



Special Olympics Ohio

Swimming Manual

All Special Olympics Ohio Swimming meets are run according to the USA Swimming Rules. Any modifications to those rules shall be found in this manual.

OFFICIAL EVENTS

The SOOH Swimming season runs October through February. The State Tournament is held each year in mid-February. To qualify for the State Swimming Competition athletes must be in a training program for at least 8 weeks prior to the State Competition and compete at a Regional Qualifying swim meet.

Special Olympics Ohio provides a range of events to offer athletes of varying abilities the opportunity to compete. The following is a list of official events available in Special Olympics Ohio.

- 25M Breaststroke
- 25M Backstroke
- 25M Freestyle
- 25M Butterfly
- 4 x 25M Medley Relay (Traditional & Unified)
- 4 x 25 Free style Relay (Traditional & Unified)
- 50M Breaststroke
- 50M Backstroke
- 50M Freestyle
- 50M Butterfly
- 4 x 50 M Free Relay (Traditional and Unified)
- 100M Breaststroke
- 100M Backstroke
- 100M Freestyle
- 100M Butterfly
- 100M Individual Medley
- 200M Backstroke
- 200M Freestyle
- 200M Breaststroke
- 200M IM

Special Olympics Ohio

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Created by the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation for the benefit of persons with intellectual disabilities



MEET EVENT ORDER

This is subject to change based on the number of athletes we have registered for each event

Session 1:

1. 200M Individual Medley – Female
2. 200M Individual Medley – Male
3. 50M Breaststroke – Female
4. 50M Breaststroke – Male
5. 25M Backstroke – Female
6. 25M Backstroke – Male
7. 200M Backstroke - Female
8. 200M Backstroke – Male
9. 50M Butterfly – Female
10. 50M Butterfly - Male
11. 100M Freestyle – Female
12. 100M Freestyle – Male
13. 25M Butterfly- Female
14. 25M Butterfly- Male
15. 4x25M Medley Relay- Unified
16. 4x25M Medley Relay- Traditional

Session 2:

17. 100M Individual Medley – Female
18. 100M Individual Medley - Male
19. 50M Freestyle – Female
20. 50M Freestyle - Male
21. 100M Butterfly – Female
22. 100M Butterfly– Male
23. 200M Breaststroke – Female
24. 200M Breaststroke – Male
25. 25M Breaststroke – Female
26. 25M Breaststroke – Male
27. 4 x 25 Free style Relay – Unified
28. 4 x 25 Free style – Traditional

Session 3:

29. 200M Freestyle- Female
30. 200M Freestyle Male
31. 100M Backstroke – Female
32. 100M Backstroke – Male



33. 25M Freestyle – Female
34. 25M Freestyle – Male
35. 100M Breaststroke - Female
36. 100M Breaststroke - Male
37. 50M Backstroke-Female
38. 50M Backstroke- Male
39. 4 x 50 M Freestyle Relay - Unified
40. 4 x 50 M Free Relay - Traditional

RULES OF COMPETITION

Athletes are limited to entering into a maximum of 3 individual events and 2 relay events (1 traditional and 1 unified only). Swimmers may be entered in a Traditional Relay and a Unified Sports Relay, however athletes may not be entered in two traditional relays.

- The Meet Referee shall have full control and authority over all officials, approve their assignments and instruct them regarding all Special Olympics features or regulations related to the competitions. He/she shall enforce all rules and decisions of the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules and USA Swimming rules and shall decide all questions relating to the actual conduct of the meet, the final settlement of which is not otherwise covered by these rules.
- Standing on the bottom for the purpose of resting during freestyle events or during the freestyle portion of the medley events shall not disqualify a competitor. Walking on or Jumping from the bottom shall result in a disqualification.
- Any athlete who has been disqualified in an event at their Regional Meet may not enter in that event at the State Swim Meet.
- Swimmers who have a hearing or vision impairment may apply, at registration, for an 'A' Exception Code allowing them to have an assistant present on pool deck during the start. Vision impaired swimmers can also apply, at registration, for a 'T' Exception Code allowing them to have a Tapper.
- No competitor shall be permitted to use or wear any device that may aid his/her speed, buoyancy or endurance during a competition (except flotation events) such as webbed gloves, flippers, fins, etc.). Goggles may be worn by the swimmer.
- Swimmers may be assisted from the water upon request. Starts may be from the starting block, beside the starting block or from in-water. For in-water starts the athlete shall place one hand on the end of the pool or hold the starting block with one hand. Two hands shall be used for backstroke starts. (B for Block, D for Deck, and W for Water should be marked on the athletes hand or wrist band to know the starting position)

Equipment

- Timing system: Electronic touch pad, Button Back Up, Manual Watches. Electronic Touch pads will be used of the official time, electronic press buttons will be the secondary, and stop watch will be used last when determining the official time.



