



Special Olympics
Iowa



SPRING CLASSIC

2026



HANDBOOK

Special Olympics
Iowa



We look forward to an exciting & memorable competition for the over 1,000 athletes, unified partners, coaches, chaperones, family members & volunteers coming to Iowa City & Coralville for the 2026 Special Olympics Iowa Spring Classic. Athletes from around the state will compete in Basketball, Cheer & Dance, & Powerlifting competitions.

This handbook is designed to provide you with the information necessary to manage your participation in the Spring Classic. Please review the information in detail & share the handbook with members of your delegation as well as family members attending the event. Please contact the state office at (515) 986-5520 or registrations@soiowa.org if you have any questions.

Thank you for your assistance. We look forward to seeing you at the
2026 Special Olympics Iowa Spring Classic.





2026 Special Olympics Iowa Spring Classic Event Schedule



Friday, March 13th		
Anytime after 3:00 pm	Hotel Registration	Hotel keys are located at the front desk at your assigned hotel
Saturday, March 14th		
6:30 am – 8:30 am	Breakfast	Provided at each SOIA designated hotel
8:00 am – Throughout Tournament	Delegation Registration for Basketball Skills, Cheerleading & Team Basketball	Iowa City West High School Iowa Memorial Union U.I. Field House Main Deck
8:30 am – 9:00 am 8:45 am – 9:00 am 9:05 am – 3:00 pm	Powerlifting Delegation Registration Powerlifting Warm-ups & Coaches' Meeting Competition; Squat, Bench Press, then Dead Lift	Iowa City West High School
9:00 am – 2:00 pm	Cheer & Dance Competition	Iowa Memorial Union International Ballroom
9:00 am – 3:00 pm	Healthy Athletes – Healthy Hearing	Iowa City West High school
9:30 am – 3:30 pm	Basketball Skills & Developmental Speed Dribble	Iowa City West High School
8:30 am – 2:30 pm	3 on 3 Team Basketball Tournament	U.I. Field House – Main Deck
8:30 am – 3:30 pm	5 on 5 Team Basketball Tournament	U.I. Fieldhouse – South Gym
10:00 am – 2:00 pm	Souvenir Sales	Iowa City West High School Iowa Memorial Union U.I. Field House
11:00 am – 1:00 pm	Lunch	Iowa City West High School Iowa Memorial Union U.I. Field House – Main Deck

General Information

Delegation Packets Pick-Up

Delegation packets can be picked up at the following registration tables day of competition:

- **Iowa City West High School** for delegations participating in **Basketball Skills & Powerlifting**. The delegation registration table for basketball skills will be inside the North entrance and the South entrance for Powerlifting.
- **Iowa Memorial Union** for delegations participating in **Cheerleading**. The delegation registration table is in the International Ballroom Lobby.
- **University of Iowa Field House** for delegations participating in **Team Basketball**. The delegation registration table is just off the Main Deck near the volunteer registration table.

Delegation registration packets include:

- Nametags for basketball skills athletes & powerlifting athletes
- Team Rosters for Team Basketball & Cheer & Dance.
- General Schedule of events/Sport schedules

Housing/Room Key Pick-Up

Delegations that requested housing have been assigned to stay at one of the Special Olympics Iowa Spring Classic Hotels. Room keys for all hotels will be distributed at the front desk of your designated hotel on Friday, March 13th, from 3:00 pm.

Family members may make their own reservations at the hotels but may **NOT** utilize the block of rooms designated to Special Olympics Iowa. The block of rooms can only be utilized by the state office.

