

***Special  
Olympics  
Maryland  
St. Mary's County***



**SOMD-SMC**

**Regulations & Guidance**



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## **DISCLAIMER**

**The following pages are the Special Olympics Maryland – St. Mary’s County (SOMD-SMC) Regulations/Guidance using the Policies of SOMD as guidance. These Regulations/Guidance can be changed at any time!**



## SPECIAL OLYMPICS MARYLAND CODE OF CONDUCT

Special Olympics Maryland (SOMD) is committed to the highest ideals of sport and expects all athletes, Unified® partners, Coaches, Officials, Volunteers, Spectators, Family members and Care Providers to honor and agree to the Codes of Conduct prescribed by SOMD. The complete Code of Conduct is located at: [https://www.somd.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/SOMD\\_Codes\\_of\\_Conduct\\_Policy\\_Revised\\_2017\\_08\\_25-003.pdf](https://www.somd.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/SOMD_Codes_of_Conduct_Policy_Revised_2017_08_25-003.pdf)

By my/our signature I/we understand this code of conduct and what is expected of me/us as a member of the SOMD St. Mary's County (SOMD-SMC) programs.

Athlete Name (Printed)	Athlete Signature	Date
Parent / Guardian Care Provider (Printed)	Parent / Guardian / Care Provider Signature	Date
Unified® partners Name (Printed)	Unified® partners Signature	Date
Coaches / Officials (Printed)	Coaches / Officials Signature	Date
Volunteers / Family Members (Printed)	Volunteers / Family Members Signature	Date



## **SPECIAL OLYMPICS MARYLAND VOLUNTEER POLICY**

### **MISSION OF SPECIAL OLYMPICS**

The mission of special Olympics is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for all 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.

### **POLICY**

A person's participation in Special Olympics, as a volunteer is an opportunity and privilege; it is not an entitlement. Special Olympics has the right and responsibility to protect the well-being and safety of all participants: athletes, coaches, volunteers, staff, and spectators. Although Special Olympics cannot guarantee the safety of all participants, it recognizes the responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote and ensure a safe environment for all participants. To that end, after considerable study and investigation, Special Olympics International has developed and adopted a mandatory volunteer screening policy to set certain standards for each of the U.S. programs to follow with regard to both Class A and Class B volunteers.

Special Olympics Maryland, in order to implement the U.S. Volunteer Screening Policy adopted by Special Olympics Inc. for all U.S. programs, adopts the following Policy and Procedure.

### **APPLICATION PROCESS**

To be considered for participation with Special Olympics Maryland, all volunteers must submit a signed, completed and truthful Volunteer Application. Failure to do so may result in rejection of the application, or termination from the program.

The decision of SOMD with regard to any volunteer's application rests within the sole and absolute discretion of Special Olympics Maryland. In exercising that discretion, Special Olympics Maryland shall be guided by its mission statement, the policy and procedure set forth herein, and the standards set forth in the Special Olympics Maryland Participation Policy. St. Mary's County will follow these requirements as set forth by the SOMD Policy.

### **VOLUNTEER SCREENING**

#### **CLASS A VOLUNTEERS**

[Volunteers who have regular, close physical contact with athletes; are in a position of authority or supervision (real or apparent); are in a position of trust of athletes; or handle substantial amounts of cash or other assets of the Program.]

