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## **SPECIAL OLYMPICS INC. VOLUNTEER SCREENING POLICY**

### **Special Olympics Inc. Policy Statement**

Special Olympics will encourage the involvement of volunteers in all aspects of its programs. Each Accredited Program and Sub-Program will institute and enforce the Special Olympics Inc. Volunteer Screening Policy that includes written procedures for screening, training and monitoring volunteers.

### **Classification of Special Olympics Illinois Volunteers**

Special Olympics Illinois volunteers will be classified into two functional categories as follows:

**Class A:** Volunteers, who have regular, close physical contact with athletes, are in a position of authority or supervision with athletes, are in a position of trust with athletes or have oversight responsibility for \$25,000 or more of cash. Examples include but are not limited to: Special Olympics Illinois Board of Director members, Special Olympics Illinois staff, Special Olympics Illinois committee members, coaches, chaperones, Unified Sports Partners and Law Enforcement Torch Run Leg Leaders.

A volunteer must be at least 18 years of age to serve as a head coach. A volunteer must be at least 14 years of age to serve as a Class A volunteer. All Unified Partners, regardless of age, are required to complete a Class A Volunteer Form but only those 14 years of age or older are permitted to serve as a coach, chaperone or key volunteer.

**Class B:** Volunteers who only have limited contact with athletes or who have contact with athletes accompanied by coaches and chaperones. Examples include but are not limited to day-of-event volunteers at competitions or Special Olympics Illinois organized fundraising events. An individual must be at least 10 years of age to serve as a Class B volunteer.

### **Volunteer Screening & When an Individual Becomes a Volunteer**

An individual is not considered a Special Olympics Illinois volunteer until the person has submitted a completed volunteer registration form, completed Protective Behaviors training\* and completed the screening process conducted by Special Olympics Illinois that is applicable for that individual's volunteer classification. For example, if an individual begins Special Olympics type activities without the approval of Special Olympics Illinois, then the individual is not a Special Olympics Illinois volunteer but a volunteer for the agency and any applicable Special Olympics insurance coverage and other protections will not apply to the individual or the agency that allowed the individual to participate prior to approval from Special Olympics Illinois. This definition also applies to individuals who are paid by their employer to conduct Special Olympics activities. Such individuals are required to complete the registration form and screening process whether or not they are being paid by their employer.

**\*\*Class A Adults** Completion of Protective Behaviors training: a volunteer registration form, a national criminal background check that includes sex offender registry check, photo ID verification at the time of registration and photo ID check or identity verification check at all events.

**\*Class A Minors** Completion of Protective Behavior training: a volunteer registration form which includes a signature of the volunteer's parent/guardian and is accompanied by the Volunteer References Form, photo ID verification at the time of registration and photo ID check or identity verification check at events (for minors, IDs are only required to the extent available).

**Class B** Completion of a volunteer registration form and photo ID check at events (for minors, IDs are only required to the extent available).

\*Only minors 16 years of age and older are required to complete Protective Behaviors training.

\*\*National background checks will be completed on all active adult Class A Volunteers every three years following the date of initial registration with Special Olympics Illinois.

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### **Volunteer Oversight**

Oversight responsibility is determined by the staff member or agency head coach that is responsible for the individual volunteer.

Agency Coaches and Chaperones: It is the responsibility of each agency to ensure an individual does not participate as a Special Olympics volunteer until the individual's Class A Form has been processed and the national background check completed. If an individual is involved locally with an agency without completing the Special Olympics Illinois registration and screening process then he or she is participating for that specific agency and not as a Special Olympics volunteer.

Key Volunteers: Special Olympics Illinois staff members will be responsible to ensure the key volunteers that they oversee do not participate until the individual's Class A Form has been processed and the national background check completed. Failure to comply could jeopardize a staff member's employment.

