



Special Olympics ***Ohio***

Washington County

Sponsored by the Washington County Board of Developmental Disabilities

OPERATING GUIDELINES

The Mission of Special Olympics

To provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with developmental or physical disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, learn team work, responsibility, accountability and experience joy by participating in the sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics Athletes and the community.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS OATH

**Let Me Win
But If I Cannot Win
Let Me Be Brave
In The Attempt**

Washington County Special Olympics is an accredited local program of Special Olympics Ohio, administered by a Local Coordinator, parents and volunteers.

WEBSITES: Special Olympics Ohio – www.soo.org
Washington County Board of Developmental Disabilities – www.wcbdd.org
FACEBOOK: Special Olympics Ohio - <https://m.facebook.com/SpecialOlympicsOhio/>
Washington County Special Olympics - <http://www.facebook.com/washingtoncountysso/?ti=as>

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1. GOAL

The goal of Washington County Special Olympics is to provide a Special Olympics Program in Washington County, Ohio, that will enhance the social and physical growth of Special Olympics Athletes in order for them to perform at their best according to their individual abilities.

2. TEAM MEMBERSHIP

Athletes may be considered for team membership if they reside within Washington County and are 8 years of age or older. Requests for membership from persons living in other areas will be considered by the Coordinator. Consideration: Athletes may be considered for membership if they are unable to participate in their chosen sport with their local or county accredited Special Olympics Organization. These athletes may participate with Washington County Special Olympics in only those sports not offered by their local or county accredited Special Olympics Organization. Exceptions due to documented extraordinary circumstances may be made by the Coordinator.

3. RELEASE & PARTICIPATION FORMS

In order to practice and compete in any Special Olympics event, every Washington County Special Olympic athlete must have an up-to-date Special Olympics Release Form and Special Olympics Ohio Application for Participation Form on file with the Washington County Special Olympics Coordinator. These forms are good for **three (3) consecutive years**. When a form needs to be renewed the Washington County Special Olympics Coordinator will send a notice to the athlete. Any time there are significant changes in an athlete's medical history, a new form should be filed immediately. Contact the Washington County Special Olympics Coordinator for a new form or download a new form from the Washington County Special Olympics Website.

In addition, each athlete and parent/guardian shall sign the Athlete Code of Conduct and a photo release.

All paperwork must be completed and submitted before athletes may compete or practice.

4. OBLIGATIONS/EXPECTATIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

Parents/guardians/family members/caregivers are required to transport their athletes to and from practices and competitions in a timely fashion, (arrive and pick athletes up on time); ensure the athlete has adequate clothing, (based on the sport and weather) water and or equipment required for the sport.

5. UNIFORMS

TEAM UNIFORMS

Washington County Special Olympics provides one team t-shirt to each new athlete. The track uniform is worn to Special Olympics events & competitions including State Summer Games Opening Ceremonies. Swimmers are to wear their warm up jacket and pants. These items will be loaned to qualified athletes at no cost. You must sign them out and in.

SPORT SPECIFIC UNIFORMS

Sport specific uniforms (swimsuit, leotard, singlet, etc.) are not provided by Washington County Special Olympics. The individual athlete is responsible for these uniforms. For more information, inquire with the coach of your sport.

6. DUTIES OF THE COORDINATOR

The Coordinator must be accredited by the Special Olympics Ohio.

The Special Olympics Coordinator must adhere to the guidelines of Special Olympics Ohio and is responsible:

1. To continue and to expand the program of athletic activities for the Washington County Special Olympic athletes that will meet the requirements for participation in Special Olympics events,
2. To recruit and to supervise qualified coaches for the agreed upon athletic events,
3. To ensure that all the participants are treated fairly and safely,
4. To do outreach, and to recruit athletes,
5. To see that all paperwork is submitted to the state organization in a timely fashion, and that state regulations are followed for the competitions and other events in which the athletes participate,
6. To see that all the State Special Olympics rules and regulations are followed,
7. To see that all volunteers complete a registration form and fulfill the other training requirements of Special Olympics prior to working with the athletes,
8. To establish meaningful relationships or networks with local businesses, schools, and other interested parties to inform them of Special Olympics and to encourage their involvement,
9. Notify the general membership via newsletters, mailings, e-mails, or telephone of: the date and place of the individual sports information (practices, coaches, competitions, competition results, other events), and other Washington County Special Olympic activities.
10. To preside at the Annual Meeting.
11. To serve as additional signer with treasurer on checking account.

