



***Special
Olympics***
Washington

**Special Olympics Washington
Return to Activities Guide
Summer 2021**

Current as of 07/07/21

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Guidance on COVID-19 Return to Activities

Information on COVID-19 is changing daily. Transmission rates vary across the countries in which Special Olympics Washington operates. Local and national governments, school districts, and health agencies are developing their own guidance and mandates. It will be incumbent upon leaders at all levels of the Special Olympics movement to continually monitor this ever-changing situation and adjust decision-making accordingly while adhering to the guidance contained herein.

Stephen Opland, Director of Sports and Competition, is Special Olympics Washington's designated COVID-19 response point-person to keep current with return to activity levels and all compliance requirements, coordinate response and monitor the latest COVID-19 developments and their impact on the organization. For questions or concerns, please email rta@sowa.org. These documents are intended as minimum guidelines for Special Olympics Washington as the organization considers returning to activities. **This document is intended to supplement – not replace – any state, local, territorial/national or tribal health and safety laws, rules and regulations with which similar organizations must comply.**

Additionally, the information in this document is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. The knowledge and circumstances around COVID-19 are changing constantly and, as such, Special Olympics makes no representation and assumes no responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of this information. Further, you should seek advice from medical professionals and/or public health officials if you have specific questions about symptoms and/or diagnoses related to COVID-19.

This document and its contents are current as of 07/07/2021.

Guiding Principles

1. The health and safety of all members of the Special Olympics movement is paramount.
2. Beyond a sports organization, Special Olympics is a movement for and by people with intellectual disabilities (ID), and its guidance must be inclusive and directed at the unique needs and abilities of people with ID.
3. Relevant World Health Organization (WHO) and country-specific (e.g., U.S. CDC) guidelines should serve as minimum standards. In addition, consideration should be given to local and community authorities in that if there are more conservative/restrictive guidelines, these should be followed.
4. Guidance is based on current medical information and the Washington State Phase Plan available at the time of publication. As knowledge of COVID-19 is changing rapidly, guidance will continue to evolve.
5. Guidance takes a level approach that is dependent on local transmission rates as well as testing/monitoring/contact tracing/health system capacity.
6. Counties must be in Phase 3 for in person practices. If your county is in Phase 2, you may register, but you will not be allowed to move forward to practice until your county reaches Phase 3. Click [here](#) to locate your county's phase.

Approach to Return to Activities: Levels

Special Olympics Washington is adopting a three (3) level approach to our return to activities (RTA). **It is important to note there may be times a community will revert to an earlier level if the spread of infection rises.**

Participation Risk Awareness and Acknowledgement

Prior to returning to any in-person Special Olympics Washington activities in Levels 1 and 2, all participants are required to complete and return a *Participant Risk Assessment Form* which provides information and guidance on assessing risk and acknowledges that participation could increase risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19.

If participants have tested positive and/or been diagnosed with COVID-19, the participant must provide written proof of clearance from their healthcare professional prior to returning to in-person sport or fitness activities.

Special Olympics Washington will ensure that all participants - including athletes, Unified partners, coaches, volunteers, staff, and families - are educated about those that are at higher risk of complications from COVID-19 as well as all procedures and expectations for return to activities.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS WASHINGTON RETURN TO ACTIVITIES LEVELS		
Level 0 Prevalence: community transmission occurring Stay at home order in place for all individuals.	Level 1 Prevalence: sporadic cases reported Size restrictions on gatherings increased to ≤25 people.	Level 2 Prevalence: No reported cases* No restrictions on size of gatherings and public facilities are open. <i>* In Epidemic or Pandemic stage</i>
No events or activities of any sort to be held in person. Individual sport training sessions in own home using own equipment. Coaching occurs virtually. Fitness and Health programming offered virtually or at home. Meetings, conferences, or trainings to be held virtually.	HIGH RISK INDIVIDUALS should continue to remain at home. PRACTICES, HEALTH/FITNESS, LEADERSHIP and LOCAL EVENTS (25 or fewer participants), MAY resume if they adhere to physical distancing and sanitation protocols. Indirect contact (e.g. through a ball in the hand) MAY resume. No direct contact should occur in sports. Virtual programming should be made available for those not able to attend in person. HEALTHY ATHLETES may occur for disciplines where risk mitigation and infection control precautions can be put in place. SCHOOL -based activities led by schools should comply with guidance from schools/districts.	HIGH RISK INDIVIDUALS can resume public interactions, but should practice physical distancing, minimizing exposure to social settings where distancing may not be practical, unless precautionary measures are observed. LARGE COMPETITION and GAMES (with people traveling from multiple geographic areas who are in same level) MAY potentially occur, if permitted by Special Olympics Washington, country, state and local standards. HEALTHY ATHLETES may resume activities, with appropriate infection control precautions in place. SCHOOL -based activities led by schools should comply with guidance from schools/districts.

Summer Season: Mitigation and Precautions for Level 1

Level 1

Prevalence: Sporadic cases occurring

Size: Local gatherings restricted to ≤25 people, individuals at high risk should remain safe at home

Level 1 Comply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure compliance with all local and national restrictions, including for participation of high-risk individuals. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that the Special Olympics Washington Board of Directors (including medical professional, if possible) approves the plan for a return to activities.
Level 1 Educate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Designate a COVID-19 response point person for the activity. <input type="checkbox"/> Prior to attendance, educate all participants on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ High-risk conditions and the risks of participation. ○ Requirement that anyone who has symptoms must stay home and to contact their own health provider if they are sick for further evaluation. ○ Requirements for in-person gathering, including PPE, hygiene, and physical distancing. <input type="checkbox"/> Following this education (e.g., video or handouts), all participants should acknowledge receiving education and confirm understanding of risks and participation procedures by signing <i>Participant Risk Assessment Form</i>
Level 1 Prepare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Have COVID screening protocol in place and coaches/staff/volunteers prepared to implement prior to or upon arrival at event (see additional guidance on screening protocol below). <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that the venue is disinfected or sanitized, especially bathrooms. <input type="checkbox"/> No shared supplies such as towels and water/beverage bottles. <input type="checkbox"/> Minimize shared equipment. If shared equipment must be used, prepare a cleaning protocol and supplies to disinfect shared equipment between uses. <input type="checkbox"/> Remind participants to bring PPE and, if used, their own water bottle, towel, and equipment. Provide facemasks/PPE available for those who may need them. <input type="checkbox"/> Post reminders/signage that reinforces appropriate use of PPE relevant to the activity, hygiene, and physical distancing. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide hand sanitizer or handwashing facilities at venue. <input type="checkbox"/> Know how to communicate potential cases to the local health authorities for testing and to Special Olympics Washington (within privacy laws). <input type="checkbox"/> During transport to activities, it is recommended that participants should wear a mask if on public transport, such as a bus, trolley,

