



Policy: Special Olympics Maine (SOME) Athlete Participation Policy

Updated: October 2024

A person's participation in Special Olympics, as an athlete or volunteer, is an opportunity and a privilege; it is not an entitlement. Special Olympics Maine reserves the right to limit, or exclude, an individual's participation in an activity and/or the program for behavior that is deemed to be inappropriate, illegal and/or potentially harmful. If in the opinion of the Board of Directors, any athlete or volunteer in the program poses a threat to others, they may be expelled.

Standard 1: Athlete Eligibility

Athletes must meet Special Olympics eligibility standards to participate in Special Olympics. Athlete eligibility standards can be found at www.somaine.org/some-athlete-eligibility-policy/

Standard 2: Athlete Registration

Every athlete who is training and competing in Special Olympics must have valid SOME Athlete Registration Form on file in the SOME office. Every athlete in the Young Athletes Program must have a Young Athletes Registration Form on file in the SOME office. Athlete registration forms can be found at www.somaine.org/resources/athlete-resources/athlete-registration-forms/

Standard 3: Code of conduct

Athletes, volunteers, family members and staff are expected to maintain high standards of moral and ethical conduct.

- All athletes must adhere to Special Olympics Maine's [Athlete Code of Conduct](#).
- All athletes, volunteers and staff must comply with the policies and rules of Special Olympics Maine and Special Olympics, Inc.
- All athletes, volunteers and staff must comply with all laws of the State of Maine.

Standard 4: Violation of Special Olympics Maine and/or Special Olympics, Inc. policies

The penalties outlined below deal with situations in which the health, safety and well-being of athletes, volunteers, staff or others may be at risk, whether or not a criminal charge has been made or could result.

Actions taken will be predicated on a good faith belief that the disciplinary action is appropriate and corresponds to the seriousness of the infraction. Actions that may be taken include: warning, probation, suspension or expulsion from Special Olympics Maine. Any of these disciplinary actions may be reconsidered at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

Definitions

Warning: A cease and desist warning for perceived inappropriate behavior which, if ignored, could lead to a more severe course of disciplinary action. Decision to be made and notification to be given by supervising personnel.

Probation: A flexible, but defined period of time (which may contain temporary participation restrictions in an activity), during which the probationer must demonstrate the corrective behavior required. Decision to be made and notification to be given by supervising personnel.

Suspension: A temporary period of time in which a person is barred from participating in Special Olympics Maine. Decision to be made and notification to be given by the President.

Expulsion: Permanent dismissal from Special Olympics Maine. Decision to be made by the Board of Directors (or Executive Committee) and notification to be given by the President.

Enforcement of Violations

A **warning** or **probation** may be levied as appropriate by the supervising personnel.

The President has sole discretion to **suspend** an athlete or volunteer from Special Olympics Maine based upon available information and a determination that the conduct or the alleged conduct is so inherently harmful or egregious as to warrant immediate action, whether or not a criminal charge has been made or could result. The President will report the suspension to the Chair of the Board and will submit a report to the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors (or Executive Committee) has sole discretion to **expel** an athlete or volunteer from Special Olympics Maine. Action will be taken if the circumstances are so inherently harmful or egregious as to warrant expulsion, whether or not a criminal charge has been made or could result.