



Local Program Development Guide





A Letter from the President & CEO

Thank you for all you do to support the athletes of Special Olympics Wisconsin (SOWI). I am so grateful to you, our local program leaders, for your dedication and commitment. You are the foundation of our movement and the work you do in your community is vital to the health and well-being of each athlete.



On behalf of the SOWI Local Program Manager Committee and the SOWI Team, we are pleased to provide our SOWI Local Program Guide. This guide is a resource for local program leadership, providing the necessary information and tools to manage a Special Olympics Wisconsin local program in your community.

The SOWI Local Program Guide includes:

- A Quick Start Guide to Developing a Local Program
 - Growing & Sustaining a Local Program
 - References to Key documents within SOWI for greater ease of management
 - Resources

This guide provides you with the information and tools necessary to build a foundation for the local program and provide the next level of resources to grow the local program by offering new and expanded opportunities.

The SOWI Team is here to offer additional guidance and support as you work to engage athletes in local sports training and competition opportunities, health programs, unified champion schools activities and athlete leadership.

If you have questions, suggestions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to me. Your feedback and insights are extremely important to me and the SOWI community.

Thank you for your commitment to the athletes and the mission of Special Olympics Wisconsin as we create inclusive communities across Wisconsin together.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chad Hershner".

Chad Hershner President & CEO
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"You are the stars and the world is watching you." – Eunice Kennedy Shriver

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

Local Program Development Guide *(version September 2025)*

Section 1 – Starting & Structuring Your Local Program

What is Special Olympics?

Special Olympics is a global movement that unleashes the human spirit every day around the world through the transformative power and joy of sport. Here is how it works:

- 1. Inclusive Sports:** Special Olympics Wisconsin provides year-round training and activities for more than 7,000 children and adults with intellectual disabilities. These programs include sports training, competitions, and events. Athletes with intellectual disabilities have the opportunity to compete in 19 different sports within 4 separate sport seasons participate in Olympic-style individual and team sports, from swimming, track and field to basketball and soccer.
- 2. Special Olympics Unified Sports:** One of the unique aspects of Special Olympics is Unified Sports. In **Unified Sports**, people with and without intellectual disabilities play on the same teams. This inclusive approach fosters social connections, breaks down barriers, and promotes understanding among participants. Unified Sports connects people with intellectual disabilities (athletes) and without intellectual disabilities (Unified partners) together. It was inspired by a simple principle: training together and playing together is a quick path to friendship, understanding, and inclusion. Special Olympics Wisconsin offers unified sports competitions in 11 sports throughout the year.
- 3. Health and Wellness:** Special Olympics recognizes the importance of overall health and well-being. Special Olympics Wisconsin offers health programs and screenings to athletes, ensuring they have access to quality healthcare. This focus on health extends beyond the sports field. Special Olympics Wisconsin's health program improves access to health care for athletes through free event-based screenings and educational initiatives in 8 disciplines. With nearly 1,800 free health screenings provided annually, Special Olympics Wisconsin has emerged as a leading public health organization for people with I.D.
- 4. Education and Community Building:** Special Olympics goes beyond sports events. They work to create an inclusive world by promoting social change. Through education and community-building initiatives, they combat stigma, isolation, and injustice faced by people with intellectual disabilities. The Unified Champion Schools® strategy is creating a Unified Generation who are leading the charge to reimagine and create communities in which all people are included and accepted. The three Components model offers a unique combination of effective activities that equip schools with the tools and training to create a climate of acceptance. These three components can be implemented differently within each school and are encouraged to be student-led.
- 5. Young Athletes:** Special Olympics starts early! Their **Young Athletes** program introduces basic sports skills to children as young as 2 years old. This early engagement helps develop physical abilities and social connections. Special Olympics Wisconsin's Young Athletes is a sport and play program for children ages 2 – 10 years old with and without intellectual disabilities (ID). Young Athletes introduce basic sport skills, like running,

throwing and catching. This fun and inclusive program offers families, teachers, caregivers, and people from the community the chance to share the joy of sports with all children and abilities.

- 6. Leadership and Advocacy:** Special Olympics encourages leadership and advocacy among athletes, coaches, and volunteers. Special Olympics empowers individuals to become advocates for inclusion and equality. Athletes are an important part of Special Olympics and it is the commitment of Special Olympics Wisconsin to have Athlete Leadership an integrated part of the Local Program Management team and included in all that we do.

In summary, Special Olympics is about more than just sports. It's a movement that aims to create a world where every person, regardless of ability or disability, is accepted and welcomed. [Through sports, health programs, education, and community-building efforts, Special Olympics promotes social participation and celebrates the human spirit.](#)

What is a Local Program and what purpose does it serve?

Local Programs are crucial to the success of Special Olympics Wisconsin (SOWI), serving as vital hubs for community engagement and athlete empowerment. These programs provide athletes with intellectual disabilities opportunities to train, compete, and build confidence in a supportive environment. Ultimately, Local Programs are central to the transformative impact of Special Olympics Wisconsin, enriching the lives of our athletes and communities statewide.

The Local Program serves athletes and their family members at the grassroots level on behalf of its Accredited Special Olympics Program (Special Olympics Wisconsin), through sports training, competition opportunities, and related activities. The Local Program brings our mission and vision to life.

The mission of Special Olympics is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy, and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills, and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes, and the community.

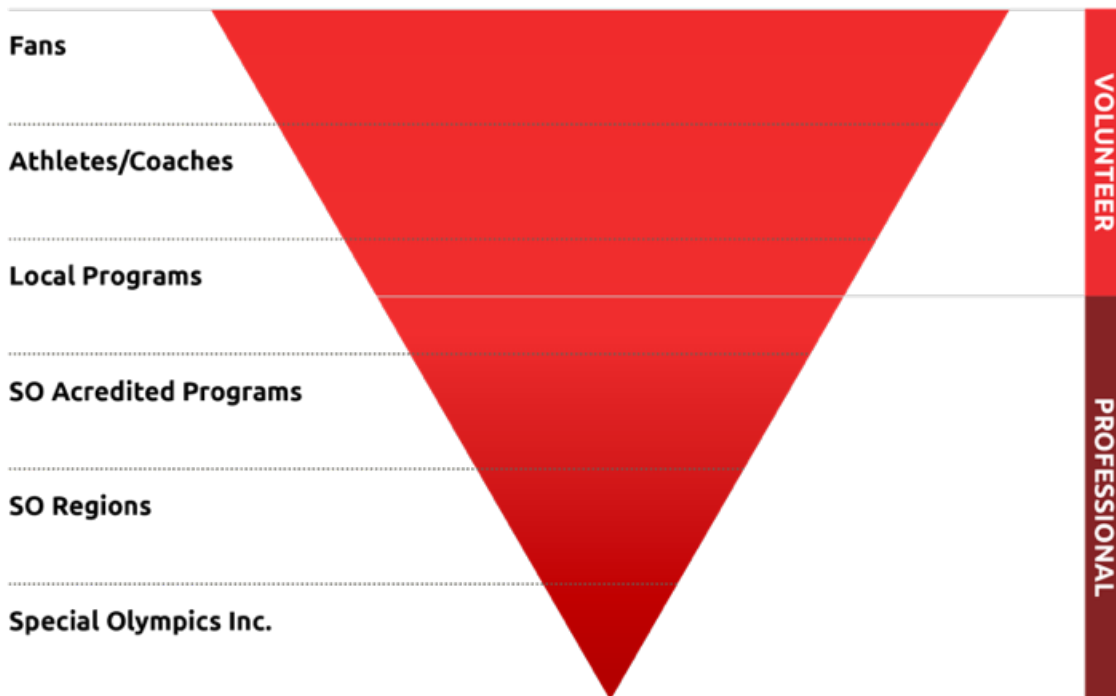
The **vision** of Special Olympics is to help bring all persons with intellectual disabilities into the larger society under conditions whereby they are accepted, respected, and given the chance to become productive citizens.