*Local Coordinator may delegate these responsibilities to volunteers or coaches.

7. DUTIES OF THE TREASURER

The **treasurer** shall:

1. Keep the records of all income and disbursements of the organization,
2. Disburse the funds,
3. Account to the coordinator and the Board, annually and as requested;
4. Be co-signer with the coordinator on all checks,
5. Report quarterly to the State Special Olympics.
6. Make the financial reports available at the Annual Meeting.
7. Prepare Annual Statement.

8. DETERMINATION OF SPORT REPRESENTATION BY THE WCSO:

STATE GAMES:

In the event that Washington County Special Olympics consists of more eligible athletes than the quota of spaces for state games as allotted by Ohio Special Olympics, Washington County's representation to these games will be determined by the following:

First Priority: Athletes shall be first place winners in at least the event at the next lower level completion if the number of first place winners exceeds the quota, the athletes shall be chosen by random selection from among all division winners.

Second Priority: Athletes who were second place finishers in the event shall be chosen next by random selection, then third place finishers.

9. DETERMINATION OF ATHLETE SELECTION BY THE COACH:

STATE GAMES

Athletes are selected for the State Games teams according to these guidelines:

- Maintained membership in Washington County Special Olympics or another accredited Special Olympics team for one year before competing at State Games,
- Approved medical form submitted by cut-off date,
- Declaration of sport filed with Washington County Special Olympics Coordinator before deadline
- Required consistent attendance of practices in the sport to be represented at the games. Attendance records are the responsibility of the coach(s) of each sport,
- Age: minimum of 8 years to compete,
- Effort at practices and events: the coach of the sport is to determine which athlete has given the most effort according to his or her abilities,
- If a coach is unable to make a decision among the athletes, then selection of team representation for that sport may be made by a drawing held by the coach,
- If athlete has competed for three consecutive years in the Summer Games, it is preferred that he or she not compete in the Summer Games the following year, provided there are enough athletes in his or her sport to fill the prescribed slots.

10. CODE OF CONDUCT/ATHLETE BEHAVIOR

An individual's participation in Special Olympics, as an athlete or volunteer is an opportunity and privilege; it is not an entitlement. Washington County Special Olympics (as an accredited local program of Special Olympics Ohio and National Special Olympic Organization) has the right and responsibility to protect the well-being and safety of all participants: athletes, coaches, volunteers, staff and spectators. Therefore, Washington County Special Olympics reserves the right to limit or exclude an individual's participation in the program.

Athletes/parents/guardians/family members/caregivers are expected to abide by and follow all Washington County Special Olympics Code of Conduct and the State of Ohio/National Special Olympics Organizations.

Serious offenses both while in uniform of the WCSO and outside the WCSO environment will result in suspension from either a sport or all sports for a specified period of time. The suspension shall be determined by a subcommittee containing at a minimum the Local Coordinator and the Coach from the Sport involved, another coach who knows the athlete. Once a determination of a suspension is made, all the Coaches who have interaction with the athlete are to be informed of the suspension (not necessarily the details of the event causing the suspension).

Repeat offenses, even after Reinstatement, shall be considered by the subcommittee when determining any new suspensions.

To be reinstated back to WCSO, the athlete and parent/guardian/family must follow the Reinstatement Procedures in Section 17.

Athletes under school suspension are not permitted to participate with WCSO until suspension is over. WCSO or Coaches must be advised of all incidents.

11. SPECIAL OLYMPICS ATHLETE'S CODE OF CONDUCT

Special Olympics is committed to the highest ideals of sport and expects all athletes to honor sports and Special Olympics. All Special Olympics athletes and Unified Sports partners agree to the following code:

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 insult other persons.
- I will not fight with other athletes, coaches, volunteers or staff.

Training and Competition

- I will train regularly.
- 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.

