



Dear Special Olympic Athlete,

Congratulations on becoming a Special Olympics Washington athlete! As a Special Olympics athlete, you will take on the challenge of athletic training and competition, increase physical fitness, and have a great time doing so. You will meet new friends and experience great rewards in achieving the best that you can. Special Olympics athletes are an inspiration to the community and we hope that you will also be inspired to participate in as many activities as possible.

Special Olympics Washington provides year-round sports training and competition for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. By participating in sports, physical fitness and healthcare education programs, SOWA athletes increase self-confidence and social skills, improve physical and motor skills, and have better success in leading more productive and independent lives.

This handbook is designed to introduce SOWA to you and to provide general information needed as a Special Olympics athlete. It contains an outline of the organization, policies and guidelines, form samples, training and competition information, calendars, sports rules and regulations, and much more.

Please contact your local SOWA Coach or the SOWA Regional Sports Manager for any additional information or resources that you may need.

Best wishes for a satisfying experience as a Special Olympics Washington athlete!

Beth Wojick
Chief Executive Officer

John Borgognoni
Program Director



Table of Contents **Page**

I. Special Olympics

Introduction

- Quick Facts – Special Olympics Inc. 4
- Quick Facts – Special Olympics Washington 4
- History 5
- Vision and Mission 5
- Athletes 5
- Regions 6
- Training and Competition 6
- Sports and Seasons 6
- Unified Sports® 6
- Healthy Athletes 7
- Athlete Leadership Program 7
- So Get Into It 7
- Volunteers 7
- Funding 7

II. SOWA Policies and Guidelines

Athlete

- Statement of Eligibility 8
- Application for Participation 9
- Athlete Code of Conduct 11
- Team Registration Procedures 13

Marketing and Fundraising

- Commercial Messages 14
- SOWA Logo and Name 15
- Logo Use Policy 16
- SOWA Team Logo Samples 17
- Fundraising Regulations 18

Insurance

- SOWA Insurance Coverage for Athletes 19
- SOWA Insurance Procedures 20

III. Competition Information



• Competition Opportunities	21
• Special Olympics Age Groups	22
• Forming Competition Divisions	23
• Criteria for Advancement to Higher Level Competition	25
• Allocations: Questions and Answers	27
• Metric System	29
• Motor Activities Training Program	30
• Unified Sports®	31
• Sports Facts Sheets	
Alpine Skiing	33
Aquatics	34
Athletics (Track & Field)	35
Basketball	36
Bowling	37
Cross Country Skiing (Nordic)	38
Cycling	39
Figure Skating	40
Golf	41
Long Distance Running	42
Powerlifting	43
Soccer	44
Softball	45
Speed Skating	46
Volleyball	47
IV. Safety Information	
• Safety Guidelines	48
• Emergency Procedures	49
V. Forms	
• Form list	50



Introduction

Quick Facts – Special Olympics Inc.

- Founded 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver and the Joseph P. Kennedy Foundation.
- Currently one million athletes worldwide in 150 countries.
- Hold World Winter and World Summer Games on alternate two-year schedule.
- Expanded Special Olympics movement worldwide.

Quick Facts – Special Olympics Washington (SOWA)

- Incorporated in Washington in 1975 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.
- Governed by a 30 plus member board of directors.
- Staffed by 20 plus sports, business and administrative professionals.
- Over 8,500 volunteers support the organization statewide.
- Over 7,000 athletes with intellectual disabilities.
- Over 32,000 family members statewide.
- Vision is to help persons with intellectual disabilities be accepted and respected.
- Mission is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition.
- Persons with intellectual disabilities may participate in sports and other programs.
- Individuals are eligible at age eight with no upper age limit.
- There is no cost to participate for athletes or their families.
- Athletes are provided a volunteer coach for training and competition.
- Athletes are organized into athletic divisions according to age, gender and ability.
- Organized into four regions - King County, Northwest, Southwest and East Regions.
- Competition in each sport takes place at local, regional and statewide events.
- Four sports seasons are offered each year in 19 different Olympic-type sports.
- Unified Sports: Special Olympics athletes paired with non-Special Olympics athletes.
- Healthy Athletes: Athletes receive free dental, vision, feet and nutrition exams.
- Athlete Leadership: Athletes become board members, officials and public speakers.
- So Get Into It: A school-based curriculum promoting awareness and acceptance.
- Funding: Supported by individuals, corporations, foundations and civic groups.



Introduction (cont.)

History

Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver and the Joseph P. Kennedy Foundation, Special Olympics formed to improve the lives of the intellectually disabled. That year, 1,000 athletes from 26 states and Canada competed in an Olympic type competition at Soldier Field in Chicago. During a time when the mentally retarded were most often confined to institutions, the organization of Special Olympics began a movement to change the world's view about intellectually disabled people. The Special Olympics movement has grown to over one million athletes worldwide in 150 countries. Special Olympics Inc. holds the World Winter and World Summer Games on an alternate two-year schedule.

Special Olympics Washington (SOWA) incorporated in 1975 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization following several years of program presentation by local community volunteer groups. A board of directors that provides guidance to SOWA staff and volunteers governs the organization.

Vision and Mission

The vision of Special Olympics is to help bring all persons with intellectual disabilities into the larger society under conditions whereby they are accepted, respected and given the chance to become useful and productive citizens.

The mission of Special Olympics Washington provides year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympic athletes, and the community.

Athletes

Persons with intellectual disabilities, regardless of ability level, may participate in sports and other programs offered by Special Olympics Washington. Individuals are eligible for training and competition at age eight. There is no upper age limit. More than 7,000 Special Olympics athletes compete in Special Olympics Washington programs at no cost to them or their families.

Each athlete is provided a volunteer coach as an individual competitor or via a team sport. Athletes train for a period of time prior to competing at local, regional and state tournaments. Four sports seasons are offered each year in 19 different Olympic-type sports that are governed by official rules and regulations provided by Special Olympics Inc. Athletes are organized into athletic divisions according to age, gender and ability.



Introduction (cont.)

Regions

SOWA is organized into four regions including the King County Region, the Northwest Region, the Southwest Region and the East Region. The Northwest Region includes Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish and Whatcom counties. The Southwest Region includes counties from Pierce County south to the state border, west to the Pacific Ocean and throughout the Olympic Peninsula. The East Region includes all counties east of the Cascade Mountains to the eastern, northern and southern state borders.

Training & Competition

Competition in each sport takes place at local, regional and statewide events. Individuals and teams compete in divisions according to age, gender and ability. Year-round training, directed by qualified coaches, is the primary goal of Special Olympics. Prior to each sports season, volunteer coaches are trained and certified at clinics conducted by Special Olympics professionals and other sports experts. Officials and event committees also receive training.

Sports & Seasons

- Winter Season & Winter Games
Alpine Skiing, Basketball, Cross Country Skiing, Figure Skating, Speed Skating, Snowboarding
- Spring Season & Summer Games
Aquatics (Swimming), Athletics (Track & Field), Cycling, Power Lifting, Soccer
- Summer Season & Summer Sports Classic
Golf, Softball
- Fall Season
Bowling and Volleyball (recreational)

Unified Sports®

In this innovative program, athletes with and without mental retardation or a closely related developmental disability of similar age and ability, form teams for training and competition. By providing all athletes the opportunity to participate, Unified Sports develops specific athletic skills, builds confidence and self-esteem, and increases understanding of persons with different abilities.



Introduction (cont.)