	<p>subway or if carpooling which includes someone not living with them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If Special Olympics Washington is providing transportation, participants must wear facemasks during travel.
<p>Level 1 Activity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ On arrival, conduct screening for ALL PARTICIPANTS (<i>see screening protocol below</i>). All participants with symptoms, a history of recent (last 14 days) COVID exposure, or temperature >100.4F/37.8C may not proceed to the activity. □ Activities must comply with distancing guidelines at all times. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Indirect contact (e.g., through a ball in the hand) MAY resume. Direct contact may NOT resume yet. ○ Maintain physical distancing and avoid close contact (e.g. high fives, hugs, huddles). ○ Wear facemasks throughout the activity, except during exercise, including upon arrival and departure. □ Coaches and volunteers cannot make changes in personnel-- groups must stay together and not switch up. □ Program staff must provide reminders to participants on standard infection prevention measures (e.g., frequent handwashing, avoid touching face, cover mouth when sneezing/coughing, etc.) at the start and throughout event. □ Participants may share equipment when circumstances require it (i.e. bocce balls). If shared equipment must be used, prepare a cleaning protocol and supplies to disinfect shared equipment between uses. □ Maintain a list of all participants with contact details. This will allow for contact tracing should a participant be later diagnosed as having COVID-19 during the activity.

Sports Risk Assessment

Low Risk	Sports that can be done with social distancing or individually with no sharing of equipment or the ability to clean the equipment between use by competitors.
Moderate Risk	Sports that involve close, sustained contact, but with protective equipment in place that may reduce the likelihood of respiratory particle transmission between participants OR intermittent close contact OR group sports OR sports that use equipment that can't be cleaned between participants.
High Risk	Sports that involve close, sustained contact between participants, lack of significant protective barriers, and high probability that respiratory particles will be transmitted between participants.

Moderate and High Risk sports can still be active during early levels through individual skills training and development.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS SPORTS		
Low Risk	Moderate Risk	High Risk
Athletics - Running Events	Athletics - Field Events / Relays	Judo
Swimming - Individual Events	Swimming - Relays	Competitive Cheer
Bocce - Singles	Bocce - Doubles / Team*	Handball
Tennis - Singles	Tennis - Doubles	Basketball*
Badminton - Singles	Badminton Doubles	Netball
Table Tennis - Singles	Table Tennis - Doubles	Flag Football*
Cycling	Gymnastics (Artistic)*	Dance Sport
Equestrian	Gymnastics (Rhythmic)*	Floor Hockey
Golf	Bowling	Floorball
Open Water Swimming	Powerlifting*	
Triathlon	Roller Skating	
Alpine Skiing	Cricket	
Cross Country Skiing	Baseball*	
Figure Skating	Softball*	
Snowboarding	Volleyball	
Snowshoeing	Sailing	
Speed Skating	Football - Soccer	
	Speed Skating Relays	

*Could be potentially considered lower risk with appropriate cleaning of equipment and use of masks by participants.

Sports Offered by SOWA for the Summer Season

After reviewing the Sports Risk Assessment from SOI on page 7, Special Olympics Washington will be providing the below low-risk sports for this Summer season to ensure the safety of our athletes and volunteers while re-engaging with each other in-person.

- Athletics (Individual Running, Walking, and Rolling Events)
- Bocce
- Cycling
- Golf (Includes Individual Skills)
- Tennis (Singles Only)
- Fitness Heptathlon

*Health and wellness programs (such as Fit 5) can be facilitated at your sports practices. You can indicate interest in both your Pre and Final registration.

Timeline for Summer Season

- May 3 – Pre-Season Registration Opens
- May 5 – Town Hall Meeting #1 @ 4:30pm (Register [here](#))
- May 8 – Town Hall Meeting #2 @ 10:00am (Register [here](#))
- May 19 – Training of Staff / Area Directors
- May 28 – Pre-Season Registration Closes
- June 1 – Registration Opens
- June 10 – Start of Online Trainings for Programs
- July 1 – Registration Concludes
- July 13 & 15 – Sports-Specific Trainings
- July 19 – Season Starts
- September 6 – Season Concludes

Participation Numbers for the Summer Season

For the Summer season, Special Olympics Washington will operate under **Level 1** of our return to activities plan.

- Maximum number of **25 participants** (not including Safety Squad members)

Teams must follow the 4:1 ratio of Athletes to Coaches.

- 20 athletes
- 5 coaches
 - Coaches can be the following:
 - Head Coach
 - Assistant Coaches
 - Chaperones
 - Unified Partner (18 years or older)
 - Class A Volunteer
- 1-5 Safety Squad members
 - Minimum of 2 if your team has over 10 participants
 - Minimum of 1 if your team has 10 or under participants
 - Maximum of 5
 - Safety Squad can be the following:
 - Assistant Coaches
 - Family members
 - Unified Partners (18 years or older)
 - Class A Volunteer

Safety Squad Job Description

Safety Squad is a new volunteer role that will play a vital role in our return to activities.

