

Participation in Special Olympics is both an honor and a privilege. The primary purpose of this code of conduct is to establish a standard for athlete and partner behavior that will ensure the safety and well being of all athletes, partners, coaches, and volunteers involved in training and competition. All athletes and partners are expected to abide by this code of conduct established by Special Olympics Illinois:

Athletes and partners agree to the following code:

1. Commit to train regularly.
2. Show respect for those volunteers, coaches, officials, and event coordinators who, through their time and efforts, provide Special Olympics opportunities.
3. Show respect for all competitors and display good sportsmanship throughout the Special Olympics event.
4. Show respect for all competition facilities and equipment.
5. Commit to knowing and following the rules and policies for all Special Olympics events.
6. Participate honestly and with maximum effort in all preliminary trials and/or finals. Athletes and partners will not “hold back” in preliminary trials just to get into less competitive final divisions.
7. Refrain from the use of profanity or verbal abuse toward anyone associated with the Special Olympics event.
8. Refrain from the use of alcohol, illegal drugs, and any other controlled substances.
9. Refrain from the use of tobacco in restricted areas.
10. Refrain from inappropriate or unwanted physical, verbal, or sexual advances on others.
11. Refrain from any form of personal abuse (verbal, physical, emotional, etc.) toward coaches, athletes, unified partners, family members, volunteers and spectators. Such behavior will not be tolerated by Special Olympics Illinois.
12. Refrain from dating or having a relationship with any Special Olympics volunteer or staff member. Please refer to the Volunteer/Athlete Dating Policy for complete details regarding this policy.
13. Refrain from using drugs for the purpose of improving performance.
14. Refrain from violent or disruptive behavior.
15. Refrain from any illegal activities.

Should the behavior of any athlete or partner be contrary to this code of conduct, then one or more of the following steps may be taken by the Games Committee, Sports Officials, and/or Special Olympics Illinois:

1. The athlete or partner and coach will be notified of the undesirable behavior and be requested to remedy the situation for continued participation.
2. The athlete or partner will be requested to withdraw from the remainder of the event.

In cases of extreme or repeated behavior contrary to this code of conduct, Special Olympics Illinois may:

1. Prevent the athlete or partner from participating in Special Olympics for a specified period of time.
2. Prevent the athlete or partner from participating in Special Olympics indefinitely.

Specific complaints against an athlete or partner must be made to the appropriate Region Director. For Region events, the Region Director will inform their Senior Director of the situation. For state events, the Region Director will inform the Senior Director – Central Group. Senior Directors will make proper notification to the COO, who will make all final decisions regarding athlete or partner participation.