Healthy Athletes

Special Olympics Healthy Athletes is a program designed to help athletes improve their health and fitness. This leads to an enhanced sport experience and improved well-being. Athletes can receive oral health screenings and eye exams at no cost to the participant, and programs in other health specialties are being developed worldwide.

Athlete Leadership Program

Special Olympics Athlete Leadership Programs (ALPs) allow athletes to explore opportunities for Special Olympics participation in roles previously considered “non-traditional.” Such participation might come in the form of serving on the Board of Directors or as a committee member; or an athlete acting as a spokesperson, team captain, coach or official. Participation in ALPs may be in addition to or in place of participation in traditional Special Olympics Programs.

So Get Into It

The So Get Into It program is a school-based curriculum that helps teachers and students promote awareness and acceptance of people with developmental disabilities. The program is available to school districts via Special Olympics Washington and Special Olympics, Inc.

Volunteers

Volunteers continue to be the source of support for SOWA athletes across the state of Washington. Over 8,500 people volunteer as a coach, sports official, chaperone, committee member, fundraising volunteer, and in many other areas. SOWA programs and services could not be provided without the support and commitment provided to the athletes by volunteers.

Funding

SOWA is entirely supported by private contributions from individuals, corporations, foundations and civic groups. Although SOWA is not an official United Way agency, employees may designate SOWA as the beneficiary of workplace giving programs.



Statement of Eligibility

To be eligible for participation in Special Olympics, a competitor must agree to observe and abide by the Official Olympics Sports Rules.

Special Olympics was created and developed to give individuals with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to train and compete in sports activities. No person shall, on the grounds of sex, race, religion, color or national origin, be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity of Special Olympics.

There is no maximum age limitation for participation in Special Olympics. The minimum age requirement for participation in Special Olympics competition is eight years of age.

A person is considered to have intellectual disabilities for purposes of determining his or her eligibility to participate in Special Olympics if that person satisfies any one of the following:

1. The person has been identified by an agency or professional as having an intellectual disability as determined by their localities;

...or...

2. The person has a cognitive delay as determined by standardized measures, such as intelligent quotient or "IQ" testing, or other measures generally accepted within the professional community, in the country of the accredited program, as being a reliable measurement of the existence of a cognitive delay;

...or...

3. The person has a closely related developmental disability. A "closely related developmental disability" means having functional limitations in both learning (such as IQ) and in adaptive skills (such as in recreation, work, independent living, self-direction, or self-care). However, persons whose functional limitations are based solely on a physical, behavioral, or emotional disability, or a specific learning or sensory disability, are not eligible to participate as Special Olympics athletes, but may be eligible to volunteer for Special Olympics as partners in Unified Sports, if they otherwise meet the separate eligibility requirements in participation in Unified Sports set forth in the Sports Rules.



Application for Participation

Application for Participation, Form 0001, Rev 3/02 (also known as athlete medical/release) is required for any SOWA athlete participating in Special Olympics Washington at any level (local, regional, State) at the beginning of a sport season. A participation form is valid for three years. Forms are available from any SOWA office. The form must be copied on both sides to ensure that the release form is signed.

Before a coach actively begins training sessions with a team, a form for all new athletes must be completed, and a copy of the current form for each continuing athlete must be present. These forms must be fully completed, signed and dated by the athlete (if 18 years of age or older), or the athlete's guardian, and the physician that examined the athlete. Without the required signatures, the document is not valid. Incomplete forms mailed to SOWA are returned to the Region Sports & Training Manager with a checklist of incomplete information attached.

All completed forms must be sent to the Region Sports & Training Manager for approval. The Region Sports & Training Manager will then file the original with the State Office.

Without a current and completed Application for Participation form in the possession of the coach, Sports & Training Manager, and the SOWA Office, an athlete should not be allowed to participate in any training or competition at any level (Local, Region, State).

Application for Participation forms are for the protection of the athletes and the volunteers working with them. Without information the forms provide, athletes could possibly be in life-threatening situations and SOWA may not have necessary information to assist them. The form also serves as the document to register athletes for SOWA sports programs, and for SOI secondary accident insurance coverage.

Coaches are responsible for keeping copies of the forms with them **at all times** when athletes are present for a Special Olympics related purpose.

It is an unpleasant task for anyone to deny athletes participation in competition due to incomplete Application for Participation form. Coaches, SOWA staff, parents and guardians, must make every effort to ensure a current form is on file for each athlete.

Region Sports & Training Managers will review the Application for Participation printouts prior to quarterly deadlines. The forms are compiled into a print-out, listing all athletes within the Region that have completed forms on file at the State office. Athletes whose forms are to expire as of the start of the upcoming season are also monitored by the SOWA staff, and coaches and athletes will be notified when new Application for Participation forms are needed.

SOWA guidelines on how many sports an athlete may participate in per season include:

- As long as funding and human resources are available, athletes may train in up to two sports per season, but may compete in only one sport.
- Athletes that train in two sports per season must decide the sport they will compete in at Regional and State tournaments.
- Athletes that train for a team sport and an individual sport in the same season must compete in the team sport at Regional and State Tournaments.



Application for Participation (cont.)

Unified Partner Release Form

This form is required for non-Special Olympics athletes participating in Unified Sports. It does not require a physician's signature but must be filled out and the release portion signed by the participating player (partner). The handling of the Unified Partner form is the same procedure as outlined previously for the Application for Participation form. Unlike the Athlete form, the Partner form does not expire.

Atlanto-Axial Instability/Medical Treatment Forms

Special release/provision forms are available for athletes with Atlanto-Axial Instability and athletes who for religious reasons cannot complete the standard form. These forms should accompany the standard form when returned to Region Sports & Training Managers. Forms are available through the SOWA office.

Samples of these forms can be found in the "Forms" section of the Coaches' Handbook. Deadlines for submitting Application for Participation forms are four times a year, coinciding with seasonal sports training programs. Submit any time prior to these dates for participation during the upcoming season.

Application Deadline Dates

Deadline dates for Application for Participation forms can be obtained from the Region Sports & Training Managers or the SOWA office.



Athlete Code of Conduct

Special Olympics Washington prides itself in sponsoring high quality physical fitness training and sports competitions. The primary purpose of the Athlete Code of Conduct is to establish a high standard of athlete behavior to ensure the safety and well being of all athletes involved in training and competition. All athletes are expected to abide by the code of conduct and standards of behavior as established by Special Olympics Washington.

Athlete Standards of Behavior

While participating in Special Olympics Washington, whether in transit, during practice, at a competition, or in any associated social activity, athletes are expected to exhibit good sportsmanship and to meet the following standards of behavior:

Category A – Refrain from:

- Use of alcohol, illegal drugs or any controlled substance.
- Unwanted physical or verbal sexual overtures.
- Physical abuse or any unwelcome physical contact.
- Violent or disruptive behavior.
- Felonies, misdemeanors, possession of harmful weapons, or any other illegal or socially unacceptable behavior which seriously disrupts or impedes participation of an athlete or others.

Category B – Refrain from:

- Profanity or verbal abuse.
- Tobacco use in restricted areas.
- Frequent unexpected absences.
- Poor personal hygiene.

Athlete Disciplinary Measures

In **Category A**, Special Olympics Washington (defined as State staff and Region Sports & Training Managers) reserve the right to immediately suspend any athlete, pending an investigation of the offense.

In **Category A**, the following progressive disciplinary measure will be exercised by the SOWA staff member:

- a. Verbal warning given to the athlete.
- b. Personal meeting with the athlete:
Athletes under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent/guardian or caseworker. The meeting will be documented in writing with copies distributed to the athlete, Region Sports & Training Manager, State office, coach's file, and parent/guardian or caseworker.



