30 feet to ensure your teams can build proper throwing skills, and help prevent property damage to your venue from high arcing footballs.



TRAINING FACILITY



LOCATION

When looking to incorporate a wide range of athletes from various backgrounds, the location of your practice venue is important. Many athletes may rely on public transportation. Athletes might not be able to, or feel comfortable accessing venues in suburbs. Additionally, if practice times require athletes to navigate traffic or longer commutes, this could affect athletes with jobs or families. Consider a venue that is centralized, rotating venues across a couple of sites, or providing a pickup from an accessible transportation stop for those who might need that.

ACCESSIBILITY

Ensure your venue is accessible for your athletes. That means having enough accessible parking, bathroom/locker room space, hydration stations at an appropriate height, etc.

A venue accessibility checklist can be found at the end of this playbook.





RECRUITING COACHES



WHAT SKILLS TO LOOK FOR?

Find upcoming in-person coaches training dates or register for virtual trainings at usawfl.org

Good coaches are key to a team's success. Remember that many hard skills, such as X's and O's of football and disability specifics can be taught, but many soft skills, such as passion and empathy are harder to train into a coach.

When looking for a coach, consider the following groups to pitch your program:

- Current or Former Volunteers
- Current or Former Parents/Family Members
- Current or Former Football Coaches
 - Are there coaches in your community with experience at the youth, high school, or even collegiate level?
- Alumni or Players
- College Students

No matter who you're recruiting, don't forget to emphasize the resources your team and the USAWFL will offer them to ensure they will be prepared for their job. This includes trainings, help with practice planning and organization, payment, help with travel, swag or other perks, or anything you'll do to make their job easier. Coaches who feel appreciated and a key part of the process are more likely to return for future years and create the consistency of a good program.

RECRUITING COACHES



TRAINING & DOCUMENTATION

Whether your coach is on the payroll or not, ensure you provide them with the appropriate training and support they'll need. Create a job description and be clear about the time commitment involved, along with other requirements and expectations for the role. Clearly document all training provided as it relates to both football and HR policies within your organization. The more formal you can make the process, the better for all involved.

FOCUS ON INCLUSION

At Move United, we believe it's essential to include coaches and athletes from all perspectives and walks of life so that everyone is included, valued and accepted. When recruiting coaches and program volunteers, it is important to ensure you are not unintentionally discriminating against groups of people through language choices, recruitment practices, or other unconscious biases. Make sure a wide range of people are reviewing program materials so that you get input from a diverse group. Additionally, we encourage you to specifically reach out to underserved groups and create mentorship or training practices that help grow the pipeline for coaches and volunteers who might not previously have had opportunities to participate.



RECRUITING ATHLETES



ESSENTIAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

For ideas on recruitment strategies for adaptive athletes in your community, visit the [Move United Resource Library](#) and review the [recruitment webinars](#).

To compete in the USA Wheelchair Football League, an athlete must "have a permanent physical disability which consistently reduces the function of the lower limbs to a degree where they cannot run, pivot, block or tackle, at the speed and with the control, safety, stability and endurance required to play stand-up football."

If you are running a recreational program, or need athletes to help with scrimmages, able-bodied athletes or those who don't fit into classification categories are welcome to participate.

To ensure the safety of all players on the field, an athlete in the USA Wheelchair Football League must also meet the following essential eligibility criteria:

- Athlete must be able to breathe without mechanical assistance
- Athlete must not require head, neck or back bracing
- Athlete must be able to independently manage their own personal care
- Athlete must be able to wear a standard football helmet
- Athlete must be able to follow instructions from officials and effectively communicate independently or with the help of a coach or companion
- Athlete must be able to stay alert and engaged for the length of a play on the field

TEAM PLANNING



CREATING TEAM GOALS

For more information on practice planning, player skill building, safety awareness and more, register for a USAWFL Coaches Training. at usawfl.org

A successful team is always working towards a common goal. What are the goals you have for your program. Do you want to create a cohesive team experience? Do you want to win a national championship? Do you want athletes to report an increased level of fitness and football knowledge? Maybe it's some combination of the three. Think this through prior to the start of the season, so your team knows what they are working towards together. Then create a written list of guidelines and expectations for your team that will help you reach those goals.

Once you've written down your goals, guidelines, and expectations, it's your job as a coach to make sure that your season and practice sessions are all built around those goals.

If your primary goal is team cohesion, maybe that includes more off-site practices not focused specifically on skill-building or sessions where players trade off being team leaders? How many times per week do you want to meet? When will you start practice? What skills will you focus on first? Sketching out at least a rough arc for your practice season, and setting benchmarks for various points in the season before players hit the field on day one will help keep you on track for your goals.