#### **1. Application Process:**



- a. All Class A Volunteers shall be screened for participation in the Special Olympics program. Once screened and accepted, Class A Volunteers shall be re-screened every three years.
    - i. Existing volunteers: SOMD-SMC shall identify volunteers in the SOMD database (Games Management System – GMS) who are missing their screening or any other necessary information and shall screen all those registered NLT Dec 31, 2019 in order for them to continue as volunteers in the program. Existing volunteers may continue to participate until such time as SOMD schedules them for background screenings or obtains missing information. Volunteers that do not respond and provide the necessary information or forms will be removed from ACTIVE status to Inactive status until such time SOMD-SMC receive the necessary information or forms and they are accepted in the GMS database.
    - ii. New volunteers: An individual who applies to participate as a volunteer with the program must be screened for acceptance as a volunteer in accordance with this Implementation Plan in order to participate as a volunteer. The level of their participation depends on the level of training they have completed (see the “Coaching Education & Development Progression chart).
  - b. Prior to the deadlines set forth in the preceding section, each Class A Volunteer shall submit a Volunteer Application and be subject to a criminal records check, and where applicable under this policy, to a motor vehicle record check.
  - c. Motor Vehicle Record Check: If an applicant answers “yes” to the question regarding their driving record on the Volunteer Application, or if the program receives information through the background check that the applicant may have motor vehicle related convictions, then the program shall conduct a motor vehicle record check for that applicant.
  - d. Along with the submission of the Class “A” volunteer form any prospective volunteers who are under the age of 18 shall also be required to submit a “Student-Minor Reference” form, which consist of providing the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of two (2) non-family references (one of which is from the applicant’s school, if applicable) for consideration by SOMD.
  - e. In conducting the required criminal records check, SOMD shall use an SOI approved vendor who uses a national database that includes the sex offender registry for each State in which the sex offender registry is available.
2. **Orientation:** All volunteers shall attend a Class A Volunteer General Orientation as directed by Special Olympics Maryland.
3. **Day of Event:**
- a. On the day of each event, the accepted volunteer shall report to a designated volunteer coordinator for that event and verify his/her identify by way of a photo ID.
  - b. The program has the option at any time to issue appropriate credentials to a volunteer that may replace the requirement for a photo ID provided that the credentialing



procedure undertaken by SOMD ensures that the credentials are issued to an accepted volunteer and that the credentials are nontransferable.

#### CLASS B VOLUNTEERS

[Volunteers who only have limited contact with athletes or who have contact with athletes accompanied by coaches and chaperones.]

1. **Application Process:** All Class B Volunteers shall be screened for participation in the Special Olympics program as follows:
  - a. Class B Volunteers shall apply for participation by submitting a Volunteer Application. Based upon the contents of the application, SOMD may conduct additional inquiries as may be appropriate before accepting the applicant as a Class B Volunteer.
  - b. Along with the submission of the Class "A" volunteer form any prospective volunteers who are under the age of 18 shall also be required to submit a "Student-Minor Reference" form, which consist of providing the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of two (2) non-family references (one of which is from the applicant's school, if applicable) for consideration by SOMD.
2. **Orientation:** All volunteers shall attend a Class B Volunteer orientation program as directed by Special Olympics Maryland.
3. **Day of Event:** On the day of each event, the accepted volunteer shall report to a designated volunteer coordinator for that event and verify his/her identify by way of a photo ID.

#### DISCLOSURE AND AUTHORIZATION REQUIREMENTS

1. SOMD shall use a standard Volunteer Application to obtain the required Special Olympics release and an appropriate authorization to conduct a criminal record background check and if required, a motor vehicle record check.
2. SOMD's standard Volunteer Application has been reviewed by legal counsel and is in compliance with all applicable State laws and regulations.
3. SOMD shall take all reasonable steps to notify their respective Area or County Directors of the automatic or potential disqualifiers as a result of the background checks. SOMD will only use this information to conduct criminal background, including sex offender registries, and motor vehicle checks as mandated by Special Olympics, Inc. policy. SOMD will maintain the confidentiality of all information obtained as part of the volunteer application process, and we will endeavor to keep all sensitive information confidential.

#### RESULTS OF CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK

1. If the criminal background record check discloses a conviction for any of the below-listed offenses, the volunteer applicant shall automatically be disqualified from participation as a volunteer, and shall not have any right of appeal:
  - child abuse
  - sexual abuse of a minor/adult
  - causing a child's death
  - neglect of child or any other individual for whom the potential volunteer had/has responsibility
  - any assault against a minor/adult
  - kidnapping



- physical abuse
- murder
- manslaughter
- felony assault
- arson
- criminal sexual conduct

2. If the criminal background record check or motor vehicle record check discloses a conviction for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, driving while intoxicated, driving while impaired by alcohol or drugs, or comparable offenses, the volunteer applicant shall automatically be disqualified from driving on behalf of Special Olympics, and shall not have any right of appeal.