Responsibility for My Actions

- I will not make inappropriate or unwanted physical, verbal, or sexual advances on others.
- I will not drink alcohol, smoke or take illegal drugs while representing Special Olympics at training sessions, competition or during Games.
- I will not take drugs for the purpose of improving my performance.
- I will obey all laws and Special Olympics rules.

I understand that if I do not obey this Code of Conduct, my Program or a Games Organizing Committee may not allow me to participate.

12. SPECIAL OLYMPICS COACH'S CODE OF CONDUCT

Special Olympics is committed to the highest ideals of sport and expects all coaches to honor sport and Special Olympics. All Special Olympics coaches agree to observe the following code:

Respect for Others

- I will respect the rights, dignity and worth of athletes, coaches, other volunteers, friends and spectators in Special Olympics.
- I will treat everyone equally regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or ability.
- 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 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

- My language, manner, punctuality, preparation and presentation will demonstrate high standards.
- I will display control, respect, dignity and professionalism to all involved in the sport (athletes, coaches, opponents, officials, administrators, parents, spectators, media, etc.)
- I will encourage athletes to demonstrate the same qualities.
- I will not drink alcohol, smoke or take illegal drugs while representing Special Olympics at training sessions, competition or during Games.
- I will refrain from any form of personal abuse towards athletes and others, including inappropriate or unwanted sexual advances on others, verbal, physical and emotional abuse.
- I will be alert to any form of abuse from other sources directed toward athletes in my care.
- I will abide by the Special Olympics policy on the prohibition of coaches dating athletes.

Quality Service to the Athletes

- I will seek continual improvement through performance evaluation and ongoing coach education.
- I will be knowledgeable about the Sports Rules and skills of the sport(s) I coach.
- I will provide a plan for a regular training program.
- I will keep copies of the medical, training and competition records for each athlete I coach.

Health and Safety of Athletes

- I will ensure that the equipment and facilities are safe to use.
- I will ensure that the equipment, rules, training 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 encourage athletes to seek medical advice when required.
- I will maintain the same interest and support toward sick and injured athletes.
- I will allow further participation in training and competition only when appropriate.

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 coaching in Special Olympics.

13. SPECIAL OLYMPICS VOLUNTEER'S CODE OF CONDUCT

As a Special Olympics Volunteer, I agree that while serving as a volunteer, I will:

- Provide for the general welfare, health and safety of all Special Olympics athletes and volunteers.
- Dress and act in an appropriate manner at all times.
- Follow the established rules and guidelines of Special Olympics and/or any agency involved with Special Olympics.
- Report any emergencies to the appropriate authorities after first taking immediate action to ensure the health and safety of the participants.
- Abstain from the consumption or use of all alcohol, tobacco products and illegal substances while involved with any Special Olympics event, competition or training school.
- Not engage in any inappropriate contact or relationship with athletes, volunteers or other participants of Special Olympics.

14. SPECIAL OLYMPICS OHIO SPECTATOR GUIDELINES

As fans (family, friends and supporters) of Special Olympics Athletes, it is expected that you will play a positive role at SOOH events by following these guidelines:

1. Please refrain from using abusive or offensive language towards anyone; officials, coaches, opponents and fellow spectators.

2. Keep your emotions under control – Remember that the athletes are amateur athletes and the coaches and officials are all volunteers.
3. It may help if you understand the rules of the sport/event. If you need further information or clarification, ask your home program for a copy of the rules.
4. De-emphasize winning and losing!
5. Let the coaches coach the players – PLEASE refrain from shouting instructions.
6. Spectators and fans are prohibited in the competition areas. Only registered/approved coaches and athletes should be on the official playing field/area.
7. ALL CHEERS should stress the spirit of good sportsmanship. Derogatory comments directed to players, coaches or officials will not be tolerated.

Any spectator who fails to follow the above guidelines will be reprimanded. A reprimand could be one of the following:

- a. You will be escorted from the venue.
- b. You will be banned from attending future events for the remainder of the season.
- c. You will be banned from attending any SOOH event for lifetime.

BE A FAN!
BE A GREAT FAN!

15. PROCEDURAL POLICY FOR REINSTATEMENT

Our athletes and their wellbeing are WCSO's greatest concern. It is our belief that no one is perfect and that mistakes in life happen. Therefore, if an athlete has done something that does not follow the guidelines of the Athlete's Code of Conduct, resulting in suspension from the WCSO Program, the following steps must be taken to allow that athlete back into the WCSO Program.

