



Special Olympics
South Dakota



ATHLETE HANDBOOK

Bocce

2021

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Special Olympics South Dakota



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Dear Special Olympics Athlete,

Congratulations on becoming a part of Special Olympics South Dakota (SOSD)!

Through your commitment to Special Olympics and its programs, we challenge you to train and compete in all sports you desire. We also challenge you to find your voice and to help us shape and grow SOSD. There are many exciting ways to be an athlete and a leader, so be sure to ask your coach or the Special Olympics office for more resources.

By participating in sports, physical fitness, and health education programs, you will increase self-confidence and social skills, improve physical and motor skills, and have more opportunities to grow as a person. This handbook is designed to introduce SOSD to you and to provide general information needed as an athlete.

We wish you luck, and can't wait to see you out on the field and in the community!



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1. Competition

The state is divided into four Areas. The city in which you live will determine which Area competitions you attend.

Northeast (NE) - Aberdeen, Huron, Watertown, and the surrounding communities

Southeast (SE) - Brookings, Mitchell, Sioux Falls, Yankton, and the surrounding communities

Black Hills (BH) - Custer, Rapid City, Spearfish, and the surrounding communities

Central (C) - Pierre, Mission, Winner, and the surrounding communities. These delegations do not have dedicated Area competitions to attend. In other words, you can choose where you wish to go.

For those who qualify, there are also State competitions held in the following sports:

State Basketball Tournament - Team (Traditional & Unified), Cheerleading (Traditional & Unified), and Skills (Individual & Team)

State Summer Games - Swimming (Traditional & Unified), Powerlifting, Volleyball, Soccer (Traditional & Unified), Soccer Skills, Racewalking, and Track & Field (Traditional & Unified)

State Equestrian

Fall Classic - Bocce (Traditional & Unified), Softball (Traditional & Unified), and Softball Skills

State Traditional Bowling

State Unified Bowling

Eligibility to participate in these events will depend on you meeting all of the training requirements and rules developed by your Delegation or Team.

Please Note: Delegations and Teams may choose to NOT participate in events. There could be many reasons for this, including the availability of coaches, finances, and roster numbers.

2. Practices / Training Requirements

The time, place, duration, and content of your practices will be established by your program leadership and can vary rather significantly from program to program. However, rest assured your coaches have completed the required certification course work and have demonstrated competence in coaching their sport. The following are general training expectations set forth by the State Office:

- Bowling: A minimum of five 3-game series or a total of 15 games over a minimum of 8 weeks.
- Winter Games: A minimum of 15 hours over a minimum of 8 weeks.
- Basketball: A minimum of 15 hours over a minimum of 8 weeks.
- Summer Games: A minimum of 15 hours over a minimum of 8 weeks. The number of hours required would be divided among the number of sports in which you are participating; for example 3 sports - 5 hrs per sport / 2 sports - 7.5 hrs per sport / 1 sport - 15 hours.
- Equestrian: A minimum of 15 hours over a minimum of 8 weeks.

- Fall Classic: A minimum of 15 hours over a minimum of 8 weeks. The number of hours required would be divided among the number of sports in which you are participating; for example 2 sports - 7.5 hrs per sport / 1 sport - 15 hours.

3. Unified Sports

There are two kinds of teams in Special Olympics, Traditional and Unified. Everyone on a Traditional Team is a Special Olympics Athlete. On a Unified Team, some of the players have a disability and some do not.

4. Athletes 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 are expected to observe 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 preliminary competition just to get into an easier finals division.

Responsibility for My Actions

I will not make inappropriate or unwanted physical, verbal, or sexual advances on others.

I will not smoke or vape in non-smoking areas.

I will not drink alcohol or use illegal drugs at Special Olympics events.

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, I will be subject to a range of consequences by my Program or a Games Organizing Committee for a World Games, up to and including not being allowed to participate.

5. You Know What I mean?

People often use short-cuts when speaking and writing about Special Olympics.

DQ = Disqualification. An athlete will receive only a participation ribbon when, during competition, a judge determines a rules infraction has occurred.

GOC = Games Organizing Committee. For every State event we host, there is a group of people from the host city who help organize the event.

HA = Healthy Athletes. At our State Summer Games, we provide health screenings to athletes.

HOD = Head of Delegation. This is the person in charge of your delegation/team.