- At practices, teams must have a team family member or another program coach acting in this role.
- Safety Squad members will need to be a Class A certified volunteer. They will need to complete a Background Check and sign the COVID Waiver before trainings begin.
- Safety Squad will act in a support role to teams to ensure that the proper protocols are in place to return to activities.
- After being matched with a team, SOWA staff will connect Safety Squad volunteers to the Special Olympics coach and athletes to become acquainted.
- Coaches will send the Safety Check-In checklists to Safety Squad members at the end of each in-person practice. Liaisons are responsible for tracking the checklists and reporting to SOWA.
- Safety Squad members will check in athletes and coaches at each event using a no-contact thermometer.
- Safety Squad members submit brief forms for each member at an event for proper tracking.
- During competition, the volunteer will ensure that there is social distancing.
- Safety Squad volunteers will assist with disinfecting equipment after use.
- Communicate with Special Olympics Washington any challenges teams are facing, any needs they have, and report back any questions.

If you are currently a Class A certified volunteer:

- Register at <https://sowa-volunteerapp-site.my-trs.com/>
- If you are a returning coach or Unified partner, please connect with your existing program.
- Ensure your WSP background check and protective behaviors training are up to date.
- Complete the [COVID Waiver form](#)
- Review return to activities resources.

If you are applying as a new Class A certified volunteer:

- Register at: <https://sowa-volunteerapp-site.my-trs.com/>
- Complete your [WSP Background check](#)
- Complete your [Protective Behaviors training](#)
- Complete the [COVID Waiver form](#)

Safety Squad Volunteers: Procedures

Arrival at Practice/Competition

- Safety Squad Volunteers will arrive at the practice a minimum of 20 minutes prior to the start of practice to set up the check-in station and signage.
- Check in should take place in a safe location, such as near or in the parking lot.
- All participants will check in with the Safety Squad Volunteer and be asked the necessary questions and have their temperature taken.
- If the participant answers YES to any question and/or their temperature is 100.4 F or higher, they will receive the handout for "individuals that did not pass check-in," with further instructions and MUST be isolated from the group and/or sent home.
- If an individual (coach, volunteer, Unified partner or athlete) is not on the approved roster, please give them the handout for "Participants NOT on Roster." They are not permitted to attend practice until they follow the steps on the handout and register appropriately.
- Complete COVID-19 Contact Tracing form and return it to the SOWA office within 24 hours. The form can be completed online or emailed into SOWA Staff.

During Practice/Competition

- Safety Squad volunteers will help athletes maintain social distancing rules.
- Safety Squad volunteers will assist athletes in wearing their mask correctly.
- Safety Squad volunteers will assist with disinfecting equipment after use.
- Volunteers will work with coaches to inform SOWA if any safety measures cannot be met during practice. The safety of athletes and volunteers is most important, and an athlete will be asked to leave the practice if they repeatedly fail to follow safety measures.

Important Reminders

- All participants in attendance should adhere to social distancing rules (6 feet/2 meters).
- Everyone should have Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and must wear their mask throughout practice, including arrival and departure. SOWA will provide additional PPE in the PPE Toolkit.
- If participants are unable to adhere to the safety measures, they will be asked to leave the practice.

Athletics Guidelines

In-person Athletics (only individual Rolling, Running and Walking events), can return to training in Special Olympics Washington Level 1 plan following the requirements outlined in this document, as well as the specific sport requirements below. Any program not following the SOWA or sport- specific guidelines will be asked to stop trainings immediately.

SOWA Requirements

- Head Coach must ensure that venue is following the protocols outlined in the SOWA Return to Activities Guidelines and the SOWA Health & Safety Protocols training.
- All Safety Squad members must be in place before athletes are admitted into the practice area.
- Only Individual Running, Individual Walking and Wheelchair events are allowed. There will be no relays and no field events.
- Teams can and should utilize both sides of the track to help with social distancing requirements. Teams can separate the sides of the track based on ability and/or specific events.
- Use every other lane to help ensure social distancing requirements.
- Starting blocks are not permitted.
- A rope or baton used for the Assisted events should not be shared between teams. If needing to be shared, cleaning of equipment must take place between every use.

Permitted Track Events

- 10 Meter Manual Wheelchair Race**
- 25 Meter Manual Wheelchair Race**
- 30 Meter Manual Wheelchair Slalom Race**
- 100 Meter Manual Wheelchair Race
- 200 Meter Manual Wheelchair Race
- 400 Meter Manual Wheelchair Race
- 25 Motorized Wheelchair Obstacle Race**
- 30 Meter Motorized Wheelchair Slalom Race**
- 50 Meter Motorized Wheelchair Slalom Race**
- 10 Meter Assisted Walk***
- 25 Meter Assisted Walk***
- 50 Meter Assisted Walk***
- 100 Meter Guided Walk***
- 25 Meter Guided Race***
- 50 Meter Guided Race***
- 50 Meter Walk**
- 50 Meter Dash**
- 100 Meter Dash
- 200 Meter Dash
- 100 Meter Walk
- 200 Meter Walk
- 400 Meter Walk
- 800 Meter Walk
- 1.5k Meter Run
- 1.5k Race Walk
- 3k Road Race
- 5k Road Race
- 10k Road Race

** Designated for lower ability athletes.

*** Assistant must be a member of the same household.

Bocce Guidelines

In-person Bocce (Singles Only) can return to training in Special Olympics Washington's Level 1 plan following the requirements outlined in this document, as well as the specific sport requirements below. Any program not following the SOWA or sport-specific guidelines will be asked to stop trainings immediately.

SOWA Requirements

- Head Coach must ensure that venue is following the protocols outlined in the SOWA Return to Activities Guidelines and the SOWA Health & Safety Protocols training.
- All Safety Squad members must be in place before athletes are admitted into the practice area.
- Only **"Singles" Bocce** is allowed for the Summer season.
- All courts must be separated by ten (10) feet. and athletes must adhere to the social distancing guidelines of six (6) feet between other athletes on the team.
- Bocce balls should not be shared if possible.
- Bocce balls, if shared, will need to be cleaned after every use by the athletes before transferring to another athlete.
- Teams should have two pallinas per court, so they don't have to be cleaned after every throw.
- At the end of every practice, bocce balls must be thoroughly cleaned before being put away.
- At the end of each round, if athlete is not able to remove their bocce balls to the side, a volunteer may assist them, but must adhere to the six (6) feet social distancing protocols and use their feet to move the bocce balls.
- If a measurement is required, the volunteer taking the measurement must not touch the bocce balls and adhere to the six (6) feet social distancing protocols.

