



## RAMP ASSISTANT GUIDE





# ABOUT BOCCIA

**Boccia is a unique target ball sport designed to include people with significant physical impairments including those most severely affected.**



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

SPORT SUMMARY	3
CLASSIFICATIONS	3
ROLE OF THE RAMP ASSISTANT	4
REQUIRED ABILITIES AND DESIRED SKILL SETS	4
TIME COMMITMENTS	5
RAMP ASSISTANT OBLIGATIONS	5
RAMP ASSISTANT REQUIREMENTS	6
MENTORING OPPORTUNITIES	6
PATHWAY	6
NDIS	7
SUPPORT AND BENEFITS	7
HOW TO REGISTER YOUR INTEREST	7

## SPORT SUMMARY

**Boccia is contested at local, national, and international levels, being only one of two Paralympic sports with no Olympic equivalent. Boccia became a Paralympic sport in 1984.**

It is suggested the sport of Boccia was adopted from the ancient Italian game of Bocce developed due to a realisation that there was a distinct lack of opportunity for participation in sport for **athletes with severe mobility difficulties**. Originally played by people with severe cerebral palsy the sport has broadened, now including athletes with other severe impairments affecting motor skills such as muscular dystrophy, quadriplegia, or multiple sclerosis. The athletes involved are perhaps the most impaired athletes within the Paralympic family, yet the sport requires a high degree of accuracy, muscle control and strategy.

Boccia is a **precision ball sport**, which can be played by **individuals, pairs or teams of three**, and all events are currently mixed gender. The aim of the game is to throw leather balls as close as they can to a white target ball, the jack. The balls can be released with hands, feet, or, if the competitor's motor function is severely affected, with an assistive device such as a ramp and head/mouth pointers. Boccia is played on a court measuring 12.5m x 6m with 2m of empty space around it. The playing surface is flat and smooth.

## CLASSIFICATIONS

There are five classifications (BC1-5) of which four are included on the Paralympic program. Of the five classes, athletes in the BC1 and BC3 classes are eligible to compete with a ramp assistant.

CLASSIFICATION	EXAMPLES (GUIDE ONLY)
----------------	-----------------------

<b>BC1</b>	Players with cerebral palsy, brain injury or similar who have some difficulties with trunk and hand control. Players in this class <b>throw</b> the ball with the hand or foot.
<b>BC3</b>	Players in this class have very severe locomotor dysfunction in all four extremities. Players have no sustained grasp or release action; although they may have arm movement, they have insufficient range of movement to propel a Boccia ball onto the court. Player may use an assistive device such as a <b>ramp</b> to deliver the ball.

BC1 athletes may compete with a sport assistant who stays outside of the playing box. They stabilise or adjust their athletes playing chair and give the ball to them when requested.

BC3 athletes may compete with a sport assistant (although widely referred to as a ramp assistant). Assistants must keep their back to the court and their eyes averted from play. They position the ramp and balls according to the players' instructions.

## ROLE OF RAMP ASSISTANT

- To work cooperatively and collaboratively with an athlete to form an **aligned partnership** to achieve performance outcomes
- Attend and engage in all on-court training sessions, moving equipment with precision under the direction of athlete
- To follow instructions on court and support strategy development through training sessions
- Support the athlete to maintain, store and transport equipment
- To maintain professional and high-quality sporting conduct at all times in particular when representing Australia at international competitions
- To provide care to an athlete in their daily living needs including but not limited to;
  - o assisting to eat, drink and toilet during training sessions
  - o assisting to eat, drink, toilet, shower, dress, groom, transfer, reposition overnight (night time care), charging chair, washing clothes, etc. during competition times both **domestic and international**
  - o assist athlete with transferring in and out of their wheelchair when and where necessary
  - o sharing a room when travelling/competing interstate and internationally
  - o where relevant, picking up athlete from their home and drive them, in their vehicle, to training sessions and competitions (domestic)
- To maintain personal physical fitness and good health off court to ensure seamless performance and injury prevention on court
- Encourage independence of athletes by only supporting where physically required



## REQUIRED ABILITIES AND DESIRED SKILL SETS

**Personality Traits** – Patient, motivated, perceptive, respectful

**Work Ethic** – professional, hard-working, invested

**Core Competencies** – collaborative, strong communication skills, flexible, attention to detail, a strong interest in sport

Ramp assistants are passionate and hard-working people who function well in a team environment and have an appreciation for the assistance all Para-athletes require outside of their sport.

