



COACHES' and VOLUNTEERS'

CODE OF CONDUCT

Special Olympics Northern California and Nevada (SONC/SONV) volunteers and coaches are models whose behavior should serve as a positive example for all athletes. Their behavior should reflect a concern that the fairest and most positive competitive experience is equally available to every Special Olympics athlete in each training or competition. The coach/volunteer has the unique opportunity to influence the development and personal growth of many individuals. For this reason, it is important that the coach/volunteer adhere to the standards of ethical decision making and teaching. In addition, it is the position of SONC/SONV that each volunteer/coach shall agree to:

HAVE RESPECT FOR OTHERS

- I will respect the rights, dignity and worth of athletes, other coaches and volunteers, SONC/SONV staff members, and friends and spectators in Special Olympics.
- I will treat everyone equally regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or ability.
- I will be a positive role model for the athletes I interact with.
- I will dress and act in an appropriate manner at all times.

ENSURE A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE

- I will ensure that for each athlete I encounter, the time spent with Special Olympics is a positive experience.
- I will respect the talent, developmental stage and goals of each athlete.
- I will ensure each athlete competes in events that challenge that athlete's potential and are appropriate to that athlete's ability.
- I will be fair, considerate and honest with athletes and communicate with athletes using simple, clear language.
- I will ensure that accurate scores are provided for entry of an athlete into any event.
- I will instruct each athlete to perform to the best of the his or her ability at all preliminaries/heats and finals in accordance with the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules.

ACT PROFESSIONALLY AND TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS/HER ACTIONS

- My language, manner, punctuality, preparation and presentation will demonstrate high standards.
- I will display control, respect, dignity and professionalism to all involved in Special Olympics, including athletes, other coaches and volunteers, opponents, officials, administrators, SONC/SONV staff members, parents, spectators and the media.
- I will encourage athletes to demonstrate the same qualities.

- I will not drink alcohol, smoke or take illegal drugs while representing Special Olympics at training sessions or during competitions.
- I will not engage in any form of personal abuse or inappropriate contact or relationship towards athletes, other coaches and volunteers, SONC/SONV staff members, or friends and spectators in Special Olympics, including verbal, physical or emotional abuse.
- I will be alert to any form of abuse from other sources directed toward athletes or others in my care.
- I will abide by the Special Olympics policy that prohibits volunteers/coaches from dating athletes.

PROVIDE QUALITY SERVICE TO THE ATHLETES

If I am a coach:

- I will seek continued improvement through performance evaluation and ongoing coach education.
- I will be knowledgeable about the Sports Rules and skills of the sport(s) I coach.
- I will provide a planned training program.
- I will keep copies of the registration, training, and competition records for each athlete I coach.
- I will follow the Special Olympics and National Governing Body rules for my sport(s) coached, as well as all SONC/SONV policies and procedures as amended.

ENSURE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF ATHLETES AND VOLUNTEERS

- I will ensure that the equipment and facilities I encounter are safe to use.
- I will ensure that the equipment, rules, training and environment are appropriate for the age and ability of the athletes.
- I will review each athlete's application and be aware of any limitations on that athlete's participation noted on that form.
- I will encourage athletes and volunteers to seek medical advice when needed.
- I will report any emergencies to the appropriate authorities after first taking immediate action to ensure the health and safety of those involved.
- I will maintain the same interest and support towards sick and injured athletes.
- I will allow further participation in training and competition only when appropriate.

Should the behaviors and/or abilities of any volunteer/coach or other faction of a school/organization violate either the principles stated above (including the SONC/SONV policies and procedures as amended) or the philosophy of the Special Olympics movement, then any of the following actions may be taken by SONC/SONV in its sole discretion:

1. The volunteer/coach may be notified by official warning of the undesirable behavior and be requested to remedy the situation immediately in order to continue his or her participation in Special Olympics;
2. The volunteer/coach may be requested to withdraw personally or with his/her team from the remainder of any Special Olympics event or tournament;
3. The volunteer/coach or sponsoring school/organization may be suspended from participating in any or all Special Olympics activities or events for a specified period of time; and/or
4. The volunteer/coach or sponsoring school/organization may be permanently prohibited from participating in any or all Special Olympics activities or events.