ID = Intellectual Disability. All athletes participating in Special Olympics have an ID.

LETR = Law Enforcement Torch Run. These are people who help raise money for SOSD.

SO or SOI = Special Olympics and Special Olympics, Inc. The preferred name is Special Olympics.

SOSD = Special Olympics South Dakota. SOSD is a state program of Special Olympics. The State Office is located in Sioux Falls.

UP = Unified Partners. These are players on teams who do not have an ID.

YA = Young Athletes. These are future Special Olympics athletes who are ages 2 - 7.

6. Application for Participation in Special Olympics South Dakota

To participate in Special Olympics, you must complete Form A: Application for Participation in Special Olympics South Dakota. This form contains the following components:

- ⇒ Your contact information
- ⇒ Contact information for a parent/guardian
- ⇒ Health insurance information
- ⇒ Physical exam that must be completed by a medical professional every three years
- ⇒ A release signed by either you or a parent / guardian
- ⇒ Once this form is completed, you should give it to your HOD. They will give a copy to the State Office.
- ⇒ If you should get injured or become ill at a Special Olympics event and should require the care of a medical professional, your HOD should bring this document with you.

7. Concussions

Defining a Concussion

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury caused when you get hit on the head or from a bunch of smaller blows to the head. Concussions can also occur from a blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth—causing the brain to bounce around or twist within the skull. Although concussions are usually not life-threatening, their effects can be serious, therefore, proper attention must be paid to individuals suspected of sustaining a concussion.

Suspected or Confirmed Concussion

If a coach or official thinks you have sustained a concussion in a practice, game, or competition, you will be removed

from practice, play, or competition at that time. If a qualified medical professional is available on-site to render an evaluation, that person shall have final authority as to whether or not a concussion is suspected. If applicable, your parent or guardian should be made aware that the participant is suspected of sustaining a concussion.

Return to Play

If you have been removed from practice, play or competition due to a suspected concussion, you may not participate in Special Olympics sports activities until either of the following occurs A) at least seven consecutive days have passed since you were removed from play and a currently licensed, qualified medical professional* provides written clearance for the participant to return to practice, play and competition or B) a currently licensed, qualified medical professional determines you did not suffer a concussion and provides written clearance for you to return to activities immediately. Written clearance in either of the scenarios above shall become a permanent record.

*A qualified medical professional is defined as a person who is registered, certified, licensed, or otherwise recognized in law, by the State of South Dakota, to provide medical treatment and is trained and experienced in the evaluation, management, and care of concussions.

8. Abuse

Your health, safety, and well-being are of the highest concern to those in your Special Olympics family (Coaches, chaperones, staff, and volunteers). If you should ever feel unsafe or mistreated, we urge you to seek the assistance of a family member or a trusted member of your Special Olympics family.

9. Competition Readiness

To compete at your best you need to be prepared!

1. Proper sports equipment: For example, you will need a softball glove that fits your hand.
2. Uniform or sports clothing: Blue jeans are not appropriate for competition. Your shoelaces should be tied and you should be wearing sports socks.
3. Proper sports shoes: If you wear cowboy boots while competing in basketball, for example, the possibility of injuring an ankle is quite high. Plus, you won't look like a serious athlete.
4. Minimal or no jewelry.
5. Hair is out of your face.
6. Sunscreen on exposed skin.
7. Eat a healthy snack or meal within 2-3 hours of the event.
8. Drink one bottle of water within an hour of the event.
9. Warm-up before the event.

10. Year-round Fitness

Staying fit and healthy should not end when your latest State event is over. It is very important for you to set fitness goals and strive to fulfill them. Here are some ideas:

1. Work out or go for a walk at least 5 times per week.

2. Eat fast food no more than 3 times per week.
3. Get 8 hours of sleep per night.
4. Drink 5 large glasses of water per day.
5. Do not drink soda... even diet soda.
6. Eat 5 fruits and/or vegetables every day.

11. Athlete Leadership

Inclusion starts with Athlete Leadership! What does the word “inclusion” mean? Many things, but as it applies to Special Olympics it means:

- A. You should have the opportunity to enjoy the same experiences as people without an ID, and;
- B. You should have the same opportunities to contribute to SO through the sharing of your talents and gifts outside of competition.