3. If the criminal background record check or motor vehicle record check discloses convictions for three or more moving violations within the three years immediately preceding the record check, the volunteer applicant shall automatically be disqualified from driving on behalf of Special Olympics, and shall not have any right of appeal.

4. If the criminal background record check discloses any of the below-listed circumstances, SOMD may reject the volunteer applicant, subject to the applicant's right to appeal the program's decision as set forth herein:

- Adverse judgment for damages or other civil penalty involving sexual or physical abuse of a minor
- Conviction for theft of funds, fraud, larceny or other financial crime, prostitution-related crime, or controlled substance crime
- Being the subject of any court order involving any sexual abuse or physical abuse of a minor that restricts contact with a minor

The rejected volunteer applicant shall have the right to appeal SOMD's decision to reject a volunteer's application under this paragraph by written request to the President/Chief Executive Officer, within thirty (30) days of the program's notification to the volunteer applicant. The President/Chief Executive Officer shall refer the appeal to the SOMD's Risk Management Task Force Committee immediately. The program's decision not to accept a volunteer applicant is binding until the appeal is decided by the Risk Management Task Force Committee.

5. With regard to any criminal or traffic violation, the granting of a probation before judgment under section 6-220 of the Criminal Procedure Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, or any similar disposition under the laws of another State whereby a finding of guilt is withheld or otherwise stayed, shall be considered a "conviction" for purposes of this Policy and one's suitability to serve as a volunteer.

6. SOMD shall have the right and the authority to make the final decision as to the acceptance of any volunteer applicant under this section.



## **SPECIAL OLYMPICS INC. DESCRIPTION OF VOLUNTEERS**

### **CLASS A VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers who have regular, close physical contact with athletes  
Volunteers in positions of authority or supervision (real or perceived)  
Volunteers in a position of trust with athletes  
Coaches  
Unified partners  
Chaperones  
ALP's Mentors  
Overnight Hosts  
Drivers of Athletes  
Volunteers who have administrative and/or fiscal authority who act on behalf of Special Olympics  
Volunteers who handle funds in excess of \$10,000  
Fundraising Event Committee Members  
Games Management Team Members  
State Program Boards of Directors  
Area/Regional Management Team members  
Minor (according to State law) volunteers who have regular, close contact with Athletes  
Minor Unified Partners  
Minor Peer Coaches  
Minor Chaperones

### **CLASS B VOLUNTEERS**

Single day or single event or fundraiser volunteers  
Volunteers who only have limited contact with athletes who are accompanied by coaches and chaperones  
Healthy Athlete volunteers  
Volunteers who drive vehicles on behalf of Special Olympics not transporting Athletes  
Minor (according to State law) single day or single event/fundraiser volunteers  
Minor who have limited contact with athletes who are accompanied by their coaches or chaperones



## ATTENDANCE, TRANSPORTATION AND PICKUP GUIDELINES

Attendance: "The purpose of Special Olympics is to provide sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympics type sports....." To that end, athletes are encouraged to attend all practices. It is the policy of Special Olympics Maryland - St. Mary's County (SOMD-SMC) to require all athletes to attend at least a minimum of 80% of the practices and participate in at least two competitions to be eligible for any state competition. Nowhere is this more critical than in team sports where the athletes must learn to operate as a team. Athletes who cannot make this commitment and wish to participate simply for recreational purposes need to identify their intent to the coach at the first practice.

Transportation: SOMD-SMC is not a taxi service. It is not the responsibility of the Sport Coordinator (HEAD Coach), Assistant Coach, or any other SOMD-SMC volunteer to transport an athlete to and/or from any or all practices. These volunteers give willingly of their time, and to require them to serve beyond the practice time for your convenience is inconsiderate. However, we do understand that sometimes an athlete may require transportation from other than their provider or family. When that occurs, a volunteer may provide transportation, but they need to read the section named "**GUIDANCE FOR THE OF THE USE OF PRIVATELY-OWNED VEHICLES (POV)**" later in this document.

