



TO: All Special Olympics Washington Programs, Athletes, Coaches and Volunteers

FROM: Dave Lenox, President and CEO

CC: Special Olympics Washington Board of Directors

DATE: March 16, 2020

Given the increasing spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus), and the resulting actions taken by the State of Washington, municipalities and other businesses, and the statewide closure of K-12 schools, it is clear that our best path is to cancel Unified league play; practices and regional competitions for athletics, cycling, powerlifting, soccer and swimming; and the State Spring Games in June. This follows the initial precaution we took to cancel all practices and other athlete-related activities through March.

We know this is a great disappointment for the entire Special Olympics Washington family, but the safety of our athletes, coaches, volunteers and staff remain our primary concern.

The reports we are seeing from the State of Washington and the CDC indicate that it will be mid- to late-April before we have a sense of whether the social isolation strategies that have been mandated will be effective in curbing the spread of the virus. That doesn't mean that the threat will be over then; just that we will have a better sense of when it might be over. In the meantime, we know that training facilities have been temporarily closed.

On a more positive note, while this situation is challenging in many ways for our athletes, families and volunteers, Special Olympics Washington is in good shape financially and we don't expect these disruptions to have long lasting significant impact on our financial position at either the state or local levels. We fully expect that as soon as we get clearance to restart programming, everyone will be healthy and ready to roll! The Special Olympics Washington staff will be working on ways to keep people in touch and engaged while we all weather this situation. So, people should not worry that there will be long-term damage to our program or our ability to deliver it.

We will continue to update you on what we are hearing from the Department of Health, the CDC, and Special Olympics International. Our hope is that we will eventually be able to give a more definitive timeline for an "all-clear" and for the restart of training and programming at the local level.

Please continue to check our website – SpecialOlympicsWashington.org/coronavirus-updates – for the latest updates on our response to the coronavirus outbreak.

Stay well, stay in touch and please stay home if you are able. And, most importantly, WASH YOUR HANDS! We will get through this together.