How do Local Programs fit into the overall structure of Special Olympics?

Each Local Program offers official Special Olympics sports training and competition opportunities for athletes (individuals with intellectual disabilities) and Special Olympics Unified Sports® partners (individuals without intellectual disabilities). A Local Program may originate from a variety of places:

- Geographic areas – Communities, counties, or other land boundaries
- Independent community Special Olympics clubs or teams
- Schools – Public or specialized schools, colleges or universities
- Sports organizations, such as Parks and Recreation Departments
- Organizations serving people with intellectual disabilities, such as independent living facilities or adult service providers

Special Olympics Local Programs' "inverted pyramid" approach (below) shows the importance of Local Programs and those who take part. The Local Program makes the first – and often, the strongest – impression about the Special Olympics movement. A strong Local Program is necessary to our success.



Who and what are the parts of this pyramid, and what is their role in the Local Program?

The Local Program begins with our athletes, and includes several important people

Athletes

Individuals of all ages and ability levels are welcome to participate in Special Olympics. Athlete Eligibility information can be found on the [Athlete Eligibility Page](#).

Each athlete must have the required release and medical form on file. Athlete forms and information about the forms can be found on the [Medical Info & Forms page](#).

Unified Sports Partners

Unified Sports partners are individuals without an intellectual disability who participate in Special Olympics Unified Sports®. Special Olympics Wisconsin Unified Partners need to be Class A Volunteers. More information about becoming a Class A Volunteer can be found on the [Class A Volunteer Page](#).

Families – Parents, Siblings, and Caregivers

Families are encouraged to participate at every level of Special Olympics, and are an essential component of most Local Programs. All family members of Special Olympics athletes are encouraged to participate in Special Olympics as volunteers, coaches, and Unified Sports partners.

Volunteers

Volunteers are the lifeblood of Special Olympics and serve as the primary source of support for athletes. There are a Volunteer opportunities include serving as a coach, Unified Sports partner, sports official, chaperone, committee member, fundraising volunteer, and more! Local Programs and services could not be provided without the support and commitment provided to the athletes by volunteers. Additional information on volunteering can be found on the [Volunteer page](#).

Special Olympics Professional Structure

The following levels of Special Olympics provide leadership and management for our movement, and exist to support our Local Programs in delivering the mission of Special Olympics.

- **Special Olympics Inc. (SOI)** is responsible for the overall leadership and management of all Special Olympics Programs across the globe — which supports more than 6 million athletes and Unified Sports partners in over 190 countries. With the support of more than 1 million coaches and volunteers, Special Olympics delivers 32 Olympic-type sports and over 100,000 games and competitions throughout the year.
- **Special Olympics North America (SONA)** is one of SOI's seven regions, and is responsible for implementing the policies and initiatives of SOI. SONA also supports and guides each of the Special Olympics state programs within North America (Canada, the United States, and the Caribbean).

- **Special Olympics State Programs** - Each Special Olympics State Program is a charitable organization that exists to provide sports training and athletic competition for persons with intellectual disabilities. It is accredited by SOI and is responsible for following the policies and rules established by SOI in its delivery of services. It is known as a “Program” (with a capital “P”) of Special Olympics.
- **Sub-Programs** - Many Special Olympics Sub-Programs are divided into smaller geographic regions, called sub-Programs. Sub-Programs provide support, assistance, and competitive opportunities to Local Programs.

How do I build a quality Local Program?

Take pride in your Local Program by building a team of leaders who share the Special Olympics Wisconsin vision of excellence.

A Local Program Manager will lead and oversee essential programming, including building a Management Team of volunteers who will help manage crucial areas. It is important to know that the Local Program Manager is **never alone!** In addition to the Management Team you create, Special Olympics Wisconsin will provide relevant and appropriate guidance, information, resources, policies, and procedures.

Who can I recruit as Management Team members?

Local Program management will come from a variety of backgrounds. The most likely candidates are those already connected to Special Olympics in some fashion:

- Current coaches, volunteers, and Unified Sports partners
- Parents and other family members
- Athletes

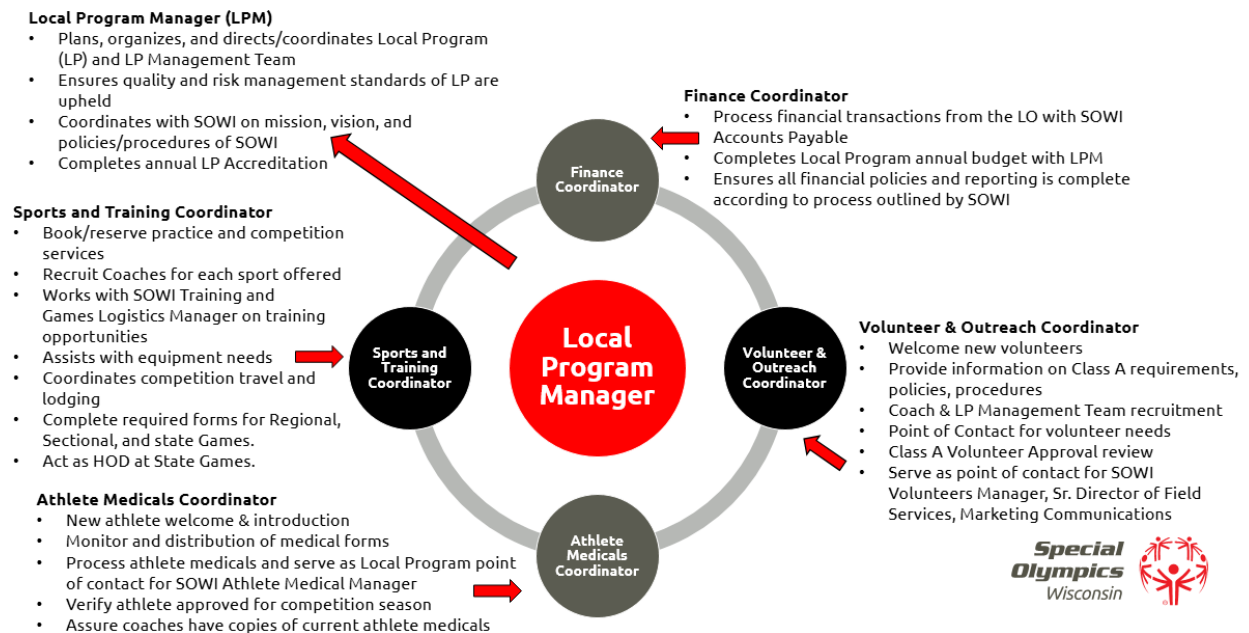
As your Local Program grows, you may find additional members within your community such as:

- Professionals with experience in key functional areas such as finance, public relations, fundraising, sports, etc.
- Community sports programs, civic groups, and fraternal organizations
- Military and police organizations
- Teachers, professionals, and paraprofessionals in school settings – from elementary through high school, as well as colleges and universities
- Professionals and young professionals in partnering agencies (chamber of commerce) and businesses

How is the Management Team structured, and what are the roles?