The following are roles athletes can and should be filling:

1. Athlete Leadership Council
2. Coaches
3. Committee Members
4. Fund-raisers
5. Games Organizing Committee Members
6. Global Messengers (Giving Speeches)
7. Health Promoters
8. Officials
9. Photographers
10. Reporters
11. SOSD Board of Directors
12. Volunteers

For more information regarding any of these roles, contact the person listed on the back of this document.

12. Fundraising

It takes a lot of money to put on Special Olympics events. You can help your local program as well as the State with this. We strongly encourage you to attend fundraising events in your community and actively help out when applicable.

For you to perform at your best, you need to know the rules of the game. Look for Athlete Handbooks for all of your sports.

Special Olympics South Dakota Sports Rules - Bocce

Court And Equipment

1. The Court should measure 12 feet by 60 feet.
2. The court surface may be composed of stone dust, dirt, clay, grass, or artificial surface.
3. Lines that are 2 inches wide should be marked on all courts for the following:
 - ⇒ Foul line for pointing and shooting - 10 feet from the backboards on both ends of the court.
 - ⇒ Half-court marker – 30 feet from backboards. This is the minimum distance the pallina is played at the start of the frame. During play, the position of the pallina may change as a result of normal play; however, the pallina may never come to rest before the half-court line or the frame is considered dead.
 - ⇒ The foul lines and the half-court line should be drawn from sideboard to sideboard.

Equipment

1. Bocce balls may be manufactured of wood or a composition material and must be of equal size.
2. Official tournament ball sizes may be from 4.20 inches to 4.33 inches in diameter.
3. The color of the balls is immaterial provided that the four balls of one team are clearly and visibly distinct from the four balls of the opposing team.
4. The pallina must not be larger than 2.5 inches or smaller than 1.875 inches in diameter and should be of a color visibly distinct from both teams' bocce ball colors.
5. A measuring device may be any device that can accurately measure the distance between two objects, and is acceptable to tournament officials.

The Game

1. **Game length** – The length of a standard game is 30 minutes or the first team to score 12 points. SOSD reserves the right to establish shorter length of games.
2. **Bocce balls** – There are four balls to a side or team, and are generally made in two colors.
3. **Coin toss** – A coin toss by a referee will determine which team has the pallina and choice of ball color.
4. **Three attempt rule** – The team possessing the pallina will have three attempts at placing the pallina beyond the 30-foot line and before the 10-foot line on the opposite end. If these three attempts are unsuccessful, the opposing team will have one opportunity to place the pallina. If this attempt is unsuccessful, the referee will place the pallina in the center of the court at the 50-foot mark. However, at no time does a team lose its earned pallina advantage of being able to deliver the first ball.
5. **Sequence of play** – The pallina is rolled or tossed by a member of the team having won the coin toss to start the game. The player tossing the pallina must deliver the first ball. The opposing team will then deliver their bocce balls until the point is taken or they have exhausted their four balls. This “nearest ball” rule governs the sequence of played balls. The side whose ball is the closest to the pallina is called the “in” ball and the opposing side the “out” ball. Whenever a team gets “in”, it steps aside and allows the “out” team to deliver.
6. **Initial point** – It is always incumbent upon the team with the pallina advantage to establish the initial point. Example: Team A tosses the pallina and delivers the first ball. Team B elects to hit Team A's ball out of position. In doing so, both balls (Team A's and Team B's) fly out of the court, leaving only the pallina in the court. It is incumbent upon Team A to re-establish the initial point.
7. **Ball delivery** – A team has the option of rolling, tossing, bouncing, banking, etc., its ball down the court, provided it does not go out of bounds or the player does not violate the foul markers. A player also has the option of hitting out

any ball in play in trying to obtain a point or decrease the opposing team's points. A player can grip the ball by placing his/her hand over or under the ball as long as the ball is released in an underhand delivery. An underhand delivery is defined as releasing the ball below the waist.

*SOSD staff or the event manager/tournament director shall have the discretion to allow certain modifications/interpretations of the ball delivery based upon a physical disability.

8. **Number of balls played by a player** – In singles, each player will play four balls. In unified doubles/traditional doubles, each player will play two balls. The sequence of players does not matter. (NOTE: In SD, we play doubles only.)