### **Volunteer Registration Forms**

**Class A Adults** All volunteers 18 years of age and older in this category will be required to complete the Special Olympics Illinois Class A Adult Volunteer Form. Specific instructions regarding completion of the form are found on the reverse side of the form. Failure of the volunteer to provide requested information will result in the form being rejected. Volunteers must attach verification of completion of Protective Behaviors training when submitting their Class A Form.

**Class A Minors** All volunteers under the age of 18 in this category will be required to complete the Special Olympics Illinois Class A Minor Volunteer Form and the Volunteer References Form found on the reverse side of the form. Minors 16 years of age and older are required to complete Protective Behaviors training. Specific instructions regarding completion of the forms are found on the page attached the form. Failure of the volunteer to provide requested information will result in the form being rejected. Volunteers must attach verification of completion of Protective Behaviors training when submitting their Class A Form.

**Class B** All volunteers in this category will be required to complete the Special Olympics Illinois Class B Volunteer Form.

Special Olympics Illinois will not accept faxed forms. Faxed forms are not legal documents.

In May of 2007, Special Olympics Inc. released new Protective Behaviors training guidelines. The new training material is a critical tool for protecting Special Olympics athletes from sexual, physical and emotional abuse. Each US program is required incorporate the new Protective Behaviors training into its regular training and screening of all Class A volunteers. Beginning April 1, 2008 all Class A volunteers must complete Protective Behaviors training. Volunteers must attach verification of completion of Protective Behaviors training when submitting their Class A Form. Programs cannot permit Class A volunteers to participate until they have completed Protective Behaviors training. All Class A volunteers are required to repeat the Protective Behaviors training every three years.

The Protective Behaviors Training is offered on-line at <http://www.specialolympics.org/protectivebehaviors>. Go to the website and complete the course as prompted by the materials. If you cannot obtain access to the internet, then please contact Special Olympics Illinois at 309/888-2551 and ask for the Sports Training and Competition secretary who will provide information regarding options to complete the required training.

### **Changes to Class A Volunteer Information**

Pending policy changes over the long term, once accepted, the registered Class A volunteer remains valid as long as the volunteer remains active with the organization and renews Protective Behaviors training. Any volunteer that leaves the organization or is "de-activated" will be required to complete a new form if he/she returns to active status. De-activated means that Special Olympics Illinois was unable to confirm that the volunteer was still active with the organization or did not renew Protective Behaviors training, resulting in the volunteer being placed in the inactive file as a regular procedure of database clean-up. It is the responsibility of the Class A volunteer in question to report changes to the appropriate person (Area Director, Head Coach, etc.).

### **Class A Implementation**

Area Directors and other Special Olympics staff members who oversee Class A volunteers will distribute forms to key volunteers that fall under their supervision. When complete, the forms will be returned to the staff member responsible for those key volunteers. This staff person will review forms for completeness, verify the identity of the volunteer and, for minors, verify the References Form is completed. Staff members must also verify that verification of completion of Protective Behaviors training is attached to the Class A Form. Forms are then forwarded to the Special Olympics Illinois Normal for completion of background checks and final processing procedures. Exact steps are detailed in the section titled Special Olympics Illinois Staff Guidelines for Processing Class A Forms.

Head coaches will distribute forms to their agency coaches and chaperones and provide information for the completion of Protective Behavior training. Completed forms will be returned to the head coach who will review the forms for completeness, verify the identity of the volunteer and, for minors, verify the References Form is completed. Staff members must also verify that verification of completion of Protective Behaviors training is attached to the Class A Form. Head coaches will then forward all completed forms to their Area Director. The Area Director will review forms for completeness and then forward forms to the Special Olympics Illinois Normal office for final processing. Exact steps are detailed in the section titled Agency/Head Coach Guidelines for Processing Class A Forms.

Reference Checks: Volunteers must provide two references. References for adult Class A volunteers are not required to be contacted. Special Olympics Illinois reserves the right to contact references if necessary. Class A volunteers who are minors must submit the Volunteer References Form along with their Class A Volunteer Form.

