



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.

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 shall screen all those registered as volunteers as of January 1, 2005 no later than July 1, 2008 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.
 - ii. New volunteers: An individual who applies to participate as a volunteer with the program after December 31, 2004 must be screened for acceptance as a volunteer in accordance with this Implementation Plan in order to participate as a volunteer after July 1, 2005.
- 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. Prospective volunteers who are under the age of 18 shall not be subject to a criminal records check but must submit 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 non-transferable.

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. Prospective volunteers who are under the age of 18, shall not be subject to a criminal records check but must submit the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of two (2) non-family (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.

APPENDIX
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