

# Swimming

January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
Pre-season Webinar

**Special Olympics**  
Pennsylvania



# Today's Agenda



- Welcome/Introductions
- Reminders
- Athlete Performance Training
- Sectional & State Events
- Sports Director & Rule Updates
- Training
- Questions



# THANK YOU



# Reminders

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# Spring Season Updates

- Coaches should begin training at least 10 weeks prior to the state culminating event.
  - 10 weeks from Summer Games: March 29
- Athletes must be trained according to the minimum standards acceptable, for at least eight (8) weeks in the appropriate sport and must have several opportunities to compete during that period.
  - Athlete Attendance will be tracked in the Attendance Tracker
  - Early Season practice, Team workouts indoors, Athlete Performance Training activities, virtual training, fitness training, team walk/run, etc.

# Attendance Trackers



- Age Calculator – Spring is determined as of **1/15/2024**
- Eligibility Tab: Deadline for all rostered individual to be eligible is **3/29/2024**
  - ▶ UPDATE: Only those Ineligible will be listed
  - ▶ Athletes need Medical
  - ▶ Volunteer/UPs need Background Check, Gen Orientation, Protective Behavior, Concussion Training
    - ▶ Sport Specific Rosters/Tabs:
      - ▶ Team Sports MUST complete Competition tab indicating team each athlete is on or skills
      - ▶ Team Rating Forms, must be completed by **March 29** if submitting age exemptions OR by registration for the first competition
      - ▶ Missing volunteer/athlete
      - ▶ Did they complete Sport Sign-up Form?
        - If Yes and you don't see them contact RSD

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS? CONTACT YOUR REGIONAL SPORT DIRECTOR**



# Attendance Trackers

- **Coach will receive tracker when they submit Site Registration Form**
- **Site Attendance Tracker has 3 tabs: Directions, Attendance, Eligibility**
  - **Tab 1: Directions: How to complete the form**
  - **Tab 2 Attendance:**
    - Lists all participants that have signed up
    - Includes phone & Email
    - Attendance should be tracked after each practice
    - Interest in attending Sectionals & State Games will be used to advance for competitions
    - Data will be used to collect training numbers and ultimately future allocations
- **SAMPLE TRACKER**

# Attendance Trackers



**Tab 3: Eligible – NEW this will only list ineligible individuals - if participant is on this list, they cannot participate and should not be attending practice**

- Athletes: Must have current medical
- Volunteer: General Orientation, **Concussion** Protocol, Protective Behaviors, 18 and over current background check
- Highlighted **RED** out of date
- Highlighted **YELLOW** will expire prior to state competition
- Updated weekly by SOPA
- **IMPORTANT: Spring deadline March 29, 2024**

• **Tab 4: Competition – sport specific**

- Required for Team Sports – identifies team participation or skills for each athlete and coach



# Athlete & Volunteer Eligibility



**Athlete Requirements:** Medical on file WITH signature + expiration dates

- **Local Programs:** Athlete Medical under Certifications
- **Regions:** Athlete Registration Form & Health History under Certifications
  - **Valid for 3 years.**
  - Save attachments under "Attachments" within a person's profile vs. anywhere else in the profile.

**Class A Volunteer Requirements:** Trainings + Background Check on file

- **Local Programs + Regions**
  - Background Results under Background Checks, **Valid for 5 years.**
  - General Orientation under Training, **Valid for life.**
  - Protective Behaviors, under Training, **Valid for 3 years.**
  - Concussion Training, under Training, **Valid for 3 years.**

# UCS: PIAA Medical



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A Unified Champion School athlete may participate in a local program with their PIAA Medical. The participant must request a copy of the medical from their school.

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The PIAA physical exam must be inputted into Vsys as an "athlete medical" and the medical form must be uploaded as an attachment.

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**UPDATE:** The PIAA physical exam form is good for one year from the Dr's Signature date. If the date is 1/25/24 the exam expires on 1/25/25.



# Unified Partners Eligibility

Unified Partners do not need an athlete medicals

- All Partners – Must have a VSys database record
- Ages 16 and up – must have General Orientation and Protective Behaviors Training
- Ages 18 and up - Must have General Orientation, Protective Behaviors and a Background check.