If you cannot commit to transporting your athlete (either on your own or by making car-pooling arrangements) you will need to reconsider your athlete's participation in that sport. SOMD-SMC will make every effort to provide transportation (if an athlete needs transportation) to any and all competitions they are required to attend to participate in the state level competitions (i.e. Summer Games, Fall Festival, Winter Games, etc.) to include the state competition.

Arrival/Pick-up of Athletes: The SOMD-SMC guidance is that parents/guardians/care providers must check in athletes with the Sport Coordinator (Head Coach) prior to the practice start time. If there are known behavior problems with the athlete the parent/guardian/care provider must stay for the entire practice session. If the parent/guardian/provider leaves the practice, they must provide a cell phone number with their name, the name of the athlete to the Sport Coordinator. Parents/guardians/care providers must return 15 minutes prior to the scheduled end time to collect any news and handouts from the Sport Coordinator and to be ready to pick up their athlete. The consequences of a late pick-up (defined as 5 minutes after the conclusion of the scheduled practice time announced) are as follows:

- First instance - A warning letter or email will be sent to the parent/guardian/provider. If the guardian is employed by a Service Provider, a copy of the letter or email will be sent to their agency as well.
- Second instance - The athlete will be suspended for the remainder of that season.



## **MULTIPLE SPORTS REGULATIONS**

### Special Olympics Maryland St. Mary's County(SOMD-SMC) Regulation on Participating in Multiple Sports per Season

Currently The Special Olympics Maryland - St. Mary's County (SOMD-SMC) guidance is that there are no restrictions for an athlete to participate in more than one sport in a season. Currently, athletes can participate in multiple sports if practice and competition times do not conflict. However, in a situation such as Summer Games where there are multiple sports competing at the same time an athlete will be required to select a PRIMARY sport during registration for that practice season as the one they desire to compete at the state level.

As SOMD-SMC continues to grow and facilities space becomes increasingly restricted, there may be times when we will be forced to limit athletes to participate in only one sport per season. If there are issues with too many athletes registering for sports, we may have to change the policy to allow athletes to only do one sport per season. We are not there yet, but it may become necessary to enact this because of limited facility space in some sports.

We ask that athletes indicate their PRIMARY SPORT choice when signing up online for the season. When participating in the offered sports, the TEAM SPORT should be considered your PRIMARY SPORT above an individual sport. We are competing with numerous school and recreational sports programs for a finite number of fields, gyms, pools, etc. In some cases, we have to pay for the facilities - such as the Great Mills pool for our aquatics program - and in other cases, we have had wonderful in-kind donations such as the Cornerstone Church for the use of their gym for basketball practice.

Some examples of the need for choosing a Primary SPORT are as follows:

Bocce has practice on Thursday and Athletics has practice on Saturday. An athlete may choose to register to participate in each sport but can only attend state competition for one. Both sports have teams involved so the athlete will need to indicate which sport they will participate in the state competition and let the Sport Coordinator know in order ensure the athlete will not be assigned to a team for competition.



## **GUIDANCE FOR ONE-ON-ONE ASSISTANTS**

AT PRACTICE –Special Olympics Maryland - St. Mary’s County (SOMD-SMC) guidance is that families must provide a person to assist at practice for athletes with behavior or attention issues. It is unfair to expect our coaches or other volunteers to try to manage these issues. They are there to teach a sport to an athlete and are not trained in how to handle these type matters. Typically, this person is a family member, but could be a trained 1:1 technician. These 1:1 technician are not required to attend a SOMD Volunteer orientation if their only responsibility is to manage behaviors for the one athlete under their charge during practices and they will not have access to other athletes. If they will be assisting their charge in areas where they have access to other athletes they will be required to attend the SOMD Volunteer Orientation. These trained assistants have liability insurance through the service provider. All family members that take on a 1:1 role must attend a volunteer orientation if they have access to other athletes in order to be covered if a liability issue would arise.