- Flags should be located 5 meters from each end of the pool to indicate distance to the finish, especially in respect to backstroke events. Flags should not be removed during competition or training sessions.

Relay Events

- There shall be four swimmers on each relay team.
- Each swimmer shall swim one-fourth the distance of the total relay. No swimmer shall swim more than one leg of any one relay.
- A relay team which combines genders to include both male and female swimmers shall compete as a male relay.
- Swimmers may be entered in a Traditional Relay and a Unified Sports Relay; however, athletes may not be entered in two traditional relays.
- Delegations may enter more than one relay team in each event for traditional and Unified Sports relays, however individual athletes may only be entered in a traditional relay and a Unified Sports Relay, as stated above.
- Relay swimmers should exit the pool as soon as possible following the completion of their relay leg. Relay swimmers who cannot exit the water immediately may be allowed to remain in the lane until all relays have finished so long as they do not interfere with the other swimmers or the timing equipment. A swimmer remaining in the water should move a short distance away from the end of the pool, close to the lane rope but shall not obstruct a swimmer in another lane. Obstruction of a swimmer in another lane shall cause the team to be disqualified.

Unified Sports Relay Events

- Each Unified Sports relay team shall consist of two athletes and two partners.
- Swimmers on a Unified Sports relay team may be assigned to swim in any order.
- Swimmers may be entered in a Traditional Relay and a Unified Sports Relay; however, athletes may not be entered in two traditional relays.
- Unified Partners may enter in more than one Unified Relay; however, they cannot enter on more than one team in the same event. For example, Unified Partners may enter in to 25M Freestyle relay and the 25M Medley Relay but they cannot enter on more than one team in the 25M Freestyle Relay.
- Delegations may enter more than one relay team in each event for traditional and Unified Sports relays., as long as the same Unified Partners are not entered on more than one team in that specific event.
- Athletes and Unified Partners will be quoted separately.



ALTERNATES

- No alternate will be allowed for the individual events. Swimmers may be listed as an alternate on multiple relays, however they only may be used for one traditional relay or one unified relay.
- Coaches must declare the use of any alternates in relays no later than at check-in on Saturday morning.

MAXIMUM EFFORT - PERFORMANCE DISCREPANCY

- An athlete who exceeds a time of 15 percent better than the time recorded for divisioning or a reported time shall be disqualified. This applies to all events.
- It is the responsibility of the coach to submit an improved performance time, if the time recorded in the divisioning competition is not a true reflection of the athlete's ability.
- An athlete who is disqualified for a violation of the Maximum Effort rule shall be presented with a participation ribbon.
- Where a divisioning round of competition is not offered at an event the coach must have the opportunity to update a swimmers submitted time prior to the event. The coach is responsible for ensuring that all times submitted are the fastest time recorded for the swimmer at the time of submission. Competition management are responsible for setting the deadline for submission of all updated times.

MAXIMUM EVENT TIMES

When registering athletes for the state competition, you must use qualifying times from the sanctioned Regional Meet. Below is the chart for the maximum times for each event. If an athlete's times for these events exceeds the times listed they will not be eligible to enter into that event at State. Maximum event times will not be applied at Regional Events. Any athlete who has been disqualified in an event at their Regional Meet may not enter in that event at the State Swim Meet.

Event	Maximum Time	Event	Maximum Time
25M Freestyle	1:20 Minutes	25M Backstroke	1:20 Minutes
25M Breaststroke	1:20 Minutes	25M Butterfly	1:20 Minutes
50M Freestyle	2:00 Minutes	50M Backstroke	2:00 Minutes
50M Breaststroke	2:00 Minutes	50M Butterfly	2:00 Minutes
100M Freestyle	4:00 Minutes	100M Backstroke	4:00 Minutes
100M Breaststroke	5:00 Minutes	100M Butterfly	5:00 Minutes
100M Individual Medley	4:00 Minutes	200M Backstroke	6:00 Minutes



200M Freestyle	6:00 Minutes	200M Breaststroke	7:00 Minutes
200M Individual Medley	6:00 Minutes	4 x 25M Medley Relay	4:00 Minutes
4 x 25M Freestyle Relay	4:00 Minutes	4x50M Freestyle Relay	5:00 Minutes

PERSONNEL

Where possible all Officials (including the referee, timers and judges) should be certified by the respective governing body. Where this is not possible, all Officials must receive appropriate training.