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|--|----------------|
| • Country Inn & Suites, 2571 Heartland Pl, Coralville, IA 52241 | (319) 545-8464 |
| • Courtyard by Marriott, 901 Melrose Ave, Iowa City, IA 52246 | (319) 569-6777 |
| • Fairfield Inn, 650 Coral Ridge Ave, Coralville, IA 52241 | (319) 333-7711 |
| • Hampton Inn Iowa City, 4 Sturgis Corner Drive, Iowa City, IA 52240 | (319) 339-8000 |
| • Hampton Inn, 1210 1 st Avenue, Coralville, IA 52241 | (319) 351-6600 |
| • Heartland Inn, 87 2 nd St., Coralville, IA 52241 | (319) 351-8132 |
| • Holiday Inn, 1220 1 st Avenue, Coralville, IA 52241 | (319) 351-5049 |
| • Residence Inn, 2681 James St, Coralville, IA 52241 | (319) 338-6000 |
| • Springhill Suites, 1001 25th Ave, Coralville, IA 52241 | (319) 625-1001 |

Special Olympics Iowa will only pay for rooms for delegations that completed the appropriate housing registration form. Any phone calls, movie rentals or other incidentals are the responsibility of the delegation assigned to the room. A complimentary breakfast will be available at the hotels on Saturday morning. Please refer to our [Housing policy](#).

Please contact Special Olympics Iowa at registrations@soiowa.org or (515) 986-5520 to make alternate arrangements.

Opening Ceremony

There will be **no** Opening Ceremony this year on Friday, March 13th. Delegations staying overnight will be responsible for their own activities and meals Friday evening. The Missouri Valley Conference Women's Basketball Championships will be taking place at the Xtream arena on Friday, March 13th. Discounted tickets are available for \$10 to all Special Olympics Iowa athletes, families, and supporters. (You may utilize your centralized account to purchase tickets)

Special Olympics athletes will be recognized during the evening *6pm Session 3*. and be part of a community-wide celebration of inclusion and sports.

Tickets -> <https://xtreamarena.venue.net/promotions/SOI>

Meal

Special Olympics Iowa will provide lunch Saturday for registered athletes, coaches, & chaperones at each event venue.

Concessions

Iowa City West High School will have **Marco's Grilled Cheese** food truck available outside for purchase. University of Iowa Field House will have **Jethro's Express** food truck available outside for purchase as well as **Travelin' Tom's Coffee**. Please bring water bottles to the events for athletes, coaches, chaperones, & spectators. Family members & spectators may want to bring snacks & water with them. These items can be brought to the lunch area at the venues.

Medical Coverage

Emergency Information: Each Special Olympics coach needs to bring pertinent medical information for each athlete. This should include the coaches' copy of medical release/parent/guardian consent forms.

First Aid volunteers will provide on-site medical coverage at the venue sites on Saturday. University Hospital should be used for emergencies.

Important Medical Number: University of Iowa Emergency Room (319) 356-2233. Emergency entrance is adjacent to the Field House.

Locker Rooms

Field House: There are locker rooms available for your use on the ground floor, on the northeast end. You will need to bring your own towels, soap, shampoo, & locks.

Sports Rules

All Special Olympics Iowa competitions shall be conducted in accordance with the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules & corresponding national governing bodies: Basketball – National Federation of State High School Associations; Basketball Skills – Special Olympics Iowa Coaches Handbook; Cheerleading – Special Olympics Iowa Coaches Guide; Powerlifting – Special Olympics International. Any rule protest will be handled by the Venue Directors.

Competition Age Groups & Divisions

Special Olympics Iowa follows the guidelines provided by Special Olympics Incorporated for divisioning competition at the Spring Classic. Special Olympics sports rules specifically require the separation of genders in Powerlifting & Gymnastics. Our guidelines for divisioning state that ability should be the primary consideration for divisioning.

Lost & Found

Lost & Found will be located at Delegation/Athlete Registration at each venue.