The Management Team provides leadership, administration, and oversight of the Local Program. At its core, the Management Team performs the necessary functions to allow sports training and competition to exist at the local level.

To efficiently manage the needs of the Local Program, Special Olympics Wisconsin Local Program Management Teams should include four members serving in role supporting Sports and Competition, Finance, Volunteers and Outreach, and Athlete Medicals:



Local Program Management Team Position Descriptions

Local Program Manager (LPM)

- Plans, organizes, and directs/coordinates Local Program (LP) and LP Management Team
- Ensure quality and risk management standards of LP are upheld.
- Coordinates with SOWI Sr. Director of Field Services on mission, vision and policies/procedures of Special Olympics Wisconsin
- Complete annual LP accreditation

Athlete Medicals Manager

- New athlete welcome/introduction
- Monitor and distribution of medical forms
- Process athlete medicals & interaction with SOWI Athlete Medical Manager
- Verify athlete approved for competition season
- Assure coaches have copy of current athlete medicals

Sports & Training Manager

- Book/reserve practice and competition services
- Recruit Coaches for each LP sport (works with LP volunteer/outreach Manager)
- Works with SOWI Training and Logistics Manager on training opportunities for LP coaches
- Assists in equipment needs
- Coordinates competition travel and lodging
- Complete required competition forms for regional, sectional, and state games. Acts as Head of Delegation (HOD) for State Games

***Special
Olympics
Wisconsin***



Finance Manager

- Process financial transactions from the LP with SOWI Accounts Payable
- Complete with LPM, the local program budget
- Work with SOWI and LP Fundraising Manager

Volunteers and Outreach Manager

- Welcome new volunteers
- Provide information about Class A requirements, policies and procedures
- Coach and LP GMT recruitment
- Point of contact for volunteer needs and questions within the LP
- Interacts with SOWI Sr. Director of Field Services, Marketing and Communications

As Local Programs grow, Local Program Management Teams may add roles to support the key functions of the Local Programs.

Health and Fitness Manager

- Assist in training with Sports Manager
- Assist with Nutrition
- Interacts with SOWI Healthy Athletes initiative

Equipment and Uniform Manager

- Assist with general maintenance of equipment
- Tracks need for equipment utilized for training within the LP
- Maintain needs and distribution of LP uniforms
- Works with SOWI Marketing and Communications on proper uniform compliance (logos, etc.)

Unified Champion School Manager

- Coordinate Unified Sports including liaising with Unified Champion Schools, Park & Rec, and transition plans for 11+ year olds into community programs

LETR Manager

- Coordinate Law Enforcement Torch Run activities with the LP Mgmt. team including Torch Run, Cops on the Roof Top, awards, local picnic/community interactions
- Works with SOWI LETR team

Fundraising Manager

- Work with community to support the LP on fundraising efforts
- Plan and implement fundraising efforts
- Donor acknowledgement
- Work with SOWI Development and Special Events on state fundraising efforts such as Polar Plunge, LETR Torch Run, Run with the Cops, etc.
- Interact with LP Treasurer on the handling and processing of funds from fundraising efforts

Marketing/Communications Manager

- Updates webpage and social media
- Verifies compliance to policies of social media guidelines within SOWI
- Assists with community outreach
- Assists with LP appreciation cards, letters for donors and volunteers
- Assist with internal communication via emails, texts, newsletter
- Provide content to SOWI Marketing and Communications regarding LP stories and LP content

Special Olympics Athlete Leaders are able to provide key input to Local Program decisions and processes based on their experience, perspective, and individual skills. It is important to consider Athlete Leaders when creating your Local Program Management Team as supports or leads for any of the above areas.

Local Program Expectations

What are the expectations of a Local Program?

- Creation of an LP Management team. The roles will vary based on the size of the team, the Local Program and the team needed to manage it effectively.
- Forms are to be completed using the manner provided. An example is fillable forms. Forms not received as directed may not be easily read and could affect your athletes' registration in Special Olympics or certain events.
- Completion of the required accreditation and local program budgets within the required time limit is a requirement for all Local Programs.
- Participation in fundraising at both the local program level and SOWI state level where able.
- Follow all guidelines, policies, and rules for Local Programs, and of SOWI and SOI. This includes all accreditation requirements such as budgeting information and reporting on leadership structure.
- Provide proper training for all athletes, safe training conditions and the ability to compete at regional, sectional, and state competitions.
- Continued evaluate process, facilities, events, and procedures to create a safe environment and mitigate risks.
- Effectively communicate with Athletes, Families, Coaches, and volunteers.

What do Local Program Managers need to know?

The **Local Program Manager** is expected to **engage** key volunteers to assist with the following:

- Compliance with all Special Olympics, Inc. (SOI) and Special Olympics Wisconsin policies, rules, and practices
- Ensure that only athletes with valid medical forms and volunteers with valid Class A forms are allowed to participate and be in direct contact with the athletes
- Athlete training, including ensuring that there are enough trained coaches
- Safe, secure, and appropriate training facilities
- Ensure that proper procedures are followed for insurance and signing contracts
- Develop partnerships to effectively run the program
- Ensure athletes have access to proper sports equipment
- Registration and arranging participation in higher-level competitions including:
 - Ensuring there are enough chaperones
 - Coordinating Transportation
 - Arranging Lodging

Local Program Minimum Standards

Special Olympics Wisconsin has developed minimum standards for Local Programs in order to provide consistent experiences for all SOWI athletes. These standards have in mind that athletes will have the choice to participate in multiple sports throughout the year, can advance beyond local competitions if they meet advancement criteria, participate at no cost, and have the resources available to successfully train.

SOWI has developed the following minimum standards to operate as a Local Program:

- Maintain a minimum of 15 athletes in the Local Program per year.
- Maintain a Class A volunteer ratio of 4 volunteers per athlete with a minimum of 4 registered Class A volunteers in the Local Program per year.
- Local Programs are to have a Local Program Committee consisting of a minimum of 4 key roles:
 - Local Program Manager/Finance Manager
 - Volunteers and Outreach Manager
 - Athlete Medicals Manager
 - Sports & Training Manager
- Provide training and register to compete at a Regional, District, or State competition in at least 3 sports throughout the year in 2 Sports Seasons.
- Attend 1 State Games per year, if their athletes meet qualifying standards.
- It is encouraged to participate in at least one Health or Fitness program a year. These include:
 - SOfit
 - Attending Healthy Athletes Screening at Local or State Games
 - Attending a Family Health Forum
 - Participation in SOI Health Study

- Local Programs must participate in 1 Special Olympics Wisconsin fundraising activity or initiative which includes:
 - Polar Plunge
 - Tip a Cop Events
 - Truck Convoy
 - Submitting and receiving a grant
 - Running a Local Program fundraising event
 - Securing a financial partner
 - Coordinating a Major Gift (\$5,000 donor)
- **Athlete Leadership:** Local Program places athletes in positions of leadership at the Local Level and connects them to SOWI Athlete Leadership programs, when appropriate.
 - Ensure Athlete Leaders remain engaged in SOWI/Local Program Leadership
 - Local Program specific training/opportunities
- **Communication Standards:** Provide monthly updates to Coaches, Volunteers, Athletes and Families about Local Program and SOWI events, policies, and updates.
- Fill out annual Accreditation
 - Submit Local Program Budget
 - Submit Local Program Succession Plan

Local Program Growth and Sustainability

As a Local Program grows, it will have to evolve in order to serve athletes in a quality manner. As more athletes join a Local Program, more sport opportunities will need to be added, practice facilities will need to be larger, the budget will have to increase, and the coach and volunteer base will need to grow. It is wise to plan ahead for growth so you are best prepared for your Local Program to reach its full potential.

