

Special Olympics Michigan: Return To Play Guidance

August 2021

Special Olympics has updated guidance on return to in-person activities to reflect the latest information on COVID-19. This guidance is based on the latest information from the World Health Organization (WHO), the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other health authorities and created in consultation with a team of global medical experts and with input from Special Olympics stakeholders. The primary goal of this guidance has been and remains zero deaths due to transmission of COVID-19 at events. The secondary goal is to prevent outbreaks of COVID-19. This guidance is intended to supplement – not replace – any state/provincial, local, territorial/national or tribal health and safety laws, rules and regulations with which similar organizations must comply.

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 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 the current medical information available at the time of publication.
5. Guidance takes a phased approach that is dependent on local transmission rates, vaccination rates as well as testing/monitoring/contact tracing/health system capacity

Event Size & Venue Type (indoors/outdoors)	Size and venue per local authority regulations.
Type of sport/activity	Per local authority regulations. Stagger start times to reduced crowding at the event.
Forms	Athletes, Coaches, Unified partners, Officials, Volunteers, and Staff complete the COVID Code of Conduct & Risk Form. Communicable Disease Waiver for Participants (US Only).
Operations	Event organizers must have a COVID Point of Contact identified. Event organizers must have a plan for identifying and isolating individuals with COVID symptoms, rapid testing (if necessary), contract tracing for the event, and notifying health authorities, per local requirements.
Onsite Screening	Verbal confirmation of no symptoms for all participants and spectators + onsite temperature checks on arrival (each day, if multiple days). Signage on preventive measures (handwashing,

	distancing and masking) and education on symptoms and reminder to stay home if sick or any symptoms.
Positive COVID test or previous COVID disease	No participation within 10 days of COVID positive test and 7 days of any symptoms. Athletes and Unified partners must receive medical clearance prior to participating in sport. Programs must educate on this requirement.
Masking <i>Masking requirements may be more stringent if Programs chooses based on local situation.</i>	Masks are required for ALL participants, when indoors, except during rigorous exercise. All individuals who are unvaccinated are to wear masks indoors and outdoors, except during rigorous exercise.
Distancing	Take active measures to ensure distancing as much as possible outside of sport activities, especially in indoor spaces.
Transportation	Private transportation encouraged as much as possible. Distancing on any shared transport organized by SO. Masking required for all on any SO transportation, unless all participants are vaccinated.
Travel <i>All travel requirements for host country/state/territory as well as for return to home should also be considered in planning.</i>	Permitted, with precautions. All participants must be from other low transmission area or must be vaccinated – tracked as part of planning and registration. If air/train travel, negative PCR test should be required prior to departing home location. Individuals with positive results are instructed to stay home.
Accommodations	If ALL individuals in the room are vaccinated, up to 4 individuals may share a room. Otherwise, individuals sharing a room must live in the same household.
State or Multi Region Event	For State and multi-county events: Athletes, coaches, unified partners, and chaperone's (all registered delegation members) must show proof of vaccination card or a negative covid-19 test 72 hour prior to competition. NOTE: If anyone tests positive, they should not participate, be isolated, and contract tracing should be conducted per event protocol and local regulations.
Sanitization	Equipment shall be sanitized after the completion of each competitive match or game. Prior to entry in competitive space (field, court etc.) athletes should utilize hand sanitizer. Sanitization protocol for all communal shared areas (e.g.,

	bathrooms, meal areas) and frequently touched surfaces + shared equipment between uses.
Spectators	Permitted per local authority regulations. Separation from participants as much as possible.
Sideline observers (e.g., family/support staff)	
Meals	Stagger mealtimes and cohort groups as much as possible, especially when indoors.
Non-Sport Gatherings (during Competitions)	Follow size restrictions, venue options and risk mitigation guidance per above. Minimize large social gatherings (e.g., community dances, athlete festivals), where possible.
Ceremonies	Follow size restrictions, venue options and risk mitigation guidance per above. For award ceremonies, strongly recommend outdoors.
Healthy Athletes	Follow size restrictions, venue options and risk mitigation guidance per above. See additional HA guidance for discipline-specific precautions.
Young Athletes	Children should wear masks during YA activities. All coaches and volunteers should also wear masks. Distancing and outdoor activities are highly encouraged. Additional guidance for implementing YA activities in the Return to Activities protocol for young children.
School-based Activities	School-based activities led by schools are considered separate from this framework and should comply with guidance from schools/districts.
Fundraising Events	Fundraising events are considered separate from this framework and should comply with any local regulations and local guidelines and in consultation with local legal counsel. There is a template for a General Waiver of Liability, Assumption of Risk, and Indemnity (US example) available for these events.