
SOIA COVID-19 FAQ SHEET



Point of Contact

Who do I contact with questions?

Please contact our Special Olympics Iowa (SOIA) COVID-19 representative: Dawn Criss, Senior Director of Sports & Programs dcriss@soiowa.org

Background

How was this protocol developed and who was consulted?

In order to address the complexity of this issue and our global movement, Special Olympics International (SOI) set up a process that allowed for, and will continue to allow for, subject matter expert and stakeholder input, with the expectation that multiple iterations of this guidance may be required.

First, SOI gathered guidance from the World Health Organization (WHO), US Center for Disease Control (CDC), multiple governments, sport's governing bodies, and other organizations. SOI also developed stakeholder input panels. Specifically, a COVID-19 medical advisory working group was convened. Input was sought from Program CEOs, staff and athletes, legal, and risk management, human resources, programmatic leads (sport, health, youth/schools, leadership), Global Medical Advisory Committee, and Regional Presidents. In addition, we had review by World Athletics/IPC (International Paralympic Committee), CDC, USOPC (US Olympics and Paralympic Committee) and others.

Phases and Timeline

What is the timeline for roll-out?

After delegations have completed all steps listed on the Special Olympics Iowa Return to Play, they can begin Phase 1, which means that all practices or team gatherings will consist of 10 or less participants. The SOIA guidance is intended as a minimum standard, not to replace any local regulations or guidance. If your local

community has more stringent restrictions in place, local delegations must follow those.

SOIA will also refer to governmental guidance and revert to earlier phases if COVID-19 transmission increases. For example, if SOIA were currently in Phase 1, but the local authorities determine that the community must resume “Stay at Home” orders, we will revert to Phase 0.

Is there any further guidance for events between 50 people (Phase 2) and no size restrictions (Phase 3)?

Additional guidance will be developed as needed.

Responsibility, Liability, and Third-Party Events

Does this protocol apply to events hosted by a third party but at which SOIA participants are invited to attend?

If the event is hosted by a third party and SOIA athletes or participants are being invited to attend, the third-party host organization should assume all responsibility. While SOIA would defer to the rules and regulations of the third-party host, it is recommended that local delegations understand the safety and health measures the host will be implementing in order to help participants determine if they would feel safe attending.

The possibility of high-risk conditions in populations within the Special Olympics movement should be conveyed to leaders/authorities.

Participants, parents, guardians and caregivers should be provided with education on SOIA guidelines and relevant acknowledgements or expectations of participants by the hosting party.

In Phase 1 and Phase 2 , does the number restriction include any non-Special Olympics staff may be running/employees of the venue/facility, or other members of the public at the same venue who are not part of our Special Olympics group, or just the Special Olympics participants?

If venue staff will not be interacting with the athletes and are not consistently within 6 feet/2 meters of the Special Olympics group, these facility staff would not count against your 10 or less limit. If the facility staff are mixing with the group and within 6 feet/2 meters during the activity and/or will be leading activities, then they should be counted in the number of participants.

In addition to SOIA guidance, of course, delegations will have to follow the guidance of the venue/facility (as well as the local authorities) if more stringent in terms of number of participants allowed within the venue/facility overall for Phase 1 and 2. If there are other groups in the space, it is the responsibility of the venue to follow local guidance to control and applicable venue capacity limits and/or physical distancing requirements amongst groups in the venue. However, if the venue is not operating in a safe manner, or in conjunction with the general infection control precautions, the Program should consider switching venue or ceasing activities, until they can be done safely.

COVID-19 Participant Code and Conduct and Risk Acknowledgement Form

Who should complete the COVID-19 Participant Code of Conduct and Risk Acknowledgement Form?

All participants: SOIA athletes, Unified partners, coaches, and volunteers should complete the COVID-19 Participant code of Conduct and Risk Acknowledgement Form prior to returning to play.

As a Delegation Manager, what should I do with the completed COVID-19 Participant Code of Conduct and Risk Acknowledgement Forms for my team?

All completed and signed forms should be sent to Special Olympics Iowa, 551 SE Dovetail Rd, Grimes, IA 50111 or emailed to registrations@soiowa.org.

