

Return to Practice Guidelines

FALL SEASON

Valid for Athletics, Bocce, Flag Football Skills, MATP (@ home), Snowshoe, Swimming practice

Guiding Principals

1. The health and safety of all members of the Special Olympics community is paramount.
2. Participation is completely optional and we respect, understand and fully support anyone who is unable to or uncomfortable returning to practice.
3. Anyone considered high-risk (per the [COVID-19 Participant Risk Form & Code of Conduct](#)) is strongly discouraged from practicing in-person until there is little or no COVID in your community.
4. Guidance is based on current medical information and state guidelines and are subject to change as guidance evolves.

Guidelines

Allowable Activities:

- Each season SOCO will determine and communicate allowable sports and activities per season and teams may practice and participate in those sports only.
- If a coach would like to request a variance, please contact your Regional Manager.
- Local program funds may be spent on current SOCO approved sports and activities and related PPE expenses only (i.e. bocce, athletics, swimming, flag football, MATP, snowshoe).

Size & Frequency of Practice:

- Groups of 10 or fewer at a time, including coaches and athletes (multiple shifts are allowed)
- Recommend practicing no more than once per week

Pre-Practice Steps:

- Become familiar with these guidelines and resources below
- Work with SOCO Regional Managers to find a facility that will:
 - Accommodate your group while ensuring physical distancing guidelines are met
 - Ensure there is a designated space to isolate ill participants with cones or chairs
- Establish a plan for safe practice, which includes access to personal protective equipment (PPE) (see below) and physically distanced drills and activities
- Maintain a roster with contact information for all athletes and coaches, and be prepared to support SOCO and local public health contact tracing efforts if exposures occur
- Send these guidelines to participants and families in advance and ask athletes to bring personal equipment if possible
- Encourage [higher risk individuals](#) to adhere to guidelines and stay home
- Print "COVID-19 Waiver and Code of Conduct", "Sign-In Sheets" & Physical Distancing Signage

Upon Arrival at Practice, Everyone Must:

- Be wearing a mask
- Submit a signed "COVID-19 Waiver and Code of Conduct" (one / person, required each season)
- Have temperature taken using [touchless thermometer](#)
 - Fever equals temperature of 100.4°F/37.8°C +
 - If high, may offer one re-test after 5 minutes to ensure temperature is accurate

- Fill out sign-in sheet, including symptom tracker
 - Those with exposures/symptoms must go home with recommendation to get tested
- Use hand sanitizer or wash hands

During Practice

- Provide reminders on mask wearing at all times, physical distancing and proper hygiene
- Have [distancing signage](#) on display (on ground works)
- Set-up isolation area
 - If you or someone else becomes ill, move to isolation area, and send home
- Sanitize equipment before, during and after use (and avoid shared equipment if possible)
- Limit activities that are not conducive to physical distancing
- Spectators are discouraged but if present should be at least 6 feet from others

Coaches Submit to Regional Managers:

- **By End of 1st Week of Practice:** Sign-In Sheet (1st practice) & COVID-19 Waiver and Code of Conduct from each participant (coach, unified partner, athlete, etc.)
- **By End of Season:** Remaining weekly Sign-In Sheets

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) & Supplies Needed for Practice:

- [Touchless Thermometer](#)
- Hand Sanitizer
- Sanitizing Wipes or Spray
- Participant Sign-In Sheet (which includes symptom tracker) and Sanitized Pens
- COVID-19 Waiver and Code of Conduct
- [Physical Distancing Signage](#)
- Items to indicate physical spacing are encouraged (pool noodle, string, cones, tape, etc.)

How to Get PPE & Needed Supplies:

- Pick-up from SOCO Office
- Option to have PPE mailed by SOCO
- Teams can purchase supplies on own and SOCO will reimburse up to \$25
 - THERMOMETERS: Can be purchased using local program funds or SOCO will loan one for the season at no cost)

Masks

- Per the [State of Colorado Mask Mandate](#), all participants ages 10+ (athletes, coaches, volunteers, etc.) should wear a mask at all times during practice.
 - Breaks are allowed to catch your breath if separated from others.
- **What does it mean to be medically unable to tolerate a face covering:** This means a person who has trouble breathing or anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face-covering without assistance, according to CDC. [Read more from the CDC](#) about other reasons face coverings may not be possible in every situation or person.
- **While Swimming:** Athletes should take masks off while swimming, but must put it back on after.

Food & Beverages:

- All participants must bring their own beverages and water bottles must not be shared
- Hydration stations (water fountains, etc.) should not be utilized
- Do not share snacks and avoid snack breaks or meals during practice

If Someone becomes Ill During Practice:

- Direct individual to isolation area and keep them there until they are able to leave
- Activate plan to ensure other athletes receive instruction and direction
- Recommend person get [tested immediately](#) and adhere to [requirements for quarantine](#)
- Remind them to stay at home and NOT go to any activities until 14 days after exposure or after all of symptoms are gone (unless received clearance from a healthcare professional)

Protocols for Reporting if Someone Gets Ill

- Person who becomes ill should immediately alert coach and/or SOCO Regional Manager (RM)
- Coach must immediately alert SOCO RM and submit sign-in sheet from the most recent practice
- SOCO will alert [local public health agency](#) if they don't already know
- [SOCO will call and email all participants in close contact with the following message:](#)
 - "We were notified that someone within the Special Olympics Community that you were in contact with has been tested positive for COVID-19. Out of an abundance of caution we encourage you to begin self-quarantining & contact your healthcare provider to pursue any necessary medical care."
 - **NOTE:** *It is critically important that we respect all participant's privacy and thus SOCO will utilize the exact messaging above in the event that someone becomes ill.*
- Practice must be postponed for 14 days from last contact with ill participant

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Printable Resources (available at SpecialOlympicsCO.org/Coronavirus)

SOCO will happily mail copies of these resources if needed/requested

- [Physical Distancing Reminders Signage \(8.5 X 11"\) \(11" X 17"\) \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Stop the Spread of Germs Poster](#) (optional to print)
- [Participant Sign-In Sheet](#)
- [COVID-19 Waiver and Code of Conduct](#)
- [Return to Practice Guidelines](#) (this document)

Additional Resources:

- [State of Colorado Mask Order](#)
- [Higher Risk Individuals](#)
- [Testing for COVID](#)
- [Symptom Tracker](#)
- [What to Do if You are Sick and Requirements for Quarantine](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions on COVID-19. Read the article.](#)
- [Handwashing techniques. See the graphic and video.](#)

Additional Note: All athletes must have an active medical to participate