



General Code of Conduct for Family Members and Spectators of Special Olympics

“Special Olympics celebrates and strives to promote the spirit of sportsmanship and a love of participation in sports for its own sake”. This is one of the founding principles of Special Olympics. With this in mind, Special Olympics Wisconsin (SOWI) has established the following Spectators’ Code of Conduct in order to promote a positive environment for athletes to showcase their talents and compete in.

As a family member and/or spectator of Special Olympics, I agree to the following:

- Display good sportsmanship. Always respect players, coaches, officials, and other spectators.
- I will remember that athletes and Unified partners participate to achieve their personal best and have fun, and that the competition is for them.
- I will ensure my language, manner, and presentation will demonstrate high standards.
- I will display control, respect, dignity, and cooperation at all times. I will encourage others to demonstrate the same qualities.
- I (and my guests) will not engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct, such as booing and taunting, refusing to shake hands, or using profane language and gestures, with any participant, official, coach, or family member.
- I will refrain from coaching athletes or other participants from the stands/sidelines during competitions and practices.
- I will respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants and spectators in Special Olympics and will not willfully engage in discriminatory behaviors.
- I will treat everyone equally regardless of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, race, ethnicity origin, national origin, religion, or ability, or any other characteristic.
- I will respect the rules and policies in place at the activity, event and/or venue at all times.
- I will abide by the information sharing/communications processes set forth by my local Special Olympics Program.
- I understand that I play a vital role and have a responsibility to assist Special Olympics in providing for the health and safety of all athletes, by reporting any unsafe environment or suspicious behavior to my Special Olympics Program leadership.
- I will not engage in any form of verbal, physical, psychological, emotional or sexual abuse, unwanted sexual advances, or harassing, bullying or hazing behavior in person, via telecommunications, or via any other form of electronic communication, including, but not limited to email, texting and social media. This includes the exchange or transmission of inappropriate language, derogatory comments or slurs, and/or inappropriate images of a sexual or violent nature.
- I understand all telephonic and electronic communications between myself and any other participant must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about Special Olympics activities, and I will always make best efforts for a third party to be included on communications so that one-one-one communications are avoided whenever possible.
- I will inform my Special Olympics Program leadership should I be subject to such behavior or abuse from another participant and/or if I become aware of such behavior occurring amongst others.

Special Olympics Wisconsin

6582 Ronald Reagan Ave. | Madison, WI 53704

Phone (608) 222-1324 | **Web** SpecialOlympicsWisconsin.org | **Email** info@specialolympicswisconsin.org

Created by the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation for the benefit of persons with intellectual disabilities.



- I will ensure I am aware of any applicable law(s) which classifies me as a mandatory reporter. I am aware that I am obligated to report abuse or suspected abuse, regardless of whether laws omit me as a mandatory reporter. I know that I can consult with my Special Olympics Program leadership for guidance, as needed.
- I will promote the emotional and physical well-being of all participants.
- **I will not take action(s) that endangers a participant.**
- I will not drink or possess alcohol, smoke (tobacco products, e-cigarette devices), or possess or consume recreational cannabis or cannabis-based products or take illegal drugs while attending or participating in Special Olympics activities.
- I will respect and not misuse any equipment or property belonging to Special Olympics or that is provided to Special Olympics for its use.

Competition officials (referees, umpires, etc.) and event management personnel reserve the right to warn spectators of undesirable behavior and request immediate correction of the behavior. If spectators display inappropriate and disruptive behavior that interferes with competition, competition may be stopped until the spectator(s) is/are removed from the viewing area and competition venue. Examples of inappropriate and disruptive behavior include (but are not limited to):

- Use of obscene or vulgar language in a boisterous manner at any time
- Use of tobacco products or alcoholic beverages in restricted areas
- Taunting of players, coaches, officials or other spectators by means of baiting, ridiculing, threat of violence or physical violence
- Negative cheers or chants that encourage an athlete to fail i.e. in basketball, chanting “Air Ball” during a free throw attempt; in volleyball, chanting “Side Out” while a player attempts to serve the ball; in athletics race walking, cheering for an athlete to “run they’re catching you”, etc.
- Intentionally creating a loud noise or disturbance at inappropriate times during a competition (according to the rules of the sport) in order to disrupt the performance of an athlete i.e. shaking of a cow bell, blowing a whistle or horn during a basketball, soccer or volleyball game; creating noise at the start of an aquatics race after the official has indicated being quiet for the start of the race; creating a noise during a gymnastics routine to intentionally disrupt the concentration of the performing athlete; use of a bullhorn to cheer on or coach athletes, etc.

As a Special Olympics Wisconsin family member or spectator, I also understand that if I fail to abide by the rules and guidelines, I may be subject to disciplinary action that could include, but may not be limited to, the following (including other disciplinary steps/measures):

- Verbal warning by officials, coaches, and/or Local Program and SOWI personnel
- Game suspension with written documentation of incident kept on file
- Written warning
- Game forfeit through official or coach
- Season suspension

Special Olympics Wisconsin

2310 Crossroads Drive, Suite 1000, Madison, WI 53718

Phone (608) 222-1324 **Fax** (608) 222-3578 **Web** SpecialOlympicsWisconsin.org **Email** info@specialolympicswisconsin.org

Created by the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation for the benefit of persons with intellectual disabilities