Athlete Disciplinary Measures (cont.)

- c. Individual disciplinary action taken:
The action may include suspension or expulsion. In cases of suspension or expulsion, a review may be conducted at the end of the suspension period. In cases of very serious or repeated incidents, permanent expulsion by SOWA may be required.
- d. State Office advised of action taken.

In **Category B**, the following progressive disciplinary measures are to be exercised by the coach:

- a. Verbal warning given to the athlete.
- b. Written warning issued to the athlete, with copy to Region Sports & Training Manager.
- c. Suspension from practices or competition during the specific sport season. Further action must be referred to the Program Director or Chief Executive Officer in the SOWA Office.
- d. The athlete has the right to appeal, with a written plan in place to improve behavior.



Team Registration Procedures

Pre-Season

A coach must register a team with the Region Sports & Training Manager before the beginning of each sports season. This information will be used as a mailing list for information during the season, for bracketing and to schedule practice visits and scrimmages.

Competition

The SOWA Event Registration Packet is to be used to register a team for Regional and State competitions. (See sample in “Forms” section of this handbook.)

The packets will be mailed out to all coaches who are actively coaching that season. Registration forms will be distributed by the Region Sports & Training Managers to the coaches. Coaches must complete the forms and send the forms to the SOWA office approximately one month prior to the competition.

The only additional information required for State competition in a team sport is the Team Cover Sheet.

For a schedule of deadlines for Region and State competitions contact your Region Sport & Training Manager.



Commercial Messages

In order to avoid commercial exploitation of persons with intellectual disabilities, no uniforms, bibs or other signs bearing competition numbers, worn by Special Olympics athletes during competition, or opening or closing ceremonies of any tournaments or Games may be emblazoned with commercial names or commercial messages unless it is the normal markings of the manufacturer.

Special Olympics athletes participating in training or practice sessions, or other non-tournament or Games activities, may wear clothing or use non-apparel items (sports bags, etc.) that contain small and attractively designed identifications of corporate or organizational sponsors.

These rules apply to Special Olympics Games and competitions because of the relationship Special Olympics Inc. has with the U.S. Olympic Committee and other governing bodies. However, because of the voluntary nature of most Special Olympics Games Organizing Committees, the following rules of thumb regarding commercial messages should be followed at all Special Olympics competitions:

1. Volunteers may wear clothing that bear small and attractively designed names or logos identifying corporate or organizational sponsors while attending Games and competitions, so long as those displays do not exceed an area of six square inches or its metric equivalent. All placement of sponsor logos must be approved by the SOWA Marketing Department.
2. Sports officials may not wear, carry or use other apparel items that contain the names or logos of corporate or organizational sponsors (except for normal commercial markings) during the opening or closing ceremonies, competitions or sports demonstrations. At other times, or at Games venues other than the sites of opening and closing ceremonies, competitions or demonstrations (such as at the sites of training and practice sessions), officials may wear, carry or use clothing or other items that contain sponsors' names or logos if those displays comply with those permitted to be displayed by volunteers, as listed above.
3. The opening ceremonies of all Games shall celebrate the athletic skill, accomplishments, and courage of Special Olympics athletes. It is the policy of SOI that no banners or other signage bearing the names of commercial sponsors or their products may be displayed at the site of opening ceremonies of any World Games, Regional Games, or Multi-National Games. Accredited Programs may permit commercial banners and signage that are subordinate to Special Olympics pageantry, that do not violate any other provision of this Section, and are in the utmost good taste, consistent with the first sentence of this subsection.



SOWA Logo and Name

The Special Olympics logo is the official trademark of the worldwide Special Olympics program and is registered with the U.S. Patent Office. Use of the logo, has been licensed to Special Olympics Washington by Special Olympics Inc. for presentation of Special Olympics programs in Washington State. Strict rules and regulations regarding use of the logo are given to SOWA by SOI to follow. In return, local programs must meet these rules and regulations at all times.

Only the SOWA office can grant permission to use the SOWA logo or name. Before using the logo on uniforms, printed materials, etc., the local program should contact the SOWA Sports & Training Manager for approval. The Sports & Training Managers have information about proper use of the logo and name through the Special Olympics Washington Style Guide. The Sports & Training Manager may consult with the SOWA Marketing Department for final approval. Electronic media art of the SOWA logo can be obtained through the SOWA office.

Special Olympics Washington may approve use of the logo and name:

- when a local program wants to include its name with the official logo using the official local program logo template available via the SOWA office;
- when the logo will be used in conjunction with a fundraising event or promotion;
- when an organization or business wants to use a logo along with the SOWA logo; and
- when a local program wants to create a communication tool (e.g., brochure, banner).

Sample proofs of materials using the name or logo (artwork, ad copy, uniform designs, draft, scripts, etc.) must be submitted to the SOWA Sports & Training Manager at least three weeks prior to initiating the project. The activity or project cannot commence without SOWA approval.

For further information, please consult the **Special Olympics Washington Style Guide** provided on the SOWA website - www.sowa.org.



Logo Use Policy

Local, Region and State programs are required to comply with the Graphics Standards Guide published by Special Olympics Inc. and Special Olympics Washington. Following is a summary of Special Olympics International policy regarding logo use on uniforms and other equipment.

Team uniforms and equipment utilizing a logo must have the design approved in writing by your region Sports & Training Manager before going to print. Teams will not be allowed to wear any new uniforms that do not comply with SOI and SOWA policies and replacement of these uniforms will come at the team's expense.

- The official Special Olympics logo should appear on all athletes' uniforms. It may appear as the only logo on the uniform or in conjunction with a team logo, (e.g. a small Special Olympics logo may appear on the left chest or sleeve of the uniform top, with "Everett Bears" and a picture of a bear appearing on the body of the shirt.)
- The Special Olympics logo must be produced in its official form, enlarged or reduced. It may not be distorted or altered in any way. Artwork of the official logo may be obtained from your SOWA Sports & Training Manager or the SOWA Marketing Department.
- The State designation (Washington) must appear on the logo. Region and program (local) designations may be added below the State designation, but they may not be used alone.

Logo Sample for Local Programs



Special Olympics
Washington
Everett Bears

Unacceptable Logo Use

- Sponsor advertising is not permitted on either the equipment used or the uniforms worn by athletes and officials, other than the normal commercial markings on retail goods.
- The five interconnected circles which form the official logo of the International Olympic Committee may not be used in any way by the Special Olympics program. This is expressly forbidden under Special Olympics Inc.'s agreement with the International Olympic Committee.

For further information, please consult the **Special Olympics Washington Style Guide** provided on the SOWA website - www.sowa.org.



SOWA Team Logo Samples

Below are examples of logo usage. They are to be used for guideline purposes only.

Team Logo Samples

Everett Bears



Everett Bears



Everett Bears



Patch Samples



Back of Jersey Samples

Everett Bears

22



Everett Bears

22





Fundraising Regulations

Anyone raising money in the name of Special Olympics Inc. or Special Olympics Washington must adhere to the following policies:

A Fundraising Registration Form (see "Forms" section of this handbook and at www.sowa.org) must be submitted to the SOWA Sports & Training Manager at least forty working days prior to the commencement of a fund raiser. After receiving the registration form, the SOWA Sports & Training Manager will either approve the fund raiser or explain why it cannot be approved. A copy of the Fundraising Registration Form must be available at the event for insurance to be provided. All approved forms are for one-time approvals only and are valid only for the stated term of the event. After the fund raiser, the financial results must be filed with the Sports & Training Manager who will forward the activity report to the SOWA Accounting Manager and Marketing Department.

