



Special Olympics Washington Continuation of Masking and Vaccine Protocols



Special Olympics Washington will continue to align with state and local health authorities' masking protocols. This means if local health authorities and facility do not require the use of masks, then masks will be optional at all Special Olympics Washington practices and events in those areas. **However, it is highly recommended that individuals and those living in congregate settings continue proper masking and social distancing!**



Onsite screenings with temperature checks and verbal confirmation of no symptoms for all participants, volunteers, and spectators will remain in effect for all indoor practices and sporting events. Onsite screenings are not required for outdoor practices or events.



Onsite testing is not mandatory but will be conducted on an individual basis for participants, volunteers, and spectators should they exhibit symptoms before or while attending Special Olympics Washington competitions.



There will be no limitations on the overall **program participation size** or additional restrictions to the **size of rosters** for team events outside of the sport rules. Should a program feel the need to restrict the number of individuals participating within their program due to safety concerns or lack of coach support, it is at the discretion of the program to enforce and communicate to their program. Programs cannot deny an individual's participation due to vaccination status.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic began, people with intellectual disabilities (ID) faced disparities in health care systems. Across the board, people with ID are disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in health care, especially in terms of access to the COVID-19 vaccine.



- People with ID already die 16-20 years earlier than the general population due to preventable illness.
- People with ID are almost 6x more likely to die from COVID-19.
- People with ID who live in congregate settings are dying at even higher rates of COVID-19 due to challenges with social distancing.



Special Olympics Washington will continue to monitor COVID-19 trends, and consult with the CDC, state and local health authorities. Should state or local safety measures change, we will update protocols as necessary.

We want to thank everyone for supporting Special Olympics Washington and our commitment to the health and wellbeing of our athletes and communities as we return to our regular in-person activities.

For questions, please contact your region manager or email: rt@sowa.org