Coach Responsibilities

Coaches attending the Special Olympics Iowa Spring Classic are asked to accept & carry out the following responsibilities:

- Provide for the general welfare, safety, health, & well-being of each Special Olympics athlete in their charge
- Familiarize themselves with the information in this handbook
- Provide supervision for athletes as necessary
- Assistance to athletes in getting to all meals at appointed times
- Ensure that athletes report to competition venues on time
- Ensure that medical & prescribed medications protocols are followed
- Ensure that athletes are properly attired for competition, hotel breakfast & special events
- Report all emergencies to appropriate authorities after taking immediate action to insure the health & safety of participants
- Be courteous & professional in all dealings with volunteers.
- Always carry a copy of the athlete's medical release with you at practices & competitions
- Please have all members of you delegation review our policies on our [Policies page](#) on our website.

Please scan the QR Code for all schedules



Competition Information

Basketball Skills & Developmental Speed Dribble

Venue Directors: Sela Ingalls & Kenzie Olson

Iowa City West High School; 2901 Melrose Ave, Iowa City, IA 52246

Main entrance and check in is on the North Side entrance.

Parking is free and preferred parking is on the North side. **A Food truck will be available outside for purchase.**

Please make sure your athletes are in the staging area 15 minutes prior to the start of their age groups competition with their name tags on the front of their shirts.

Basketball Skills & Developmental Speed Dribble Schedule

<u>Time</u>	<u>Age Group</u>
9:30 am	8 – 11
10:15 am	12 – 15
11:30 am	16 – 21
Lunch	
12:30 pm	22 – 29
1:15 pm	30 – 50
1:45 pm	51 +

Athletes are asked to report to the staging area based on the schedule.

Lunch will be served in the cafeteria.

Team Basketball

University of Iowa Field House; 225 S Grand Avenue, Iowa City: (319) 335-9847

The Field House is located west of Rienow & Slater Residence Halls & just east of the University Hospitals & Clinics. Parking is available in the Field House Lot underneath the South Gym or in new Lot 14 (enter and exit off Melrose Ave). The main entrance to the Field House is on Grand Avenue. There is an elevator in the Field House.

Parking Map & Weekend Rates – University of Iowa Field House

Parking Rates: Ramp 4 - \$1.75 / hour Field House Lot - \$1.75 / hour Lot 14 - \$1.75 / hour

Lot 43 – Bus parking is available in this lot. Also, free parking on weekends. Please park in marked stalls only. Lot 49 – Open for public use on the weekends.

3 vs 3 Basketball Team Competition

Venue Director: Hailey Brown

3 vs 3 or Half-Court team basketball will be conducted on the courts of the Main Deck of the University of Iowa Field House. **Schedule is subject to change.** The team coach must submit a line-up of no more than 6 players 30 minutes prior to each game. **Coaches are responsible for bringing their own practice balls for warm-ups.**

The games will be conducted under the Special Olympics rules.

- A game consists of 20 minutes running time or the first team to 20 points with stop time during the final minute of play.
- Teams are allowed 2-time outs per game.
- 3-minute overtime if teams are tied after 20 minutes.

All basketball team members are expected to wear uniforms with numbers on both the front & back of the shirts. The rest of the uniform must consist of gym shorts, gym shoes, & socks.

Lunch will be served on the Main Deck.

5 vs 5 Basketball Team Competition

Venue Director: Emily Morris

5 vs 5 team basketball competition will be conducted on the courts of the University of Iowa Field House South Gym. **Schedule is subject to change.** The team coach must submit a line-up of no more than 10 players 30 minutes prior to each game. **Coaches are responsible for bringing their own practice balls for warm-ups.**

5 vs 5 team basketball will be conducted according to the National Federation of State High School Associations basketball rules & Special Olympics Iowa general except for the following adaptations:

- A game consists of 4 quarters, each 8 minutes long.
- In Division II & below, a player may take 2 steps beyond what is allowable. However, if the player scores, “travels”, or escapes the defense as a result of these extra steps, an advantage has been gained & a violation is called immediately.
- Four time-outs during regulation play with one additional time-out for overtime. Three-minute overtime.
- Before each game, coaches & officials will meet to discuss how to call the game & if any changes are to be made. Any concerns about officiating should be directed to Josh Berka.

