

Frequently Asked Questions

Who can participate in Special Olympics?

Special Olympics training and competition is open to every person with intellectual disabilities who is at least eight years of age and who registers to participate in Special Olympics. There is no maximum age limitation for participation in Special Olympics.

Participation in Special Olympics training and competition is open to all persons with intellectual disabilities, regardless of the level or degree of that person's disability, and whether or not that person also has other mental or physical disabilities, so long as that person registers to participate in Special Olympics as required by the General Rules. Any person wishing to participate must first have a medical exam, a signed Medical Release, a signed Parent/guardian/individual Release and a signed Athlete Code of Conduct.

Why is the Medical and Release Form necessary?

Application for Participation (Medical Form) is similar to release forms required for any other sports program. It provides for:

- Necessary medical information, including a health history, health insurance information and emergency contacts, including physician, parents or guardians.
- It makes the athlete eligible to be covered by Special Olympics, Inc. medical insurance as a secondary policy.

The Release Form provides for:

- Emergency medical treatment to be provided in the event that a parent or guardian cannot be reached.
- A media release.
- Acknowledgement of any restrictions for athletes with Downs Syndrome.

Is there a fee to participate in Special Olympics?

There is no cost to any athlete to join Special Olympics Colorado or to compete in any of the competitions. Most costs associated with state competitions, such as meals, awards and housing, are covered by Special Olympics Colorado. Area programs cover the costs of training, uniforms and travel for all levels of competition.

How do potential athletes get involved with Special Olympics Colorado?

- Print and complete the necessary forms listed in the [Become an Athlete](#) section.
- Return forms to the State Office
- Area Managers will assist athletes in locating coaches and organized practices for the sports of choice.
- Athletes shall attend training sessions and thereby make themselves eligible to compete at Area and State competitions.

How can I help?

There are many ways to help. How about volunteering your time at a local competition? If you have an hour or two to spare, there are volunteer opportunities that are available. Volunteering at a local competition is a great way to involve the entire family. Visit our [Volunteer](#) page for more information.

Another way to help is to support fundraising events. Special Olympics relies solely on the donations received from people, organizations and corporations in our community. We receive no federal or state funding of any kind so we appreciate any support you can give to our fundraising activities.

How can I find out what competitions are coming up in my area?

You will need to locate your area manager and find out about upcoming events and competitions near you. Also, our website has a [master calendar](#) with event and competition information.

Is sports training available for athletes of all levels?

Special Olympics offers training and competition to athletes with varying ability levels. Some sports offer particular opportunities for athletes who function with low ability levels.

What if my athlete does not have the necessary skills to compete?

Motor Activities Training Program (MATP) provides comprehensive motor activity and recreational training for people with severe mental disabilities or multiple disabilities. MATP places an emphasis on training and participation rather than competition. MATP enables a participant to take part in a program appropriate to his or her age and ability.

What is Unified Sports?

Unified Sports® is a Special Olympics program that brings together people with intellectual disabilities and non-disabled members of the community on the same sports team. Non-disabled individuals training and competing on Unified Sports® teams are called Unified Sports® Partners.

My Athlete has a non-disabled sibling, can they participate?

Non-disabled siblings cannot participate as a Special Olympics athlete. HOWEVER, depending on their age and the sport they are interested in, they could participate in our Unified Sports® Program and be a Unified Partner with their Special Olympics sibling. Unified Sports® brings disabled and non-disabled athletes together on the same playing field.