Enhancing Existing Sports

Consider adding fitness training to the existing Local Program schedule. This approach can improve the fitness and conditioning of your athletes, and creates healthy habits that extend beyond your sports season.

Adding Unified Sports Options to Already Existing Sports

The Local Program can grow by giving volunteers the option of becoming Unified Sports partners to train and compete alongside Special Olympics athletes.

Adding New Sports

Athletes, coaches, and families may have interest in new sports beyond what is currently offered. In order to make effective decisions in adding a new sport or Program, consider the following:

Interest

- Aside from surveying athletes, a sports clinic or demonstration would allow you to introduce basic skills for a new sport, and determine the true interest.

Facilities

- Discuss training and competition options with local recreation centers, schools, and sports organizations to determine available facilities for your Local Program

Coaches

- Survey your coaches' interests and skills in a new sport, and determine if there are additional volunteers or coaches in your community that are capable of a) effectively training in a new sport, and b) helping to avoid overloading your existing coaches and volunteers

Budget

- Include information in your budget about how much revenue the Local Program will need to sustain and/or grow. Plan out how much fundraising will be required to grow, either through fundraising or donations
- Consult your Special Olympics Wisconsin to confirm the Local Program's budget and that the Program is staying within the parameters of the organization
SOWI Core Values

INTEGRITY

Be passionate about the mission and work of Special Olympics.

Be honest.

Ingrain values in the way we think and act.

Be reliable.

Lead by example.

TEAMWORK

All members are part of one team that is SOWI.

Seek common ground and listen respectfully.

Be supportive of new ideas.

Be willing to collaborate for organizational success.

Elevate each other in the execution of core values.

INCLUSION

Empower the whole athlete.

All abilities are valued.

We value, celebrate and respect all differences.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion are at the heart of all that we do.

EXCELLENCE

Project optimism.

Recognize and celebrate our successes.

Strive for quality in everyday work.

Evaluate processes, learn and practice continuous improvement.

Be brave in the attempt.

Local Program Development Guide

Section 2 – Athletes

Special Olympics aims to create an inclusive environment for all athletes. While no athlete will be turned away based on financial need, there are required steps to become a Special Olympics athlete. There are also recommended sources for recruiting athletes, and additional opportunities for athletes beyond the playing field.

Eligibility

Special Olympics training and competition is open to every person with intellectual disabilities who registers to participate in Special Olympics as required by the General Rules. For detailed information regarding eligibility within General Rules, please visit:

<https://resources.specialolympics.org/governance-and-leadership-excellence/special-olympics-general-rules/article-2>

Age Requirement

Individuals are eligible for training and competition at age 8, and there is no upper age limit for participation. Children under age 8 are eligible to participate in the Special Olympics Young Athletes program.

A Local Program may permit children who are at least 6-years-old to participate in age-appropriate Special Olympics training programs, or in specific and age-appropriate cultural or social activities offered during a Special Olympics event. Such children may be recognized for their participation in such training or other non-competitive activities through certificates of participation, or through other types of recognition not associated with participation in Special Olympics competition. No child may participate in a Special Olympics competition (or be awarded medals or ribbons associated with competition) prior to their 8th birthday.

Identifying a Person with an Intellectual Disability

A person is considered to have an intellectual disability for purposes of determining their eligibility to participate in Special Olympics if that person satisfies one of the following requirements:

- The person has been identified by an agency or professional as having an intellectual disability as determined by their localities; or
- The person has a cognitive delay, as determined by standardized measures such as intelligent quotient or “IQ” testing or other measures which are generally accepted within the professional community in the United States as being a reliable measurement of the existence of a cognitive delay; or
- The person has a closely related developmental disability. A “closely related developmental disability” means having functional limitations in both general learning (such as IQ) and adaptive skills (such as recreation, work, independent living, self-direction, or self-care).

- Persons whose functional limitations are based solely on physical, behavioral, or emotional disability or a specific learning or sensory disability are not eligible to participate as Special Olympics athletes but may be eligible to volunteer for Special Olympics or consider becoming a Unified Sports Partner.

Unified Sports Partners

Unified Sports partners follow a similar registration process as athletes. In order to become a Unified Sports partner, an individual must be a class A volunteer.

Athlete Registration

Athletes must submit the required paperwork to participate and compete. These forms may be on the Special Olympics Wisconsin website: <https://specialolympicswisconsin.org/medical-info-forms/>

No athlete can be excluded due to lack of funds. For more details, visit Special Olympics General Rules, Article 3: <https://resources.specialolympics.org/governance-and-leadership-excellence/special-olympics-general-rules/article-3>

Athlete Recruitment

Special Olympics Local Programs are always growing. It's important to reach as many athletes as possible to help maintain growth. Below are a number of tips to assist with outreach to new and current athletes.

Create Links to Local Groups & Agencies Serving Individuals with Disabilities

- Partner with Parks and Recreation Departments for opportunities to include individuals with intellectual disabilities in their current Programs. Connect links between Special Olympics and Parks and Recreation websites for more information on how to get involved.
- Connect with all agencies and community services – such as group homes – to bring in older athletes or maintain current athlete base as they age out of school.

Advertise Locally & Utilize Social Media

- Create a Local Program website and social media account(s), according to your Special Olympics Wisconsin's guidance. Use these outlets to promote your Local Program and recruit.
- Advertise upcoming events and include information such as how to join, how to volunteer, and how to donate.

Target Local Schools

With support from your Special Olympics Wisconsin, introduce the Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools[®] program, which is a comprehensive model implemented in the United

States that combines Special Olympics Unified Sports®, Inclusive Youth Leadership, and Whole School Engagement to create school and community climates of acceptance and inclusion. This can begin as early as kindergarten with Young Athletes, and continue throughout elementary, middle, and high school with Unified Sports and/or related sports and leadership opportunities.

- Work with local independent school districts, Special Education Directors, or Athletic Directors. Partner with them to add Special Olympics opportunities to the school day or as a part of after-school programs with a focus on the middle schools.
- Speak at parent meetings and/or teacher professional development days
- Provide Special Olympics and Unified Sports information to students and their families through newsletters and brochures.

Athlete Leadership

- **Athlete Leadership** empowers athletes to develop leadership skills and utilize their voices and abilities to undertake meaningful leadership roles (also referred to as Unified Leadership), influence change in the Special Olympics movement, and create inclusive communities around the world. As athletes gain the confidence that comes with achievement, they feel empowered and ready to take on new challenges to make use of all their abilities.
- There are various roles athletes might serve in the Local Program. Some roles require meeting certain criteria as well as training. A support mentor can assist the athlete to become more successful and have a more meaningful experience.
- Athletes can serve Special Olympics as an Athlete Leader in many roles such as: Local Program Management Team Member, Global Messenger, Assistant Coach/Coach, Official, Committee Member, Athlete Health Messenger, Fitness Captain, and more!
- Consult your Special Olympics Wisconsin about additional opportunities to advance your athlete leaders through their offerings. Additional athlete leadership resources can also be found at: <mailto:Athleteleadership@specialolympicswisconsin.org>

Unified Champion Schools

- Terminology:
 - UCS: Unified Champion Schools
 - UCCS: Unified Champion City Schools
 - Unified: Both athletes & partners are involved and participating together.
 - Athlete: Any student who has an intellectual disability.
 - Unified Partner: Any actively involved student who does not have an intellectual disability.

