



ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT

Special Olympics Michigan adheres to the highest ideals of sport in the tradition of the Olympic movement. The Special Olympics Oath, "Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt", represents the ideal of competition that every Special Olympics athlete tries to achieve.

I understand that my participation in Special Olympics is a call to excellence for me to train and compete in ways that bring honor to me, my family, and to Special Olympics. I pledge to uphold the spirit of this Code of Conduct, which is only a general guide for my conduct and does not describe all types of good behavior and bad behavior. If I do not obey this Code of Conduct, my Program or a Games Organizing Committee may suspend me from Special Olympics either temporarily or permanently. If I am suspended from Special Olympics, I can appeal the decision in accordance with the Special Olympics Athlete's Appeal Process.

I pledge that:

Sportsmanship

- I will practice good sportsmanship and act in ways that will bring respect to my coaches, my team, Special Olympics and me.
- I will not use bad language, such as swearing or insulting other persons, and will not fight with other athletes, coaches, volunteers or staff.
- I will show respect towards my fellow athletes, coaches and volunteers at all times. I will not make fun of other people or criticize them, but will give them praise and positive recognition.

Training & Competition

- I will train regularly and attend scheduled practices and meet training criteria set by my coaches and area program. I will try my best during training/practices, and competitions.
- I will learn and follow the rules of my sport, and I will ask questions when I do not understand.
- I will not hold back in divisioning preliminaries in order to get into an easier heat in the final. (alternative: I will perform in divisioning the same as I perform in competitions.)

Personal Responsibility

- I will not make unwanted physical, verbal, or sexual advances on others in person or through social media.
- I will not bully or harass any other person. Harassment or bullying is any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts via internet, cell phone, or electronic communication device) that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any sexual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression; or a mental, physical, or sensory disability or impairment; or by any other distinguishing characteristic. Such behavior is considered harassment or bullying whether it takes place on or off the field, at any Special Olympics event, or in a vehicle.
- I will not drink alcohol, **vape** or smoke in non-smoking areas or use **medical marijuana** or illegal drugs at Special Olympics' venue sites, and I will not take drugs for the purpose of improving my performance.
- I will obey all facility and venue rules.
- I will obey all federal, state, and local laws and Special Olympics rules.
- **I will tell someone if I do not feel safe and/or if I am being hurt.**

By signing below, I am saying that I have read, or have had read to me, this Athlete Code of Conduct and that I agree to obey this Code of Conduct. If I violate this Code of Conduct and disagree with my punishment, I agree to follow the Special Olympics Athlete's Appeal Process and I will accept their decision as final.

Athlete

Date

Parent / Guardian or Witness

Relationship to Athlete

Revised April 2018



DISCIPLINARY STEPS FOR VIOLATING ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT

The following progressive disciplinary steps may be taken with the program ***beginning at whichever step is deemed appropriate under the circumstances*** by a sanctioned area representative. The representative must notify the Area Director of any action that is taken.

Step 1 Verbal warning to the athlete and to parent/guardian or caseworker with a written copy of the Incident Form to the Area Director.

Step 2 A written Incident Report must be completed giving warning to the athlete with a copy to the Area Director, SOMI State Office and parent/guardian or caseworker.

Step 3 The Area Director will conduct a personal meeting with the athlete to review unacceptable behavior and to agree on a plan for improvement.

If the athlete is under 18, or over 18 and has a guardian, he/she will be accompanied by his/her parent/guardian or caseworker. If the athlete is over 18 and his/her own guardian, he/she may choose to have another adult present. The meeting will be documented in writing and copies distributed to the athlete, Area Director, state office, parent/guardian or caseworker.

Step 4 Suspension from practices or competition for a specific time period (such as during the specific sport season).

The Area Director must be contacted before an athlete is suspended. The Area Director will discuss the circumstances and must approve/disapprove the action. The action will be documented in writing and presented to the athlete, parent/guardian (or caseworker) and a copy will be sent to the state office.

Any further action must be referred to the Area Director. The Area Director and program staff member responsible for **Field Service** Management will approve any further action to be taken.

Further action could be, but is not limited to:

- Suspension for a longer period
- Permanent expulsion

ATHLETE APPEAL PROCESS

The athlete has the right to appeal any disciplinary action to the Area Director. The athlete or the athlete's representative must submit a written notice of appeal, with a copy to the Area Director and to the President/CEO of Special Olympics Michigan. This notice must include a request for a meeting within 30 days of being notified of the disciplinary action.

The appeal will be heard by the Area Director, the Director of **Field Services** or the Chief Program Officer, and the Chair from the Program Committee or designee not involved with the situation. A decision must be rendered in writing within 21 days following the meeting and may reverse, amend or affirm the disciplinary action. The decision shall be submitted to the athlete and to the Area Program and should include, if applicable, a plan of action for the athlete to correct the unacceptable behavior that led to the disciplinary action.