

Special Olympics Canada and Special Olympics Alberta
SAFE SPORT POLICY

This Policy has been prepared by Special Olympics Canada and is a Pan-Canadian Policy applicable to Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters. This document cannot be modified by a Chapter without consultation and approval from Special Olympics Canada.

SOC EFFECTIVE DATE: September 2022
SOA EFFECTIVE DATE: November 2022

SOC LAST REVISED: November 2022
SOA REVISED: April 2026

Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters have a fundamental obligation and responsibility to protect the health, safety and physical and mental well-being of every individual that is involved in the Canadian Special Olympic community.

Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters have zero tolerance for misconduct or maltreatment of any Individuals affiliated with Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters, and therefore take any situation involving misconduct, discrimination or maltreatment very seriously. For this reason, Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters are collectively committed to enacting and enforcing strong, clear, and effective policies and processes for preventing and addressing all forms of misconduct or maltreatment.

The policies are intended to promote a Safe Sport environment in a manner that allows for consistent, immediate, appropriate and meaningful action should any issues arise, and they are also intended to prevent issues from arising in the first place by communicating expected standards of behaviour.

Any individuals involved with Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters, including but not limited to Athletes, coaches, officials, staff, volunteers, and parents/guardians of Athletes, who wish to report any instance of misconduct or maltreatment may first contact Special Olympics Canada or the applicable Chapter to try and resolve the matter informally. If not practical, or if preferred, the individual may report the complaint directly to Special Olympics Canada’s independent third-party responsible for managing complaints or to the Chapter’s independent third-party responsible for managing complaints. The independent third party will then determine the appropriate forum and manner to address the complaint.

Special Olympics Alberta’s Independent Third Party:

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Special Olympics Canada also recognizes the recent development of the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS) and its responsibilities to integrate the UCCMS into its policies. Since the UCCMS may continue to evolve in the foreseeable future, the safe sport policies incorporate the key elements of the current version of the UCCMS as follows (which are indicated with an * within the policy):

UCCMS v. 5.1 Section	Policy
Section 1.2 – General Principles	Discipline and Complaints Policy para. 3
Section 1.3 – Consensus Statements	Safe Sport Policy para. 3
Definitions	Code of Conduct para. 1 Discipline and Complaints Policy para. 1

Scope and Application 2.1.2	Code of Conduct para. 6 Discipline and Complaints Policy para. 7
Scope and Application 2.1.3	Code of Conduct para. 12b
Scope and Application 2.1.4	Code of Conduct para. 9-10
Scope and Application 2.1.5	Code of Conduct para. 11
Scope and Application 2.1.6	Investigation Procedure para. 6
Maltreatment 2.2	Code of Conduct para. 1
Retaliation 2.2.6.1.2	Investigation Procedure para. 10
Sanctions 3.1	Discipline and Complaints Policy para. 39
Considerations 3.2	Discipline and Complaints Policy para. 37-38
Presumptive Sanctions 3.3	Discipline and Complaints Policy para. 40
Public Disclosure 3.4	Discipline and Complaints Policy para. 49

Definitions

1. Terms in this Policy are defined as follows:

- a) ***Athlete** – An individual registered as an Athlete with Special Olympics Canada or a Chapter.
 - b) **Chapter** – means the Provincial or Territorial Special Olympics organization recognized by Special Olympics Canada as a provincial or territorial governing body of Special Olympics.
 - c) ***Maltreatment** – Voluntary acts that result in harm or the potential for physical or psychological harm
 - d) ***Minor** – An individual who is under the age of majority at the time and in the jurisdiction where the alleged *Maltreatment* occurred. It is the responsibility of the adult to know the age of a minor.
 - e) ***Participant**– Refers to all categories of individual members and/or registrants defined in the By-laws of Special Olympics Canada or the Chapter who are subject to the policies of Special Olympics Canada or the Chapter, as well as all people employed by, contracted by, or engaged in activities with, Special Olympics Canada or the Chapter including, but not limited to, employees, contractors, Athletes, coaches, instructors, officials, volunteers, managers, administrators, committee members, parents or guardians, and Directors and Officers
 - f) **Person in Authority** – Any Participant who holds a position of authority within Special Olympics Canada or the Chapter including, but not limited to, coaches, instructors, officials, managers, staff, support personnel, chaperones, committee members, and Directors and Officers
- Vulnerable Participant** – Includes Minors and vulnerable adults (people who, because of age, disability or other circumstance, are in a position of dependence on others or are otherwise at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed by people in positions of trust or authority).

Purpose

2. This Policy describes how Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters aim to provide a safe sport environment.

Commitment to a Sport Environment Free from Maltreatment

3. Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters make the following commitments to a sport environment free from Maltreatment:

- a) All Participants in sport can expect to play, practice and compete, work, and interact in an environment free from Maltreatment.
- b) Addressing the causes and consequences of Maltreatment is a collective responsibility and requires the deliberate efforts of all Participants, sport stakeholders, sport club administrators and organization leaders.
- c) Participants in positions of trust and authority have the general responsibility to protect the health and well-being of all other Participants.