The criteria for approving a fund raiser are as follows:

- Fund raising expenses should not exceed 25-30% of gross revenues. This means that at least 70-75% of every dollar raised should be returned to SOWA. Exceptions may be approved in special cases.
- The Sports & Training Manager will work with the SOWA Marketing Department to approve materials using the Special Olympics or Special Olympics Washington name and logo.
- Adequate measure must be taken to ensure that official Special Olympics Inc., SOWA, and SOWA sponsors are given the right of first refusal to fund and participate in the event.
- In-kind donations can be solicited to reduce cash expenditures. In-kind forms are available through the SOWA office and must be provided to the donor to meet IRS and audit rules.
- The fund raiser must not cross local or region geographical boundaries without written permission from the SOWA office.
- The fund raiser must not publicize a tobacco product or an alcoholic beverage.
- The fund raiser must be consistent with and supportive of the Special Olympics image as presented in the Special Olympics Inc. Public Relations Guidebook.
- The degree of effort required of volunteers must be consistent with the return.
- Fiscal policies and procedures must be followed and can be obtained by contacting the SOWA office. Funds must be deposited in an approved SOWA account.
- The fund raiser must comply with all federal, state and local laws.

Note: Chapter-wide events (e.g. Law Enforcement Torch Run Campaign) do not require fund raiser applications. However, coordination and approval must occur between the persons conducting the event and the SOWA office.



Insurance Coverage for Athletes

Special Olympics Washington carries three kinds of insurance to protect athletes:

General Liability

This coverage protects volunteers and athletes from claims of bodily injury, property damage, or personal injury due to their alleged negligence during the conduct of Special Olympics activity. The limit per occurrence for bodily injury or property damage is \$1,000,000. There is additional \$20,000,000 Umbrella Liability coverage.

Automobile Liability

Special Olympics Washington volunteers, whether driving their own cars or rented vehicles, have liability coverage as long as the vehicle is in the process of being used for a Special Olympics activity. The limit of coverage is \$1,000,000 per occurrence.

The automobile coverage has also been broadened to include Hired Auto physical damage coverage with a \$25,000 per vehicle limit with a \$1,000 per claim deductible. This coverage is in excess of any other automobile liability insurance, which the owner of the automobile must carry. The driver or owner of the vehicle's policy is primary. The policy does not cover physical damage to the vehicle and should not be confused with comprehensive or collision insurance.

Accident

SOWA also has a policy that provides accidental medical coverage for volunteers and athletes who are injured while participating in a Special Olympics activity or who are injured while traveling directly to or from a Special Olympics activity. The limit, whether for medical benefit, accidental death, or accidental dismemberment, is \$5,000 per incident. The claim must be filed within one year of the accident.

For more detail about SOWA insurance coverage for both volunteers and athletes, call the SOWA Sports & Training Manager or the SOWA office.



Insurance Procedures

Special Olympics Washington athletes, volunteers and coaches are insured while participating in a Special Olympics activity, or while traveling directly to or from a Special Olympics activity, by North America Specialty Insurance Company up to a maximum of \$5,000 per incident. This is secondary coverage, in excess of a person's personal coverage, which must be used first.

Liability coverage with the same company is provided to cover lawsuits or proven negligence to a maximum of \$2,000,000 per Chapter, with an umbrella liability coverage with Fireman's Fund Insurance Company for \$20,000,000.

In the case of any incident, accident or injury at a Special Olympics activity, or traveling to and from that activity:

1. Complete an Incident Report Form for any incident/injury. If the incident/injury is a claim, the claim-processing unit will automatically send out a cover letter and the appropriate form. (A sample Incident Report Form is included in the "Forms" section of this handbook.)
2. All Incident Report Forms should be forwarded to:
Special Olympics Claims Service
C/O American Specialty Claims Services, Inc.
North Main Street, PO Box 459
Roanoke, IN 46783-0459
Telephone: 1-800-566-7941 Fax: (219) 673-1291
3. Incident Report Forms should be routed through the SOWA Sports & Training Manager for additional signatures and awareness of all incidents.
4. Should there be a serious or fatal injury please call the 24-hour, seven days a week 800 number above.

Incident Report Forms are available from the SOWA office and at every Special Olympics Washington tournament or competition.



Competition Opportunities

Special Olympics Washington offers year-round sports program in four sports seasons. Regional tournaments are held during each sports season, and State Games are held following the winter, spring and summer seasons. The seasons and sports include:

Winter Sports Season

- Alpine Skiing
- Basketball
- Cross Country Skiing
- Figure Skating
- Speed Skating

Spring Sports Season

- Aquatics
- Athletics (Track & Field)
- Cycling
- Power Lifting
- Soccer

Summer Sports Season

- Softball
- Golf

Fall Sports Season

- Bowling
- Volleyball (recreational sport)
Regional tournaments are offered for bowling.
There are no state games for bowling or volleyball.



Special Olympics Age Groups

Athletes must be at least eight years of age to participate in Special Olympics competition. Certain sports and events may further restrict athlete participation based on age. If pertinent, additional age requirements are indicated in the specific rules for each sport in the Sports Rules.

The following age groups shall normally be used for all Special Olympic competitions:

Individual Sports

- Ages 8-15
- Ages 16-21
- Ages 22 and over
- Additional age groups may be established if there are a sufficient number of competitors in the “30 and over” age group.

Team Sports and Relay Events

- Ages 15 and under
- Ages 16-21
- Ages 22 and over
- Additional age groups may be established if there is a sufficient number of teams in the “22 and over” age group.

Age groups may be combined under the following circumstances:

- In individual sports, if there are less than three competitors within an age group, the athletes shall compete in the next oldest age group. That age group shall then be renamed to accurately reflect the entire range of competitors within that age group. Age groups may also be combined to reduce the variance between the highest and lowest scores within a division.
- In team sports within each ability group, age groups may be combined to create divisions. If there is only one team within an age or ability group, that team must be combined with other teams for competition.
- An athlete’s age group shall be determined by the athlete’s age on the opening date of the competition.
- The age group of a team is determined by the age of the oldest athlete on that team on the opening date of the competition.



Forming Competition Divisions

An athlete's ability is the primary factor in forming divisions for Special Olympics competitions. Ideally, competition is enhanced when all divisions accommodate at least three and no more than eight competitors or teams of similar ability. In some cases, however, the number of athletes or teams within a competition will be insufficient to achieve this goal. The following procedures describe the sequential process for creating equitable divisions by event and providing guidance for managing athlete participation when factors preclude an ideal division process.

1. Divide Athletes by Gender

Athletes shall compete against other athletes of the same sex, unless:

- a. The sport specifically allows coed events (e.g. pairs skating, bowling, tennis, etc.)
- b. There are only two male or two female athletes within an event. These athletes may compete against one another or be combined with athletes of the opposite sex who are of similar age and ability.
- c. There is only one male or one female athlete within an event. This athlete shall be combined with athletes of the opposite sex who are of similar age and ability.
- d. There is only one athlete, male or female, of any age or ability, registered to compete in an event. This athlete shall be allowed to compete in a single person division.
- e. A relay team that consists of both male and female athletes shall compete in the male division of the competition.