RISK MANAGEMENT



INSURANCE

USA Wheelchair Football League Teams must maintain a policy of Commercial General Liability Insurance in an occurrence format in an amount of no less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 per annual aggregate with no “participant or spectator exclusions”, covering liability arising out of premises operations, personal and advertising injury, products-completed operations, contractual liability and independent contractors, applicable to any claims, liabilities, damages, costs or expenses arising out of the wheelchair football program. Teams must provide a certificate of insurance evidencing proof of all insurance required and naming Move United as an additional insured for the duration of this agreement.

Note: Move United Member Organization policies already meet or exceed this criteria.

CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

Teams should ensure they have a concussion protocol that follows the recommendations of the USA Wheelchair Football League. Concussion protocol can be found at www.usawfl.org.

RISK MANAGEMENT



EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

Ensure all staff knows what to do in case of an emergency. The seven components of an effective plan include emergency personnel, emergency communication, emergency equipment, medical emergency transportation, venue directions with a map, roles of first responders, and emergency action plan for non-medical emergencies

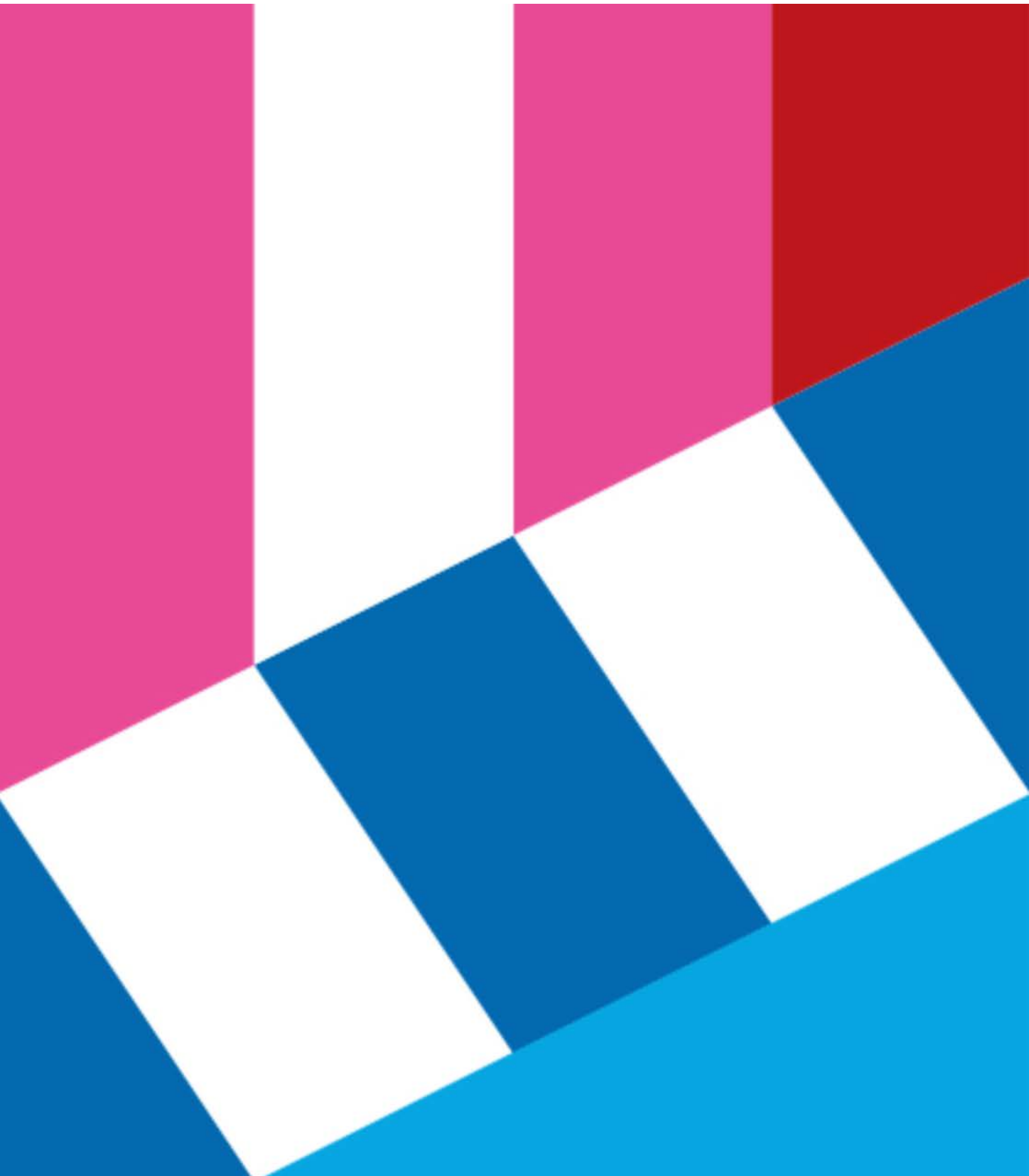
Key questions to consider:

- Is a medical professional on-site or does all coaching staff have a number of an available medical professional?
- Does onsite staff have access to emergency contact information?
- Does onsite staff know if players have any existing allergies or pre-existing conditions that might affect medical care?
- Is there cell phone access throughout the facility, or do we need to account for dead zones?