AT COMPETITIONS - Special Olympics Maryland - St. Mary’s County (SOMD-SMC) guidance is that families must provide a person to assist at practice for athletes with behavior or attention issues. It is unfair to expect our coaches or other volunteers to try to manage these issues. They are there to teach a sport to an athlete and are not trained in how to handle these type matters. Typically, this person is a family member, but could be a trained 1:1 technician. These 1:1 technician are not required to attend a SOMD Volunteer orientation if their only responsibility is to manage behaviors for the one athlete under their charge during competitions and they will not have access to other athletes. If they will be assisting their charge in areas where they have access to other athletes they will be required to attend the SOMD Volunteer Orientation. These trained assistants have liability insurance through the service provider. All family members that take on a 1:1 role must attend a volunteer orientation if they have access to other athletes in order to be covered if a liability issue would arise.



## PARTICIPATION CRITERIA

Several of the paragraphs below (identified by the BOLD, Italicized and underlined text are quotes directly from the Special Olympics Official General Rules from the following link: <https://media.specialolympics.org/resources/leading-a-program/general-rules/Special-Olympics-General-Rules-Amended-2015-8-17.pdf>

Article 2

Special Olympics Athletes

Section 2.01

Eligibility for Participation in Special Olympics

### **2.01 (a)**

#### *General Statement of Eligibility*

**Every person with an intellectual disability who is at least eight years of age is eligible to participate in Special Olympics.**

Resident of St Mary's County or attends a St Mary's County school with an intellectual disability who is at least eight years of age is eligible to participate in Special Olympics Competitions.

- Families or caregivers are required to provide a one-to-one assistant for athletes with behavioral issues or the need for physical support.
- Continued behavioral issues may result in suspension from the program.

### **2.01(b)**

#### *Age Requirements*

**There is no maximum age limitation for participation in Special Olympics. The minimum age requirement for participation in Special Olympics competition is eight years of age. The Young Athletes program introduces children, two to seven years old to the world of sport, with the goal of preparing them for Special Olympics sports training and competition when they get older. In addition, an Accredited Program may permit children who are at least six years old to participate in age-appropriate Special Olympics training programs offered by that Accredited Program, or in specific (and age-appropriate) cultural or social activities offered during the course of a Special Olympics event. Such children may be recognized for**



**their participation in such training or other non-competition activities through certificates of participation, or through other types of recognition approved by SOI which are not associated with participation in Special Olympics competition. However, no child may participate in a Special Olympics competition (or be awarded medals or ribbons associated with competition) before his or her eighth birthday.**

There is no maximum age limitation for participation in Special Olympics. The minimum age requirement for participation in Special Olympics competition is eight years of age but can start training at the age of seven. There are other programs SOMD-SMC is discovering such as Young Athletes program, which, introduces children, two to seven years old to the world of sport, with the goal of preparing them for Special Olympics sports training and competition when they get older. (Currently SOMD-SMC does not have the Young Athletes Program activated but SOMD recently introduced the program to one of the elementary schools.

#### Identifying Persons with Intellectual disabilities

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

1. The person has been identified by an agency or professional as having an intellectual disability as determined by their localities; or
2. 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 that Accredited Program's nation as being a reliable measurement of the existence of a cognitive delay; or
3. 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 in adaptive skills (such as in recreation, work, independent living, self-direction, or self-care). However, persons whose functional limitations are based solely on a 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.

For SOMD-SMC other requirements consist of:

1. School age athletes have an IEP (or had an IEP for adult athletes); or
2. Has been identified by an agency or professional as having intellectual or closely related disabilities.
3. ***Athletes who have physical disabilities, but who do not have intellectual disabilities are not eligible for Special Olympics, but may be eligible to become a volunteer or possibly a unified partner for some Special Olympics sports programs.***