2. Divide Athletes by Age

Athletes shall compete against other athletes within the same age group, unless:

- a. There are a low number of competitors within an age group. These athletes shall compete in the next oldest age group. That age group shall then be renamed to accurately reflect the entire range of competitors within that age group.
- b. After dividing athletes by ability, age groups are broadened and/or individual athletes are reassigned to other age groups to improve the similarity of scores between athletes within a division.



Forming Competition Divisions (cont.)

3. Divide Athletes by Ability

When the number of athletes competing is inappropriate, the variance between the highest and lowest scores in the division should be equitable. To achieve equitability:

- a. The age group may be broadened. Athletes within the new age should then be re-ranked and grouped into divisions. This process should be repeated until the highest and lowest scores within each division are as similar as possible.
- b. Athletes may be individually reassigned to another division that is more similar to their own ability, regardless of age group.



Criteria for Advancement to Higher Level Competition

The criteria for athlete advancement, along with division procedures, are considered two of the most critical elements of Special Olympics that distinguish it from virtually every other sports organization in the world. Adherence to fundamental principles of athlete advancement is essential for the consistent implementation of Special Olympics Programs worldwide. Special Olympics Washington, as an accredited program, must adhere to and administer the following criteria that can be found in the Official Special Olympics Summer Sports Rules Book (pages 29h-29i).

Quota Allocation

All Programs need to have a system for quota allocation to manage the number of athletes attending a competition. The procedures used for selecting athletes to fill assigned quotas for an event must follow the procedure set forth in this section.

Eligibility for Advancement

1. The athlete must be eight years of age or older and participate for a minimum of eight weeks in an organized training program.
2. The athlete must abide by the Athlete Code of Conduct.
3. If offered, the athlete **should** compete at a local competition.
4. If a Region competition within a sport is offered, the athlete **must** compete at the Regional competition, regardless of advancement to State competition.

Procedure for Athlete and Team Selection

1. SOWA staff will determine the number of athletes and/or teams that will be allowed to participate at the next competition by sport and/or event. This is the quota to be filled.
2. Identify the number of athletes or teams eligible for advancement within the sport/event based on eligibility requirements.
3. If the number of eligible athletes or teams does not exceed the quota, all athletes and teams shall advance.
4. If the number of eligible athletes or teams exceeds the quota, athletes or teams that advance shall be selected as follows:
 - a. Priority is given to first place finishers from all divisions of the sport/event. If the first place finishers exceed the quota, athletes or teams advance by random draw.
 - b. If there are not enough first place finishers to fill the quota, all first place finishers shall advance. The remaining quota shall be filled by a random draw of second place finishers from all divisions of the sport/event.



Procedure for Athlete and Team Selection (cont.)

- c. If the quota is large enough for all second place finishers to advance; the remaining quota is filled by random draw of third place finishers from all divisions of the sport/event.
- d. Repeat this process, adding each place of finish as necessary, until the quota is filled.

Special Olympics Washington reserves the right to utilize additional criteria for advancement to State competition when safety or well being of the athletes or others may be in jeopardy.

Procedure for World Games Selection

- a. The World Games Organizing Committee (WGOC) will determine the quota system.
- b. SOWA will determine the number of athletes or teams to represent SOWA based on assigned allotment from the WGOC.

In order to advance, an athlete must:

- a. Follow Special Olympics Washington Guidelines and meet eligibility requirements.
- b. Qualify in the sport at the State competition during the year prior to the World Games.
- c. Place first in the sport or event at State competition.
- d. Complete a SOWA Application Form for World Games available up to 12 months prior to the World Games.
- e. Athletes or teams that meet requirements will be selected by random draw.



Allocations: Questions and Answers

Why can't all Special Olympics athletes participate in State competitions?

First, the Special Olympics movement is modeled after the International Olympics movement. Like most amateur and professional sports programs, teams and individuals earn the right to advance through their performance at each level of competition.

Second, the capacity and availability of facilities often determine the number of teams or individuals that can take part in a given tournament. For example, the number of lanes on a track or in a pool may limit the number of runners or swimmers who can compete. Accommodations may be a related component; the housing area at Fort Lewis, during Summer Games, has a limited number of beds.

A third factor is time. If all track and field athletes advanced to Summer Games or if all bowlers advance to the Fall Sports Tournament, SOWA would have to expand the competitions beyond a present two-day length or rent additional facilities. Either option would increase the cost of the event and require more volunteers. In addition, there is the issue of scheduling other activities. If a dinner and a victory dance are scheduled, for example, the competition must end in time for athletes to attend these events.

The final factor is financial. While Special Olympics Washington receives significant in-kind donations, those donations do not cover all the costs of staging a large event. Contrary to popular belief, for example, use of Fort Lewis and other Summer Games venues is not free of charge. Meals are not all donated and neither are medals. Corporate sponsorships and individual donations remain an important source of revenue to support the program. Sponsor and individual donations, however, are difficult to obtain and resources are often limited.

These limitations compacted with the fact that the number of participating athletes increase regularly statewide, it is likely future percentages of athletes that qualify for State competitions will decrease rather than grow. An emphasis on regional competitions may then exist.

How does SOWA determine the number of athletes allocated for a Region in a particular sport?

Using athletics as an example, given the limitations of time, facilities, beds and money, 1,000 track and field athletes can compete during Summer Games at Fort Lewis. Using numbers from pre-season registrations, the SOWA Program Department calculates allocations for each Region. For example, if the NW Region has 200 athletes in athletics, and there are 2000 athletes in athletics statewide, the NW Region has 10% of all athletes in that sport. Therefore, NW Region will be allocated 10% of the 1,000 slots for Summer Games, or 100 athletes.



Allocations: Questions and Answers (cont.)

Do all sports have allocations?

The most popular team and individual sports are likely to have allocations. Currently, all sports have allocations with the exception of the following: Golf, Long Distance Running, Power Lifting, Speed Skating and Figure Skating.

For team sports, a team must win its division in a Region Tournament to automatically advance to a state tournament. Other teams may be invited if there are vacancies in a division.

Can a coach guarantee athletes' participation in State competitions?

A coach should consider coaching a less heavily subscribed sport that currently does not have allocations. Again, this includes Golf, Long Distance Running, Power Lifting, Speed Skating and Figure Skating.

Isn't it all about going to state competitions?

It's about much more than that. The mission of Special Olympics Washington is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for persons with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills, and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

While the goal of every athlete should be to compete at the highest possible level, Special Olympics exists to improve quality of life for all participants. Athletes and teams should indeed strive to win division competitions and advance to state competitions. This should, however, never be the only goal of either an athlete or a coach. If it is, many additional positive aspects of Special Olympics may be missed. Learning competition and sports rules, and how to live within the guidelines, helps athletes learn life lessons with grace and dignity.

Is it fair the most talented athletes are advanced?

As with most competitive sports, the most accomplished teams and individuals win the right to advance to higher and better competition. This is earned through many weeks of hard work and training. Since Special Olympics athletes compete in divisions according to age, gender and ability, athletes compete against those of similar ability. Therefore, they have a very good chance, through consistent and proper training, to improve their performance, win their division and become eligible for State competitions. This also allows athletes the ability to gauge how well they are advancing relative to those of similar age, gender and ability.

By maintaining standards for advancing to higher levels of competition, it also gives the athletes and coaches a goal to focus on. When the goal is achieved, coaches and athletes will feel a sense of accomplishment that is a well-deserved life lesson.



