



## Accessibility in the OA: Accessibility in OA ceremonies

**Session Length: 45 Minutes**

### **Required Materials:**

- PowerPoint presentation file
- Tool Kit
- Handouts
- Computer/laptop
- projector

### **Slide 2.**

Through this session, you will:

**Explain** Options and Ideas for Assisting Arrowmen with Accessibility Need

**Demonstrate** Ways these diverse accessibility needs can be met

**Guide** Participants to share things they will try back in their home chapter/lodge to help make OA accessible for all

**Enable** Participants to want to use and feel comfortable enough to use what they learned in this session back in their Chapters/Lodges/Sections

### **Slide 3**

### **Learning Outcomes: [create a brief list of what participants should take away with them]**

- Outcome 1: Participants will be aware of ways they can make OA ceremonies accessible to all Arrowmen
- Outcome 2: Participants will be given positive and inclusive ideas for all Arrowmen in OA, including those that have different disabilities, gender, culture, income, and other challenges
- Outcome 3: Participants will be informed about the opportunities and responsibilities involved in providing program and logistical support to Arrowmen that have different disabilities, gender, culture, income, and other challenges
- Outcome 4: Participants will take accessibility ideas for Arrowmen with challenges back with them and commit to implementing some of them in their home lodges.



## Slide 4

### Theme Connection:

The theme of NOAC 2018 is “Decide Your Destiny,” emphasizing the message that today’s decisions shape tomorrow’s reality. This session will relay this theme in the following ways:

- Arrowmen with Challenges are Arrowmen with possibilities
- Are you going to ignore these Arrowmen or have faith in what the Arrowmen can become
- Arrowmen who have disabilities/challenges want the same personal growth opportunities that any Arrowman does .It is our challenge to provide them the opportunity.
- It is up to us to help them create their own success story.

## Slide 5

This session will help the \*\*Lodge/Chapter/Section\*\* with the Journey to Excellence Requirement(s):

- Membership Impact: experience positive growth in membership in the chapter over the previous year, OA can be adapted to include everyone
- Communications: Maintain active communications within the chapter
- Short-term camping
- Long-term camping
- Service projects

## TRAINER PREPARATION

The trainer should prepare for this training session by becoming familiar with ways to make OA accessible to all Scouts and Scouters. Reading literature published by the Boy Scouts of America relating to accessibility is a good place to start. Personal interviews with Scouting and Order of the Arrow leaders, who have worked extensively with Scouts with challenges may be helpful. Consultation with non-BSA people, such as local school personnel, who work regularly with disabilities, gender, culture, income, and other challenges, would also be a good idea. Reflect on my experience - 30 years teaching special education and working with special need Scouts, two trips with Special Need Scouts to Philmont and one trip to Boundary Water with Special Need Scouts and Scouters.

Prepare the training venue well ahead of time. Make sure that all participants will be able to freely converse with the group with no impeded view due to audio visual equipment, etc.

Prepare all visual aids, including the Power Point presentation equipment with care to avoid last minute panic and problems. Have handouts ready.

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## Session Narrative

### Slide 6

#### **Introduction**

**7 minutes**

(Welcome everyone and thank them for attending. State that you know they could be doing something else with their time, but that they chose to be at this presentation speaks to their dedication. Challenge participants to ask questions and encourage them to join in the discussions.)

(Budget the amount of time spent for each participant on the number of participants in the class and available time.)

RJ will briefly introduce himself by name and past experience in working with disabilities. Then go around the room and have participants share

**Now it's your time to share with the group your name and Order of the Arrow Responsibility.**

### Slide 7

#### **First topic**

**20 minutes**

Accessibility in Ceremonies

### Slide 8.

The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 mandates that all public facilities need to be accessible for those with disabilities. We need to make sure that all of our meeting and activity facilities meet ADA standards, including chapter meeting venues, Scout offices, other meeting

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locations, and camp facilities. (Accessible Facilities Checklist for Scouts and Scouters with Special Needs)

Are Boy Scouts facilities subject to the federal law?

