



2026 EQUESTRIAN CANADA PARA DRESSAGE DISPENSATION CERTIFICATE INFORMATION

The Equestrian Canada (EC) Para Dressage Dispensation Certificate allows riders with a physical, visual and/or sensory impairment to compete at EC-sanctioned dressage competitions.

It is very important that you take the opportunity to read through this document, as it has detailed information on the use of compensating aids or adaptive equipment at EC Dressage competitions.

Riders with an impairment may compete in both dressage competitions and in para dressage specific classes.

- All riders who are competing in an EC Bronze level Para specific class must submit a Dispensation Certificate, regardless of whether or not they require compensating aids or adaptive equipment, ~~or not~~ with their entry to the Show Secretary.
- All riders with a physical and/or sensory impairment competing in EC Bronze-level Para Dressage classes must hold an EC Para Dressage Dispensation Certificate. The certificate identifies the compensating aids or adaptive equipment the athlete is permitted to use in competition.
- All approved compensating aids or adaptive equipment must be listed on the Dispensation Certificate. Any compensating aids or adaptive equipment not listed will not be permitted for use in competition.
- Riders with an impairment who use compensating aid(s) and are competing in EC Silver or Gold level dressage shows must have an EC classification profile or a copy of the current EC Classification Master List that identifies the compensating aid(s) they are permitted to use in competition.
- Please reference to the FEI Para Dressage Rules Annex IV Compensating Aids or Adaptive Equipment Summary Chart on the FEI website for a list of profile specific Compensating Aids or Adaptive Equipment - [LINK](#)
- Compensating aids and adaptive equipment are used by athletes to compensate for physical limitations resulting from impairment and enable them to ride a horse. For example, a hand hold on the front of the saddle enables someone with a high-level spinal cord injury to balance safely on a horse.

Compensating aids or adaptive equipment are not to be used to compensate for lack of riding skill or provide an advantage to enhance the horse's performance – this would be considered a training aid. The well-being of the horse is paramount in considering the use of any compensating aid.

It is the responsibility of each athlete and coach to ensure all compensating aids or adaptive equipment used in competition have been documented correctly on the athlete's EC Para Dressage Dispensation Certificate and are approved by the EC Para Dressage Department.



Athletes With a Physical, Visual and/or Sensory Impairment

- All riders competing in an EC Bronze level para-specific class must submit a Dispensation Certificate application, regardless of whether they require compensating aids or adaptive equipment.
- Riders with an physical, visual and/or sensory impairment who use compensating aids or adaptive equipment and are competing in EC Silver or Gold level dressage shows must have an EC classification profile or a copy of the current EC Classification Master List -[LINK](#) that identifies the non-standard compensating aids or adaptive equipment that they are permitted to use in competition.

Exception: Riders with hearing loss only may use the EC Para Dressage Dispensation Certificate at EC Bronze, Silver and Gold level dressage competitions. The compensating aid allowed for hearing impairment is a two-way communication device, provided that the athlete uses only one earpiece to enable them to hear any directions from the steward. Riders with documented hearing impairment may also use headsets if the competition organizer is able to provide a supervisor to stand with the caller. An EC Para Dressage Dispensation Certificate indicating the athlete's hearing impairment must be submitted with the competition entry and the steward and judge must be advised.

EC Para Dressage Dispensation Guidelines

1. All riders with physical, visual and/or sensory impairment who wish to compete—whether with or without compensating aids or adaptive equipment —must have either:
 - An EC Para Dressage Dispensation Certificate (Bronze-level competitions only), or
 - An EC Classification Profile (Silver- and Gold-level competitions)

The applicable documentation must clearly identify all approved compensating aids or adaptive equipment, including both standard and non-standard aids.

2. The EC Para Dressage Athlete Master List is a *separate list* from the EC Classification Master List and applies exclusively to Bronze-level competitions. It includes the athlete's name, approved compensating aids or adaptive equipment, and the dispensation expiry date.
3. Athletes competing at the Bronze level must submit a copy of their EC Para Dressage Dispensation Certificate and/or ensure their name appears on the EC Para Dressage Athlete Master List – [LINK](#) when submitting competition entries.