For more information contact: unifiedschools@specialolympicswisconsin.org and review Section 2 – Athletes page 3.

Young Athletes (YA)

YA is a play and learn programs for all children ages 2-10. This is a unified program that can be implemented in schools, communities, and homes. Young Athletes is a guided curriculum that covers foundational skills such as running, walking, and balancing.

Health & Fitness Programming

- **Healthy Athletes** is a Special Olympics program that provides free health screenings and health education in a fun, welcoming environment with a focus on removing the anxiety people with intellectual disabilities often experience when faced with a visit to a medical professional.
- **Fitness** is a key part of the Special Olympics mission. Fitness is a lifelong pursuit, requiring the establishment of healthy habits year-round. Athletes and all other members of the Special Olympics community are encouraged to seek optimal health and performance through adequate physical activity, nutrition and hydration.
- **Inclusive Health** aims to integrate people with intellectual disabilities into mainstream health systems to ensure accessible, inclusive, and equitable healthcare for all.

Code of Conduct

Special Olympics Athlete Code of Conduct

SOWI prides itself in providing high quality sports training and competitions for people with intellectual disabilities. The primary purpose of this code of conduct is to establish a high standard of athlete behavior, which will ensure the safety and well-being of all athletes involved in training and competition. All athletes (including Unified Sports® Partners) are expected to abide by the Athlete Code of Conduct as established by SOWI. Athletes should be reminded that **participation in Special Olympics is a privilege, not a right, and that the Local Program Manager has the authority to make immediate accommodations until final decisions can be made.**

As a Special Olympics athlete or Unified partner, I agree to the following behavior:

- Uphold the mission, philosophy, principles and policies of Special Olympics, Inc. and Special Olympics Wisconsin
- Behave in a manner consistent with Special Olympics Wisconsin's core values of mutual respect, positive attitude, accountability, teamwork and dedication
- Each athlete further agrees and acknowledges that participation in SOWI is voluntary and SOWI may terminate an athlete's participation if the athlete fails to follow SOWI rules and policies, including the athlete code of conduct.

SPORTSMANSHIP

- I will always practice good sportsmanship, including during, before and after practice and competition.
- I will act in ways that bring respect to me, my coaches, my team and Special Olympics.
- I will not use inappropriate or offensive language, including swearing or insulting other individuals, in any form of communication.

- I will not fight with other athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, staff, family members or spectators.
- I will respect the rights and dignity of all athletes, Unified partners, coaches, volunteers, staff, family members, 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, national origin, religion, ability, or any other characteristic.

TRAINING AND COMPETITION

- I will train regularly. I will let my coach know when I will not be at practice.
- I will learn and follow the rules of my sport.
- I will listen to my coaches and the officials and ask questions when I do not understand.
- I will always try my best during training, divisioning, and competitions.
- I will not “hold back” in preliminary competition just to get into an easier finals competition division.
- I will follow Special Olympics’ concussion protocol.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY ACTIONS

- 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 will not take drugs for the purpose of improving my performance.
- I will tell my Special Olympics Program leadership if I experience bullying or abusive behavior while participating in Special Olympics activities and/or if I become aware of such behavior occurring between other participants.
- I understand all telephone and electronic communications between myself and any Special Olympics participant must be appropriate and respectful.
- I will not send or share inappropriate images via email, text, or social media.
- I understand that any social media connections I make with other Special Olympics participants on my personal social media accounts are my choice and I am completely responsible for all such communications and who I choose to friend/follow on social media.
- 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 representing Special Olympics 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.
- I will obey all laws where I am participating, and Special Olympics rules.
- I will respect the property of hotels, dormitories, athletic facilities and dining facilities.

- I will obey all laws and Special Olympics rules, the International Federation and the National Federation/Governing Body rules for my sport(s).

I understand that if I violate this Code of Conduct, I will be subject to a range of consequences up to and including being prohibited from participating in Special Olympics.

_____	_____	_____
Participant Name (Print)	Participant Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Parent/Guardian Name (Print)	Parent/Guardian Signature	Date

(If participant is minor or cannot sign for self)

Local Program Development Guide

Section 3 – Volunteers, Coaches, and Families

In order to run efficiently, all Local Programs rely on several functions for success. Volunteers, coaches, and families all play a very important role in the health of your Local Program.

Volunteers

Volunteers are the backbone of Special Olympics. Your Local Program will thrive due to your ability to recruit and meaningfully involve volunteers. This process includes identifying your volunteer needs, locating and recruiting volunteers in your service area, proper registration and training for volunteers, and acknowledging their contributions.

Your Special Olympics Wisconsin has staff responsible for volunteer management, and can be a helpful resource in growing and maintaining your volunteer base.

Determining Volunteer Needs

- Develop a list of volunteer roles needed by your Local Program in all categories (Management Team, sports, communications, fundraising, etc.). Be mindful of the skills and time required to do these roles effectively.
- Maintain job/position descriptions for volunteer roles, including training duties
- Set firm but reasonable expectations for your volunteers. A sample list of expectations might include:
 - Complete the required volunteer registrations forms and trainings
 - Fulfill the responsibilities of your assignment
 - Set a good example for the athletes

- Model good sportsmanship and behavior
- Be continually vigilant and aware of the safety of the athletes
- Fulfill your commitment to the role, and consider additional training that can increase your involvement with Special Olympics

Volunteer Registration

All volunteers must register and receive approval by the Special Olympics Wisconsin. The registration procedure and forms are important tools for ensuring the safety and well-being of all athletes and volunteers. In compliance with Special Olympics, Inc. policy, all U.S. Programs must register and classify volunteers.

Class A Volunteers

All volunteers must complete a Class A Volunteer Registration Form if they meet any of the following criteria:

- Has regular close, physical contact with athletes
- Is in positions of authority, trust, or supervision with athletes
- Handles cash or other assets of the Local Program
- Chaperones athletes and may stay overnight or transport athletes

The Class A Volunteer Application can be located at the following site:

<https://app.voluntaro.com/WI/Application>.

All Volunteer Registration Forms must be submitted and volunteers must be approved by the Special Olympics Wisconsin prior to commencing any Class A Volunteer duties. All volunteers listed as coaches or chaperones, or listed on a housing form for competition must have a current, approved Class A Volunteer form on file. Proof of Protective Behaviors training completion should also be on file prior to athlete training and competition. *

** In the United States, Special Olympics, Inc. requires that all Class A Volunteers complete Protective Behaviors training PRIOR to commencing any Local Program volunteer activities. If serving as a coach, Concussion Training must also be completed.*

All Class A volunteers must undergo a background check. A background check is completed by the Special Olympics Wisconsin using a national vendor. Motor vehicle checks are required for anyone driving at the direction of or on behalf of the organization or if an applicant answers "Yes" to any of the questions regarding suspension or revocation of a driver's license. **

**If under the age of 18, the volunteer does not have to complete a background check until their 18th birthday.

The Special Olympics Wisconsin may make a determination regarding the level of the volunteer's involvement based on the aforementioned background check. The Special Olympics Wisconsin will notify the volunteer and Local Program if they are unable to assist as a Class A Volunteer.

All volunteer information must be renewed every three years.