### **Special Olympics Illinois Normal Office Processing Guidelines**

Designated staff at the Special Olympics Illinois Normal office will process all submitted forms, verify completion of Protective Behavior training, complete the national background checks and make a final determination upon acceptance or rejection of the volunteer. Upon approval, Special Olympics Illinois will send verification of approval to all Class A volunteers. Upon acceptance, volunteers should immediately communicate their approval to the Head Coach so they can begin to work with athletes.

Individuals are not allowed to serve as Class A volunteers until they receive approval from Special Olympics Illinois. In time sensitive situations, Special Olympics Illinois will attempt to call or e-mail the volunteer and/or the Area Director to inform them of the approval. For coaches and chaperones, it is the responsibility of each agency to ensure a volunteer does not serve as a Class A volunteer prior to official approval from Special Olympics Illinois.

### **Unauthorized Individuals Functioning as Class A Volunteers**

At any Special Olympics Illinois competition, if an individual that has not been authorized\* or approved to serve as a Class A volunteer and is then observed acting in this capacity, the individual will immediately be asked to cease and desist all Class A volunteer activities. If the individual refuses to stop their involvement then the whole agency will be removed from competition(s) and all events will be forfeited. If the removal of the individual results in an inadequate coach to athlete coverage ratio then the agency will be removed from all competition and asked to leave the event.

\*Authorized refers to any individual that has met the conditions of the last minute substitution guidelines outlined in the section titled; Special Olympics Illinois Staff Procedures for Class A Volunteer Verification at Events, and is participating in the event with the knowledge and consent of Special Olympics Illinois.

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## **SPECIAL OLYMPICS ILLINOIS STAFF GUIDELINES FOR PROCESSING CLASS A FORMS**

1. Disperse the appropriate number and kind of Class A Forms to your key volunteers and Head Coaches. Copies of the form can be made to meet demands. Provide information about completing the Protective Behavior training and indicate that forms will not be accepted until the training has been completed and verification of completion is attached to the form.
2. The form must be completed by the Class A volunteer. Any forms that are incomplete must be returned to the volunteer. Do not forward incomplete forms to the Normal office because the forms will just be returned. Instruct the individual to indicate NA if he or she does not have a driver's license.
3. Staff must review their key volunteer forms for completeness and verify the following items:
  - The individual completed the correct form for his or her age.
  - Verification of Protective Behaviors Training is attached to the form.
  - If the individual is an area key volunteer then the Area number must be provided and then 000 written in as the agency number and the agency name should be Area Committee.
  - If the individual is a state key volunteer then write "State" in the Area number, leave agency number blank and write in the committee name in the provided space for Agency Name.
  - Verify that all required information in Section I has been provided.
  - Verify that all questions in Section II have been answered.
  - Section III - For Adult Class A Forms only: Two references with their relationship and contact information must be listed. Family members cannot be used as references.
  - Section III – For Minor Class A Forms only: The Volunteer References Form must also be submitted and must be reviewed for completeness. Family members cannot be used as references.
  - The volunteer must sign and date the form in the provided space after Section IV.
  - Parent/Guardian Signatures: A parent/guardian signature is required for all minor Class A volunteers. Parent/Guardians must sign and date the form and then print their full name in the provided space.
  - Agency Representative Authorization Section: The identity of each Class A volunteer must be verified at the time of initial registration. The staff member responsible for the individual must view the individual's photo identification and then print and sign his or her name and date the form in the provided space to verify that the photo identification was verified. The agency is responsible for completing this requirement for all agency volunteers.
  - Staff Only Section: Only the President & CEO or specifically designated staff are authorized to accept or reject an individual. No other staff members are authorized to sign this section of the Class A Volunteer Form.
4. Completed forms must be forwarded to the Special Olympics Illinois Normal office for completion of the screening process.

