

COACH/CHAPERONE/VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT



Serving as a coach or chaperone in Special Olympics is both an honor and a privilege. Special Olympics adheres to the highest ideals of sport in the tradition of the Olympic movement.

I pledge that:

Sportsmanship

- I will lead practice and instruct the athletes to have good sportsmanship and act in ways that will bring respect to the athletes, my team, Special Olympics and me.
- I will not use abusive language or behavior towards other persons. I will be a good role model and have a positive attitude.

Training & Competition

- I (coaches only) will conduct regular training sessions and meet training criteria set by Special Olympics Michigan. I will instruct the athletes to always try their best during training/practice and competitions.
- I will instruct the athletes to follow the rules of the sport, and I will encourage and support the athletes of all abilities.
- I will not allow the athletes to hold back in divisioning preliminaries in order to get into an easier heat in the finals.
- I (head coaches only) will carry a copy of each athlete's Application for Participation form to practices and competitions.
- I will update my credentials every three years - Volunteer A Form and Protective Behaviors (and Concussion Training for certified coaches).

Personal Responsibility

- I agree to ensure that for each athlete I coach, the time spent with Special Olympics is positive.
- Be open to new ideas and new ways of doing things.
- Out of respect for our athletes, please refrain from using cell phones or texting while working at an event. We need your full attention to your task. Thank you for your consideration.
- I will ensure each athlete competes in events that challenge that athlete's potential and are appropriate to that athlete's ability.
- I will not make inappropriate or unwanted physical, verbal or sexual advances on others in person or through social media.
- I will not bully or harass any other person. Harassment or bullying is any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts via internet, cell phone, or electronic communication device) that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any sexual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression; or a mental, physical, or sensory disability or impairment; or by any other distinguishing characteristic. Such behavior is considered harassment or bullying whether it takes place on or off the field, at any Special Olympics event, or in a vehicle.
- I will not drink alcohol, vape or smoke in non-smoking areas or use medical marijuana or use illegal drugs at Special Olympics events.
- I will not mishandle or abuse Special Olympics Michigan funds.
- I will abide by the Special Olympics policy on the prohibition of dating athletes.
- I will obey all federal, state, and local laws and Special Olympics rules.
- I will abide by the NO recreational swim rule.
- I will always hold the athletes' well-being and safety as my utmost responsibility.
- I will report suspected abuse to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services or call the police at 911 and notify Special Olympics Michigan within 24 hours. Failure to report could result in legal consequences.

I understand that being a coach or chaperone in Special Olympics is an honor and a privilege. I pledge to uphold the spirit of this Code of Conduct, which is only a general guide for my conduct and does not describe all types of good behavior and bad behavior. If I do not obey this Code of Conduct, my Program or a Games Organizing Committee may suspend me from Special Olympics, either temporarily or permanently. If I am suspended from Special Olympics, I can appeal the decision in accordance with the attached Special Olympics Appeal Process.

By signing below, I am saying that I have read, or have had read to me, the Coach/Chaperone Code of Conduct and that I agree to obey this Code of Conduct. If I violate this Code of Conduct and disagree with my punishment, I agree to follow the Special Olympics Appeal Process and I will accept their decision as final.

Coach/Chaperone/Volunteer

Date



DISCIPLINARY STEPS FOR VIOLATING COACH/CHAPERONE/VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

The following progressive disciplinary steps may be taken with the program beginning at whichever step is deemed appropriate under the circumstances by the Area Director.

- Step 1** Verbal warning to the coach/chaperone with a written copy of the Incident Form to the Area Director.
- Step 2** A written Incident Report must be completed giving warning to the coach/chaperone with a copy to the Area Director.
- Step 3** The Area Director will conduct a personal meeting with the coach/chaperone to review unacceptable behavior and to agree on a plan for improvement.
- The meeting will be documented in writing and copies distributed to the Area Director and state office.
- Step 4** Suspension from Special Olympics practices and events for a specific time.
- The Area Director will discuss the circumstances and must approve/disapprove the action. The action will be documented in writing and presented to the coach/chaperone and a copy will be sent to the state office.
- Any further action must be referred to the Area Director. The Area Director and program staff member responsible for **Field Service Management** will approve any further action to be taken. The SOMI program staff will work provide guidance on policies for disciplinary measures.
- Further action could be, but is not limited to:
- Suspension for a longer period
 - Permanent expulsion

COACH/CHAPERONE/VOLUNTEER APPEAL PROCESS

The coach/chaperone has the right to appeal any disciplinary action to the Area Director. The coach/chaperone must submit a written notice of appeal, with a copy to the Area Director and to the President/CEO of Special Olympics Michigan. This notice must include a request for a meeting within 30 days of being notified of the disciplinary action.

The appeal will be heard by the Grievance Committee, a decision must be rendered in writing within 21 days following the meeting and may reverse, amend or affirm the disciplinary action. The decision shall be submitted to the coach/chaperone and to the Area Program and should include, if applicable, a plan of action for the coach/chaperone to correct the unacceptable behavior that led to the disciplinary action. Grievance Committee meetings will be scheduled on a quarterly basis.