Class B Volunteers

Class B Volunteers include volunteers who participate in one-day, day-of events, walk-on volunteers, or Healthy Athletes volunteers. Class B Volunteers have more limited contact with athletes, and do not have any contact with a Program's cash or assets.

While Class B Volunteers have limited contact with athletes, a strict registration protocol must still be followed, in accordance with your Special Olympics Wisconsin's procedure.

- Class B Volunteers must sign in and produce a valid photo ID on the day of the event for which they volunteer.
- When checking in as a Class B Volunteer, the volunteer must provide the following information:
 - Name
 - Complete Address
 - Phone Number
 - Group Affiliation (if any)

Disqualifiers

In order to ensure the safety of Special Olympics athletes, Unified Sports partners, and other participants, Special Olympics is selective with its volunteers. While Special Olympics is committed to a culture of teamwork and inclusion for all, there are disqualifiers for potential volunteers.

Disqualifiers for Being a Volunteer Include, but are not limited to:

- A felony arrest / prosecution
- Child abuse, or any role in causing a child's death
- Kidnapping
- Sexual abuse or misconduct
- Neglect of a child or any other individual for whom the potential volunteer has held responsibility
- Arson
- Driving while intoxicated (DWI), driving under the influence (DUI), or comparable offenses; or three or more moving violations within the past three years, disqualifies the volunteer from driving on behalf of Special Olympics for seven years

Coaches

Having a well-trained team of coaches is critical to the success of Special Olympics and Local Programs, as well as ensuring the happiness and development of athletes.

There are a number of targeting sources for Special Olympics coaches:

- Sports organizations
- Sports leagues
- Colleges and universities – including athletic departments, sororities and fraternities, academic departments, and/or residential halls
- Service groups
- Local officials' associations
- Adaptive Physical Education and Physical Education teachers
- Special Education and General Education teachers
- Coaches (current or former) at the elementary or secondary school level
- College students in Special Education programs

***Note:** For additional information on “Types of Special Olympics Volunteer Coach Roles” and “Coaching Levels” please see Section 3 – Volunteers, Coaches, Families” on the SOWI website. [Local Program Guide - Special Olympics Wisconsin](#)

Coaches/Volunteer Code of Conduct

SOWI prides itself in sponsoring high quality sports training and competitions for people with intellectual disabilities. The primary purpose of this Code of Conduct is to establish a high standard of coach/volunteer behavior that will ensure the safety and well-being of all athletes involved in training and competition. All coaches/volunteers are expected to abide by the code of conduct and standards of behavior as established by SOWI. Coaches and volunteers should be reminded that **volunteering for SOWI is a privilege, not a right, and that the Local Program Manager has the authority to make immediate accommodations until final decisions can be made.**

As a Special Olympics Coach/Volunteer, I agree to the following:

RESPECT FOR OTHERS

- I will respect the rights, dignity and worth of athletes, coaches, other volunteers, friends, 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 be a positive role model for the athletes I coach.

ENSURE A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE

- I will ensure that for each athlete I coach, the time spent with Special Olympics is a positive experience.
- I will behave in a manner consistent with SOWI's core values of Integrity, Teamwork, Inclusion and Excellence, respect the talent, developmental stage, and goals of each athlete.
- I will ensure each athlete competes in events that challenge that athlete's potential and are appropriate to that athlete's ability.
- I will be fair, considerate, and honest with athletes and communicate with athletes using simple, clear language.
- I will ensure that accurate scores are provided for entry of an athlete into any event.
- I will instruct each athlete to perform to the best of the athlete's ability at all preliminaries and final heats in accordance with the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules.

ACT PROFESSIONALLY AND TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY ACTIONS

- I will ensure my language (profanity or verbal abuse), manner, punctuality, preparation, and presentation will demonstrate high standards.
- I will display control, respect, dignity, and professionalism at all times. I will encourage others to demonstrate the same qualities.
- 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 representing Special Olympics or participating in Special Olympics activities.
- 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 will inform my Special Olympics Program leadership immediately should I be subject to such behavior or abuse from another participant and/or if I become aware of such behavior occurring amongst other participants.
- 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.
- 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 team-related 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 be alert to any form of abuse from other sources directed toward athletes in my care and will immediately report any incidents or concerns to my Special Olympics Program leadership.
- 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.
- 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 abide by the Special Olympics policy on the prohibition of coaches dating athletes.
- I will abide by the information sharing/communications processes set forth by my local Special Olympics Program.
- I will respect and not misuse any equipment or property belonging to Special Olympics or that is provided to Special Olympics for its use.
- I will not take action(s) that endangers a participant.
- I will obey all laws where I am participating, and Special Olympics rules which includes the possession of any harmful weapons.

QUALITY SERVICE TO THE ATHLETES

- I will seek continual improvement through performance evaluation and ongoing coach education.
- I will keep current with all required trainings and required forms pertaining to my role.
- I will be knowledgeable about and follow the Sports Rules and skills of the sport(s) I coach.
- I will provide athletes/teams with plans to support their increased health, fitness and sport development.
- I will be aware of any unique medical, training, or competition needs of each athlete I coach.
- I will exercise extreme caution, discretion and care with any documents, material, or devices containing confidential information.

GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY OF ATHLETES

- I will provide for the general welfare, health and safety of all Special Olympics participants.
- I will ensure that the equipment and facilities are safe to use.
- I will ensure that the equipment, rules, trainings, and environment are appropriate for the age and ability of the athletes.
- I will review each athlete's medical form and be aware of any limitations on that athlete's participation noted on that form.
- I will follow the established rules and guidelines of Special Olympics and/or any agency involved with Special Olympics.

- I will follow Special Olympics' concussion protocol.
- I will allow further participation in training and competition only when safe for the athlete and/or the other participants.
- I will follow the emergency / crisis communications procedures set forth by my Special Olympics Program.

I understand that if I violate this Code of Conduct, I will be subject to a range of consequences up to and including being prohibited from participating in Special Olympics.

Participant Name (Print) Participant Signature Date

Parent/Guardian Name (Print) Parent/Guardian Signature Date
(If participant is minor or cannot sign for self)

Local Program Name and number

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.
- 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

Local Program Development Guide

Section 4 – Sports Management

Training and competition takes place at all levels. The primary goal of Special Olympics is to provide year-round training and competition opportunities, which are directed by qualified coaches. Individuals and teams compete in divisions according to age, gender, and ability.

As a Local Program Manager, it is important to understand the basics of sports training and competition. There are factors involved in getting athletes ready for competition and then taking them to competition.

Please note that prior to the beginning of training and attending competition, the following elements should be in place:

- Registration of the Local Program with the Special Olympics Wisconsin
- Selection of sport(s) for competition
- Athlete medical forms and release forms completed and submitted by appropriate medical deadline dates.
- Partner application and Class A Volunteer form certification completed
- Volunteer/coach recruitment and Class A Volunteer certification completed
- Head coach and assistant coaches trained and certified

Foundational details regarding Special Olympics sports training and competition can be found on the SOWI website, in addition to the SOWI Competition Guide also located on the SOWI website under sports.

Official and Recognized Sports by Special Olympics Wisconsin (SOWI)

Special Olympics Wisconsin provides year-round sports training and athletic competition in 19 Olympic-type sports for individuals with intellectual disabilities 8 years of age or older.