Metric System

Special Olympics Washington converted to the Metric system in 1979. All athletics, aquatics and long distance events will be measured in the metric system. In athletic events, the adjustment from yards to meters can be made either at the start or at the finish line.

Old Event	New Event	Change
50 yard dash	50 meter dash	add 14 feet
100 yard dash	100 meter dash	add 28 feet
220 yard dash	200 meter dash	subtract 4 feet
440 yard run	400 meter run	subtract 8 feet

SOWA highly recommends local programs purchase either a 30-meter tape or a 100-meter tape that also has feet and inches on the back of the tape. It is imperative qualifying times are recorded in meters. Failure to do this will result in an athlete being placed in the wrong division during subsequent competitions.

Metric System Conversion

Two methods may be used to convert measurement into metrics.

1. Timed Events:

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{Time in seconds} \\ \text{for yard race} \\ .9144 \end{array} \times \begin{array}{r} \text{Length of race} \\ \text{In meters} \\ \text{Length of race} \\ \text{In yards} \end{array} = \begin{array}{r} \text{Time in seconds} \\ \text{for meter race} \end{array}$$

Example: Participant swims the 25 yard freestyle in 26 seconds.

$$\begin{array}{r} \underline{26 \text{ seconds}} \\ .9144 \end{array} \times \begin{array}{r} \underline{25 \text{ meters}} \\ 25 \text{ yards} \end{array} = 2843 \text{ seconds for} \\ \text{25 meter freestyle}$$

2. Distance Events:

$$\begin{array}{r} \underline{\text{Distance in feet}} \\ 3.28 \end{array} = \text{Distance in meters}$$

Example: Participant jumps 9 feet in the standing long jump.

$$\begin{array}{r} \underline{9 \text{ feet}} \\ 3.28 \end{array} = 2.74 \text{ meters}$$



Motor Activities Training Program (MATP)

The Special Olympics Motor Activities Training Program (MATP) is designed for persons with the most severe disabilities that do not possess the physical, mental or behavioral skills necessary to participate in Official Special Olympics Sports. The program provides a comprehensive motor activity and recreation training curriculum for these participants, a program that can be administered by a variety of trainers (e.g. physical educators, recreation therapists and volunteers). In addition, direct care workers, parents and volunteers will find the MATP helpful in developing appropriate programs for individuals with severe disabilities.

The MATP emphasizes training and participation rather than competition. It utilizes goals, short term objectives, task analyzed activities, assessments, and teaching suggestions for individualizing motor activity instruction. This enables persons with severe disabilities or new young participants can pursue appropriate recreational activities geared to their ability levels. The motor and sport activities included in this program are mobility, dexterity, striking, kicking, wheelchair and aquatics. Each activity is customized to challenge each athlete according to his/her abilities. The MATP activities can be conducted in schools and large residential facilities as well as in community based settings.

A training session is conducted for eight weeks and is followed by a Training Day to give the athletes a chance to demonstrate skills for family and friends. The Training Day should be short (no longer than four hours for training demonstrations, plus any extra activity) and not require long travel.

Training for MATP Coaches is available periodically in Washington and Oregon. SOWA Sports and Training Managers will try to find coaches and volunteers to assist locally with a MATP. For more information about MATP or to find out when the next training will be held contact the SOWA Sports and Training Manager or the SOWA office.



Unified Sports[®]

Special Olympics Unified Sports is a pioneer program combining athletes with intellectual disabilities and those without, on teams that compete against other Unified Sports teams. Unified Sports teams are made up of equal numbers of athletes with intellectual disabilities, and those without, that are of similar age and ability levels.

Special Olympics Unified Sports expands sports opportunities to individuals with intellectual disabilities and furthers the Special Olympics mission by:

- integrating athletes with intellectual disabilities and those without, in a setting where all athletes are challenged to improve their skills;
- fostering a spirit of equality and team unity;
- further increasing public awareness of the spirit and skills of individuals with intellectual disabilities;
- enabling Special Olympics athletes families to participate as Unified Sports team members and coaches;
- providing a valuable sports opportunity for individuals with intellectual disabilities that are not presently involved with Special Olympics, especially those with mild disabilities that have few, if any, opportunities to participate in sports competition in their local community; and
- providing opportunities for training and competition for athletes in communities where there are not enough Special Olympics athletes to conduct team sports.

A Special Olympics Unified Sports program can be conducted in a variety of ways and settings:

- in a community or church sports program, such as an adult softball league or YMCA volleyball league;
- with an interscholastic after-school league at the Junior High School or High School levels;
- as part of the league system at a local bowling alley; or
- with an independent league sponsored by businesses or civic groups.

Athletes with intellectual disabilities can be recruited from schools, corporations, civic groups or other community organizations.

The Unified Sports season will run concurrently with the Special Olympics sports season. Teams are coached by volunteers who must attend Special Olympics Coaches Training Schools in the appropriate sports. All participants are covered under Special



Unified Sports[®] (cont.)

Olympics accident insurance coverage. All Unified teams will participate in Unified Sports divisions at Region and State Games. National governing body rules are followed for each sport.

Athletes will practice and play games during the same time of the year as the established SOWA Sport Season, so athletes will choose between Unified teams or regular Special Olympics team. SOWA teams are encouraged to play in other sports leagues such as church leagues and parks and recreation leagues.

A coach can create a team by finding athletes with similar abilities – both Special Olympics and non-Special Olympics – and training together. Ex-college players and other outstanding athletes are not appropriate because sports skills will not be comparable to those of the rest of the team.

Unified Sports Coaches should:

- ensure that **all** team members **must** have a good understanding of sport rules and be capable of performing all the basic skills in the sport;
- pre-register with the SOWA office to be assigned games with other Unified teams;
- begin practices at least eight weeks prior to a tournament; and
- arrange practice games with other community adult teams, church leagues or parks and recreation leagues.

Partners Must:

1. Fill out a Partner Release form and give to Head Coach prior to first practice (these forms are good for the partners tenure with Special Olympics Washington).
2. Submit a Washington State Patrol form prior to season if 18 years of age or older (see Volunteer Screening section).



Alpine Skiing

National Governing Body

- United States Ski Association
1750 E. Boulder Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80909
(719) 578-4600

Sport Season

- Winter (December - March)

Uniform Requirements

- Parka or shell
- Warm-ups and/or stretch pants
- Ski gloves
- Goggles
- Warm undergarments

Registration Requirements

- Athletes must compete in a Regional competition prior to the SOWA Winter Games. Coaches must submit those times for Winter Games registration, due to their Region office by the designated deadline.
- Athletes may compete in up to three events.
- Events identified with ** are for athletes with lower ability levels who are unable to participate in the other events.
- Finish time for the downhill race is determined by the time of one run.
- Finish time for the slalom and giant slalom race is determined by the combined time of the two runs.
- Check with your Region Office for specific pre-season and event registration deadlines.

Events Offered

- 10 M Ski Race**
- Glide Event**
- Slalom
- Giant Slalom
- Downhill
- Unified Slalom
- Unified Giant Slalom
- Unified Downhill



Aquatics

National Governing Body

- United States Swimming, Inc. (USS)
1750 East Boulder Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80909
(719) 578-4578

Sport Season

- Spring (March - June)

Uniform Requirements

- One piece swimsuit (women)
- Swim trunks or racing brief (men)
- Swimming cap, eye goggles, ear and/or nose plugs are optional

Registration Requirements

- Athletes must compete in a Regional competition prior to the SOWA Summer Games.
- Athletes may compete in up to three events plus a relay.
- Events identified with ** are designated for athletes with lower ability levels who are unable to participate in the other events.
- Check with the SOWA office for specific pre-season and event registration deadlines.