- I: Athlete/parent/guardian/caregiver must request permission for athlete to return to WCSO program.
- Ia: Athlete/parent/guardian/caregiver must provide step-by-step program to show how and what athlete, as well as parent/guardian/caregiver, will do in order to rectify offense and prevent offense from happening again.
- II: Athlete and parent/guardian/caregiver must come before the Local Coordinator and the subcommittee (coach of that sport and a coach who knows the athlete well) to discuss offense, reconciliation program and new expectations. Athlete must take responsibility for his/her action and (to the best of their ability) show some kind of remorse.
- III: Athlete must serve a mandatory suspension (to be determined by subcommittee) from current sport they are participating in followed by a (1 year) probationary period. Length of suspension can also be extended due to parent/guardian/caregiver not providing required reconciliation program.
- IV: It is a combined effort between WCSO and parent/guardian/caregiver to make sure that the athlete is living up to provided expectations and rectification program.
- IVa: If subcommittee believes that athlete is not living up to expectations, extended suspension and probationary period can be instigated.

If continued disregard for reconciliation program, as well as continued disregard for Athlete's Code of Conduct guide persists, athlete will be permanently banned from participating in any WCSO program and information will be filed with Ohio Special Olympics program to further exclude athlete from participating state wide.

16. GENERAL INFORMATION

All practices are on Wednesdays other than bowling which falls on Mondays. Practice times have changed due to work schedules.

- * Swimming – 4:00-5:30 pm (Ewing),
 - * Track – 4:30-6pm (Marietta Middle School),
 - * Basketball - 4–5:30 pm (Ewing),
 - * Bowling – 3:30 – 5:30 and 6:00 -8:00 pm (2 shifts – North Hill Lanes).
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- If the head coach is not present please show the same respect for the assistant coach filling in. It is very important that you listen and follow the rules.
 - Each sport will compete in area meets but not all sports are taken to compete in state events.
 - All athletes must compete in an area meet to qualify for a state meet and meet all state requirements.
 - For the purposes of safety and supervision a minimum ratio of one coach to every three athletes (1:3) is recommended at all Special Olympics events.
 - If an athlete needs 1 on 1 assistance parent/caregiver is responsible for having a person there to assist them. We are unable to guarantee that Special Olympics will have enough staff to cover and assist those with 1 on 1 needs for supervision or care. This goes for any and all sporting events. If you are unsure if your athlete needs special assistance please contact the coach to verify. If someone is not there to assist your athlete they may have to wait till help arrives. That is why it is crucial for staff or parents to arrive 15 min early to help folks get ready.
 - All permission slips and info that is available is given out approximately one month in advance. Please return as soon as possible. There is no need to wait to turn it in.
 - If you are given a new physical and release to get done please do so in a timely manner. All paperwork is to be filled out completely. Please leave nothing blank. Signatures are crucial. The state of Ohio will not accept forms that have blanks.
 - If you qualify and you miss more than 2 practices you can still practice with the team but may not attend the state event. Special Olympics Ohio now requires that practices are held for a minimum of 8 weeks.
 - It is preferred that all athletes and coaches ride the bus to the event and the return trip to Wasco. You will be given the opportunity to call parents and staff to be at Wasco to pick you up upon our return. All parents, staff or extra coaches may follow the bus. If, on the day of departure, we find we have extra seats on the bus we will fill them first come, first served. It is best if the **team stays together as a team**. Some **families** prefer to ride home from events together. In order to do this you must fill out an exception form and get approval from the Local Coordinator before the group leaves for the event. This exception will be approved for family member only.

Volunteer/Coach

- Washington County has a great support family and friends to help volunteer and coach. If you would like to help with this you must complete a volunteer application and do online trainings and to be approved by the State of Ohio. Once you have been cleared you may be a chaperone, coach or a volunteer. New coaches will be accepted when we have an

empty spot to fill. If you are a volunteer and would like to help please let the coaches know so you can be added to that list. This will give everyone an opportunity to help.