Cycling Guidelines

In-person Cycling can return to training in Special Olympics Washington Level 1 plan following the requirements outlined in this document, as well as the specific sport requirements below. Any program not following the SOWA or sport-specific guidelines will be asked to stop trainings immediately.

SOWA Requirements

- Head Coach must ensure that venue is following the protocols outlined in the SOWA Return to Activities Guidelines and the SOWA Health & Safety Protocols training.
- All Safety Squad members must be in place before athletes are admitted into the practice area.
- All athletes must monitor social distancing guidelines.
- Masks are mandatory when on the bicycle.
- There should be no shared bikes or equipment.

Fitness Activities Guidelines

In-person Fitness Activities can return to training in Special Olympics Washington's Level 1 plan following the requirements outlined in this document, as well as the sport specific requirements below. Any program not following the SOWA, or the sport-specific guidelines will be asked to stop trainings immediately.

SOWA Requirements

- Head Coach must ensure that venue is following the protocols outlined in the SOWA Return to Activities Guidelines and the SOWA Health & Safety Protocols training.
- All Safety Squad members must be in place before athletes are admitted into the practice area.
- No sharing of any fitness equipment and/or food and drink.
- If you are setting up fitness stations, make sure you are using distancing guidelines and cleaning equipment after every use.
- Use tape or cones to mark stations.
- All Fitness programs are allowed and can be done in conjuncture with or without sports.

Permitted Events

- Fit 5
- Fitness Heptathlon
- SO Fit
- Unified Fitness Club
- Walking Club

Golf Guidelines

In-person Golf can return to training in Special Olympic Washington's Level 1 plan following the requirements outlined in this document, as well as the specific sport requirements below. Any program not following the SOWA or sport-specific guidelines will be asked to stop trainings immediately.

SOWA Requirements

- Head Coach must ensure that venue is following the protocols outlined in the SOWA Return to Activities Guidelines and the SOWA Health & Safety Protocols training.
- All Safety Squad members must be in place before athletes are admitted into the practice area.
- All golfers and coaches are required to follow the specific golf course rules already in place.
- Flags should not be removed from the hole or touched for any reason.
- No bunker rakes will be permitted.
- Players may play with a group of four, but they must wear masks, and maintain social distancing.
- Use of caddies is permitted but participants are encouraged to carry their own equipment.
- If a caddie is necessary, the participants must maintain social distancing and athletes must pull their own equipment from their bag.
- For Individual Skills on the range, you must have one bay in-between athletes to maintain social distancing guidelines. Athletes need to use their own range balls and not share equipment.
- For Individual Skills on the green, all athletes need to maintain six (6) feet of separation while waiting in line to complete the short and long putt events.

Permitted Events

- Level 1 - Individual Skills (*Must play with own golf ball*)
- Level 2 - Unified Team Play (9 hole) (*Must play with own golf ball*)
- Level 3 - Unified Team Play (18 hole) (*Must play with own golf ball*)
- Level 4 - Individual Stroke Play (9 hole)
- Level 5 - Individual Stroke Play (18 hole)

Tennis Guidelines

In-person Tennis (Singles Only) can return to training in Special Olympic Washington's Level 1 plan following the requirements outlined in this document, as well as the specific sport requirements below. Any program not following the SOWA or sport-specific guidelines will be asked to stop trainings immediately.

SOWA Requirements

- Head Coach must ensure that venue is following the protocols outlined in the SOWA Return to Activities Guidelines and the SOWA Health & Safety Protocols training.
- All Safety Squad members must be in place before athletes are admitted into the practice area.
- Only singles Tennis is permitted. There will be no doubles tennis.
- Mark individual athlete's tennis ball so it is not shared with opponent.
- Server should only use their marked tennis ball.
- Athletes should not touch opponent's tennis ball.
- No sharing of tennis rackets or other equipment.

SOWA Requirements for All Safety Components

Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)

- SOWA will provide all registered teams with PPE kits. The kits will include:
 - Thermometer
 - Paper Masks
 - Anti-Fog Shields
 - Individual Pen Hand Sanitizer
 - Hand Sanitizer Wipes
 - Sanitizer w/pump
 - Disposable Gloves
 - Individual First Aid Pouch
 - Electric Whistle (depending on sport)
 - RTA Signage
 - Tape
 - RTA Forms
 - Cinch Sacks
 - Binder w/ COVID-19 -RTA Plan
 - Box of Pens
- Athletes/Unified Partners/Coaches/Safety Squad/and all Class A volunteers must complete both the COVID Waiver and Code of Conduct Risk Assessment Forms to participate in RTA practices/events.
- All participants are encouraged to bring their own mask, water bottle and personal towel.
- Mask wearing and social distancing must be enforced. Those that don't comply will be dismissed and not allowed to participate.
- All athletes/partners/coaches/volunteers/ will have their temperature checked when they arrive at the practice/event session. Those with a fever (100.4 or higher) will be sent home. They also will be asked a series of health-related question when they enter facility/venue.
- Hand sanitizer will be made available, and all will be encouraged to use frequently.
- Safety Squad member will submit contact tracing information to the respective Region Sports Manager within 24 hours of the completion of the practice/event.
- All participants will be notified by a SOWA staff member if someone in the group contacted COVID-19. All future practices/events for that group will be canceled.
- SOWA will notify all proper health organizations of a potential COVID-19 outbreak.

Venue

- Work with your Region Sports Manager to secure a practice/event venue that will adhere to all RTA protocols.
- All facility contracts must be passed on to SOWA. A SOWA staff member will work directly with American Specialty Insurance (on contract language and/or certificates of insurance) to be clear if we are expected to sanitize their venue or not.
- Coach/Safety Squad member must complete a venue walk-through prior to practice/activity to assess all necessary protocol, safety and activity modification needs.
- Ensure enough space is available at the venue for extra spacing for all sport and non-sport elements of activity (e.g., coach meetings, hydration and resting areas, skills and drills stations).