Sports are separated into four sport seasons. Athletes train locally, compete at the Region/District level, and may qualify for the State level of competition. Sport seasons, rules, tournament dates and locations, and all required documents can be found at: [Sports - Special Olympics Wisconsin](#). Additional Fact sheets, rules, and coaching guides for each sport (official and recognized) are available at <https://resources.specialolympics.org/sports-essentials/sports-and-coaching>. Most sports offer multiple levels of play, ranging from standard regulation offerings to individual or team skills competitions.

Local Program Development Guide

Section 6 – Fundraising & Partnerships

For information and detail regarding fundraising and partnerships at the local level, please reference Section 6 of the Local Program Guide located at: [Local Program Guide - Special Olympics Wisconsin](#)

Local Program Development Guide

Section 7 – Finance

Finance

It is critical that Section 7, in its complete form, be reviewed by all members of the Local Program Management Team to understand all aspects of fundraising and spending policies and procedures. Section 7 can be found at the following link: [Local Program Guide - Special Olympics Wisconsin](#).

Accounting for all funds raised and used by your Local Program is important to protect the credibility of the Special Olympics brand, as well as to ensure compliance with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in the United States (or comparable agency in your country) as a tax-exempt charitable not-for-profit organization.

Oversee & Manage Financial Resources

The following steps should be taken in order to ensure that the Local Program's financial resources are managed appropriately:

- **Identify a Local Program volunteer to manage finances.**
Recruit someone who is capable of helping to budget, manage funds, and report finances as required. Notify the Special Olympics Wisconsin office as to who has been identified for this role.

Educate your local program about financial procedures

Local program leadership should be knowledgeable about financial practices and policies in place by your Special Olympics Wisconsin and should make program participants aware of financial procedures that they must follow as part of the local program.

Special Olympics Wisconsin Finance Policies

A variety of individuals and groups are interested in the reported expenses and revenues of Special Olympics Wisconsin (SOWI).

1. Those who donate money, services or materials
2. The Board of Directors, who have a responsibility to manage the assets of SOWI for stated purposes and objectives
3. The President (CEO) of SOWI, who has the responsibility of carrying out the stated policies of the SOWI Board of Directors

4. Special Olympics, Inc., who mandates a standardized accounting system in the General Rules
5. Those governmental jurisdictions, who have authority to control charitable solicitation through enacted legislation as well as the local, state and federal governments which grant tax exemption and a solicitation license to SOWI

In order to provide adequate information to these persons and groups, SOWI classifies expenditures on a “functional” basis. The functional classifications are:

Program Services, which describe SOWI program activities such Games and Competition, Training, Programs, Outreach and Public Education.

Support Services, through which management, administrative, fundraising and general non-program operating expenditures are charged, such as legal and accounting services, as well as portions of salary, postage, printing, etc.

Local Programs are included in the SOWI annual financial audit.

All Special Olympics Local Programs who collect and spend money in the name of Special Olympics will have an in-house account. Programs that have their finances accounted for in-house with SOWI will be asked to maintain their account balances by following all procedures outlined in this handbook in the Finance / Local Programs with In-House Accounts section.

Procedures For Local Program Deposits

When you deposit revenue for your Local Program, please follow the steps listed below. **Programs should process and mail deposits into State office at least once per week.** If you have any questions regarding your deposit or deposit procedures you may contact SOWI's Gift Records Manager.

- **Local Program Number** – identifying number assigned by SOWI
- **Account Number** – the account number identifying the revenue (see reference table)

Account Coding Reference:

Account Number	Description
4002	Corporate Contributions
4003	Organization & Associations
4006	Foundation Grants
4007	Individual Contributions
4200	Fundraisers
4205	Souvenirs
4206	Concessions
If you have a deposit that does not fit into accounts listed above, please contact SOWI's Gift Records Manager	

- Total checks for deposit. A downloadable 10-key calculator is available on the Local Program log in page on the SOWI website.
- Complete the Local Program Deposit Ledger listing all donors and contact info. **It is strongly recommended that Local Programs complete this step.** The deposit ledger is kept by the Local Program (do not mail to State) and is a precaution in case the deposit is lost or destroyed in the mail. **This is the Local Program's in-house record of the deposit.**
- Complete the Local Program Deposit Ticket with the required information:
 - Deposit Date
 - Local Program Number
 - Total of Checks being submitted
 - # of Checks
 - Submitted by
 - E-mail Address
- Insert the Local Program Deposit Ticket and checks (no cash) into the postage-paid envelope and mail. They should be dropped in a U.S. Mail postal box or post office, not in residential roadside mailboxes.
- The State office will receive your Local Program deposit via U.S. mail, and verify deposit total. All forms must be complete and included with the deposit (ex. *Sales Tax Summary form*, bank deposit receipts). Your deposit will be deposited electronically. The deposit date will be approximately 3-5 business days from the date received at the State office (this excludes holidays, weekends and staff vacations).

8. The State office will receive a deposit confirmation via e-mail immediately after completing the deposit. This deposit confirmation will then be e-mailed to the contact's e-mail address listed on the deposit ticket.

Example of Deposit Confirmation:

Special Olympics Wisconsin Inc.

We have received your deposit at **12/28/2022 9:46 AM (CST)**. This email is confirmation that the deposit below was received. Please verify this information and contact us with any questions.

Account: *******3838**

Account Description: **3838-SOWI - Agency**

Amount: **\$1,250.00**

2 item(s) (including the virtual deposit ticket)

9. Gift acknowledgements will be mailed to the donor by the State office on the Local Program's behalf (excludes raffle, souvenirs, concessions and other events where the donor receives a good or service). The State office processes gift acknowledgements daily and the donor should receive their receipt within 5-7 business days of deposit. For cash donations, if the donor requests a receipt, the Local Program may provide a handwritten gift receipt on the day of the event or fundraiser.
10. The deposit will be reflected on the monthly financial statements provided to the Local Program manager through the Local Program finance page on the SOWI website. If the Local Program needs assistance logging in, please contact the State office.

Sales Tax

SOWI is a tax exempt organization but we are not exempt from collecting sales tax. This means we must report sales tax on the sale of taxable items and submit these taxes to the Department of Revenue each month for the previous month:

- Sales of goods such as T-shirts, candy, wreaths, bird seed, buttons, concessions, souvenirs, etc.
- Any admissions/participation/registration fees we charge to events (including holiday and recognition events)
- Live or silent auctions
- Any fees we charge for carnival games or similar activities

If you do not participate in any of the activities listed above, you do not have to read any further regarding sales tax. Please note that the sale of raffle tickets is not a sales taxable activity. That is a separate reporting process. Work with your Regional Development Director on all Ruffles.

If you participate in the above activities, please note:

- When figuring your sale price, make sure you mark up your items enough to still make a profit after the sales tax because you will now have to pay sales tax.
 - When selling, you **must** disclose to buyers that sales tax is included in the price. This should also be disclosed on brochures and price signs. This is a Department of Revenue rule.
 - Sales tax items must be reported in the month they were sold/charged using *Sales Tax Summary form*.
1. If you participate in sales tax activities listed above, please do the following:
 - a. Complete *Deposit Ticket* (mark the check box stating there are taxable sales items included in your deposit).
 - b. Complete the *Sales Tax Summary form* and include with your deposit. The amounts on this form must match the taxable money you are depositing.
 - c. Deposits for taxable items must be submitted in the month the items were sold/charged. **If it is the last day of the month, submit by next day as SOWI must report sales tax to the Department of Revenue at month end.**

All deposit forms can be found under Agency Forms & Tools on the Agency log in page of our website, SpecialOlympicsWisconsin.org as well as in the *Forms for Duplication* section of this handbook.

