



2017 BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT SAFETY INFORMATION

The health and safety of every athlete, coach, volunteer, and spectator is the highest priority at Basketball Tournament. Prior to departure, please refer to Special Olympics Washington [Safety Guidelines](#), [Emergency Procedures](#) and [Crisis Communications Guidelines](#) for general information. The following information applies to Basketball Tournament only.

ON-SITE ORIENTATION

When teams arrive at their respective sports venues, coaches and chaperones should take a few minutes to orient themselves and athletes to important contacts and locations:

- Venue managers and Special Olympics staff
- Venue Information Center or message board
- First aid stations and medical personnel
- Emergency exits (indoor venue) and site evacuation plan
- Locker rooms or restrooms

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBER: 206-681-9370-Stephen Opland

Special Olympics Washington will operate an emergency contact telephone number throughout the weekend. *In the event of an emergency*, family members or care-providers may use this number as a point of contact the Basketball Tournament. Coaches of teams staying in hotels should also provide to family members or care-providers hotel telephone numbers for emergency contact before or after competition.

COMMUNICATIONS

A network of volunteers equipped with portable radios and cellular telephones provides communication support for Basketball Tournament. This network links competition venues and members of the Basketball Tournament Committee for both routine and emergency situations.

LOST ATHLETES

If an athlete is missing or unaccounted for, contact the venue manager or the Vice President, Sports & Community outreach, Joe Hampson immediately. Be prepared to provide a complete description of the missing athlete, including clothing, physical characteristics and location where the athlete was last seen.

ATHLETE PARTICIPATION FORMS (MEDICALS) & UNIFIED PARTNER FORMS

It is the coach's responsibility to carry copies of the Athlete Participation Form (Medical) & Unified Partner Release forms for all team member at all times during Special Olympics tournaments. In the event of an injury or medical emergency, coaches will be asked to provide this form to medical personnel.

WEATHER AND ROAD CONDITIONS

Winter storms can range from moderate snowfall over a few hours to blizzard conditions with blinding, wind-driven snow or freezing rain that lasts several days. Severe weather conditions that restrict travel or limit visibility. Weather conditions will be monitored by the East Region Games Management team. Teams may call the emergency hotline number regarding the cancellation status of the East Region Basketball Tournament starting the Friday prior to the tournament and on Saturday morning.

SOWA and the Basketball Tournament Committee will maintain a winter storm watch prior to and during the weekend, with periodic evaluation of weather and road conditions. Venue managers and coaches will be notified of any cancellations.

If teams are unable to reach competition venues because of hazardous driving conditions or road closures, competition may be suspended until conditions improve or the tournament will be cancelled.

If competition is suspended (late start), then the tournament will go to a single-elimination game format. Teams will be guaranteed two games, but will not be able to advance through the loser-bracket to advance to Winter Games.

If the tournament is canceled. We will determine which teams will advance to state by a drawing of the hat, conducted per bracket.

TRANSPORTATION

Vehicles should be equipped with tire chains or other traction devices, booster cables, first aid kit, blankets or sleeping bags, bottled water and other emergency provisions.

TRAVEL BETWEEN VENUES

With the chance of inclement weather, coaches are advised to allow adequate time for travel to and from competition venues. If you are delayed or unable to reach the venue when competition is scheduled, please call the Emergency Contact Number, **206-681-9370**.



SAFETY GUIDELINES

The health and safety of athletes, volunteers and spectators is the highest priority at every Special Olympics team practice, competition or special event. Risk reduction and accident prevention requires good planning, effective communication and a high level of awareness by all participants.

HYPOTHERMIA OR FROSTBITE

Prolonged exposure to cold temperatures can lead to hypothermia or frostbite. Wear several layers of loose-fitting, lightweight clothing rather than one layer of heavy clothing. Wear mittens instead of gloves and always wear a cap. Signs of frostbite are white or pale fingers, toes, nose or ear lobes. Signs of hypothermia are uncontrollable shivering, slow speech, memory lapses, frequent stumbling, drowsiness and exhaustion.

Do not give a frostbite or hypothermia victim any liquid containing caffeine. Do not use hot water to warm cold hands or feet.