## TIME COMMITMENTS



### High Performance commitments

- Minimum 4-year commitment (or part of Paralympic cycle dependent upon time of engagement)
- Weekly training – minimum **three days** per week, **4-6** hours per day
- Up to **four** international trips per year – 8-14 days duration
- Minimum two domestic competitions per year (state and national titles) – up to 4 days duration
- Ad hoc team workshops/camps as they arise



### Emerging/Developing commitments

- Minimum 4-year commitment (or part of Paralympic cycle dependent upon time of engagement)
- Weekly training – minimum **two days** per week, **2-4** hours per day
- Up to **two** international trips per year – 8-10 days duration
- Minimum two domestic competitions per year (state and national titles) – up to 4 days duration
- Ad hoc team camps as they arise



## RAMP ASSISTANT OBLIGATIONS

- Complete, submit and follow an Individual Performance Plan (IPP) which details long and short-term goals and competition objectives. IPP's are reviewed quarterly
- Comply with all BA policies including code of conduct, member protection, anti-doping and any other policies listed on the BA website
- Undertake medical screening as required by BA or other stakeholders as requested (ie. National Institutes, Paralympics Australia)
- Assist with team travel and logistics when travelling internationally
- Reasonable requests to promote BA during competitions, training, when being photographed, filmed, interviewed or when participating in BA program activities
- Wear the supplied uniform as directed
- Agree to and sign the HP Program Athlete Agreement
- Be a member of Boccia Australia

## RAMP ASSISTANT REQUIREMENTS

- Must hold an Australian Passport or be able to attain one
- Must have a driver's license and willingness to drive an accessible vehicle
- Must have an ABN
- Must have or is able to attain a working with children check
- A willingness to learn the sport of Boccia, commit to an athlete and share common goals in achieving sporting success at the highest level
- An ability to work within a team and promote a positive team culture
- Previous personal care experience of a person with a disability, whilst useful, is not essential however a willingness to learn is
- Relatively good fitness and overall health is essential
- Excellent communication skills

## MENTORING OPPORTUNITIES

- New ramp assistants will have the opportunity to spend time with current, experienced ramp assistants to develop their skills and be mentored to assist in their learning
- Existing ramp assistants will make time to share experiences and knowledge regarding techniques, etc

## PATHWAY

- Once a potential ramp assistant is identified, they are invited to attend a one-on-one session with the athlete and the head coach, before inclusion into the HP team training environment
- Should the ramp assistant be deemed a suitable fit for both the athlete and the overall team environment the pairing will be confirmed and they will be included into the HP Program (athlete agreement offered)
- After a minimum of three months of full-time training, one domestic competition and one international competition, the RA will be eligible for athlete categorisation.



## SUPPORT AND BENEFITS

- Ramp assistants are considered by BA and the broader high-performance sports system in the same way that athletes are with respect to the athlete in which they are partnered with
- Ramp assistants receive the same distinction as athletes during medal ceremonies at World Boccia international events and Paralympic Games
- Ramp assistants who become part of the Boccia Australia High Performance Program have all their program costs covered including their international flights, accommodation, meals (as provided), uniforms and transport
- Ramp assistants receive the same level of coaching, strength and conditioning, physiotherapy, nutrition, sports psychology and well-being support as the athlete they are partnered with
- If an athlete that a ramp assistant is partnered with achieves a performance standard required for consideration of receiving direct athlete income support (dAIS) from the AIS, the ramp assistant will also be eligible to receive direct funding. Funding through the dAIS scheme ranges from approximately \$3,500 per year to \$32,000 per year for gold medal winners at a bench mark event.

## NDIS

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is a scheme of the Australian Government that funds costs associated with disability. The scheme entitles people with a “permanent and significant” disability to full funding for any “reasonable and necessary” support needs related to their disability.

Generally, athletes within the Boccia pathway have access to funding which allows them the opportunity to train and compete in domestic and international competitions. Once an athlete is paired with a ramp assistant, there should be an agreement put in place between the two parties which outlines the associated costs the athlete will make to the ramp assistant for the provision of their services (as outlined in this guide).



### HOW TO REGISTER YOUR INTEREST

To register your interest in becoming a ramp assistant or to find out more about Boccia, please contact:

**Caroline Walker**  
High Performance Manager  
P 0409 247707  
E [hpm@boccia.com.au](mailto:hpm@boccia.com.au)



**WEB** [www.boccia.com.au](http://www.boccia.com.au) **EMAIL** [admin@boccia.com.au](mailto:admin@boccia.com.au)

**f** Boccia Australia **t** @bocciaaus **g+** Bocciaaustralia **in** Boccia Australia