- Concerns will be resolved through the Local Coordinator.
- Coaches are responsible for assisting in the restroom, trip attendance, making sure meds are given, assisting on and off of the field and fundraising. At state events you will be given a group of athletes to assist. You must make sure they get to and from their events on time, and chaperon at the hotel.
- If coaches are at an event and see something in question regarding scoring, placement etc. you need to question it right then. Changes can't happen after the fact.
- Personal vehicles that are asked to be driven on state trips will only be used for transporting back and forth to events (example—state track). All athletes and coaches should be on the bus at all other times.
- Procedures for out of town events that require an overnight stay: Coaches will not share rooms with athletes but rather will be placed in rooms next to athletes whenever possible. If you are not a coach you will be required to pay for your own room, you may team up with other parents and split the cost. I will still hold rooms so you can get a discount. If a parent wants to room with their athlete, they will be required to pay for the room. If we would not have enough coaches to cover the rooms we will check to see who has completed the state approved paperwork to chaperone a room. S.O. will make one payment and your total will be due back to us.
- Any athlete or coach listed per each event will get their meals paid for by S.O. all others will be required to purchase their own meals.

MISCELLANEOUS

- State tent town and souvenirs: we will plan to go as a group. This will happen as time allows for our group to go together. Athletes are expected to stay with the team while competitions are going on. Schedules are subject to change and those who leave the venue may miss their event.
- Medical issues – We are equipped to handle small emergencies. If it is a major emergency 911 will be called. If we are at a sanctioned state event they have medical staff available to handle anything at hand. Headaches, tiredness, heat and such will not result in going back to the hotel. There is shade and other resources to assist in feeling better.
- Buses DO NOT leave the track without the head coach's permission.

FUNDRAISING REQUIREMENTS AND CRITERIA

- All athletes are required to have some involvement with **ALL FUNDRAISING EFFORTS.**
- You may either be at the event to help, sell tickets, donate baked goods, donate items needed for the events, hang or hand out flyers, parade participation, and so forth. No athlete is exempt from this.
- A spread sheet will keep track for all athletes and their involvement with fundraising and events. After keeping track of the following information. That info will be used to base further athlete involvement regarding extra trips, conferences, or just fun type activities. Lack of participation could play a part in not getting chosen for certain things. This is why it is so important to be a part of a team. Also when our community and businesses donate money and things to our organization and only see a handful of the same athletes out in the community it could cause them to stop supporting us. This is something I hope never happens. This does not mean athletes will not be able to compete in competition events.

This only goes for the extra trips or fun things going on that have a limit on how many may attend.

- **WE ARE A TEAM! PLEASE SHOW YOUR TEAM SPIRIT AND BE THERE FOR THE WHOLE TEAM!!!!!!**

Basketball

- This is only done as an individual skills test of the athletes.
- They dribble, shoot, and target practice.
- We do not compete as a team playing other teams
- Tennis shoes are REQUIRED. No flip flops or sandals.
- 8 weeks of practice. Then we attend a skills meet.

Bowling

- Payment is due at the time the permission slip is turned in. Please do not turn in separately.
- Cost is \$56.00, make checks payable to NORTH HILL LANES, Not Wasco.
- Practices are always on Mondays.
- **NO REFUNDS.** If you miss practice you we will try and work with you to make it up. If not it is counted as a missed practice.
- If you miss more than 2 practices, you may not be able to compete in the tournament.
- If Wasco is closed due to weather, practice will be canceled and made up.
- If Wasco is closed due to a holiday it is possible that we may still be meeting for practice. Will let everyone know the week before.
- Any cancelations due to weather will be posted on WTAP. Please check before going out.
- Bowling has two practice times due to the amount of athletes that compete. One is from 3:30 – 5:30 pm, the second is from 6:00 – 8:00 pm. You will be asked on the permission slip to mark which one you would like to choose.

Track and Field

- Many types of events are offered. We try and accommodate any special needs athlete to something that best fits them.
- Each athlete may compete in up to two events and a relay.
- All relays will compete in the area meet but not all relays are allowed to compete in state events. There is a limit on them due to teams (male/female) and type of relay.

Swimming

- Must be able to swim 25m, no stopping
- Must have one piece suit.
- Flip flops and goggles suggested, but not required.
- Relay teams will be chosen according to sex and similar speeds of one another.