Athletes competing at the Silver or Gold level must be listed on the EC Classification Master List or provide a copy of their EC Classification Profile.

They must also carry a copy of the relevant documentation with them at all times while on the competition grounds.

4. Competition organizers must notify officials prior to the start of the competition if a rider will be competing using an EC Para Dressage Dispensation Certificate (Bronze level) or an EC Classification Profile (Silver/Gold levels).

They are required to provide the officials with a copy of the athlete's EC Para Dressage Dispensation Certificate **or** the relevant section of the EC Para Dressage Athlete Master List **or** EC Classification Master List, as applicable.



5. The competition steward(s) and officials have both the right and responsibility to inspect compensating aids or adaptive equipment and determine whether any aid poses a safety risk to the horse and/or rider. It is essential that the athlete can fall free from the horse at all times.
6. Where electronic communication is authorized on a rider's EC Para Dressage Dispensation Certificate (Bronze level) or noted within their EC Classification Profile (Silver/Gold levels), the individual providing communication to the athlete in the ring must be positioned beside or next to a competition official.
7. At the Bronze level, athletes may compete at the grade in which they feel most comfortable performing. However, they are encouraged to compete at the highest level that matches their ability.
8. If a rider does not apply for renewal within two (2) months of their dispensation certificate's expiration, the dispensation certificate will expire.

Completion of the EC Para Dressage Dispensation Certificate

1. Riders must review with their coach the compensating aids or adaptive equipment they may require. The rider's physician must complete and sign the Diagnosis Information Form (link to form) included in the EC Para Dressage Dispensation application.
2. The completed EC Para Dressage Dispensation Certificate application must be submitted to the EC Para Dressage Department. All sections of the application must be completed.
3. A copy of the application will remain on file at the EC Para Dressage Department and will not be shared publicly. Submission with competition entries is not required..
4. Athletes are responsible for ensuring all compensating aids and adaptive equipment used in Bronze-level competition are correctly documented on their EC Para Dressage Dispensation Certificate. Any compensating aid not listed on the certificate is not permitted in competition.
5. The EC Para Dressage Dispensation Certificate remains valid until the expiry date listed on the certificate.
6. The Para Dressage Classification Advisory Group (CAG) reviews each application and determines whether it is approved.
7. The CAG may request additional documentation before approving the certificate.



APPENDIX 1

EC PARA DRESSAGE DISPENSATION CERTIFICATE APPLICATION FORM

(PAGE 1 OF 3)

This form must be completed by all riders wishing to compete in EC Bronze Dressage or Para Dressage classes, regardless of whether they use compensating aids or adaptive equipment.

Riders are responsible for requesting a new or renewed EC Para Dressage Dispensation Certificate using this form. Applications should be submitted before the expiry date, as all certificates expire annually.

All applications are reviewed and approved by the Para Dressage Classification Advisory Group (CAG).

ALL SECTIONS OF THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETED. PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY.

Full Name: _____ **EC Sport Licence Number:** _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ **Province/Territory/State:** _____ **Postal Code:** _____

Phone: (____) _____ - _____ **Email:** _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____ (DD/ MM /YYYY)

Gender: Female Male X



APPENDIX 1

EC PARA DRESSAGE DISPENSATION CERTIFICATE APPLICATION FORM

(PAGE 2 OF 3)

Briefly explain your medical impairment and how it affects you in everyday living skills (e.g. strength, mobility, etc.):

Athletes may use approved compensating aids or adaptive equipment necessary for riding. These aids must not provide an advantage over other athletes. Riders are encouraged to use the minimal number of aids required.

Standard Compensating Aids or Adaptive Equipment: Salute with head only, sitting or rising trot, gloves, spurs, any type of saddle, soft hand hold, deep saddle, elastic bands on stirrups, enclosed stirrups, magnetic stirrups, one (1) whip, breast plate and/or neck strap, split rein on double bridle, elastic inserts in reins, safety vest (including inflatable)

All standard aids used must be listed on the Dispensation Certificate request.

Please reference the FEI Para Dressage Rules – Article 8432 and Annex 4.