- Confirm if other entities/groups will be using the venue at the same time as Special Olympics. If so, it is recommended to stay clear from any other non-Special Olympics group.
- No use of locker rooms for the summer season. All participants should dress at home for the training session/event.

Event Signage and Notices

- SOWA will provide all signage needed in the PPE kits.
- Signage will use both language-based notices and pictures/icons for those who have difficulty reading.
- Signs must be posted highly visible locations (e.g., at entrances and exits, and in restrooms)
- Signage will promote protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs such. Signage examples include:
 - Do not enter if you are exhibiting any signs of illness such as sneezing, coughing, sniffles, have a fever, or don't feel well.
 - If you are repeatedly sneezing or coughing, you may be asked to immediately leave the premises.
 - All athletes, staff, volunteers, and spectators should practice responsible social distancing by remaining at least 6 ft apart whenever possible.
 - All athletes, staff, volunteers, and spectators should wear PPE such as face masks at all times.
 - Wash your hands and/or use hand sanitizer upon entrance, during the event, before and after you eat, and as you leave.
 - Avoid touching your face including your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Broadcast regular announcements on public announcement (PA) system (if applicable).

Transportation/Arrivals/Departures

- Schedule staggered participant pick up/drop off times.
- Increase the amount of time between practices and competitions to allow for one group to depart before another group enters the facility. This also allows for more time to clean the facility between uses.
- Try to avoid entering venue (more applicable for indoor venues) at same time as athletes – attempt to reduce human bottlenecks/proximity in and out of venue.
- Athletes and Unified partners: arrive already dressed and sport ready.
- Establish procedures for safely transporting anyone who is sick to their home or to a healthcare facility. If you call an ambulance or bring someone to the hospital, call first to alert them that the person may have COVID-19 and notify their family or caregiver.

Staff/Volunteers/Coaches/Officials

- All teams must adhere to the 4:1 athlete to coach ratio. The maximum number of participants at a summer season practice season is 25: 20 athletes and 5 coaches.
- The roster of participants must stay the same throughout the season. No additions will be allowed. If someone can't attend, the team cannot substitute for that individual that can't attend.
- Extensive training sessions will be offered for staff, coaches, volunteers and family members prior to the start of the season.
- Coaches will need to complete an RTA General Session and a Sports Specific Training before they can conduct a practice session for the summer season.
 - The volunteer training will address why precautions are needed to protect all Special Olympics athletes, partners, coaches and volunteers.

- During a practice session, Safety Squad members will concentrate on sanitizing, cleaning, and enforcing athlete social distancing and safety behavior compliance so coaches can coach.
- Safety Squad will perform participant screenings, on-site observation for symptoms, and/or in the event of on-site quarantine needs.
- Safety Squad members have the authority to send someone home from a practice or event if they do not meet the screening requirements or do not adhere to the participant agreement terms.
- The safety of our coaches and volunteers is our utmost concern. At any time, if coaches feel uncomfortable coaching under these circumstances, it is completely acceptable and understandable.
- Coaches, volunteers and officials must socially distance at all times! Stay at least six feet apart.
- No officials will be needed for the summer season. All competitive opportunities will be performed within the framework of practice sessions.

Equipment

- All equipment must be cleaned and sanitized pre and post practice session.
- Coach keeps all equipment / equipment bag in between practices and sanitizes at start and end of every practice.
- Equipment/gear for each person (their own or provided): put athlete or partner's name on it with tape or other means.
- Be aware of any damaging effects frequent use of some sanitizing products may have on certain forms of gear or equipment.

Spectators/Family Members/Caregivers

- No non-essential personnel at practice.
- Family members/caregivers may need to drop off and pick-up only or stay in car during practice/activity.
- For the summer season, no spectators will be allowed at practice / activity.

Sport: Practices and Competitions

- Split squads/practices if you have enough venue availability and coaches give enough time.
- Modify all sports to meet social distancing requirements.
- No spectators at practices and/or events.
- Use physical guidance (ropes, tape on floor, chalked areas, coning off areas) to help ensure social distancing.
- Break athletes into small groups that stay together and do not co-mingle. Keep players together in small groups with dedicated coaches or staff, and make sure that each group of players and coaches avoid mixing with other groups as much as possible. Teams might consider having the same group of athletes stay with the same coach or having the same group of athletes rotate among coaches.
- Put out cones or chalk ground to ensure social distancing for each player to have personal area for static stretching. Similarly, designated lanes could be set up for any dynamic stretches or running warm up. Mark off areas along bench, ground, fence or other stationary point of reference with tape/chalk/cones/surveyor's tape to give each athlete same "spot" for gear, rest, when not active at practice every week for consistency.
- Modify practices, skills, drills, scrimmages, to limit the time athletes and partners spend physically close to others.

- During times when players are not actively participating in practice or competition, attention should be given to maintaining social distancing by increasing space between players on the sideline, dugout, or bench. Additionally, coaches can encourage athletes to use downtime for individual skill-building work or cardiovascular conditioning, rather than staying clustered together.

Support Coping and Resilience

- Encourage participants to take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media if they are feeling overwhelmed or distressed.
- Promote healthy eating, exercising, getting sleep, and finding time to unwind.
- Encourage participants to talk with people they trust about their concerns and how they are feeling.
- Many participants are going through challenging times. Some may have lost loved ones, lost jobs, been disconnected from friends and school and haven't had the structure they are accustomed to. This creates a lot of stress that can show up in different ways. You can help reduce this stress through your communication approach.
 - Special Olympics has shared the [Bridges Model](#), ([more on Bridges](#)) which have some helpful insights on leadership in times of crisis.
 - The CDC also has helpful resources regarding talking with youth, including: [Helping Children Cope](#) and [Talking with Children](#).
 - [Helping Athletes Cope with Covid](#)

COVID-19 Vaccine Information and Resources

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 due to COVID-19 because of challenges with social distancing.

The health and safety of the Special Olympics Washington community, including our athletes, coaches, volunteers, and employees, are our top priority. As Special Olympics Washington prepares for return to activities, we will continue to follow guidance from national and local authorities. We will continue to require social distancing, face coverings, and promote healthy hygiene and sanitation.