## **REGUATIONS FOR OUT-OF-COUNTY PARTICIPATION**

- Out-of-county athletes that have participated in the past are grandfathered into the program and have the same privileges as a county athlete.
- New Out-of-county athletes (i.e., have never participated in Special Olympics Maryland - St. Mary's County (SOMD-SMC)) are welcome under the following conditions:
- Space is available in the sport in which they would like to participate.
- The home county agrees to cover training and competition costs, if any are occurred, and the home county offers the particular sport the athlete wants to complete in our county.
- If the home county doesn't offer the sport, then no charges will be incurred by either the athlete or the home county.
- When competition slots are limited, the following will apply:
  - For individual sports, out-of-county athletes will get last choice. SOMD-SMC will notify state and the respective county that the athlete is training with us and eligible to go to state games based on minimum eligibility criteria (i.e., 10 hours practice and two preliminary competitions), but due to limited slots the athlete will not be able to attend the state competition with SOMD-SMC. We will request that the athlete receive consideration under their home county or that the state allots an additional slot for SOMD-SMC to take that athlete.
  - For team sports, the decision about out-of-county athlete participation has to be made at the outset of training. If 14 athletes are training for soccer and only 12 are allowed on the roster, the Sport Coordinator (HEAD Coach) or Assistant Coach, needs to decide to go with two teams or notify the athlete that he/she won't be eligible to participate in the competition.



## REGUATIONS FOR STATE COMPETITION ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to attend the end-of-season Special Olympics Maryland (SOMD) final competition, the following criteria must be met:

- Must have attended a minimum of 80% of practices and at a minimum complete 8 weeks and 10 total hours of training and competition experiences with a certified Special Olympics coach prior to a state competition.
- Must have participated in three preliminary competitions (i.e., if a competition is offered in that sport - several sports do not currently have preliminary competitions, e.g., cycling and skiing).
- Must meet the sports minimum requirements for competition (e.g., swimmers must be able to swim a minimum distance safely).
- Must exhibit Good Sportsmanship and be responsive and respectful to Coaches and volunteers
- SOMD-SMC offers sports training without a requirement to attend state competition. In many of our sports programs it is possible to establish arrangements with the Sport Coordinator to train with the sport program WITHOUT the intent to qualify for State Competition. These arrangements will be considered on a case by case basis and are a good alternative for the athlete who will not be available for either Qualifying Competition or State Competition OR for the athlete who may not feel a comfort level with competition. **This is not conducive with team sports!**
- Some sports will make the season for non-competition athletes shorter than those attending state competition. This is to allow for higher concentration of training for the competition practices. An example is kayaking – once the first qualifier has been completed the training for all athletes is over and now the coaches concentrate on those going to the state championships.



## REGULATIONS FOR STATE COMPETITION SELECTION PROCESS

Athletes and parents must be aware that state competition slots are sometimes limited and participation each year is not guaranteed. The athletes intentions must be known at the beginning of the season. If slots are limited, and after meeting the requirements of State competition minimum eligibility criteria, the Special Olympics Maryland - St. Mary's County (SOMD-SMC ) guidance below will apply:

1. If there are enough slots to attend the higher-level competition (i.e. state level) for all participating athletes then all that wish to attend will be afforded that opportunity.
2. If there is a limited number of slots for our county then selections will be made giving the first opportunities to the Gold Medal recipients first. Then it will move to Silver and finally Bronze.
3. If there are fewer slots than there are Gold medal participants then the selection will be made on a rotation basis. For example, if Johnny gets Gold each and every year, then Johnny will get to go the first year but not necessarily the second year. In order to afford the opportunity for other athlete's to experience higher levels of competition another athlete that got gold may be selected.
4. If there are more slots than we have Gold Medal athletes we will conduct the selection as above moving to the Silver Medal athletes. Silver Medal athletes will be selected until we either run out of slots or silver medal athletes.
5. This process will keep going down the list of awarded athletes until all slots are filled or we run out of athletes that want to participate in the state competition. For each of the different levels of awards, we will employ a rotating selection process in order to give all athletes a chance to eventually participate.

