

HOSA APPENDIX H

HOSA MEMBERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

HOSA seeks to provide learning opportunities and leadership experiences for all HOSA members, including those who have special needs. The mission of HOSA clearly directs that HOSA opportunities should be available to all HOSA members:

*The **mission of HOSA** is to empower HOSA-Future Health Professionals to become leaders in the global health community through education, collaboration, and experience.*

There are health careers for ALL health and biomedical science students, and opportunities in HOSA for ALL its members. Our goal is always to achieve a positive experience for students and an opportunity to help each individual HOSA member achieve his or her career goals.

There are times when the needs of HOSA members require accommodations to conference services or modifications to competitive events. HOSA provides reasonable services and accommodations in ALL events, in keeping with a set of general principles.

General Principles for Services and Accommodations at HOSA Conferences

1. **Communication:** Communication is the key to ensuring that the proper accommodations are made by HOSA for members with special conference and event needs. Communication begins with the local chapter advisor.

The HOSA chapter advisor is in a position to understand the specific needs of the HOSA member, as well as the guidelines for a specific event. The HOSA advisor can work HOSA members to determine what event and conference activities are most desired, and then develop a plan to help participation at his/her fullest potential. Sometimes, school officials will be a part of the process in determining how to best meet the HOSA member's needs

Once the local advisor has a plan, they should communicate, in writing, a request for the HOSA member with special needs to their state advisor for all regional/state conferences.

2. **Request Process:** At the international level, requests for services and accommodations must be made by the published conference registration deadline, via [this form](#). This allows HOSA the opportunity to make the appropriate arrangements. When costs are involved, it is important that HOSA has enough time to access the most appropriate and responsible resources available.
3. **Personal Services:** When additional, specially trained personnel are required, local school systems are asked to provide those services. HOSA is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. Delegate registration fees are collected to cover expected conference expenses and keep the individual cost per student at a minimum.
4. **General Approval Exception:** Requests for additional services and accommodations are almost always approved, EXCEPT when the service or accommodation presents

an unreasonable expense to HOSA, or when an event accommodation gives the member an advantage in the competition or puts the other HOSA members at a disadvantage.

5. **State Level Accommodations:** For services and accommodations at the international level, the same service/accommodation must have been provided at the state level. When extra costs are involved, the state association is encouraged to coordinate the provision of services with HOSA-Future Health Professionals.
6. **Individual Education Plan:** Four events have been modified and are offered exclusively for HOSA members who have an IEP – Life Support Skills, Interviewing Skills, Personal Care, and Speaking Skills. These four events are exclusively for HOSA members who are classified under the provision of the 2004 reauthorized Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). HOSA members with 504 classification are NOT eligible to compete in HOSA’s special needs events. Students with special needs are also invited to participate in all other HOSA competitive events, and to request accommodations without presenting an IEP. HOSA members who do not have an IEP may still request reasonable accommodations for competitive events, as needed.

Accommodation Determination Process

When determining how best to meet the needs of members with special needs, the following questions are addressed:

1. Can the member compete in the planned event setting?
2. Does the member who is given special consideration gain an advantage in the competition?
3. Does the member who is given special consideration cause the other competitors to work at a disadvantage?
4. Does the accommodation allow the competitor to meet acceptable health skill standards?

Accommodation Examples

The following examples illustrate the accommodations made by state associations and HOSA-Future Health Professionals in the past and are provided to illustrate the accommodations that have and have not been made in the past. This list is not all-inclusive, and other reasonable accommodations can be made if they fall within the guidelines described in this policy brief.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESS

Most HOSA conference sites are wheelchair accessible. As with all accommodations, notification of the need for wheelchair access must be made in writing by the conference registration deadline.

Proper advance notification allows the state and HOSA-Future Health Professionals the opportunity to, for example, build a ramp to the stage for the awards session and to arrange special transportation options if an event is held off-site.

EXTENDED TIME

Many IEPs request “more time” for students in completing cognitive tasks. In written tests, extra time can be provided. In HOSA’s special needs events (Life Support Skills, Personal Care, Speaking Skills, Interviewing Skills) extra time is already built into the

event guidelines where possible. However, extra time is NOT provided for skill performances (Life Support Skills and Personal Care).

Industry standards require that skills, such as Life Support Skills, be performed following specified time frames. The timing is an integral part of the performance and should not be adjusted.

NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING DELEGATES

As stated in the [General Rules and Regulations](#) all HOSA events are to be conducted in English. HOSA will provide translators for HOSA competitors for the purpose of understanding the instructions of the event only if a request is made in writing by Feb 1 for KY HOSA SLC.

Translators are not provided for all conference activities, (i.e., educational symposiums, leadership academies, and tours) however, certain exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis if need is requested in writing prior to Feb 1 deadline.

VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

HOSA will print tests in extra-large font and allow competitors to use a magnifying glass. If needed, HOSA will provide a quiet room and a reader if the test needs to be read out loud.

Other accommodations can be made, depending on the dynamics of a specific event and the needs of the competitor if requested in writing by Feb 1.

SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS

When competitors communicate with sign language, they are permitted to bring their interpreter to sign for them in events and conference sessions. Special seating arrangements will be made to accommodate the need for delegates and their translator. If the school system or state does not provide an interpreter for the State Leadership Conference, HOSA will have one available for competitions and the Opening General Session if the request is received by Feb 1 with conference registration.

Interpreters are not provided for all conference activities (i.e., educational symposiums, leadership academies and tours) however, certain exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis if need is requested in writing prior to Feb 1 deadline.

UNREASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

The skills in skill events are designed to help HOSA members learn and master specific health skills, based on industry standards. Competitors may not verbalize the skills steps (except as noted in the event guidelines) or be excused from the performance of a skill due to physical limitations.