Special Olympics strongly encourages everyone who is able to get the COVID-19 vaccine, to be vaccinated. At this time, it is not a requirement for Special Olympics athletes, volunteers, and staff to be vaccinated to participate in programs, however, being vaccinated will help protect you from getting COVID-19, prevent serious illness, and may also help protect people around you.

Vaccines are one of the tools available to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Special Olympics Washington is dedicated to providing you with the latest information and resources to protect our communities. We encourage everyone who has access to the COVID-19 vaccine to get vaccinated.

The COVID-19 vaccine is available to all people 16 years and older who live or work in Washington state.

- Use the [Vaccine Locator](#) to find a location near you.
- Schedule your appointment and follow any clinic instructions.

Do You Work at a School or Child Care Facility?

- Find Federal Retail Pharmacy Program locations through the [National Vaccine Finder](#).

Need help? Call the Washington State Department of Health:

- Call the COVID-19 hotline at 1-800-525-0127, then press #. Language assistance is available.

(FAQs) Frequently Asked Questions

This section contains links to all of our FAQs. Please select the topic below to visit that specific FAQ document. If you have further questions, please feel free to email us at rta@sowa.org.

- [COVID-19 Vaccine and Screening Protocols](#)
- [Phases and Timeline](#)
- [Registration and Safety Squad](#)
- [Coaches Training](#)
- [Sports Specific and On-Site Screening](#)
- [Fundraising Events and Activities](#)

Risk Assessment and Risk Mitigation: Functional Area Considerations

Until COVID-19 is either eradicated, a vaccine is administered, or a cure is found, there is no way of completely eliminating the risk of infection, especially since many within the Special Olympics movement (with and without intellectual disabilities) are at greater risk for complications from COVID-19.



To help assess risk in returning to large-scale, mass gathering activities, consider using the WHO Risk Assessment Tool to determine the organizational risk of spread.

SPORT

Each sport will present a varying level of risk as well and determination of what modifications are feasible should be considered by Special Olympics Washington. However, if precautions and mitigating criteria (e.g. PPE, physical distancing, no shared equipment and/or disinfection, staggered starts, etc.) can be implemented, then most sports may be offered in some capacity (e.g. individual skills or drills or small internal scrimmage) during all levels of return. Many local, national and international sport associations have begun to offer guidance on how to safely return to play within their sport with mitigation. It is recommended that, in addition to the minimum precautions detailed within this document, Programs adhere to sport-specific precautions and mitigation in determining how to resume sport activities and guidance from sport authorities and associations.

SCHOOLS

Programs should follow the school's protocols and guidance on when and how activities may resume. If school activities transition into Special Olympics Washington community activities (e.g., the final competition/tournament is hosted by Special Olympics Washington), then proper return to activities protocol and necessary precautions for Special Olympics events, as outlined in this document, must be followed.

If the school or community partner's guidelines are less stringent or in conflict with the guidelines of Special Olympics Washington, the following guidance applies:

1. The school/partner leaders/authorities should be informed of the Special Olympics Washington guidelines for determining return to activities.
2. The possibility of high-risk conditions in populations within the movement is conveyed to leaders/authorities.
3. Decision-making and options are provided to students with and without ID to provide for equal treatment.
4. Parents, guardians, or other caregivers of youth participants are provided with education on Special Olympics Washington guidelines and relevant acknowledgements.
5. Youth participants involved in Special Olympics branded/sanctioned activities are given the option to opt out without penalty and are provided options for safe at home activities.

In-Person Fundraising Events and Activities

In person fundraising events and activities will be permitted within a limited, pre-approved structure which differs from the general sports Return to Activity. These events will be broken down into two categories:

- Third-Party Events
- Co-Operated Activities or Events hosted by an Area, Team or LETR Agency in coordination with Special Olympics Washington.

For a definition and specific expectations of each of these please follow this [link](#) for the In-Person Fundraising Event Decision Tree

Please note that Third Party Events are fully run and supported outside of Special Olympics Washington. Although Special Olympics Washington will have no fiducial responsibility or be involved in the planning of the event, they will provide a list of [best practices](#) and will need to pre-approve any logos usages.

All Co-Operated Events (including Area, Team or LETR) will be required to submit a request and have approval before they begin to market any in-person activity. Link to register an event [here](#). At minimum, this will include:

- Brief safety training for event lead, including support of assigned and trained Safety Squad volunteer.
- Collect signed COVID Waiver (which includes participant code of conduct) and completed required contract tracing form.
- Following all COVID guidelines and safety precautions which can be found here (**link coming soon**)

Keeping our athletes safe remains on number one priority. If an athlete wishes to participate in a fundraising event as a paying entrant/registrant, like any other supporter, they are welcome to but would need to assume all liability for their own health and safety, as would all other event participants/members of the public.

If an athlete is requested for a specific role such as a speaker at the event, this will need to be pre-approved by Special Olympics Washington and included as part of the fundraising event and activity application process [here](#).

Healthy Athletes

Because of the nature of Healthy Athlete screening events -- which are often conducted indoors; may require close contact with decreased opportunity for physical distancing; and some interactions may be high risk without proper PPE and precautions in place -- programs should not resume Healthy Athlete screenings in person until Level 1 and only with limited numbers and for select disciplines. Additional guidance will be forthcoming on safety precautions for returning to in-person Healthy Athlete events. Virtual health programming and education should be offered throughout all levels.

Leadership

Leadership activities (e.g., Athlete Leadership workshops, regional or program leader meetings, board meetings, Leadership Academy, Athlete Input Councils, etc.) will present varying levels of risk, and determination of what modifications are feasible should be considered by the program. However, if precautions and mitigation for infection control (e.g., PPE, physical distancing, no shared equipment/supplies, and/or disinfection, staggered starts, etc.) can be implemented, then leadership activities may resume following the size limits for each level (25 or fewer for level 2). If travel of participants occurs, the participants must be coming from an area in which they are in the same level as the host site and follow local regulations on travel for both the originating location and the host location. Virtual programming and participation is encouraged and available through all levels, as is feasible.

