Return To Activities Protocol

Last Updated: June 29, 2021

Special Olympics Oklahoma

Special Olympics has updated guidance on return to in-person activities to reflect the latest information on COVID-19. This guidance is based on the latest information from the World Health Organization (WHO), the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other health authorities and created in consultation with a team of global medical experts and with input from Special Olympics stakeholders.

The primary goal of this guidance has been and remains zero deaths due to transmission of COVID-19 at events. The secondary goal is to prevent outbreaks of COVID-19. While local and national guidance should always be followed, we are providing guidance above the local, state and national levels because of the high risk of COVID to our population to protect all in our movement. This guidance is intended to supplement – not replace – any state/provincial, local, territorial/national or tribal health and safety laws, rules and regulations with which similar organizations must comply.

Guidance on COVID-19 Return to Activities

Programs MUST designate a COVID-19 response point-person to keep current guidance, compliance requirements, coordinate response and monitor for COVID-19. This may be the National Director/CEO/Executive Director or a designee.

Additionally, the information in this document is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Special Olympics makes no representation and assumes no responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of this information. Further, you should seek advice from medical professionals and/or public health officials if you have specific questions about symptoms and/or diagnoses related to COVID-19.

Similarly, Programs should immediately consult with legal and/or insurance counsel regarding any liability or coverage related questions.

Throughout this document “participants” are defined as all athletes, Unified partners, coaches, volunteers, family members, caregivers, staff or others in attendance of an activity. This guidance is intended for all in-person activities (e.g., sports practices, competition, coaches training, Young Athletes, Healthy Athletes, Program-hosted UCS activities, Athlete Leadership, volunteer meetings/trainings, etc.). School-hosted activities and fundraising events are considered separate from this framework and Programs should follow regulations and COVID protocols from their school and local authorities, respectively for those events.

Guiding Principles

1. The health and safety of all members of the Special Olympics movement is paramount.
2. Beyond a sports organization, Special Olympics is a movement for and by people with intellectual disabilities (ID), and its guidance must be inclusive and directed at the unique needs and abilities of people with ID.
3. Relevant WHO and country-specific (e.g., U.S. CDC) guidelines should serve as minimum standards. In addition, consideration should be given to local and community authorities in that if there are more conservative/restrictive guidelines, these should be followed.
4. Guidance is based on current medical information available at the time of publication.
5. Guidance takes a phased approach that is dependent on local transmission rates, vaccination rates as well as testing/monitoring/contact tracing/health system capacity.

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Revised June 2021

If in-person activities are permitted in your local area, follow below guidance (color chart) to determine protocols needed, in addition to local regulations.

LOW COMMUNITY COVID RATE	MODERATE COVID RATE	SIGNIFICANT COVID RATE
< 400 daily state wide cases* **OR** **HIGH VACCINATION RATE** > 80 of participants are fully vaccinated* AND COVID rate is < 50 new cases per 100,000 people	400-500 state wide daily cases** AND <80% of participants are fully vaccinated*	>500 state wide daily cases** AND <80% of participants are fully vaccinated*
↓	↓	↓
LOW RISK Local regulations for event size and risk mitigation + additional SO precautions for masks, distancing, travel and accommodations (see green guidance)	**MODERATE RISK** Local regulations for event size and risk mitigation + additional SO precautions for masks, distancing, sanitization, spectators, onsite screening, travel and accommodations (see yellow guidance)	**SIGNIFICANT RISK** Local Regulations + Size restrictions (50 or less inside) and substantial SO precautions in all areas (see orange guidance)

***KEY DEFINITIONS:**

- **Fully Vaccinated:** Two (2) weeks after completing all doses of a COVID-19 vaccine.
- **Participants:** Athletes, Unified partners, Coaches, Officials, Volunteers, HODs, SO Staff, and families/caregivers if they will not exclusively be in spectator only spaces.
- **Community:** Generally, the community is the county/district. If data is not available for the county/district, then use the smallest community (e.g., state) for which the data is available.
- **PCR/NAAT:** PCR or NAAT, is a type of viral diagnostic test for COVID-19.
- **Rolling 7-day average/100,000:** a 7-day moving average, takes the case rates per 100,000 people for the last 7 days, adds them up, and divides it by 7.