“Are Boy Scout facilities subject to the federal law?” Federal law imposes these requirements on public accommodations, which is typically a commercial operation such as a store or restaurant, and public facilities, such as libraries and city hall. Private clubs are one of the few groups that are exempt. Scout facilities such as camps and offices used exclusively by Scouts (or at least 90% by Scouts only) qualify as private club facilities and are exempt from the federal law. However, if Scout offices are leased to other organizations, or meeting rooms are rented out to the public, or the Scout shop sells a significant portion of camping supplies to non-Scouts, then these facilities may be considered “public accommodations.” “Are there other accessibility laws?” Depending on your location, there may be state or local building codes that also address accessibility issues and apply to your facilities. Typically these parallel the federal codes so the requirements and exemptions may be very similar.”

### Slide 9.

When inducting a Scout or Scouter with a special need, as with any candidate, lodges should make the activities challenging within the individual’s limitations, and plan accordingly. As Scouts and Scouters, we should certainly do what we can to enable those with special needs to participate in our program as fully as possible. Accessibility to ceremonial circles, sleeping sites, and appropriate work projects should be taken into consideration to ensure a meaningful induction. (See the appendix for Guidelines for Assisting Scouts and Scouters With Special Needs.)

Efforts to make reasonable accommodations by providing transportation for those unable to walk to out ceremonial rings is one example of an accessibility accommodation. Making the ceremony site easier to access is another example.

### Slide 10

**Is it important to understand how disabilities affect a candidates ability to perform the tests of the Ordeal?**



The Ordeal: It's important to understand how disabilities, gender, race, and income, affect a candidates ability to perform the four tests of the Ordeal. The best way to establish this understanding is by asking questions of the candidate and/or his parents, his unit leader, or a medical professional. This should begin immediately after the election/nomination of an individual with special needs. It is important that all of those involved with the Ordeal understand as much as possible about the candidate (Elangomat and ceremonialists)

-Pictures/sequential steps/cues might need to be shared with the candidate prior to Ordeal ceremony away from the other candidates

-Candidate might need a person following them at a distance but close enough the candidate can see them

-Candidate might need a fidget to help focus and stay calm

-Appropriate sleeping areas

-Medical area

## Slide 11

The Night Alone. Most individuals will be able to complete this test, but may require slight adaptations. Someone may need to spend the night with the candidate to insure safety, as that is a number one priority. A Scout or Scouter who uses a wheelchair for mobility might not be able to transfer out of his chair to sleep on the ground, but a simple accommodation like a cot can help him complete this test. Some individuals may also need private surroundings to address bathroom/toileting issues, but can still sleep outdoors without assistance.

Good judgment of all parties involved is important to insure a safe and pleasant experience. Unit leaders can often answer most questions and can provide the necessary assistance for the candidate.

-Does the candidate need meds

-Does the candidate need a snack

-Make sure they all know where you are in case of emergency

-How are you going to space out candidates in relationship to gender

-Does the candidate have any culture needs - items, routines

-Any special sleeping arrangements needed

## Slide 12.

### Can the vow of silence be broken to meet immediate needs?

The Day of Silence. There may be times that the vow of silence will need to be broken to advocate immediate needs and concerns, and flexibility should be provided. When possible, the special accommodations should be done apart from the other candidates. If a discussion is held prior to the Ordeal, a candidate with special needs may need to carry a pen and paper to minimize the need to actually talk during the Ordeal

-How are you going to communicate with the candidate during the silence



### Slide 13

#### When should dietary needs to brought up?

Scant Food. This test requires pre-event planning, and may be the requirement that needs the most flexibility. Many medicines are required to be taken with food, or full glasses of water or milk. They might also need to be taken at scheduled times during the day to insure medical consistency. Discussing special dietary needs prior to the event is essential as well. Foods that are typically used during the Ordeal might not suffice or be practical to Scouts or Scouters with special needs.

- Does the candidate have meds – do they react with the sun or heat
- Does the candidate have a special diet

### Slide 14.

#### How can work projects be adjusted?

Arduous Labor. Work projects can still be very meaningful, but may need to be done a little differently. Try to establish ahead of time some projects that will meet this goal. If possible, include the special needs candidate in the same projects as the rest of the group.

