

WHAT'S NEW FOR 2016 – 2017?

As Special Olympics embarks on its strategic five year plan, “Our vision is to open hearts and minds towards people with intellectual disabilities, using sport to create inclusive communities all over the world.” The goals and strategies set will drive us to this vision. The complete plan will be rolled out to the US Programs this fall. We will share more as we get the information.

SOWI continues to build resources to assist with managing local programs, expanding online training opportunities and resources, and simplifying the *Agency Manager Handbook* and *Competition Guide* to be more user-friendly. SOWI also recognizes that Project UNIFY® is growing; school programs, youth and teacher leaders are searching for resources to implement on growing in schools. In the next year, SOWI will start to align this shift towards Unified Sports, and the resources required, by our traditional Agencies.

Agency Management

1. We acknowledge all of the time you give to the athletes of Special Olympics Wisconsin and in an effort to try something new to streamline the process. Starting this year we will conduct the Agency Accreditation process online. The Accreditation has been shortened and will be required every two years. The Agency Standards and Accreditation will not be enclosed within the Agency Manager Handbook.

Athlete Policies

1. The previous *Application for Participation in Special Olympics* form and *Official Special Olympics Release Form* **will no longer be accepted as of January 1, 2017.**
 - a. New athletes must submit the new *Athlete Medical Form* as well as the new *Participant Release Form* as of January 1, 2017.
 - b. Current athletes who renew their medical information must submit the new *Athlete Medical Form* as of January 1, 2017. They do not need to submit the new *Participant Release Form*.
 - c. In lieu of the new *Athlete Medical Form*, a current WIAA physical form **is** acceptable.
2. The Down Syndrome Special Examination Form is no longer required.
 - a. Any current athlete previously assumed to have Down syndrome due to a medical examiner's notation in the atlantoaxial instability section of their *Application for Participation in Special Olympics* form will have their restrictions lifted when the athlete submits the new *Athlete Medical Form* and the form indicates no neurological symptoms or physical findings that could be associated with atlantoaxial instability.
 - b. If the medical examiner indicates the athlete has neurological or physical findings that could be associated with atlantoaxial instability, then the Medical Referral Form (4th page of the new *Athlete Medical Form*) must be submitted.

ALPs

1. Certain areas of the Athlete Leadership Program will be temporarily suspended until proper resources can be allocated back to this program.
2. The Athletes as Coaches (AAC) program will continue to be supported. Athletes that wish to become coaches will complete the online general coaches' certification (see training below) and will be required to complete specific AAC training with the help of a mentor. More information will be available in the fall of 2016 at www.specialolympicswisconsin.org.

Training

1. All emails regarding training can now be sent to the new Director of Training, Brittany Bergen at bbergen@specialolympicswisconsin.org.

Finance

1. Monthly financial statements are available on the Agency log in page of the website (financial statements are no longer mailed or e-mailed). These statements will be available on or before the 10th day of the following month. For example, January reports will be posted on or before February 10th. These reports will show all expenses and revenue for the month. If you need more specific reporting, please contact the Accounts Payable.
2. If you have questions, you can contact the department directly via accountspayable@specialolympicswisconsin.org.
3. All invoices and reimbursement requests should be submitted monthly. No receipts older than 90 days will be reimbursed. This allows more accurate financial statements for your agency.

Unified

1. Unified Sports opportunities will be available for schools in Unified Bowling, Unified Flag Football, Unified Snow Shoe Relays, Unified Indoor Triathlon, Unified Poly Hockey, Unified Futsal and a Unified 4x100 Relay. There are limited funds available for schools to host a Unified Invitational of their sport of choice in any of the three models: Competitive, Player Development and Recreational.

Forms for Duplication

1. Forms for finance, insurance, sports, and fundraising are updated yearly. Please use the forms in this section for the upcoming Program year and recycle anything you may have printed copies of from the previous year's handbook.

Competition

1. Review the Key Changes and Reminders page of the Competition Guide for details on competition changes and updates.
2. Multi-Agency Competition Grants are now available when hosting Unified Sports competitions.
3. Games registration checklist will be a part of Registration Packets with the Competition Guide.
4. The Special Needs form will be a part of the Registration Packets.