

Special Olympics Minnesota prides itself in sponsoring high-quality physical fitness training and sports 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 are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct and standards of behavior as established by Special Olympics Minnesota. While representing or participating in Special Olympics, all Special Olympics athletes and Unified Sports partners will obey the Athlete Code of Conduct. This includes while participating or attending any Special Olympics activity, including transportation to and from the activity.

If there is reason to believe any athlete has a criminal history, a background check will be issued by Special Olympics Minnesota, at which time the individual must submit their full name, social security number and birth date. Each situation will be assessed case by case and the appropriate decision regarding participation will be made by Special Olympics Minnesota.

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### Sportsmanship

I will practice good sportsmanship.

I will act in ways that bring respect to me, my coaches, my team and Special Olympics.

I will not use bad language.

I will not swear or say mean things about other persons.

I will not fight (either with a loud voice or hitting) with other athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers or staff.

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### Training and Competition

I will train regularly and attend as many practices as I can.

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 preliminaries just to get into an easier final heat.

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### Responsibility for My Actions

I will not make inappropriate or unwanted physical, verbal or sexual advances toward others.

I will not drink alcohol, smoke in restricted areas or take illegal drugs while representing Special Olympics.

I will not take drugs for the purpose of improving my performance.

I will follow the rules that are in place for my delegation.

I will not bring any harmful weapons to any Special Olympics activity.

I will obey all laws and Special Olympics rules.

I understand that it is a privilege to participate in Special Olympics and not a right. I also understand that if I do not obey this Code of Conduct, my delegation, U.S. Program or Games Organizing Committee may not allow me to participate.

### Disciplinary Actions for Not Following the Athlete Code of Conduct

The following progressive disciplinary actions may be taken by a coach. Depending upon the nature of the incident, any actions may be bypassed in the disciplinary process. Physical aggression toward another athlete, coach, volunteer or staff will result in accelerated disciplinary action. **An Incident Report Form should be completed and kept on file for any athlete or volunteer with whom there are ongoing behavioral or safety concerns, and must be completed immediately if it is suspected further disciplinary action may be needed.** Copies of Incident Report Forms should be forwarded as soon as completed to the Sports Program Manager/Associate for your area. Area Coordinators and Heads of Delegation must involve Special Olympics Minnesota State Office staff prior to suspension or release of a volunteer or athlete.

Action One: Verbal warning given to the athlete.

Action Two: Prior to this action being taken, an Incident Report Form (page 81) must be completed and sent to the appropriate Sports Program Manager/Associate. Subsequent to its receipt, a written warning will be given to the athlete with a copy to the appropriate individuals.

Action Three: Personal meeting with the athlete to review unacceptable behavior and work out a plan for improvement.

If the athlete is under age 18, he/she will be accompanied by his/her parent/guardian or caseworker. If the athlete is over age 18, a third person selected by the athlete will attend the meeting. The meeting will be documented in writing and copies distributed to the athlete, Head of Delegation, State Office, coaches file, parent/guardian or caseworker.

Action Four: Suspension from practices or competition during the specific sport season. The Sports Program Manager/Associate must be contacted before a coach suspends an athlete. The Sports Program Manager/Associate will discuss the circumstances and approve the action. The action will be documented in writing and presented to the athlete, parent/guardian and a copy will be filed at the State Office.

Any further action must be referred to the Head of Delegation and the Sports Program Manager/Associate assigned to the Area. The Sports Program Manager/Associate must approve further action. Further action could be, but is not limited to:

- Suspension for more than one sport season.
- Expulsion for one year or more.