All basketball team members are expected to wear uniforms with numbers on both the front & back of the shirts. The rest of the uniform must consist of gym shorts, gym shoes, & socks.

Lunch will be served on the Main Deck

Cheer & Dance

Venue Director: Kirsten Selsor

Iowa Memorial Union; 125 N Madison St, Iowa City, IA

Parking is available in the parking garage across the street or on the street.

The Cheer & Dance competition will begin at 9:00 am at the Iowa Memorial Union. Competition for Cheer teams will start at 9:00 am. Competition for Dance teams will start at 10:00 am. Please review the cheerleading & dance schedules for your team's section & competition start time. **Teams are to be ready 30 minutes ahead of their scheduled time** in case the competition is running ahead of schedule. **The schedule is subject to change.** Divisions & times are tentative. There will be no switching or changing.

Divisioning:

Individual:

Age Groups: (8-15, 16-29, 30+)

Team:

Age Groups: (8-21, 22+)

Cheerleading & Dance Competition Reminders:

1. **(Dance) Music:** It is **REQUIRED** for all coaches to have a flash drive or mobile option (MP3, iPod, iPad, Phone, etc.) with your music on it.
 - a. Music must be ready to start once the volunteer pushes the play button. There will be **no** tolerance for fast forwarding for the music & dance routine to begin.
 - i. Music **must** be handed to volunteers while your team is on deck.
 - ii. One coach from the coaches' box **must** signal to the volunteer running the music by raising their hand to let them know when to start the music.
 - b. **Dance Time Limit:** 2 minutes & 30 seconds (2:30)
 - i. If you exceed this time, there will be a total of a 5-point deduction & we will ask you to stop.
2. **Cheer Time Limit:** 3 minutes (3:00)
 - a. If you exceed this time, there will be a total of a 5-point deduction & we will ask you to stop.
 - b. Judging & timing of your performance will start with the first word. For example, if you have an entrance cheer, it will count towards one of your cheers.
 - c. A total of 2 coaches will be allowed in the coaches' box.
3. Once again, there will be two ping pong paddles in the coaches' box for Cheerleading this year. One paddle will say Cheer 1 & the other paddle will say Cheer 2. It is recommended that when you start Cheer 1 you hold up the paddle, so the judges know which cheer you are doing. Same as when you start Cheer 2. You would hold up the paddle that says Cheer 2 so the judges can again distinguish between the two cheers.
 - a. ***Please note this is not required for you to do. You will not receive any deductions should you choose not to use the paddles. The option will be available if you'd like to do it.**
4. **Awards:**
 - a. Cheerleading and Dance awards will be handed out per the scheduled time unless the competition runs early.
 - i. For these tentative award times please refer to the Cheer & Dance schedule by locating your cheer or dance team name & the tentative time you compete.
 - ii. If you are not able to stay for awards, please let Kirsten Selsor know the day of competition.

Lunch will be served in the International Ballroom.

Powerlifting

Iowa City West High School; 2901 Melrose Ave, Iowa City, IA

Venue Director: Grace Poots

Parking is available on the south side of the gym near the entrance.

The powerlifting competition will be held at Iowa City West High School. Athletes have been divided according to weight class & will receive three separate attempts in the Squat, Bench Press, and/or Dead Lift with their coach dictating the weight for each attempt. Once a weight is given, the next lift can only remain the same or be increased. The next attempt cannot be a decrease in weight from the previous attempt.

The standard command system will be in place to ensure athletes' safety & that each lift is done correctly. If the athlete does not follow the command system, the lift will be disqualified. We will have a brief coaches/judges meeting before we start the bench press to make sure we all agree on the commands & what the judges are looking for.

We will use one for squat & three stages for bench press & three for the deadlift & will call the athletes by flights. The athletes will make their three attempts in non-consecutive order meaning each athlete will do their first attempt before the first athlete in the same flight attempts their second lift & so on through each of the three attempts.