A finalized plan should be clearly posted and provided to all coaching staff and volunteers.

A sample plan is at the back of this Playbook

SAMPLES



ACCESSIBILITY CHECKLIST

ITEM

AVAILABLE

PARKING

- NEAR ENTRANCE
- ACCESSIBLE SPACES ARE 8' WIDE WITH 5 FOOT AISLE
- ACCESSIBLE SPACES ARE CLOSE TO ACCESSIBLE ENTRANCE
- ENOUGH SPACES TO ACCOMODATE ATHLETES

PATHS & TRAVEL ROUTES

- PATHS TO PROGRAM AREAS, RESTROOMS, WATER FOUNTAINS ARE MARKED AND CLEAR FROM OBSTACLES
- ALTERNATIVE ROUTES AVAILABLE FOR STEEP CURBS, STAIRS, GRASS, GRAVEL, ETC.
- CLEAR SIGNAGE FOR ACCESSIBLE ROUTES/ENTRANCES
- WIDTH OF AREAS IN USE CAN ACCOMMODATE WHEELCHAIRS (MIN. 36")
- ALL ELEVATORS ARE IN WORKING ORDER
- SURFACES ARE STABLE, FIRM & SLIP-RESISTANT

SIGNAGE/COMMUNICATION

- CLEARLY MARKED & PROMINENT
- ACCESSIBLE (BRAILLE, COLORS THAT ARE EASY TO READ)

ACCOMODATIONS

- ALTERNATIVE EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE WHERE NEEDED
- ACCESSIBLE RESTROOMS IN CLOSE PROXIMITY
- WATER FOUNTAINS IN CLOSE PROXIMITY AND AT APPROPRIATE HEIGHT



EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

TO BE DONE

ASSIGNED TO

TO BE BROUGHT OUT EACH DAY

FIRST AID KIT	COACH SMITH
AED (IF AVAILABLE)	COACH SMITH
EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBER LIST	COACH SMITH

IN CASE OF MILD INJURY

PROVIDE NECESSARY CARE	COACH SMITH
CHECK FOR CONCUSSION SYMPTOMS	COACH SMITH
MONITOR ATHLETE FOR THE REST OF PRACTICE OR UNTIL EMERGENCY CONTACT/ADDITIONAL MEDICAL HELP ARRIVES	COACH DOE
FILL OUT INCIDENT PAPERWORK/DOCUMENT INJURY	COACH SMITH

IN CASE OF SERIOUS INJURY

CALL 911	COACH DOE
PROVIDE NECESSARY ON-SITE CARE	COACH SMITH
PROVIDE ADDITIONAL HELP/DIRECTIONS TO EMERGENCY PERSONNEL	COACH DOE
TAKE TEAM MEMBERS TO ANOTHER AREA	COACH BALL
FILL OUT INCIDENT PAPERWORK/DOCUMENT INJURY	COACH SMITH

OTHER QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

IS A MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL ON-SITE OR DOES ALL COACHING STAFF HAVE THE NUMBER OF AN AVAILABLE MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL?

DO WE HAVE ACCESS TO EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION?

DO WE KNOW IF PLAYERS HAVE ANY EXISTING ALLERGIES THAT MIGHT AFFECT MEDICAL CARE?

IS THERE CELL PHONE ACCESS THROUGHOUT THE FACILITY, OR DO WE NEED TO ACCOUNT FOR DEAD ZONES?

WHO WE ARE

ABOUT THE USA WHEELCHAIR FOOTBALL LEAGUE

The USA Wheelchair Football League is the first of its kind football league for adults with disabilities to reach their highest potential through a competitive, fast-paced, team sport. The USA Wheelchair Football League brings together highly trained coaches with passionate athletes, building skills and inspiring athletes to excel both on and off the field through teamwork, dedication, and resilience. Starting in four cities in 2020, the League will expand across the United States providing more opportunities for athletes and coaches to grow their skills and their love for football. The USA Wheelchair Football League is made possible in part by an NFL-BWF Salute to Service partnership to provide a 'Healthy Lifestyles and Creating Community' grant.

[Get off the sidelines and get into the game at usawfl.org.](http://usawfl.org)



SALUTE TO SERVICE

GRANT RECIPIENT



ABOUT MOVE UNITED

Move United is the national leader in community adaptive sports, empowering 100,000 youth and adults with disabilities each year to live to their fullest potential. Move United's 200 member organizations in 43 states are united by a single mission: ensuring everyone, regardless of ability, experiences the life-changing power of sport and is fully included in their community.

Move United, an Affiliate of the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee, provides opportunities for individuals with disabilities to become physically and emotionally stronger through participation in more than 50 adaptive sports. Established in 1956, Move United offers community-based sports recreation, education and competition that push people further, bring people closer and leave no one on the sidelines.

[Join our MOVEment at moveunitedsport.org.](http://moveunitedsport.org)