HEAT AND HYDRATION

Overheating and dehydration are serious dangers, **please be sure that athletes and volunteers drink plenty of water** throughout the competition and related activities. In hot weather, pure water is the best source of hydration (not soda or water-based drinks like coffee). Whenever possible, water coolers will be placed at each venue and refilled periodically by medical staff.

At outdoor events, avoid the sun whenever possible; wear hats and apply sunscreen frequently.

SEIZURES

Seizures sometimes occur under the stress of competition or strenuous activity. In the event a seizure occurs:

- Notify the on-site medical personnel, venue manager or Special Olympics staff.
- Place towel or coat under athlete's head; do not interfere with body movements.
- Do not force anything between the athlete's teeth.
- When movement stops, roll athlete onto side and make sure breathing is unobstructed.

Seizures normally last only a few minutes and the athlete requires only rest to recover. Medical personnel will determine if the athlete requires further treatment at a hospital.

INJURIES

Injuries can occur at any time, but are more likely as athletes encounter fatigue and dehydration. In the event an injury occurs:

- Keep the injured athlete calm and stationary; *do not move the injured athlete.*
- Contact the on-site medical personnel, venue manager or Special Olympics staff.
- Stay with the injured athlete until medical personnel arrive.

Medical personnel will evaluate the injury and determine if the athlete requires further treatment. Athletes requiring further treatment will be transported to an approved medical facility.

ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORTING

A Special Olympics **First Report of Accident/Incident** form should be completed as promptly and accurately as possible. This procedure allows claims to be processed quickly and provides information for improved safety and risk reduction at subsequent Special Olympics events. These forms are available at team check-in and at the First Aid Station. Once completed, the forms need to be turned in at the team check-in table or the First Aid Station.



CRISIS COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

The risk of a crisis or controversial situation is a reality at every Special Olympics event. The likelihood of illness or serious injury to athletes, volunteers or spectators, lost or missing athletes or family members, extreme weather conditions, fire, natural disasters or other emergency situation should be considered by all participants whenever engaged in a Special Olympics activity.

Responding To A Crisis

The challenges in dealing with a crisis situation are several:

- Remaining calm and keeping others calm;
- Keeping perspective and dealing with the crisis effectively;
- Coordinating internal communication and speaking with one voice;
- Avoiding the temptation to withhold information in order to protect the organization.

A well-defined crisis communication plan enables us to manage the present situation, avoid further crisis or controversy, and maintain a positive, professional image.

Crisis Management Team

Special Olympics Washington has identified a Crisis Management Team, consisting of the CEO, V-P, Sports and Community outreach, Communications Director, Chair of the Board of Directors, Games Chair, and a legal advisor as required.

All public communication regarding crisis situations, especially communication with media, will come from members of this team. Under no circumstances should anyone else make any statement to the media regarding a crisis situation. Any inquiries by media or others should be directed to a member of the Crisis Management Team.

Please note that this policy deals with public communication during a crisis, not such things as personal safety or evacuation issues. As coaches or key volunteers, your first priority is to act in the interest of any persons at your venue who are affected or potentially affected by the situation at hand.

In most cases, your first contact should be with venue managers, medical personnel or Special Olympics staff on site. – Stephen Opland, East Region Sr. Manager @ 206-681-9370.

Whom Do You Call?

In case of an actual crisis situation, after medical personnel have been called to the scene, one of the following individuals should be contacted immediately. (Attempt to contact in the order listed.)

Stephen Opland	East Region Sr. Manager	206-681-9370
Joe Hampson	VP Sport & Community outreach	206-681-9371

The above individuals will contact members of the Crisis Management Team, and they will determine the appropriate course of action, prepare a statement and designate a spokesperson to respond to media inquiries.



EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the event of an emergency situation requiring immediate evacuation, it is imperative that all event participants be prepared to respond calmly and quickly. Emergency Plans are effective only if all participants are prepared to assess the situation carefully, respond rather than react, and use good judgment and common sense.