Coaching (rules during play)

1. Strategy discussions with any athlete and/or partner by the coach are prohibited once the match begins. Athletes/unified partners may discuss strategy with each other outside the court during the match but once one of them enters the court, no further strategy discussions, "coaching", are allowed.
2. If an official determines that a coach/partner/spectator is violating this rule, the official may sanction the offending individual. Sanctions may include: verbal warning, citing the coach/partner with unsportsmanlike conduct, or expulsion from the game.

Scoring

1. At the end of each frame (when both teams have exhausted all balls), scoring will be determined as follows: points are awarded to the team whose balls are closer to the pallina than the closest ball of the opposing team.
2. At the end of the frame, the referee announces the winning points and color to the players outside the court at the pallina end and before the balls are removed, the referee should look to the players for agreement.
3. The players (not coaches or spectators) have a right to request a measurement if the players disagree with the referee.
4. Measurements are taken from the center side of the bocce ball to the center side of the pallina.
5. The scoring team for each frame will also win the pallina advantage for the subsequent frame.
6. **Ties during frame** – If two opposing balls are equally distant from the pallina (tied), the team that rolled last will continue to roll until the tie is broken. Example: Team A rolls a ball toward the pallina and establishes the point. Then Team B rolls its ball toward the pallina, and the referee determines they are both exactly the same distance from the pallina. Team B must continue to roll until it has a point closer than Team A's ball. If Team B does roll up to the point, and Team A hits that ball out re-establishing a tie, Team A must continue to roll until the tie is broken.
7. **Ties at the end of a frame** – If the two balls closest to the pallina belong to opposing teams and are tied, no points will be awarded. The pallina returns to the team that last delivered it. Play resumes from the end of the court from which the frame was last played.
8. **Winning score** – Two-player team (two balls per player): either the first team to score 12 points or the team that is ahead after 30 minutes. SOSD reserves the right to establish different point and/or time rules.

PENALTIES

Enforcement of penalties – Immediately upon a determination by the official that a foul has been committed, the official will notify both teams and inform them of the penalty imposed. The team fouled against has the option to decline any penalty imposed by the official and accept the lie of the ball(s) and continues playing. The ruling of the official is final.

Specific Fouls

1. **Foul-line fouls** – The foremost part of the specific foul line will not be surpassed by any part of the player’s foot, or any apparatus used by an athlete such as a wheelchair, crutch, cane, walker, etc. after the ball is released and before the ball touches any part of the playing field in front of the specific foul line. The penalty for a player/team committing this foul will be to declare the specific ball dead. The referee will stop the ball just delivered before it reaches the pallina and other balls “in contention”, and remove it. If the just delivered ball comes into contact with the pallina and/or other balls “in contention” and they are moved from their original position, the referee will then place those balls back as close to their original position as close as possible, remove the just delivered ball and play continues.
2. **Player plays more than his/her allotted number of balls** – The ball in question is declared dead. The referee will stop the ball just delivered before it reaches the pallina and other balls “in contention” and remove it. If the just delivered ball comes into contact with the pallina and/or other balls “in contention” and they are moved from their original position, the referee will place those balls back as close to their original position as possible, remove the just delivered ball and play continues. This condition will exist when a player on a two-person team plays three balls instead of two. The remaining player on a two-player team will only have one ball to play.
3. **Illegal movement of a ball belonging to your team** – If a player moves one or more of his/her team’s balls, the balls are removed from the court and are considered dead.
4. **Illegal movement of an opponent’s ball** – If, after all eight balls have been thrown, a player moves one or more of his/her opponent’s balls, the opponent’s balls that were moved will be awarded one point each. If a player moves one or more of his/her opponent’s balls, and there are remaining unplayed balls, the referee will place the balls as close to their original position as possible and play continues.
5. **Illegal movement of the pallina by a player** – If the pallina is moved by a player, the opposite team will be awarded as many points as the number of live balls that were “in contention” plus the number of balls yet unplayed. If the team fouled against has no balls “in contention” and no balls remaining, the frame will be declared dead by the referee and started over at the same end.

Accidental or premature movement of balls and pallina by a referee

1. **Accidental movement of a ball or pallina during play (when more balls are yet to be played)** – The frame is considered dead and started over from the same end.
2. **Accidental movement of a ball or pallina after all balls have been played** – If the point or points were obvious to the referee, the points will be awarded. All uncertain points will not be awarded and the frame is considered dead and started over at the same end.