Events Offered

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| • 10M Asst. Swim** | • 100M Freestyle | • 100M Ind. Medley |
| • 15 M Walk** | • 100 M Backstroke | • 200 M Ind. Medley |
| • 15 M Flotation** | • 100 M Breaststroke | • 4x25 M Freestyle Relay |
| • 15 M Unasst. Swim** | • 100 M Butterfly | • 4x50 M Freestyle Relay |
| • 15 M Unasst. Backstroke** | • 200 M Freestyle | • 4x100 M Freestyle Relay |
| • 25 M Flotation Race | • 200 M Backstroke | • 4x25 M Medley Relay |
| • 25 M Freestyle | • 400 M Freestyle | • 4x50 M Medley Relay |
| • 25 M Backstroke | • 800 M Freestyle | • 4x100 M Medley Relay |
| • 25 M Breaststroke | • 1500 M Freestyle | • 4x100 M Unified Relay |
| • 25 M Butterfly | • 200 M Breaststroke | • 4X200 M Unified Relay |
| • 50 M Freestyle | | |
| • 50 M Breaststroke | | |
| • 50 M Backstroke | | |
| • 50 M Butterfly | | |



Athletics (Track & Field)

National Governing Body

- USA Track and Field
P.O. Box 120
155 West Washington St., Suite 220
Indianapolis, IN 46204
(317)638-9155

Sport Season

- Spring (March - June)

Uniform Requirements

- Running shoes
- White socks
- Shorts, tights or sweat pants
- Tank top, singlet or T-shirt

Registration Requirements

- Athletes must compete in a regional competition to qualify for Summer Games.
- Athletes may compete in two track and one field event and one relay.
- Contact the SOWA office for specific registration requirements.
- Check with the SOWA office for specific pre-season and event registration deadlines.
- Events identified with ** are designated for athletes with lower ability levels who are unable to participate in the other events.

Events Offered

- | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| • 10M W/C Race Manual** | • 50M Walk** | • 1500M Run |
| • 25M W/C Race Manual** | • 100M Walk | • Stand Long Jump |
| • 30M Motor W/C Slalom** | • 200M Walk | • Running Long Jump |
| • 30M Manual W/C Slalom** | • 400M Walk | • High Jump |
| • 100M W.C Race Manual | • 800M Walk | • Tennis Ball Throw** |
| • 200M W/C Race Manual | • 4x100M Relay | • Softball Throw |
| • 400M W/C Race Manual | • 4x400M Relay | • W/C Shot Put |
| • 25M Motor W/C Obstacle** | • 4x400M Unified Relay | • Shot Put |
| • 50M Motor W/C Slalom** | • 110 Hurdle | • Pentathlon |
| • 25M Asst. Walk** | • 50M Dash | • 3000M Unified Run |
| • 50M Asst. Walk** | • 100M Dash | • 5000M Unified Run |
| | • 200M Dash | |
| | • 400M Dash | |
| | • 800M Run | |



Basketball

National Governing Body

- Amateur Basketball Association of the U.S.
1750 East Boulder Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80909
(719) 632-7687

Sport Season

- Winter (January - March)

Uniform Requirements

- Basketball or court shoes
- White socks
- Shorts or sweatpants
- Basketball jersey or T-shirt
- T-shirts must be numbered on front and back
- Numbers used shall have no more than two digits and must be combination of 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5

Registration Requirements

- Teams must compete in a minimum of **four** games prior to a Regional Tournament and **qualify** at the respective Region Tournament.
- Teams placing first in the Regional Tournament will automatically advance to the State Basketball Tournament at Winter Games.
- Team rosters must have a minimum of five players and are limited to 12 players.
- Wheelchair athletes and athletes using walking devices will not be allowed to compete on a team with unassisted ambulatory athletes due to safety concerns.
- Check with the SOWA Sports and Training Manager for specific pre-season and event registration deadlines.

Events Offered

- Lead-Up skills competition
- Individual skills competition
- Regulation Team Play: Juniors, Seniors, Masters
- Unified Team Play: Juniors, Seniors, Masters



Bowling

National Governing Body

- American Bowling Congress (ABC)
5301 South 76th St.
Greendale, WI 53129

Sport Season

- Fall (September - December)

Uniform Requirements

- Bowling or casual shirt
- Casual slacks or skirt (women)
- Bowling shoes

Registration Requirements

- Check with SOWA office for specific pre-season and event deadlines and requirements.
- Athletes are limited to one event.
- A 15 game average must be submitted as an entry score for all bowlers.
- Teams with Special Olympic athletes are to consist of four bowlers.
- Unified teams are to consist of two Special Olympics athletes and two partners.

Events Offered

- Singles competition
- Singles ramp competition
- Special Olympics team bowling
- Unified team bowling
- Unified team doubles
- Team doubles



Cross Country Skiing (Nordic)

National Governing Body

- United States Ski Association
1750 E. Boulder Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80909
(719)578-4600

Sport Season

- Winter (December - March)

Uniform Requirements

- Parka or shell
- Knickers, tights or shell pants
- Winter gloves
- Warm undergarments

Registration Requirements

- Athletes must participate in a Regional competition to qualify for SOWA Winter Games.
- Athletes may compete in up to two events and a relay.
- Events identified with ** are designed for athletes with lower ability levels who are unable to participate in other events.
- Check with your Region Office for specific pre-season and event registration deadlines.

Events Offered

- 10 M Ski Race**
- Glide Event**
- 50 M Ski Race**
- 4 x 1 K Unified Relay
- 1 K Unified Race
- 3 K Unified Race
- 5 K Unified Race
- 1K Race
- 3K Race
- 5K Race
- 10K Race
- 100M Race
- 300M Race
- 500M Race
- 3 x 1K Relay



Cycling

National Governing Body

- U.S. Cycling Federation (USCF)
1750 E. Boulder Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80909
(719) 578-4581

Sport Season

- Spring (March - June)

Uniform Requirements

- SNELL or ANSI Approved Helmet
- Protective eye-wear (optional)
- T-shirt or cycling jersey
- Cycling shorts or tights
- White socks (preferably ankle height)
- Cycling shoes or stiff sole sneakers
- Cycling gloves

Registration Requirements

- Check with the SOWA office for specific pre-season and event registration deadlines.
- Athletes must compete in a regional competition to qualify for SOWA Summer Games.
- Athletes are allowed to enter up to three events.
- Athletes competing in the Stage Race may not compete in any other event.

Events Offered

- 500 M Time Trial
- 1 K Time Trial
- 5 K Time Trial
- 10 K Time Trial
- 5 K Road Race
- 10 K Road Race
- 15 K Road Race
- 25 K Road Race
- 40 K Road Race
- 15 K Unified Team Race
- 1 K Unified Tandem Time Trial
- 5 K Unified Tandem Time Trial
- 10 K Unified Tandem Time Trial
- 10 K Unified Team Race
- 25 K Unified Team Race
- 40 K Unified Team Race
- Stage Race – 1 K Road Race
- Stage Race – 10K Unified Team Race
- Stage Race – 25 K Unified Team Race



Figure Skating

National Governing Body

- U.S. Figure Skating Association (USFSA)
20 First Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80906
(719) 635-5200

Sport Season

- Winter (December - March)

Uniform Requirements

- See specific guidelines in the Special Olympics Winter Sports Rules Book, pp. 49-50.