****Resources for Identifying 7-Day Rolling Average Case Rate:**

- Country Level Data Globally (this is per Million to divide by 10): https://tinyurl.com/944jd6xe
- State Level Data in the US: https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/national/coronavirus-us-cases-deaths/
- County/District Level Data should also be available from your Local Health Authorities and/or Local Resources.

Protocols	**Significant Risk**
Event Size and Venue Type (indoors/outdoors)	Entirely Outdoors (except restrooms): Size per local authority regulations Indoors or Mixed Indoors/Outdoors: ≤ 50 participants NOTE: Mixed venue=Events that still have indoor components (e.g., meals) even if primary activity is outdoors.
Type of sport/activity	Individual sports and indirect contact sports only for competition play. No competitive play for contact sports – drills only For non-sport (e.g., leadership trainings, meetings, etc.): Distancing and no direct contact.
Forms	Athletes, Coaches, Unified partners, Officials, Volunteers, and Staff complete the COVID Code of Conduct & Risk Form. Communicable Disease Waiver for Participants (for US Only).
Operations	Event organizers must have a COVID Point of Contact identified. Event organizers must have a plan for identifying and isolating individuals with COVID symptoms, rapid testing (if necessary), contract tracing for the event, and notifying health authorities, per local requirements.
Onsite Screening	**Written confirmation** (electronically or via paper) of no symptoms for all participants + recommended onsite temperature checks. Verbal confirmation for required additional assistance on arrival + recommended temperature check (each day, if event is multiple days). Signage on preventive measures (handwashing, distancing and masking) and education on symptoms and reminder to stay home if sick or any symptoms.
Positive COVID test or previous COVID disease	No participation within 10 days of COVID positive test and 7 days of any symptoms. Athletes and Unified partners must receive medical clearance prior to participating in sport. Programs must educate on this requirement.

Masking *Masking requirements may be more stringent if Programs chooses based on local situation.	Masks **required** at all times for ALL participants, except during rigorous exercise.
Distancing	Distancing required at all times.
Transportation	Private transportation encouraged as much as possible. Distancing on any shared transport organized by SO. Masking required for all on any SO transportation, unless all participants are vaccinated.
Travel *All travel requirements for host country/state/territory as well as for return to home should also be considered in planning.*	**Not permitted outside local area, state, province/territory.**
Accommodations	Overnight events with accommodations organized by SO **not permitted.**

Multi-Day Events Testing Protocol	Multi-day/Overnight events not permitted under Orange protocol.
Sanitization	Sanitization protocol for all communal shared areas (e.g., bathrooms, meal areas) and frequently touched surfaces + shared equipment between uses.
Spectators Sideline observers (e.g., family/support staff)	**Not permitted** (unless athlete requires additional assistance from caregiver that can't be accommodated by a coach/volunteer. Permissions granted at the Program's discretion). Individuals should maintain social distance from one another on the sideline.
Meals	**Participants bring their own meals and water bottles and/or pick-up only.** Stagger mealtimes and cohort groups.
Non-Sport Gatherings (during Competitions)	Limit additional non-sport gatherings occurring during competitions. No large social gatherings (e.g., community dances, athlete festivals) If held, follow size restrictions, venue options and risk mitigation guidance per above.
Ceremonies	No in-person opening/closing ceremonies. For award ceremonies, maintain size limits, masking, sanitization, and distancing requirements outlined above. Find alternatives to placing medals around the athletes' necks to maintain distancing.
Healthy Athletes	Follow size restrictions, venue options and risk mitigation guidance per above. See additional HA guidance for discipline-specific precautions.

Young Athletes	Children should wear masks during YA activities. All coaches and volunteers should also wear masks. Distancing and outdoor activities are Required. Additional guidance for implementing YA activities in the Return to Activities protocol for young children.
School-based Activities	School-based activities led by schools are considered separate from this framework and should comply with guidance from schools/districts.
Fundraising Events	Fundraising events are considered separate from this framework and should comply with any local regulations and local guidelines with additional guidance for athlete leaders serving in an official capacity to complete the Code of Conduct and Risk Form and maintain masking and distancing protocols. There is a template for a General Waiver of Liability, Assumption of Risk, and Indemnity (US example) available for these events.

NOTE: In all levels, and under "Stay at Home" Orders, virtual activities should be offered to those individuals who may be unable to attend in-person. For all participants who are unable to comply with this guidance, the individual's circumstances should be assessed, and alternative accommodations should be offere