What happens if someone refuses to sign the *COVID-19 Participant Code of Conduct and Risk Acknowledgement Form*?

The main focus should be on the education and emphasizing that we are keeping everyone safe and strongly encouraging signing of the document. The Code of Conduct is not a legally binding document. If a person refuses to sign the document, please contact Dawn Criss with SOIA.

Can people fill out the Participant Code of Conduct and Risk Acknowledgement Form online instead of paper?

Yes, this form is available at <https://www.soiowa.org/> on the return to play page.

COVID-19 Screening

For the screening form, when asking if you have had any exposure to COVID-19, how immediate should the contact/exposure have been?

Only report if the participant has had direct contact with someone who has had COVID-19, not that someone has been in contact with a friend who had another friend that had COVID-19.

Is it required to do thermometer screenings onsite?

Standard of care and medical authorities recommend that, in Phases 1 and 2, temperature checks should be done onsite for any in-person activities to supplement the questionnaire portion of the screening. At this time, **SOIA is requiring** that temperature checks be done on site as participants and volunteers arrive at an event, gathering, or practice. Additionally, be sure you have provided proper education and instruction to participants regarding staying home if they show any signs and symptoms of illness, including fever (100.4°F/37.8°C or higher). It is good practice for participants and volunteers to take their temperature at home prior to departure. There must be documentation for each individual attending a given activity or practice that they have been screened with all screening questions answered.

Does the COVID-19 screening violate HIPAA (applicable in the US only)?

At this time, Special Olympics is exempt from HIPAA as HIPAA only applies if organizations/providers transmit personal health information (PHI) electronically for transactions that HHS has adopted standards including submitting for financial claims, or is considered a clearinghouse or a health plan. However, the Program and coaches should still put in place a process to protect health information as best as possible in terms of storing and sharing medical information.

What do I as Delegation Manager do with the completed screening forms?

All completed forms should be sent to Special Olympics Iowa, 551 SE Dovetail Rd, Grimes, IA 50111 or emailed to registrations@soiowa.org.

If a Special Olympics participant was potentially exposed to an individual who tested positive for COVID-19 at a different location (e.g., their school or home or work) and not the Special Olympics event, do we need to shut down practice and have all participant's quarantine?

1. The recommended protocol for Special Olympics activities would be that the individual who was potentially exposed must stay home and should not attend practice or SO events until 14 days after exposure. They should be reminded to monitor their symptoms and consult with a doctor to discuss the need for testing and/or treatment.
2. If the exposure is known to have taken place before the last time this individual was at an SO event (e.g., they attended practice on Wednesday and the potential exposure took place the previous Monday), the Program may want to consider having virtual practices for two weeks, to ensure there wasn't spread.
3. If the SO individual ultimately develops symptoms and test positives, then practice must be suspended for at least 2 weeks and all participants should be notified, while maintaining privacy, that an individual at Special Olympics event they attended has tested positive for COVID-19. As with all recommendations, consult with your local guidance to ensure you are in compliance with local rules and regulation.

Sport Specific Guidance

Are we allowed to practice any sport we would like?

Sporting activities should focus on individual skill development and conditioning to **avoid indirect contact until Phase 2** and **direct contact until phase 3**. For example, you might resume basketball individual skills practice in phases 1 and 2, but not scrimmages or games until phase 3. Please refer to the SOIA return to play page on our website for sports that are approved. This list will be continuously evaluated and updated as time goes on.

Could you clarify "indirect contact" and "direct contact"? Is passing a soccer ball considered "indirect contact"?

In this context, "indirect contact" is considered an activity where a ball or equipment is touched or in contact with an individual's hands/skin and then directly touching another individual's hands/skin without disinfection. An example of indirect contact would be a basketball or football or softball being passed around between participants. Individual drills for those sports with disinfection of equipment/ball in between uses is permitted. For example, an individual practices dribbling and then the ball being disinfected before being used by the next individual to practice their skills. Soccer drills that involve passing the ball by kicking and staying 6 feet/2

meters apart is not indirect contact as the contact is via the covered foot, not skin.