1. Event Director/Meet Director/Games Director

a. Responsibilities of Event Director

- i. The Event Director shall have the overall responsibility for the Special Olympics swimming practice sessions or events.
- ii. Providing an orientation to all swimming personnel before the Special Olympics session or event.
- iii. Coordinating the facility with host agency prior to arrival. Ensuring that necessary supervisory personnel are available.
- iv. Preparing or assuring that an emergency action plan is in place as described in Section 5: Safety Considerations.
- v. Examining the facility to ensure that the minimum quality standards are present in the following areas for each event:
 1. Safety equipment
 2. Venue Flow of People
 3. Sanitary water conditions
 4. Safe environmental factors
- vi. When a beach or lake is used for a Special Olympics event, the Event Director shall take extra precautions to ensure that safe swimming practices are followed. Note: All participants, including athletes, coaches and volunteers who participate in any boating activity, whether in a pool or on open water, are required to wear a certified personal flotation device (PFD) at all times when inside the boat.
- vii. Ensuring that lifeguards are aware of Special Olympics athletes who may have a history of seizures.
- viii. Medical restrictions exist for some athletes (for example, Down syndrome athletes diagnosed with Atlanto-Axial Instability competing in butterfly, individual medley events and dive starts). Prior to allowing athletes to compete in these events, the Event Director should review the General Rules section on eligibility.



2. Technical Delegate

- a. The Technical Delegate shall represent SOI as the key sport advisor for a specific sport and shall be responsible for ensuring that the GOC of the Games correctly interprets, implements and enforces Special Olympics Sports Rules and modifications, the rules of the relevant IF and current rule changes.
- b. The Technical Delegate shall advise the GOC on the technical requirements of the specific sport to ensure a safe, quality and dignified sports environment.
- c. The Technical Delegate shall be the final authority on each of these matters.

3. Meet Referee Judges (stroke and turn judges)

4. Chief Timekeeper

5. Timekeepers (refer to 2. Equipment- 2c Timing System.)

6. Starter

7. Announcer

8. Results – control desk personnel

9. Finish Judges (If 3 Timekeepers per lane and electronic timing cannot be supplied)

10. Lifeguard

- a. Lifeguard Qualifications
 - i. Current lifeguard certificate
 - ii. Current CPR certificate
 - iii. Current standard first aid certificate (or equivalent)

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

All Special Olympics swimming training, recreational sessions and competition events shall be conducted in accordance with the following practices, rules and procedures in order to ensure the safety and well-being of all Special Olympics athletes, coaches and volunteers:

- Basic Rules
 - There shall be at least one certified lifeguard on duty for every 25 swimmers in the water.
 - The sole function of the lifeguard shall be to guard. If no relief lifeguard is available, the pool must be cleared, even for a short duration, when a lifeguard must leave the pool side.
 - The Event Director will review the Emergency Action Plan prior to each occasion. There shall be enough coaches in accordance with FINA or program NGB guidelines.
 - Athlete medical history forms shall be on site and relevant information shall be discussed with the lifeguard or medical personnel on duty in advance of the aquatic activity.
 - Pool depths must be marked and easily visible.
 - The minimum depth of the pool for racing starts shall meet FINA or NGB specifications.



- It is recommended that all starting blocks meet FINA or NGB specifications.
- Safety lines must be in place to divide shallow and deep water areas during recreational aquatic activities.
- A pool facility shall not be used unless a satisfactory inspection rating is received prior to any Special Olympics participant entering the water.
- An athlete with Down syndrome who has been diagnosed with Atlanto-Axial Instability may not participate in Butterfly events, Individual Medley events, diving starts or diving. For additional information and the procedure for waiver of this restriction, please refer to Article I, Addendum F.
- If in the judgment of the referee or competition management an athlete's swimming competence that the athlete is not capable of completing the race distance and may even put his/her life in danger, the referee may, with the Technical Delegate's approval, require a test of swimming competence before the athlete is allowed to compete in any further swimming event or in any final.
- Emergency Action Plan
 - An Emergency Action Plan shall be in place prior to any Special Olympics participants entering the water for any reason, be it training, competition or recreation. The original plan should be written and reviewed by the staff on hand. The plan shall include the following:
 - The procedure for obtaining emergency medical support if a medical doctor, paraprofessional or medical support is not present.
 - The posts and areas of responsibilities for each lifeguard.
 - The procedure for obtaining weather information or weather watch information, particularly if the event is outside.
 - The procedure for reporting accidents.
 - The chain of command in case of a serious accident, including who is assigned to talk to the press.
 - The procedure for obtaining weather information particularly for Open Water swimming.
 - Other items as may be required by local programs.
- Supervisory Personnel Requirements
 - An adequate number of supervisory personnel shall be present at all swimming sessions, events or recreational activities. The type of personnel will vary in accordance with the following requirements:
 - Recreational Programs
 - Enough certified lifeguards to provide a minimum ratio of guards to swimmers of 1 per 25.
 - Training Programs
 - Enough certified lifeguards to provide a minimum ratio of guards to swimmers of 1 per 25.



- Enough coaches (preferably Special Olympics certified) to provide for adequate supervision and training of each athlete.

Competitions

- Enough certified lifeguards to provide a minimum ratio of guards to swimmers of 1 per 25.
- Enough supervision to provide for a minimum ratio of observer to swimmers of 1 per 2 for those swimmers who are prone to seizures.