IMPORTANT – PLEASE LIST ALL COMPENSATING AIDS or ADAPTIVE EQUIPMENT YOU ARE REQUESTING:

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APPENDIX 1

EC PARA DRESSAGE DISPENSATION CERTIFICATE APPLICATION FORM

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Please review and confirm your agreement with the statements below by checking each box:

- I confirm that I have submitted this EC Para Dressage Dispensation application to EC.
- I understand that this application is for a new or renewed EC Para Dressage Dispensation Certificate for EC-sanctioned Para Dressage and Dressage competitions.
- I consent to EC maintaining and processing my personal data, including my full name, date of birth, discipline, and relevant medical documentation, in any format.
- I consent to EC publishing my name and approved compensating aids or adaptive equipment and sharing this information with third parties, including competition organizers, show officials.
- I agree that video or photography may be used to confirm my eligibility for a Para Dressage Dispensation Certificate or classification grade, including my activity on or off the field of play during equestrian activity.
- I certify that my EC Sport Licence is valid and current.
- I agree to hold harmless and indemnify EC from any liability for property damage, personal injury to myself or any third party, or injury to my horse arising from the use of compensating aids or adaptive equipment. I acknowledge and agree to abide by all EC bylaws, policies, rules, and regulations.
- I confirm that I have reviewed Para Dressage compensating aids or adaptive equipment information and discussed my compensating aids or adaptive equipment with my coach.

Acknowledgment and Consent By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understand the terms and procedures of the national classification process as outlined above. I agree to participate in all required bench and functional tests as part of the classification process.		
Athlete Name (please print)		
Date of Birth	___ / ___ / ___ (DD/MM/YYYY)	
Have you ever applied for National Classification before?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
What Grade was allocated		
Signature of Athlete / Guardian / Other Responsible Person:		
Print Name:		
Date: ___ / ___ / ___ (DD/MM/YYYY)		



APPENDIX 2

EC PARA DRESSAGE DISPENSATION CERTIFICATE APPLICATION FORM

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This section must be completed by a licensed Doctor of Medicine.
Please print in block letters. Attach additional sheets if more space is required.

Instructions for the Physician:

Medical information is required for riders seeking to compete at EC Bronze-level competitions.

The information is used to confirm whether the rider has a permanent and verifiable impairment that may qualify under the Para Dressage classification system. Impairments must result in measurable activity limitations.

Provide results of relevant medical tests and investigations demonstrating a diagnosis that explains the rider's physical impairments.

Examples of supporting documentation: MRI, EMG, or other relevant test results.

PHYSICIAN CERTIFICATION

To be completed by the examining physician

The physician must certify the rider's diagnosis and provide their signature, license number, and official stamp.

Applicant Name: _____

Certification Statement:

I hereby certify that I have followed this patient for _____ years and that the above-named patient has the medical diagnosis specified above.

Physician Name: _____

License Number: _____

Physician Address: _____

Physician Signature: _____

Date: _ / _ / _ (DD/MM/YYYY)

**Information disclosed on this form will be remain confidential and is securely stored at the EC office.*



APPENDIX 2

EC PARA DRESSAGE DISPENSATION CERTIFICATE APPLICATION FORM

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Medical Diagnosis (Health Condition/s): List the rider's diagnosed health conditions. Do not list symptoms

Primary Impairment(s) Arising from Medical Diagnosis (Health Condition):

<input type="checkbox"/> Impaired muscle power	<input type="checkbox"/> Ataxia	<input type="checkbox"/> Leg length difference
<input type="checkbox"/> Impaired passive range of motion	<input type="checkbox"/> Athetosis	<input type="checkbox"/> Limb deficiency/loss
<input type="checkbox"/> Short stature (height: cm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Hypertonia	
Medical Condition is: <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent <input type="checkbox"/> Stable <input type="checkbox"/> Progressive <input type="checkbox"/> Fluctuating <input type="checkbox"/> Congenital (birth)		
Date of rider injury (if applicable): / / (DD/MM/YYYY)		
Date of most recent surgery (if applicable): / / (DD/MM/YYYY)		