Note: scrimmage or full play of any sports such as basketball, football, volleyball, floor hockey, or soccer, etc. however, would be considered direct contact as bodies are regularly in contact with one another.

Is Overnight Travel/Stay allowed for teams when attending an event?

At this time, all overnight travel as a team for events is prohibited. This will be continuously evaluated. Please check our website for updates as time goes on.

How do I handle shared equipment?

SOIA participants should be encouraged to use their own equipment when practicing whenever possible. Any shared equipment must be sanitized between uses. Team funds can be accessed to purchase appropriate sanitation products or additional equipment.

Individuals at High Risk

Why are participants living in long-term care facilities considered high risk?

The list of individuals at high-risk is based on guidance from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and World Health Organization (WHO). Research has shown that individuals with disabilities living in long-term care facilities are at increased risks of transmission as well as complications. The intention behind this is regarding individuals living in licensed long-term care facilities.

This issue will continue to be evaluated and further guidance may still come on this topic.

Are we restricting participation, preventing athletes and volunteers from participating if they identify as “high risk”? Are we treating athletes and volunteers the same? i.e. do we restrict athletes and allow volunteers?

At this time, the recommendation from SOI is that all individuals who identify as high risk should be **strongly encouraged to stay home**. This guidance applies to all participants (athletes, coaches, volunteers, etc.). However, it is the responsibility of SOIA and the local delegation to ensure that participants are

provided education and information about hygiene and prevention measures, as well as who is considered at high risk, per CDC and WHO guidelines so they can make an informed decision regarding their participation. Additionally, the local delegation is responsible for implementing safety control measures to mitigate risk of all participants in attendance. SOIA may also have alternative ways for engagement via virtual or at home activities, as feasible. This guidance will continue to be evaluated based on evolving clinical and legal considerations. Please refer to the SOIA website and return to play page for resources and education related to who is high risk and proper safety precautions.

Venue Set-up

How should food and beverages at events be handled?

During Phases 1 and 2, participants should bring their own food and water/beverage if needed, when possible. There should be no shared food nor shared water jugs/beverage dispensers – individual bottles and packages only. Participants should be served or prepackaged “grab and go” meals in a bag with disposable utensils, napkin, hand wipe included. Condiments should be in individual packages - not large bottles for group use.

Volunteers distributing should be wearing gloves and masks as required by local regulations.

What type of hand sanitizer should be used?

Hand sanitizer should be with at least 60% alcohol.

Are Spectators allowed at practices and events?

This is specific to the event/sport/venue and those specifics will vary per each phase. For practices, each delegation will need to provide guidance to participants, which will need to ensure SOIA and local guidelines are being followed. Regardless, each individual group/family will need to social distance from other groups/families.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

May I use team funds to purchase appropriate PPE for my team?

Yes, please submit an expense form to the SOIA Business Office.

Are masks required during practices?

At this time, SOIA is requiring that all participants and attendees of a practice wear masks except when the person is actively engaged in exercise or the specific activity.

May a participant use a face shield instead of a mask?

It is not known if face shields provide any benefit as source control to protect others from the spray of respiratory particles. At this time, clinical guidance suggests that a face shield should be used *in addition to* a facemask in certain clinical settings, not as a replacement for a mask. A face shield alone does not provide proper protection from the spread of COVID-19 via droplets in the air. At this time, it is not recommended that a face shield be used instead of a facemask at SOIA activities.

If someone says they have a medical reason for not being able to wear a facemask, how will SOIA handle this?

At this time, if an individual is unable to wear a mask for any reason, they will not be able to participate in SOIA activities. The use of the mask is not only to protect the individual, but to protect others in attendance and reduce possible transmission. Individuals unable or unwilling to wear a mask in Phases 1 and 2 should be invited to participate in virtual or at home activities.

Fundraising

Does this protocol apply to fundraising events or do the local authority guidelines apply?

Local delegations are expected to follow the rules and regulations from their local authorities regarding hosting fundraising events and participation in Phases 1 and 2. Disinfection and infection control measures should be included. SOIA participants with high risk are reminded it is recommended they stay home until Phase 3. Additional guidance forth coming.