



RETURN TO PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Approved July 23, 2020

Guideline Overview

- These guidelines were designed to provide a clear blueprint for athletes and coaches to return practice, all while ensuring the health and safety of our athletes, coaches, and community at large.
- Failure to follow these guidelines could result in immediate dismissal from Special Olympics Michigan.
- These guidelines are valid for Bocce, Cycling, and Golf. Practice for kayaking, swimming, athletics, or field events is allowed as long as all guidelines are followed.
- Under these guidelines, no Team Sports are allowed at this current time, however at home individual skills training is available.

Guiding Principals

1. The health and safety of all members of the Special Olympics community are paramount.
2. Participation is completely optional, as we respect, understand and fully support anyone who is unable to or uncomfortable returning to practice.
3. Anyone considered high-risk (per the *COVID-19 Participant Risk Form & Code of Conduct*) is strongly discouraged from practicing in-person until there is little or no COVID in your community.
4. Guidance is based on current medical information and state guidelines at the time of publication and are subject to change as guidance evolves.

GUIDELINES

There are three major steps to these guidelines, including: education, pre-practice, and practice.

Step 1 - Education

Prior to first practice:

1. Coaches must view training videos for safe practice, which includes access to personal protective equipment (see below), physically distanced drills, and activities.
2. Coaches must attend SOMI return to play training/webinar which will include all training components as well as Hippa confidentiality training.
3. All participants must sign *Covid-19 Waiver*.

4. Maintain a roster with contact information for all athletes and coaches and be prepared to support local public health contact tracing efforts, if exposures were to occur.
5. Email or communicate these guidelines to participants and families in advance and ask athletes to bring personal equipment, if possible (i.e. Golf Clubs).
6. Encourage higher risk individuals to adhere to guidelines and stay home.
7. Print *COVID-19 Waiver and Code of Conduct* and *Participant Sign-In Sheets* documents. These are available at somi.org/resources.
8. Print Physical Distancing Signage to be displayed (available at somi.org/resources).

Step 2 - Pre-Practice

1. Become familiar with these guidelines and available resources outlined in this document and on the SOMI website at somi.org/resources.
2. Understand the size & frequency of practice and communicate this to your area's athletes. This includes:
 - a. No more than groups of 10 or fewer at a time, including coaches and athletes (although multiple shifts are allowed).
 - b. Practicing no more than once per week.
 - c. Designate a safety individual for each team
3. Work with SOMI Field Service and Sports staff to find an outdoor facility that will:
 - o Accommodate your group while ensuring physical distancing guidelines are met.
 - o Ensure there is a designated space to isolate ill participants including tape, cones, or chairs indicating where to sit.
4. Receive final confirmation from State Office to begin practice (state office will review with committee consisting of staff, board member and medical advisory chair).

Step 3 - Practice

1. Use hand sanitizer or wash hands upon arrival.
2. At the first practice review the code of conduct and expectations of all athletes and coaches to ensure safety.
3. Everyone must sign the sign-in sheet, complete the symptom tracker and have his/her temperature taken on-site.
4. Coaches provide reminders on physical distancing, respiratory etiquette, and hygiene.
5. Limit activities that are not conducive to physical distancing.
6. Avoid utilizing shared equipment and regularly clean equipment, if anything is shared.
7. Clean and sanitize all equipment at the end of practice.

Other practice notes:

- Spectators are discouraged but, if present, should be at least 6 feet from others.
- For individuals who get a ride to practice, their ride should remain in their car approximately 10 minutes after dropping off their athlete, just in case they fail the health screening protocol.
- At any point during practice, if you notice someone who appears ill (or you feel ill), move to isolation area, and take the appropriate actions for the athlete (or yourself) to head home.

DOCUMENTATION & BEST PRACTICES

Sign-in & screening practices

At the beginning of each practice, coaches will:

1. Take temperature using infrared or forehead thermometer
 - If fever equals temperature of 100.4°F/37.8°C or higher, coach may offer one re-test after 5 minutes to ensure temperature is accurate. If temperature equals temperature of 100.4°F/37.8°C or higher, the individual must go home with recommendation to contact their health provider immediately.
2. Have everyone sign-in on the *Participant Sign-In Sheet* and review responses.
 - Those with exposures/symptoms must go home with recommendation to contact their health provider immediately.

Documentation for coaches to submit to field service

- From the first week of practice, submit the *Participant Sign-In Sheet* and the *COVID-19 Waiver and Code of Conduct* from each participant. These documents will take the place of team roster.
- From the remaining weekly Sign-In Sheets, save these documents and send at the end of the season.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements:

- Area programs will be able to purchase return to play starter kits through SOMI. SOMI can assist areas with the procurement of starter kits if necessary.
- Coaches should wear a mask at all times.
- Athletes should arrive and depart wearing a mask and are encouraged to wear during practice.
- Coaches should have the following supplies at each practice:
 - Infrared or forehead thermometers
 - Hand sanitizer
 - Sanitizing wipes and/or spray
 - *Participant Sign-In Sheet* document
 - Sanitized pens
 - *COVID-19 Waiver and Code of Conduct* document

- Additional items to indicate physical spacing are encouraged (pool noodle, cones, tape, etc.)

Food & beverages:

- All participants should bring their own beverages and water bottles must not be shared.
- Use markers or labels to identify each athlete's water bottle.
- Hydration stations (water fountains, etc.) cannot be utilized.
- Do not share snacks.
- Avoid snack breaks or meals during practice.

If someone becomes ill during practice with non-medically diagnosed symptoms:

1. Direct individual to isolation area until he/she is able to leave.
2. If an athlete should be isolated during practice, contact their appropriate parent or guardian, request they come pick their athlete up, and recommend they seek guidance from health care provider.
3. Activate plan to provide athletes with instruction and direction.
4. Remind them to stay at home and NOT go to any activities until 14 days after exposure or after all of symptoms are gone (unless received clearance from a healthcare professional).

Reporting protocol:

- Coach must notify the Area Director immediately. From there, the Area Director will contact SOMI Field Service staff and local public health agency if they don't already know.
- Assist with notification of those who have had contact, as directed by public health agency.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Printable resources:

- *Participant Sign-In Sheet*
- *COVID-19 Waiver and Code of Conduct*

Additional resources:

- Higher Risk Individuals
- Testing for COVID
- Symptom Tracker
- Cones/String etc. can be used to demonstrate how to keep physical distance

SOMI will provide each area:

- Copies of the *Participant Sign-In Sheet*
- Copies of the *COVID-19 Waiver and Code of Conduct*
- One (1) copy of *Return to Practice Guidelines* (this document)