Interference with a ball in motion

1. **By one’s own team** – When a player interferes with his/her team’s ball in motion, the referee must declare the ball just delivered dead. The referee should seek to stop the ball before it reaches the pallina and other balls “in contention” and remove it. If the just released ball does come in contact with the pallina or other balls “in contention”, the referee should place the balls/pallina back as close as possible to their original position and play continues.
2. **By opponent’s team** – If a player interferes with an opponent’s ball in motion, the team fouled against has one of the following options:
 - ⇒ Play the ball over
 - ⇒ Declare the frame dead

⇒ Decline the penalty, accept the lie of the touched ball(s), and continues playing.

3. **With no disruption of position** – If a spectator, animal, or object interferes with a ball in motion and that ball does not touch another ball in play, it must be played over by the same player.
4. **With disruption of position** – If a spectator, animal, or object interferes with a ball in motion and that ball touches another ball already in play and “in contention” the frame is dead.
5. **Other disruption of play** – Any action which interferes with the position of the pallina or the ball of each team closest to the pallina renders the frame dead. If balls other than the pallina or the two opposing balls closest to it are moved, they may be replaced as close as possible to their original position by the two captains and referee.

Wrong color delivery

1. **Replaceable** – If a player delivers the wrong color ball, the ball may not be stopped by another player or the referee. The ball must be allowed to come to rest and replaced by the proper colored ball by the referee.
2. **Not replaceable** – If a player delivers a wrong color ball that cannot be replaced without disturbing another ball already in play the frame is declared dead and replayed from the same end.

Wrong rotation of play

1. **Initial point** – If a team wrongly delivers the pallina and its first ball, the referee will return the pallina and the first ball which was played out of the rotation. The referee will then ask the other color player or team to deliver the pallina when restarting the frame from the same end of the court.
2. **Subsequent rolls of the proper color in an incorrect sequence** – If a player delivers his/her ball when his/her team is “in” and the other team has balls left, the ball in question should, if possible, be stopped by the referee before it reaches the balls “in contention”, be declared dead and removed from the court. If it reaches the balls “in contention”, the referee should replace the pallina and nearest balls to where they were before the out of rotation delivery took place.

Other circumstances

Broken ball – if a ball or pallina should break, the frame is considered dead. Replacement of the ball or pallina is the responsibility of the Tournament Director.

Court grooming – All courts should be groomed before the tournament. Courts may not be reconditioned during the game. Obstacles or objects such as stones, cups, etc., may be removed during the game.

Moving ball or pallina – No player may play his/her ball until the pallina or another ball has come to a complete rest.

Mechanical aid – If due to a medical or physical condition an athlete requires the use of a mechanical aid to spot the position of the pallina, discretion can be given to the Event Manager/Tournament director for this to be permitted. Any mechanical aid such as a cone or marker should be placed behind the pallina and be removed once the ball is released from the athlete’s hand. If a bell is used it should be rung while held over the pallina.

DEFINITION OF PLAYING TERMS

1. **Live ball** – any ball in play that has been delivered.
2. **Dead ball** – any ball that has been disqualified or forfeited. A ball may be disqualified if:
⇒ It is the result of a penalty.

- ⇒ It has gone out of the court.
- ⇒ It has come in contact with a person or object which is out of the court.
- ⇒ It hits the top of the court boards.
- ⇒ It hits the covering over the courts or supports thereof.
- ⇒ It is the result of a foot foul.
- ⇒ It is the result of an illegal movement of your team's ball.
- ⇒ It is the result of interference with a ball in motion by one's own team.

Player behavior

1. **Court courtesy** – Whenever possible, a player should move off the court when an opponent is playing.
2. **Attire** – it is recommended that all athletes wear closed toed shoes and dress appropriately and respectfully.

Sportsmanship – Good sportsmanship is both the coach's and athlete's commitment to fair play, ethical behavior, and integrity. In perception and practice, sportsmanship is defined as those qualities which are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. Below we highlight a few focus points and ideas on how to teach and coach sportsmanship to your athletes. Lead by example.

1. Competitive effort

- ⇒ Put forth maximum effort during each event.
- ⇒ Practice the skills with the same intensity as you would perform them in competition.
- ⇒ Always finish a match/event: Never quit.

2. Fair Play at All Times

- ⇒ Always comply with the rules.
- ⇒ Demonstrate sportsmanship and fair play at all times.
- ⇒ Respect the decision of the officials at all times.
- ⇒ Respect your opponents at all times.