**NO FAXES WILL BE ACCEPTED!!!!**

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### **AGENCY/HEAD COACH GUIDELINES FOR PROCESSING CLASS A FORMS**

1. Disperse the appropriate number and kind of Class A Volunteer Forms to your coaches and chaperones. Copies of the form can be made to meet demands. Provide information about completing the Protective Behavior training and indicate that forms will not be accepted until the training has been completed and verification of completion is attached to the form.
2. The form must be completed by the Class A volunteer. Any forms that are incomplete must be returned to the volunteer. Do not forward incomplete forms to your Area Director because the forms will just be returned. Instruct the individual to indicate NA if they do not have a driver's license.
3. Head coaches must review forms for completeness and verify the following:
  - The individual completed the correct form for his or her age.
  - Verification of Protective Behaviors Training is attached to the form.
  - The Area number, Agency number and Agency Name must be completed.
  - Verify that all required information in Section I have been provided.
  - Verify that all four questions in Section II have been answered.
  - Section III - For Adult Class A Forms only: Two references with their relationship and contact information must be listed. Family members cannot be used as references.
  - Section III – For Minor Class A Forms only: The Volunteer References Form must also be submitted and must be reviewed for completeness. Family members cannot be used as references.
  - The volunteer must sign and date the form in the provided space after Section IV.
  - Parent/Guardian Signatures: A parent/guardian signature is required for all minor Class A volunteers. Parent/Guardians must sign and date the form and then print their full name in the provided space.
  - Agency Representative Authorization Section: The identity of each Class A Volunteer must be verified at the time of initial registration. The head coach must view the individual's photo identification and then print and sign his or her name and date the form in the provided space to verify that the photo identification was verified.
  - Staff Only Section: Only the President & CEO or specifically designated staff are authorized to accept or reject an individual. No other staff members are authorized to sign this section of the Class A Volunteer Form.
4. Completed forms must be forwarded to the Area office for review.
5. The Area Director will forward forms to the Special Olympics Illinois Normal office for completion of the screening process.

**NO FAXES WILL BE ACCEPTED!!!!**

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## PROCEDURES FOR CLASS A VOLUNTEER VERIFICATION AT EVENTS

All Class A volunteers for all events at all levels of the Program must be checked prior to participation in the event to verify they have completed the registration process and are an approved Class A volunteer.

### **The following will be used to verify registration of agency coaches and chaperones:**

All agencies must submit a list of registered coaches/chaperones at the time of entry registration. The Area Director or staff person overseeing the event will verify each listed coach/chaperone using the GMS database. If an agency has volunteers that are not approved then the Area Director/staff member will first ensure that the individual is not on the denied volunteer list. If the individual is on the denied list then the individual cannot volunteer and the agency will be informed that the individual is not to have any contact with Special Olympics activities. If the individual is not on the denied list then the Area Director/staff member will inform the agency of the problem and provide a deadline for resolution of the problem. The deadline should allow time for Special Olympics Illinois to complete a national criminal background check on the individual.

If the problem is not resolved by the established deadline then Special Olympics Illinois staff may allow last minute substitutions: If a deadline is not met or a Class A volunteer is unable to attend an event and a substitute is sent that has not been screened then the substitute volunteer is permitted to volunteer one time only, at that event and only if the conditions outlined below are met.

The Area Director or staff person in charge of the event must include a step in the on-site registration process to verify Class A volunteers for each agency. The following procedures must be used:

- The original coach/chaperone roster must be available and contains all statements that must be signed during the registration process.
- The head coach or an approved Class A volunteer from the agency must verify volunteers attending the event. If there are extra names listed on the roster then the Area Director or staff member must have a procedure to identify who actually attended the event. (Suggestions: Either use a hi-liter for those who attend or cross off the names of those who do not attend.)
- The head coach or another approved Class A volunteer from the agency must sign the statement indicating that he or she verifies that the volunteers listed with the registration information from their agency are actually those in attendance at the event.
- If there have been changes then the names of the substitutes must be verified against the GMS database to ensure the substitutes are approved Class A volunteers. Individuals listed in the denied file will not be allowed to volunteer.
- All coaches and chaperones at the event will either have to provide photo identification or an approved Class A volunteer from the agency must agree to sign the statement indicating that he or she has verified the identity of all listed volunteers from that agency for that event.