SEVERE WEATHER/LIGHTNING

When Games organizers receive warning of an approaching storm that involves risk to participants from lightning, high winds, heavy rain or snow, they may suspend the event until the risk has ended. Upon notice of impending danger, participants should:

- Move out of open areas to safe refuge or designated shelter.
- IN CASE OF LIGHTNING, DO NOT SEEK SHELTER UNDER TREES.
- Stay away from objects that conduct electricity, such as utility poles or metal objects.
- If you feel a tingling sensation, drop to the ground and curl up as tightly as possible.
- If you are traveling in a vehicle, remain inside the vehicle.

TORNADO

Tornadoes are violently rotating columns of air that descend in a funnel shape and form during the early stages of thunderstorms. The best protection during a tornado is in an interior room on the lowest level of a building, preferably a basement.

EARTHQUAKE

The Pacific Northwest is a high-risk area for earthquakes. If an earthquake occurs, athletes, coaches, volunteers and spectators should observe the following guidelines:

- **Outdoors:** Stay outside. Move away from buildings, trees, signs, utility poles or downed electrical wires. Expect aftershocks, which may also cause damage due to potentially weakened condition of load-bearing structures from the first quake.
- **Indoors:** Stay inside the building, away from windows, glass doors or elevators. **Drop-Cover-and-Hold.** Crawl under a desk/table or sit with your back to interior wall. Protect your head with your arms. Do not leave a building until the shaking is over.

FIRE

Know the location of exit doors and windows. Plan your escape route and practice if possible.

- If caught in smoke, drop to your hands and knees and crawl; breathe shallowly through your nose or use your blouse, shirt or jacket as a filter.
- If forced to advance through flames, hold your breath; move quickly; cover your head and hair; keep your head down and close your eyes as much as possible.
- If your clothes catch fire, **Stop-Drop-and-Roll** until the fire is out.

COACHES AND VOLUNTEERS

Remain calm and keep others calm. Determine if injuries have occurred, notify on-site medical personnel and assist others if necessary. Make sure all athletes and coaches are accounted for. Report to the Venue's designated evacuation area and await instructions from the venue manager or emergency coordinator.

EVACUATION PLANS

In case of severe environmental conditions or other threat to participants' health and safety, athletes and volunteers will be directed to a designated safe gathering place at each venue. The venue manager or emergency coordinator will determine the appropriate course of action.



COACHES WINTER SAFETY CHECKLIST

Here are some important reminders regarding safety and health of athletes and coaches at Basketball Tournament. Please read the **2016 Basketball Tournament Safety information**.

Delay in travel to Venues:

- ◆ Call Games Emergency Number: 206-681-9370

Vehicles should be equipped with the following items:

- ◆ Tire Chains & Booster Cables
- ◆ De-Icer / Scraper
- ◆ Flashlight with spare batteries
- ◆ Fire extinguisher (5lb. ABC type)
- ◆ Road Flares
- ◆ First Aid Kit & Manual
- ◆ Blankets or sleeping bags
- ◆ Drinking Water
- ◆ Snacks (i.e. Power Bars)
- ◆ Full tank of gas
- ◆ Cell Phone

Along with required competition clothing, ensure your athletes have the following items:

- ◆ Small Flashlight
- ◆ Gloves or Mittens
- ◆ Hats
- ◆ Clothing for layering
- ◆ Lip Balm
- ◆ Skin Protection/Sunscreen
- ◆ Eye Protection (i.e. Sunglasses)
- ◆ Warm Footwear/Socks
- ◆ Water Bottle
- ◆ Personal Items (i.e. feminine products)

Reminder of Coaches Responsibilities:

- ◆ If an athlete or Unified Partner must be transported to the hospital, a coach, chaperone or family member must accompany the athlete and take a copy of the participants Application for Participation form or Unified Partner release form.
- ◆ Ensure athletes bring two days of extra medications in the unlikely event of being delayed in returning home.
- ◆ Carry current Athlete Participation Forms (Medicals) and Unified Partner forms for all athletes/Unified Partners participating in any Special Olympics activity.
- ◆ If you have any health or safety concerns, inform the venue manager or SOWA staff immediately.
- ◆ Before departing for Basketball Tournament, discuss **Safety Guidelines and Emergency Procedures** with your team.