Onsite Screening Protocol for COVID-19

Regular education must be provided to all athletes, staff, volunteers, coaches, families and caregivers reminding them stay home if they have a fever or any signs and symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea). **Individuals must not participate in any activities if they are sick, for their own health and to reduce transmission of any infections to others. Instruct anyone who is ill to contact their own health provider for further evaluation.**

In addition to education, before entering an activity, practice, event, or gathering (in levels 1), for **all participants**, the program:

1. Must set-up a space for screening that maintains physical distance (6 feet/2 meters) during screening.
2. Must ask the following questions (reinforced through visuals and verbally, such as signage or handouts with icons):
 - a. In the last 14 days, have you had contact with someone who has been sick with COVID-19?
 - b. Have you had a fever in the last week (temperature of 100.4°F/37.8°C or higher)?
 - c. Do you have a cough and/or difficulty breathing?
 - d. Do you have any other signs or symptoms of COVID-19 (fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea)?
3. Should conduct onsite measurement of temperature using thermometer (preferred non-touch thermal scanning thermometer if possible).
 - Fever equals temperature of 100.4°F/37.8°C or higher.
 - If high, may re-test after 5 minutes to ensure temperature is accurate.
4. Must record all names, results and contact information and keep in case needed for contact tracing or reporting (Template available in supplemental materials).
 - a. If yes to any questions, participants **MUST** be isolated from the group (at minimum, kept 6 feet/2 meters apart from others and with mask on), be sent home, and instructed to contact their healthcare provider for evaluation.
 - b. Participants who are found to have COVID-19 symptoms must wait 7 days after symptoms resolve to return to activity **OR** must provide written proof of physician clearance to Special Olympics to return earlier.
 - c. Participants who test positive for/have COVID-19 must provide written medical clearance before returning to sport and fitness activities.

Throughout the event/practice/training/competition remind participants of infection prevention protocols (e.g. facemasks, physical distancing, hygiene, and disinfection/sanitation). Sample signage and reminders available.

Questions?

For questions regarding Special Olympics Washington's Safe Return to Activity Protocol, please send e-mail to: rta@sowa.org

Waiver Form

WAIVER AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY, ASSUMPTION OF RISK AND INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT FOR COMMUNICABLE DISEASES ("Agreement") for SPECIAL OLYMPICS

In consideration of being allowed to participate in any way in Special Olympics sports training, competition or fundraising activities, the undersigned acknowledges, appreciates, and agrees that:

1. Participation includes possible exposure to and illness from infectious and/or communicable diseases including but not limited to MRSA, influenza, and COVID-19. While particular rules and personal discipline may reduce this risk, the risk of serious illness and death does exist; and,
2. I KNOWINGLY AND FREELY ASSUME ALL SUCH RISKS, both known and unknown, EVEN IF ARISING FROM THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE RELEASEES or others, and assume full responsibility for my participation; and,
3. I willingly agree to comply with the stated and customary terms and conditions for participation as regards protection against infectious diseases. If, however, I observe and any unusual or significant hazard during my presence or participation, I will remove myself from participation and bring such to the attention of the nearest official immediately; and,
4. I, for myself and on behalf of my heirs, assigns, personal representatives and next of kin, HEREBY RELEASE AND HOLD HARMLESS Special Olympics, Inc, Special Olympics Washington their officers, officials, agents, and/or employees, other participants, sponsoring agencies, sponsors, advertisers, and if applicable, owners and lessors of premises used to conduct the event ("RELEASEES"), WITH RESPECT TO ANY AND ALL ILLNESS, DISABILITY, DEATH, or loss or damage to person or property, WHETHER ARISING FROM THE NEGLIGENCE OF RELEASEES OR OTHERWISE, to the fullest extent permitted by law.

I HAVE READ THIS RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK AGREEMENT, FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS TERMS, UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE GIVEN UP SUBSTANTIAL RIGHTS BY SIGNING IT, AND SIGN IF FREELY AND VOLUNTARILY WITHOUT ANY INDUCEMENT.

Name of Participant: _____
Participant Signature: _____
Date signed: _____

FOR PARTICIPANTS OF MINORITY AGE (UNDER AGE 18 AT THE TIME OF REGISTRATION)

This is to certify that I, as parent/guardian, with legal responsibility for this participant, have read and explained the provisions in this waiver/release to my child/ward including the risks of presence and participation and his/her personal responsibilities for adhering to the rules and regulations for protection against communicable diseases. Furthermore, my child/ward understands and accepts these risks and responsibilities. I for myself, my spouse, and child/ward do consent and agree to his/her release provided above for all the Releasees and myself, my spouse, and child/ward do release and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Releasees for any and all liabilities incident to my minor child's/ward's presence or participation in these activities as provided above, EVEN IF ARISING FROM THEIR NEGLIGENCE, to the fullest extent provided by law.

Name of parent/guardian: _____
Parent guardian/signature: _____
Date signed: _____

COVID-19 Participant Code of Conduct and Risk Assessment Form

I understand I could get COVID-19 through sports, training, competition and/or any group activity at Special Olympics. I am choosing to participate in sports, competition and/or other Special Olympics activities at my own risk.