Special Olympics Illinois may allow last minute substitutions. If a Class A volunteer is unable to attend an event and a substitute is sent that has not been screened then the substitute volunteer is permitted to volunteer one time only, at that event and only if the following conditions are met:

- The substitute cannot be the only volunteer for the agency. There must be another approved Class A volunteer from the agency that will sign the statement agreeing that the substitute is suitable to volunteer in his or her defined role and that the approved Class A volunteer will take responsibility to supervise the substitute.
- The substitute must submit a completed Class A Volunteer Form.
- The substitute must either bring a copy of their verification of completion of Protective Behaviors training to the event or complete the Protective Behaviors training on-site using the method designated at that event.
- The substitute must produce photo identification or have an approved Class A volunteer from his or her agency verify the substitute's identity.
- The Area Director or staff member overseeing the event will submit the completed Class A Form and proof of successful completion of Protective Behavior training as soon as possible following the event to ensure timely processing.

If an agency continually abuses the last minute substitution rule or has a large number of last minute substitutions at events then Special Olympics Illinois may prohibit that agency from using the last minute substitution rule. If an agency is in a situation that will require a last minute substitution then the head coach must immediately contact his or her Area Director.

If an agency arrives at an event with only one volunteer and that individual is not an approved Class A volunteer then the agency will not be allowed to participate in that event. This applies even if the volunteer is the parent/guardian of the athlete. Following the event, the Area Director or staff person overseeing the event will contact the agency to revisit the Class A Volunteer Policy and determine if assistance is needed to avoid the problem at future events.

**THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS COMPONENT OF THE POLICY.**

## **CLASS B VOLUNTEER SCREENING**

### **Class B Volunteer Implementation & Verification at Events**

Staff members responsible for events that utilize Class B volunteers will supervise implementation of the Class B registration and screening policy. If key volunteers are used for implementation then the staff member responsible for the event must ensure the key volunteers are properly trained. The Class B Volunteer Medical Form is to be used by day-of-event medical volunteers.

### **Individual Volunteer Registration and Verification**

The following steps will be used to register and verify identification of individual Class B volunteers at events:

- The volunteer must complete the Class B Volunteer Form which is then reviewed for completeness.
- The staff member/key volunteer must verify the identity of the individual:
  1. The individual must present their photo identification. (for minors, photo identifications are only required to the extent available).
  2. If the individual does not have their photo identification then another Class B or a Class A volunteer will be allowed to visually verify the identity of the individual.
- If the individual is an adult, does not have photo identification and no one is able to verify the individual's identity then the individual is not allowed to volunteer.
- After the identity of the individual is verified then the staff member/key volunteer must mark the appropriate item in the Volunteer Identification Section on the individual's Class B Form to indicate that the identity verification was completed.
- The individual is now allowed to volunteer.
- After the event the staff member/key volunteer must complete the hours worked section on the Class B Forms.

### **Group Volunteer Registration and Verification**

The following steps will be used to register and verify identification of groups of Class B volunteers at events:

- The contact person for the group completes the information section.
- All members of the group must read the disclaimer and then print and sign their names and date the form.
- The group contact person is responsible for verifying the identity of all group volunteers and signs and dates the form in the appropriate place to affirm that this has been done.
- The staff member/key volunteer will review the form for completeness.
- The group is now allowed to volunteer.
- After the event, the staff member/key volunteer must complete the hours worked section on the form.

### **Data Collection and Storage of Class B Forms**

Area event Class B Forms are to be sent to the Vice President of Area Management within 30 days of completion of the event. District, Sectional and State Event Class B Forms are to be sent to the Director of Sports and Competition within 30 days of completion of the event. The identified individuals will review all forms and then forward to the Finance and Administration Department for entry into the organizational database.