**Note:** Individual athletes that were approved to go to a state competition and fail to attend without giving at least a one-week notification and do not have just cause (e.g., death in family or unforeseen emergency) will forfeit their eligibility to be considered the next year. This would be very unfair to a team such as a relay team where one athlete decides at the last minute not to attend. If there are no alternates the team will be unable to participate in the relay race.



## REGULATIONS FOR TEAM SPORTS PARTICIPATION

The Special Olympics Maryland - St. Mary's County (SOMD-SMC) guidance on team sports participation is as follows:

- If an athlete chooses any of the offered team sport (i.e., basketball (3x3 or 5x5), cheerleading, flag football, softball, soccer, volleyball, relays in track or aquatics) and assuming the coach's assessment places the athlete on the team level, you must commit fully to that sport. In these sports, the coaches and teammates count on every member of the team. They must practice and play together to realize their full potential. Therefore, if you choose a team sport, you must be fully committed for the season, including all practice and competition dates. If an athlete can't commit to that, they are welcome to participate in individual skills or choose an individual sport. This will affect athletes participating in sports that overlap seasons. For example, if the athlete is placed on a basketball team and also participates in an individual sport, say bowling, and there is a competition/qualifier in bowling and basketball on the same day, the athlete **MUST** attend the basketball competition **EVEN IF IT MEANS THEY DON'T QUALIFY FOR STATE COMPETITION IN BOWLING**. The basketball team sport would take precedence and the athlete **MUST** attend the basketball competition vice the individual sport competition.
- If a team sport is chosen and these rules are violated, the athlete will not be eligible to play that team sport next year.

Refer to the Multiple Sport Policy!



## REGULATIONS FOR SOMD UNIFORM

Each athlete competing in various sports are issued a regulation Special Olympics Maryland - St. Mary's County (SOMD-SMC) uniform. Each uniform package contains instructions on washing and drying procedures (some uniforms can NOT be put in the dryer) and also how the uniform is to be returned at the end of the season. In the past year, we have had athletes who have failed to return their uniforms back into inventory (this excludes swimsuits). Our Area Director has a list of all the athletes that have not returned their uniform and has tried to notify these families. Because this number has been growing and is resulting in our not having enough uniforms for the next sport or following season, SOMD-SMC is instituting a new policy.

- Uniforms will be checked out from inventory for the sport requiring the uniform by either the Sports Coordinator or the individual coaches.
  - The Sports Coordinator or individual will be responsible for the uniforms checked out to them.
  - The coaches may require the athletes to return the uniform at the end of each practice and/or competition or may make the family/provider responsible for the uniform until the end of the sport season.
  - If the athlete/parent/provider chooses to care for the uniform until the end of the sport season and fails to return the uniform to the coach, the coach will report this to the Sports Coordinator,
  - The Sports Coordinator will report this to the Sports Director, which may get involved to contact the party that failed to return the uniform.
  - The Sports Director will be responsible to report to the Management Team if the uniform fails to be returned.
  - Athletes who have failed to return their uniform will then be notified by letter.
  - Athletes will return the uniform to the SOMD-SMC office by the date stated in the letter.
  - Athletes not returning their uniform will be charged for the uniform and the following season will require a deposit for that athlete's uniform.
  - Future participation in other sports may also require a uniform deposit.
- NOTE:** The funds charged will be used to replace the uniform not returned.



## REGULATIONS FOR THE OF THE USE OF PRIVATELY-OWNED VEHICLES (POV)

Special Olympics Maryland (SOMD) has an insurance policy identified as “Special Olympics Corporate Insurance Policy” (SOCIP).

- Generally, when you are driving your Personally Owned Vehicle (POV), to/from any sanctioned SOMD-SMC events (training/practice/qualifiers/competition) your automobile insurance is the primary payee for any accidents. However, if you are using your POV that has been designated (in writing by the Area Director) for SOMD business and or transporting athletes there may be additional **liability** coverage (**no coverage for damage to your vehicle**) provided under the Special Olympics Corporate Insurance Policy (SOCIP)– but it would be secondary. Only those **registered as SOMD volunteers, unified partners or athletes** SOMD would be covered under the SOCIP.
  - If an athlete just wanted to pick up a friend to transport to a practice or a game, etc., this type of situation would not be covered by SOCIP. And vice-versa, if a friend transported an athlete to an event only the athlete would be covered under SOCIP as the secondary to the automobile insurances primary This is regardless of who is driving – athlete, care provider, volunteer, etc.