During the time these precautions are needed, I agree to the following to help keep me and my fellow participants safe:

<input type="checkbox"/> If I have COVID-19 symptoms, I will stay at home and NOT go to any activities until 7 days after all my symptoms are over. If I am exposed to COVID-19 and have no symptoms, I can return 14 days after exposure.
<input type="checkbox"/> Special Olympics gave me education on Special Olympics rules for COVID-19 and who is at high-risk.
<input type="checkbox"/> I know that if I have a high-risk condition, I have more risk that I could get sick or die from COVID-19. If I have a high-risk condition, I should not go to Special Olympics events in person, until there is little or no COVID-19 in my community.
<input type="checkbox"/> I know that before or when I get to a Special Olympics activity, they will ask me questions about symptoms and exposure to COVID-19. They may also take my temperature. I will answer truthfully and participate fully.
<input type="checkbox"/> I will keep at least 6 feet/2 meters from all participants at all times.
<input type="checkbox"/> I will wear a mask at all times while at Special Olympics activities. I may not have to wear it during active exercise.
<input type="checkbox"/> I will wash my hands for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer before any activities. I will wash my hands any time I sneeze, cough, go to the bathroom or get my hands dirty.
<input type="checkbox"/> I will avoid touching my face. I will cover my mouth when I cough or sneeze and immediately wash my hands after.
<input type="checkbox"/> I will not share drinking bottles or towels with other people.
<input type="checkbox"/> I will only share equipment when instructed to. If equipment must be shared, I will only touch the equipment if it is disinfected first.
<input type="checkbox"/> If I get or have had COVID-19, I will not go to any in-person Special Olympics events until 7 days after my symptoms end. I will go to my doctor and get written clearance before returning to any sport or fitness activities.
<input type="checkbox"/> I understand that if I do not follow all of these rules, I may not be allowed to participate in Special Olympics activities during this time.

COVID-19 Participant Code of Conduct and Risk Assessment Form

I HAVE READ ALL OF THIS AGREEMENT OR HAVE HAD IT READ TO ME AND AGREE TO FOLLOW THESE ACTIONS.

PARTICIPANT FULL NAME:

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

Circle one:

Athlete Unified Coach/Volunteer Family/Caregiver Staff
Partner

PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE *Required for adult participants (age 18+), including adult athlete with capacity to sign documents.*

By signing this, I acknowledge that I have completely read and fully understand the information in this form.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE *Required for participant who is a minor (younger than age 18) or lacks capacity to sign documents.*

I am a parent or guardian of the athlete/participant named above. I have read and understand this form and have explained the contents to the participant as appropriate. By signing, I agree to this form on my own behalf and on behalf of the participant.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Printed Name: _____

Relationship: _____



Form: Screening and Tracking Template for SOWA Activities

This form is provided to screen and track participants during Special Olympics events. If staff/volunteer/coach have access to tablets or Wi-Fi, this could also be converted to a web form that is completed online by staff/volunteer/coach at the practice/event.

REMINDERS

- **All participants to be reminded that they MUST stay home, if they are sick or showing signs and symptoms of COVID-19 or have been exposed to someone who has had COVID-19.** They should be encouraged to contact their healthcare provider if they are feeling unwell.
- Before the start of any Special Olympics event/practice/training/competition (during Levels 1 and 2), a screening of all participants must be conducted to assess if anyone is showing signs or symptoms of COVID-19. All participants at an event, training, or practice, must be documented in case someone in attendance is diagnosed with COVID-19 and contact tracing is needed.

SCREENING PROTOCOL

1. Set-up a space for screening that maintains physical distance (6 feet /2 meters) during screening.
2. Ask the following questions (reinforced through verbally and through visuals, such as a poster/paper with icons):
 - a. In the last 14 days, have you had contact with someone who has been sick with COVID-19?
 - b. Have you had a fever in the last week (temperature of 100.4°F/37.8°C or higher)?
 - c. Do you have a cough and/or difficulty breathing?
 - d. Do you have any other signs or symptoms of COVID-19 (fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea)?
3. Conduct onsite measurement of temperature using thermometer (preferred non-touch thermal scanning thermometer if possible).
 - Fever equals temperature of 100.4°F/37.8°C or higher.
 - If high, may re-test after 5 minutes to ensure temperature is accurate.
4. Record all names, results and contact information and keep in case needed for contact tracing or reporting (*Template available in supplemental materials*).
 - a. If yes to any questions, participants MUST be isolated from the group (at minimum, kept 6 feet/2 meters apart from others and with mask on), be sent home, and instructed to contact their healthcare provider for evaluation.
 - b. Participants who are found to have COVID-19 symptoms must wait 7 days after symptoms resolve to return to activity OR must provide written proof of physician clearance to Special Olympics to return earlier.
 - c. Participants who test positive for/have COVID-19 must provide written medical clearance before returning to sport and fitness activities.

Throughout the event/practice/training/competition remind participants of infection prevention protocols (e.g., facemasks, physical distancing, hygiene, and disinfection/sanitation). Sample signage and reminders available.



FORM: Screening and Tracking for Special Olympics Washington Activities

Name of Event: _____

Date of Event/Practice: _____ **Location:** _____

Information Required:

Participant First & Last Name:

Participant Type (Athlete, Unified Partner, Coach, Volunteer & Staff):

Contact Information:

Code of Contact Signed:

Screened (yes/no):

Signs or Symptoms of COVID-19? (yes/no)

[Download](#) Contact Tracing **Document**

Access Contact Tracing Form Here:



RETURN TO ACTIVITIES RESOURCES:

General Resources for All:

- New Athlete Registration Form
- COVID-19 FAQ page
- COVID-19 Participant Code of Conduct
- COVID-19 Participant Code of Conduct Explainer Video
- COVID-19 Waiver Form
- COVID-19 Vaccine - What you need to know.
- COVID-19 Resource Page - Center for Disease Control & Prevention
- COVID-19 Vaccine – Washington State Department of Health
- COVID-19 Testing – Washington State Department of Health
- Washington State COVID19 Reopening Phases – Office of The Governor
- COVID-19 – Identifying High Risk Participants
- How to Wear a Facemask
- Strong Minds Workbook & Mental Health Resource Guide

Coaches Resources

- Return to Activities Binder
- Pre-Application Form
- Final Application
- Team Roster Template
- COVID-19 Participant Code of Conduct
- COVID-19 Participant Code of Conduct Explainer Video
- Preparing the Venue Video
- COVID-19 Training-in-a-safe-environment
- Travel to Activity and Onsite Screening Video
- Coaching Adjustments Video
- View Coaches Training Dates
- Register for Coaches Training

Access our Return to Activities Webpage



Safety Squad Volunteers Resources:

- Safety Squad Volunteer Description & Instructions
- Sign up to be a Safety Squad Volunteer
- Training time/dates
- Training Recordings
- Contact Tracing Form