Registration Requirements

- Athletes must submit competition levels to qualify for SOWA Winter Games.
- Athletes may compete in up to three events.
- Check with the SOWA office for specific pre-season and event registration deadlines.

Events Offered

- Singles Compulsory & Free Competition
- Singles Freestyle Figure Competition
- Ice Dancing
- Pairs Competition
- Unified Ice Dancing
- Unified Pair



Golf

National Governing Body

- United States Golf Association
PO Box 109601
Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410
Phone (561) 624-8400
Fax (561) 624-8462

Sports Season

- Summer (June - August)

Uniform Requirements

- Golf or casual shirt
- Casual slacks, shorts or skirt
- Golf Shoes

Registration Requirements

- Athletes in team or stroke competition must establish a handicap based on the equivalent of six, 18-hole rounds.
- Unified partners must submit a handicap.
- Athletes may only compete in one event.
- All players must submit scorecards from three rounds of 9 or 18-holes of play to qualify for SOWA Summer Classic.
- Check with the SOWA office for specific pre-season and event registration deadlines.

Events Offered

- Individual Skills Contest
- Unified Partner Team Competition
- Individual Stroke Play



Long Distance Running

National Governing Body

- USA Track and Field
PO Box 120
155 West Washington St., Suite 220
Indianapolis, IN 46204
(317) 638-9155

Sport Season

- Fall (September - December)

Uniform Requirements

- Tank top or T-shirt
- Running Shorts
- Running/Walking Shoes

Registration Requirements

- Athletes should compete in a region or pre-approved community run/walk prior to the SOWA Summer Games.
- Coaches must submit the region competition times to the Sports and Training Manager by the designated deadline for Summer Games.
- Athlete may compete in up to two events.
- Check with the Sports and Training Manager for specific pre-season and event registration deadlines.

Events Offered

- 1.5 K Race Walk: Regulation and Unified
- 5 K Race Walk: Regulation and Unified
- 5 K Road Race: Regulation and Unified
- 10 K Road Race: Regulation and Unified



Powerlifting

National Governing Body

- U.S. Powerlifting Federation
2103 Langley Avenue
Pensacola, FL 32504
(904) 477-863

Sport Season

- Spring (March - June)

Uniform Requirements

- T-shirt
- Singlet
- Shorts or sweatpants (optional)
- Weight belt (optional)
- Court shoes

Registration Requirements

- Athletes must have two years lifting experience to compete in the squat event.
- Qualifying weights must be submitted for each lift performed.
- Check with SOWA for specific pre-season and event registration deadlines.
- Athletes may compete in three or four events depending on the years of sport experience.

Events Offered

- Squat
- Bench Press
- Dead Lift
- Combination 1: Bench Press & Dead Lift
- Combination 2: Bench Press, Dead Lift & Squat



Soccer

National Governing Body

- United State Soccer Federation (USSF)
1750 E. Boulder Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80909
(719) 578-6400

Sport Season

- Spring (March - June)

Uniform Requirements

- Sneakers or turf footwear
- Soccer socks or tube-socks
- Shin guards (required)
- Shorts or sweat pants
- Soccer jersey or tee-shirt
- Shirts must be numbered on the back at least 8 high, with numbers between 1 and 20.
- Goalkeepers must wear distinctly different uniforms.

Registration Requirements

- Teams must compete in a minimum of four games prior to a Regional Tournament and qualify at their respective Regional Tournament to participate in SOWA Summer Games.
- Team rosters must have a minimum of five players and a maximum of 10.
- Check with your Region Office for specific pre-season and event registration deadlines.
- Wheelchair athletes and athletes using walking devices will not be allowed to compete on a team with unassisted ambulatory athletes due to safety concerns.
- Events with ** are for athletes of lower ability levels who are unable to participate in other events.

Events

- Individual Skills Competition**
- Team Competition; Juniors, Seniors, Masters
- Unified Team Competition; Juniors, Seniors, Masters



Softball

National Governing Body

- Amateur Softball Association
2801 NE 50th St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73111-7203
Phone (405) 424-5266
Fax (405) 424-3855

Sport Season

- June through August

Uniform Requirement

- Hat (same for all team members)
- T-shirt or team jersey with numbers on back (min. 6" high)
- White socks
- Sneakers or turf footwear
- Face mask and helmet (required for Catchers)
- No metal cleats or jewelry

Registration Requirements

- Teams must compete in a minimum of **four** games prior to regional competition **and qualify** at the respective Region Tournaments.
- Teams placing first in the Regional Tournament will automatically advance to the SOWA Summer Sports Tournament.
- Team rosters must have a minimum of 10 players and a maximum of 15 players.
- Wheelchair athletes and athletes using walking devices will not be allowed to compete on a team with unassisted ambulatory athletes due to safety concerns.
- Events with ** are designed for athletes with lower ability levels who are unable to participate in the other events.

Events Offered

- Lead-Up Skills Competition**
- Individual Skills Competition**
- T-ball Team Play: Juniors, Seniors, Masters
- Regulation Team Play: Juniors, Seniors, Masters
- Unified Team Play: Juniors, Seniors, Masters



Speed Skating

National Governing Body

- U.S. International Speed Skating Assoc.
17060 Patricia Lane
Brookfield, WI 53005
(800) 334-7981

Sport Season

- Winter (December - March)

Uniform Requirements

- SNELL or ANSI approved helmet
- Sweater, sweatshirt or turtleneck
- Warm-ups or tights
- Elbow and knee pads
- Gloves or mittens

Registration Requirements

- Check with SOWA for specific pre-season and event registration deadlines.
- Athletes may compete in up to three events.
- Events with **are designed for athletes with lower ability levels that are unable to participate in the other events.
- A qualifying time must be submitted for all athletes entered in order to qualify for SOWA Winter Games.

Events Offered

- 25 M Skate Race**
- 50 M 1/2 Lap Race**
- 100 M Race
- 300 M Race
- 500 M Race
- 800 M Race
- 1000 M Race
- 1500 M Race
- 1500 M Unified Short
- 4 x 400 Unified Long
- 4 x 500 Unified Relay
- Unified Team Sprint



Volleyball

National Governing Body

- USA Volleyball
1750 East Boulder Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80909
(719) 578-4750

Sport Season

- Fall (September - December)

Uniform Requirements

- Long sleeve T-shirt or jersey
- Team jerseys must be numbered; 3" high on front, 6" on back
- Shorts or sweatpants
- Socks and white sole, court shoes

Registration Requirements

- Teams must compete in at least four games.
- Team rosters must have a minimum of six players and are limited to 12 players.
- Wheelchair athletes and athletes using walking devices will not be allowed to compete on a team with unassisted ambulatory athletes due to safety concerns.
- Events with ** are for athletes with lower ability levels who are unable to participate in the other events.

Events Offered

- Lead-Up Skills Competition**
- Individual Skills Competition**
- Modified Team Play
- Special Olympics Team; Juniors, Seniors, Masters
- Unified Team Play; Juniors, Seniors, Masters



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. 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.

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 to side and make sure breathing is unobstructed.

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.



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, 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, the event may be suspended 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 that 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 walls. Protect your head with your arms. Don't leave until the shaking is over.

Fire

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

- 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.



Forms

The following forms are available online at www.sowa.org/forms and following this page.

- Application for Participation (Medical)
- Atlanto-Axial Instability
- Special Provisions Regarding Medical Treatment
- Incident Report
- Unified Partner Release Form
- Washington State Patrol Form (Unified Partners)
- Fundraising Registration Form
- In-Kind Contribution Form