Competition will begin with Squat, followed by Bench Press, followed by Dead Lift. **Awards will be handed out following the competition of a division/flight.** Lunch will be worked in sometime around noon.

Athletes who arrive late to the start of competition will not be able to compete in Squat but will be able to compete in the Bench Press and/or Dead Lift if registered. All athletes should have their own lifting belt or have one available to use from the team. Gloves are not allowed for safety reasons. However, you may use wrist wraps as long as no part of the hand is covered. Chalk will be available at the event.

Healthy Athletes Information

Throughout each year, Special Olympics Iowa provides Special Smiles, Opening Eyes, FUNFitness, Fit Feet, Healthy Hearing, Healthy Promotion, & Medfest screenings at no charge to Special Olympics athletes. All Healthy Athlete disciplines will be offered on Saturday, March 14th from 9:00am to 3:00pm at Iowa City West High School. Join us at the Spring Classic for the opportunity to earn giveaways & receive screenings in the following disciplines:

Healthy Hearing

Clinical Directors: Jaqueline Carder & Elizabeth Stangl

This program offers athletes the services of hearing examinations & follow-up recommendations.

Special Olympics Iowa Emergency Management Plan

In the event of an emergency, (bus accident, hotel fire, athlete/coach/volunteer death, etc.) we must be ready to act. Specific assignments, in order to acquire & disseminate information & data, will be necessary in order for us to make necessary decisions. Communication among ourselves is vital in order for us to manage the situation, rather than just be reactionary. With that as a preface, the following is our initial plan for managing an emergency:

Step One - Whoever receives the phone call or message or witnesses an emergency or potential emergency, should determine whether or not the proper authorities (e.g., police, rescue squad, fire department, etc.) have been notified. Our first objective is to prevent further injury & give the necessary treatment to those who are injured.

Step Two - If an emergency should occur at a venue, the Event Director should be located & directed to the scene. The Event Director should notify Special Olympics Iowa Staff.

Event Directors / SOIA Staff:

Basketball Skills: Sela Ingalls, Kenzie Olson & Maddie Canfield **Cheer & Dance:** Kirsten Selsor
Basketball Team: Hailey Brown, Emily Morris & Abi McGlynn **Powerlifting:** Grace Poots

If an emergency should occur on the way to or from an event, please notify John Kliegl at (515) 986-5520. We ask that you direct all media inquiries & representatives to Megan Filipi, mfilipi@soiowa.org, Special Olympics Iowa Director of Marketing & Communications.

Spring Classic Souvenir Sales

Souvenir Sale Hours

Saturday, March 14	10:00 am - 2:00 pm	Iowa City West High School
Saturday, March 14	10:00 am - 2:00 pm	Iowa Memorial Union
Saturday, March 14	10:00 am - 2:00 pm	University of Iowa Field House

We accept cash, check, Venmo or credit cards.
Checks should be made out to Special Olympics Iowa.

Special Olympics Iowa thanks the following individuals, groups, & organizations for their contributions to the success of the 2026 Special Olympics Iowa Spring Classic, & for their support of more than 10,000 Athlete & Unified partners across the state. Without the support of these generous individuals & organizations Special Olympics Iowa would not be able to offer the quantity & quality of events we do for our athletes, coaches, families, & volunteers.

Spring Classic Committee

Brian Bates	Athlete Representative	Gene Nissley	Registration & Set-up
Elizabeth Stangl	Healthy Hearing	Ray Strekal	Powerlifting
Jaqueline Carder	Healthy Hearing	Derek Timmerman	University of Iowa Parking
Chris Conway	University of Iowa Facilities	Mike Valentine	University of Iowa Facilities
Paul Kaeffring	Lunch		

**2026 Spring Classic
Champion Statewide Partners**



Premier Statewide Partners