- d) Adult Participants have a specific ethical and statutory duty and the additional responsibility to respond to incidents of Maltreatment involving Minors and other Vulnerable Participants.
- e) All Participants recognize that Maltreatment can occur regardless of age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, race, ethnicity, Indigenous status, or level of physical and intellectual disability and their intersections. Moreover, it is recognized that those from traditionally marginalized groups have increased vulnerability to experiences of Maltreatment.
- f) All Participants recognize that individuals who have experienced Maltreatment may experience a range of effects that may emerge at different time points and that can profoundly affect their lives.
- g) All adults working with children and youth have a duty to prevent or mitigate opportunities for misconduct or maltreatment.
- h) In recognition of the historic vulnerability to discrimination and violence amongst some groups, and that continues to persist today, Participants in positions of trust and authority have a duty to incorporate strategies to recognize systemic bias, unconscious bias, and to respond quickly and effectively to discriminatory practices.

Conduct Standards

- 4. Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters has adopted a *Code of Conduct and Ethics* that describes standards of conduct and behaviour for all Individuals. General standards of conduct apply to all Individuals and specific standards are described for positions within the organization. The *Code of Conduct and Ethics* has specific sections, including but not limited, to:
 - a) Athletes
 - b) Coaches
 - c) Officials
 - d) Volunteers and Staff
 - e) Directors and Committee Members
 - f) Parents/Caregivers and Spectators
 - g) Chapters
- 5. The *Code of Conduct and Ethics* contains detailed definitions of key terms, including:
 - a) Maltreatment
 - b) Harassment
 - c) Discrimination
 - d) Workplace Harassment
 - e) Workplace Violence

Anti-Doping

- 6. The *Code of Conduct and Ethics* indicates that Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters adopt and adhere to the Canadian Anti-Doping Program

Social Media

- 7. Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters consider that responsible social media conduct is included under the umbrella of the SOC Code of Conduct and Ethics.
- 8. Appropriate communications between Persons in Authority and Athletes are described in the Athlete Protection Policy.

Athlete Protection

Screening

Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters each have adopted comprehensive *Screening Policies* that requires some Individuals to pass a screening process before being permitted to interact with athletes.

9. Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters have an *Athlete Protection Policy* that can be used by coaches, managers, medical personnel, and other Persons in Authority. Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters may provide training on the policy and take steps to ensure the policy is being implemented. Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters will conduct a regular review of the policy to add and/or modify new content as appropriate.

Training

10. Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters require mandatory training on preventing and addressing harassment and abuse for the following categories of Participants:
- Category 1 – Individuals in decision-making positions at Special Olympics Canada.
 - Category 2 – Athletes and individuals in direct contact with Athletes.
 - Category 3 – Individuals with no direct Athlete contact.
11. Categories of Participants must take the following training:
- Category 1 – [CAC Safe Sport Training or Respect in Sport Training or other provincially/territorially mandated training](#)
 - Category 2 – [CAC Safe Sport Training or as above](#)
 - Category 3 – [CAC Safe Sport Training or as above](#)
12. Categories of Participants must take the training at the following times:
- Category 1 – the earlier of:
 - Within 12 weeks of starting date; or
 - Prior to their first formal activity in their season, or any unsupervised contact with an Athlete
 - Category 2 – Prior to their first formal activity in their season, or prior to any unsupervised contact with an Athlete
 - Category 3 – the earlier of:
 - Within 12 weeks of starting date; or
 - Prior to their first formal activity and/or event
13. Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters will annually ensure that Participants have received up-to-date training. When the training program has been substantially updated to include new information or resources, the Participant will be required to re-take the training.
14. Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters will implement a regular review of all policies and will provide annual, up-to-date information on the policies and procedures related to Maltreatment to Special Olympics Canada.

Resources

15. Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters will regularly provide information to Participants about resources and training related to athlete protection. Resources and training opportunities can include:
- [CAC Safe Sport training modules](#)
 - [Respect in Sport](#)

Athlete Engagement

16. Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters will engage with athletes to determine the level of success of their

athlete protection measures as well as to identify any gaps or athlete concerns. This engagement may take the form of:

- a) Anonymous athlete surveys
- b) Athlete involvement in organizational decision-making
- c) Independently-led athlete outreach consultations

Dispute Resolution

17. Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters will have a comprehensive suite of dispute resolution policies that will include:

- a) *Discipline and Complaints Policy*
- b) *Appeal Policy*
- c) *Dispute Resolution Policy*
- d) *Event Discipline Procedure (tbd)*

Obligations – Reporting and Third Party Case Management

18. The policies of Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters will include requirements that certain complaints must be reported to government entities, local police services, and/or child protection agencies.

19. The policies of Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters will include requirements that complaints must be received by an independent third party that has no conflict of interest or bias.

Records

20. Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters will retain records of decisions that have been made pursuant to the organization's policies. These records may be shared with other individuals or organizations, including but not limited to, national sport organizations, provincial/territorial sport organizations, multi-sport organizations, and government entities.

Governance and Operations

21. Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters will have a comprehensive plan in which athlete protection and safe sport are top priorities for the organization.

22. Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters will pursue a governance structure and organizational culture that respects the diversity of the athletes and stakeholders within the sport, that adheres to all applicable federal and/or provincial/territorial legislation, and that moves toward a national alignment strategy for the sport in Canada.

23. Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters will continually monitor and evaluate its policies, practices, and procedures.