**It is the policy of SOMD St. Mary’s County (SOMD-SMC) to provide transportation for all athletes, coaches, and volunteers to/from each state sanctioned /required competition.**

- However, if either athletes or volunteers chose to drive their POV the above provisions apply regarding insurance policies (**i.e., SOCIP would not apply, as such is not being designated by the Area Director for SOMD business**).
- Provided all the SOMD-SMC trailers in use for any of our sports has been identified to SOMD Headquarters, SOMD has insured them separately.

“NON-OWNED & HIRED AUTOMOBILE LIABILITY. Description of Coverage: 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, athlete, or a registered volunteer of Special Olympics.”

The following scenarios identify what insurance coverage applies to what circumstances:



1. If the Area Director requests a volunteer to provide transportation the vehicle essentially becomes a vehicle being used for Special Olympics business. Therefore, the SOMD liability insurance applies as excess over any other valid and collectible insurance, including the volunteer's personal automobile coverage. There is no coverage for damage to the volunteer's POV.
2. If the Area Director does not request a volunteer to provide transportation for an athlete, but the volunteer does so regardless then the volunteer would not have access to the SOCIP liability coverage. Additionally, the individual would be assuming responsibility for the injuries to the athlete(s) under his/her personal automobile insurance policy.



## WEATHER-RELATED PRACTICE CANCELLATIONS

Weather conditions vary throughout the county and the call (to cancel practice) is made based on the conditions **AT THE TRAINING SITE**. At the beginning of the season, the Sport Coordinator should notify all the families and athletes about the inclement weather procedures. The Special Olympics Maryland - St. Mary's County (SOMD-SMC) guidance for providing cancellation of any sports practice based on weather is based on the following:

1. During the week while schools are in session practice will be cancelled if schools are closed or after school activities are canceled due to inclement weather.
2. On weekends, if Recreation & Parks cancels their activities, then our practices are canceled for those sports using the effected Recs and Parks facilities.
3. The Sport Coordinator, in consultation with SOMD-SMC management, will attempt to make the decision one hour prior to the start of practice.
4. The Sport Coordinator will contact the Area Director and Assistant director by phone, text and/or email in order for cancellation to be posted on social media.
5. The Sport Coordinator will use the RainedOut texting system to notify all the coaches, athletes and families.
6. Social Media – The cancellation will be posted on our web site (<https://sites.google.com/view/somd-smc/>), and/or our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/specialolympicssmc/>).

Considerations in making the decision to cancel practices:

- The Sport Coordinator and SOMD-SMC Management Team will monitor local weather, taking into consideration road conditions and athlete safety.
1. Outdoor Practices:
    - a. If the heat index is 100 degrees or greater, practice is cancelled.
    - b. In the event of projected storms and if weather conditions are considered to be unsafe, practice will be cancelled.
    - c. If the wind chill drops below 10 degrees, practice is cancelled.
    - d. If the outdoor facility is closed by the agency owning the facility (i.e. St. Mary's County Recreation and Parks for Bocce, Softball, etc.), practice is cancelled.
    - e. Information can be found at <https://www.smcps.org> , <http://www.co.saint-marys.md.us/recreate/index.asp> or <http://www.co.saint-marys.md.us/emergency/rpannounce.asp> or by calling (301) 475-4200 \*1840 (cancellation line).
  2. Indoor Practices:



- a. Practices are cancelled whenever the practice facility (e.g., SMCPS school or Recreation and Parks field) is closed due to weather.
- b. Information can be found at <https://www.smcps.org>, <http://www.co.saint-marys.md.us/recreate/index.asp>, <http://www.co.saint-marys.md.us/emergency/rannounce.asp> or by calling (301) 475-4200 \*1840 (cancellation line).