



MEMORANDUM

TO: Area Leadership Team Members & Coaches
FROM: John J. Borgognoni, Sr. Vice-President, Sports & Programs
DATE: August 19, 2019
RE: **Enforcement of Application for Participation Forms**

In an effort to keep our athletes safe while they give it their all and ensure that Special Olympics Washington (SOWA) is best prepared to do so, we will be strictly enforcing that all athletes are properly registered and have current paperwork on file before being allowed to participate in any manner.

Beginning **August 19, 2019**, SOWA will begin strictly enforcing the rule set by SOI stating that ALL participants must be properly registered before participation.

The SOWA office will work directly with coaches, programs, and Area Leadership Teams to ensure all athletes have proper and current paperwork on file prior to each season and that all registration deadlines are met. **It is the responsibility of the athlete, parents and guardians to obtain and track their own paperwork to ensure that it does not expire before or during the coming season of training and competition.** Should that be the case, athletes must obtain current paperwork prior to the start of the season they wish to partake in.

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 sent to SOWA are returned to the respective coach with a checklist of incomplete information attached.

All completed forms must be sent to the SOWA office for approval. Without a current and completed Application for Participation form in the possession of the coach and the SOWA Office, an athlete should not be allowed to participate in any training or competition at any level (Local, Region, and State). Coaches are responsible for keeping copies of the forms with them **at all times** when athletes are present for a Special Olympics related purpose. If the coach not have an athlete's current paperwork that is on file with the SOWA office, the coach may request a copy of the AFP to have on hand.

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.

It is an unpleasant task for anyone to deny athletes participation in competition due to an 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.

Thank you for your cooperation with this matter.