The good news is that SOWI will manage all this government reporting for you based on the sales tax summaries you submit to us. No need to worry about filing deadlines or penalties! If you have questions you may contact the Gift Records Manager, at the Headquarters office.

PROCEDURES FOR LOCAL PROGRAM ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

When you purchase items for your Local Program, please follow the steps listed below.

1. **Make sure the expense is an allowable expense.** See the list of allowable and non-allowable expenses at the end of these procedures.
2. Contact the vendor from whom you wish to make the purchase to inquire about and establish a direct. If you need a credit application filled out, e-mail to accountspayable@specialolympicswisconsin.org. We will complete the needed information and return it directly to the vendor.
3. Once direct billing has been established with the vendor you will be able to make your purchase.
4. When you make a purchase, please have the bill/invoice sent directly to the State Office.
 Special Olympics Wisconsin
 Attn: Accounts Payable
 6582 Ronald Reagan Ave.
 Madison, WI 53704
accountspayable@specialolympicswisconsin.org
5. Fill out the *Invoice Approval Form*. This form must be filled out **completely**.
 - a. Name of Payee – the party you purchased items from.
 - b. Amount - the total amount due.
 - c. Purpose – Please be as detailed in this section as possible. Include names, dates, locations, and reason for purchase.
 - d. Local Program Number – ALWAYS include your Local Program number.
 - e. Local Program Manager Approval and Witness - the witness cannot be a family member of the manager and must be a member of the Local Program

Management Team who is a Class A volunteer without financial restrictions. An invoice will not be paid without dual approval. Please be sure you sign and print your names.

- f. Expense Code – included is a list of Expense Codes. The expense codes listed are throughout ALL levels of the organization. Your expense must be an allowable expense as listed in this section of the handbook. If you have any questions, please contact the Finance Department.
 - g. Date to be paid by – Date payment is needed. Special Olympics Wisconsin pays all invoices on a net due in 30 days basis unless otherwise noted.
 - h. Date of Purchase – Date you made the actual purchase.
6. Upon receiving **both** a completed *Invoice Approval Form* and the invoice, the Accounting Department will pay the invoice.
 7. Invoices are paid bi-weekly. Invoices are scheduled to be paid the week following receipt into the State Office. There may be times when it will take additional time to process payments.
 8. Monthly Financial Statements will be available on the Local Program page of the SOWI website. These statements will be available on or before the 15th day of the following month. For example, January reports will be posted on or before February 15th. These reports will show all expenses and revenue for the month. If you need more specific reporting, please contact the Finance Department. Each invoice will be paid in full, as long as you have sufficient funds in your account.

SOWI Allowable Expenses

Allowable Expenses

- Uniforms for athletes
- Snacks & meals for athletes and coaches
- Costs associated with athlete training or competition
- Volunteer mileage reimbursed at the current IRS charitable rate
- Gift cards for a reasonable amount to show volunteer appreciation (make sure to list the name of the recipient) – not to exceed \$25.00 in value
- Bus rental
- Purchase of sporting equipment used during training for Special Olympics events
- Costs associated with recruiting new athletes or increasing athlete participation
- Costs associated with promoting Special Olympics in your community
- Reasonable fundraising expenses (concessions, candy sales, t-shirt sales, wreathes, etc.)
- Office supplies such as postage or paper
- Storage for sporting equipment
- Professional training fees (please have recipient fill out *IRS W9 Form*)
- First aid / medical supplies
- Laptop/computer and software – Not to exceed \$1000.00 per calendar year
- Banquets/Local Program party - Average cost should not exceed \$20.00 per athlete. (If athlete and/or family and friends are charged, this is taxable and proper form completed to).

*Any single item with a purchase price of \$1000.00 or greater will require the prior approval of the SOWI Sr. Director of Field Services Office

*All items that have a purchased price of \$2500.00 or greater are considered asset and SOWI needs to be notified for insurance and tax asset inventory tracking.

Non-Allowable Expenses

- Cash donations (memorials or cash gifts - SOWI permits nominal memorials for athletes & coaches)
- Gasoline purchases (unless refueling rented vehicle to transport athletes to Special Olympics event)
- Gift cards purchased to put gas in volunteer's personal vehicles
- Cell phone service or land line phone service
- Loans
- Vehicle purchases
- Stock purchases
- Salaries or stipends for any Local Program position

Local Program Development Guide Section 8 – Risk Management

Risk Management

Conducting sports and other activities involves exposure to a variety of risks to the participants, volunteers and the organization. Some of these risks could result in a financial loss for the individuals and organizations involved. Effective risk management practices allow you to minimize the chance of risk to athletes, volunteers, and also minimizes the threat of financial loss that arises from your operations.

General Risk Management Guidance

Local programs are advised to be familiar with the following topics and documents and educate local program leadership about key elements.

Please refer to your Protective Behaviors training regarding additional risk factors and how to effectively manage risk for your local program. Protective Behaviors training is offered through the Special Olympics Wisconsin can link you to this training and necessary reminders and updates located in Voluntaro via "Becoming a Class A Volunteer".

Incident Reporting

Incident Report Forms are available from your Special Olympics Wisconsin, as well as standard procedures for completion and submission. An Incident Report Form should be completed following all injuries or incidents. Other incidents may include property damage, abuse, theft, or incidents requiring law enforcement.

The Incident Report Form is a factual account and should be free of speculation or hearsay. It is best to leave the determination of potential liability to the claims professionals.

Following an injury or incident, forms should be promptly sent to the Special Olympics Wisconsin and to American Specialty Insurance if the injury or incident occurs in the U.S. This form can be obtained from the Special Olympics Wisconsin.

Please find the full page document located in [Incident form.pdf](#). You can also contact The Sr. Director of Field Services for a copy.

****Please Note:** Once the document is completed, please submit to your Regional Athletic Director or Sr. Director of Field Services – Mark Wolfgram :
mwolfgram@specialolympicswisconsin.org.

Insurance

Special Olympics Wisconsin can provide you with a brochure (or similar document) outlining insurance coverage, and the process for requesting / providing certificates of insurance as needed.

General Liability

The Special Olympics General Liability policy protects insured Special Olympics organizations, athletes, and registered volunteers from third-party claims of bodily injury, property damage, and personal injury due to alleged negligence arising from the conduct by Special Olympics during a Special Olympics activity. The general liability policy has been endorsed to provide coverage for losses resulting from damage to property in the care, custody, or control of Special Olympics.

Automobile Liability

This policy provides protection to Special Olympics for liability claims arising as a direct result of the use of a non-owned or hired automobile. For coverage to be effective, the vehicle must be used for Special Olympics business with the permission of Special Olympics and driven by an employee or a registered volunteer of Special Olympics.

NOTE: If the injury is serious or results in death, please contact your Regional Athletic Director, and the Sr. Director of Field Services who will work with other members of Special Olympics Wisconsin as outlined in the SOWI Crisis Plan.

If the injury is serious or results in death, please contact American Specialty immediately at (800) 566-7941 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) and the Special Olympics Wisconsin's crisis communications contact and/or CEO.

*Please note that exclusions and additional terms apply to coverages. Please consult with Special Olympics Wisconsin Sr. Director of Field Services for more information.

***Note:** All information pertaining to Weather policy and cancellation can be found in Section 8 – Risk Management at: [Local Program Guide - Special Olympics Wisconsin](#). Information will also be located in the Competition Guide located on the Special Olympics Wisconsin Website.