- Does the candidate need to take breaks
- Safety during this part is important to consider

### Slide 15

#### The Brotherhood.

Most individuals with special needs can complete the Brotherhood requirements with little or no adaptation required. But, similar to the Ordeal process, the induction team should hold a discussion prior to the Brotherhood process. Some questions to ask might include:

- Can the individual participate in the Brotherhood Trail?(stamina, walking, standing, etc)
- How can we help the Scout complete the tests during the ceremony?

### Slide 16

#### What role does safety play in OA?



Safety is an important part and should be considered throughout program.

**Slide 17**

**Second topic**

**Why do Elangomats and ceremonialists play an important part in the OA program?**

**10 minutes**

**Training Elangomats and Ceremonialists.**

It is important that special needs – disabilities, gender, culture, money, and other challenges - are discussed and understood by each person that will be involved with the induction process. If there is a need to make an accommodation, they all need to understand why and how to accomplish this. Elangomats should help candidates experience the most they can out of the Ordeal. Consideration should also be given to allow the unit to provide an Elangomat to work along with the special needs candidate if needed throughout the entire Ordeal process. Direct questions about what needs to happen during the Ordeal process and the ceremony should be discussed prior to the event. Know the Scouts in your clan and a plan should be established that meets the needs of the candidate involved, as well as the lodge, but does not lose sight of the traditions of the Order. Reasonable accommodations can be made, but requirements are not to be waived and credit given for just trying. Things to discuss might include, but should not be limited to:

- Can they raise their hand in the Scout sign?
- Can they repeat the obligation?
- Can they stand through the entire ceremony?

This is just a small sampling of questions to be considered, and while they may seem very basic, they need to be asked. Never assume what a person can or cannot do by just looking at them.

**Slide 18**

**Third topic**

**5 minutes**

**Conclusion**

The Order of the Arrow is a wonderful program that can be enjoyed by all. It is important to learn how to assist and involve all Scouts and Scouters in the program. Remember to use reasonable accommodations and common sense. Making the program work depends on your attitude and willingness to make it work. It is also imperative that when dealing with Arrowmen with special needs - disabilities, gender, race, income, or other challenges - the confidentiality and safety of all involved must be maintained and respected. Every individual, regardless of ability or disability, can have a rewarding experience as a member of the Order. As we include these Arrowmen into the Order of the Arrow, the Order will be strengthened greatly.



## Slide 19

### Takeaway Challenge

3 minutes

Please take out your notebook and pen. For the final three minutes, think about the role that you will be playing next year in the OA, or the role you hope to play. Write down three key ideas related to how you could help improve the way your chapter or lodge assists Arrowmen to successfully complete the ceremonies. During your break time later today, share these with others in your chapter or lodge.

One idea might be something as simple as checking with units to see if they foresee any special needs.

[Give the participants some time to develop and record their key ideas. As time allows, let the participants share their goals with the entire group.]

## Appendix: Resources and Source Material

## Slide 20

- 2016 Guide to Unit Elections, available online at <http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/guide-to-unit-elections>
- 2012 Guide for Officers and Advisers, available online at <http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/publications#goa>
- Chapter Journey to Excellence Workbook, available online at <http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/printable-forms>
- A Guide to Working With Scouts With Disabilities
- Abilities Digest
- Scouting Magazine
- Council Special Needs Committee
- Parents, Scouts, and leaders in your unit, district, and council with experience in working with Scouts with disabilities
- The National Organization on Disability has a section on their website [www.nod.org](http://www.nod.org) that lists Disability Etiquette Tips.
- The iCan Disability Community website has a library explaining different medical conditions and disabilities that can be found at [www.ican.com](http://www.ican.com)
- The Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago has a glossary of terms that could be helpful and is available at [www.rehabchicago.org/community/glossary.php](http://www.rehabchicago.org/community/glossary.php)



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- The United Cerebral Palsy Association has a section on their website that deals with Assisting People with Disabilities in a Disaster or Emergency Situation that can be found at [www.ucpa.org](http://www.ucpa.org)
- The Americans with Disabilities Act and other disabilities can be researched by using website search engines.

## Slide 21

Remember Special Need Scouts and “Typical Scouts are more alike than different.