# Volunteer Q & A



What is the minimum age for a Head Coach? **18**

What is the minimum age for a Class A? **16**

What is the minimum age for a Class B Assistant Coach? **14**

Can I be an assistant coach be 14?

**Training yes; Events No**

1-day events - 16

Overnight events - 18

What is the youngest age of a Unified Partner? **8**

What age do you need a Young athlete chaperone for?

**Overnight events for 8 & 9 year olds**

# Volunteers under 18



Steps to becoming a volunteer if under 18:

- (1) Register as a volunteer on SOPA website,
- (2) Get a parent/guardian to sign the email sent to them,
- (3) Upload the signed form into Vsys, or you can bring the email back to the coach or email it to [classAsupport@specialolympicspa.org](mailto:classAsupport@specialolympicspa.org)
- (4) Volunteers who are 16 and older and helping with a sport are also asked to complete the 3 Class A trainings (General Orientation, Protective Behavior and Concussion)



# Volunteer Position Requirements

## Class B

Volunteer Classifications	VSys, Trainings & Clearances→	Completed Volunteer Application → VSys Record	Background Clearance to include PA Disclosure Statement	Protective Behaviors	General Orientation	Concussion Training	Sport Certification
	Position & Age (If applicable) ↓						(Note: 14 & over may attend Training Schools)
Class B	Medical Volunteer - Student	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Class B	General/Local Program/Team Volunteer - Volunteer are outside the 1:4 ratio with no chaperoning responsibilities 15 yrs. old and younger	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Class B	One Day Volunteer	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Class B	Bus Driver - Non-registered volunteer	No	No	No	No	No	No
Class B	Equestrian Horse Handler 14 and older – one day events	Yes	No	No	No	No	No

*Last updated: July 2022*



# Volunteer Position Requirements

SPECIAL OLYMPICS PENNSYLVANIA VOLUNTEER POSITION REQUIREMENTS							
Volunteer Classifications	VSys, Trainings & Clearances→	Completed Volunteer Application → VSys Record	Background Clearance to include PA Disclosure Statement	Protective Behaviors	General Orientation	Concussion Training	Sport Certification
	Position & Age (If applicable) ↓						(Note: 14 and over may attend Training Schools)
Class A	HOD - 18 yrs. old or older	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Class A	Head Coach - 18 yrs. old or older	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Class A	Assistant Coach -	Yes	Yes for 18 and over	Yes for 16 and over	Yes for 16 and over	Yes for 16 and over	No
	16 to 17 yrs. old – one day events						
	18 yrs. old or older – overnight events						
Class A	Athlete as Coach -	Yes	Yes for 18 and over	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
	16 to 17 yrs. old – one day events						
	18 yrs. old or older – overnight events						
Class A	Unified Partner - 8 yrs. old or older	Yes	Yes for 18 and over	Yes for 16 and over	Yes for 16 and over	Yes for 16 and over	No
Class A	1:1- Chaperone Capacity Only	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No but recommended	No
	Volunteer/Athlete are above the 1:4 ratio						
Class A	Group Home Chaperone - Chaperone capacity only	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No but recommended	No
	Volunteer/Athlete are above the 1:4 ratio						
Class A	Equestrian Side Walker - 18 yrs. old or older	Yes	Yes for 18 and over	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Class A	Equestrian Horse Handler	Yes	Yes for 18 and over	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
	14 to 17 yrs. old – one day events						
	18 yrs. old or older – overnight events						
Class A	Health and Fitness Coordinator - 18 yrs. old or older	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Class A	Healthy Athlete Clinical Director	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Class A	Delegation Volunteer - Volunteer are outside the 1:4 ratio with no chaperoning responsibilities	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes for 16 and over	No but recommended	No
Class A	Young Athlete Chaperone - Overnight chaperone for athletes ages 8 and 9 yrs. old	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Class A	Medical Volunteer - Professional	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No

# Spring Calendars & Responsibilities



- [Eastern Spring calendar](#)
- [Central Spring Calendar](#)
- [West Spring Calendar](#)
- Season start date:
  - Summer Games sports must begin training by April 12 (*and complete 8 weeks of training prior to Summer Games*)
  - Indoor training counts as training! Teams that can't access outdoor facilities early in the season should plan to begin indoor training by these dates.



# Google Registration Snapshot



## Athlete Tab

Name	Profile code	Gender	Age	Ath Med Exp.	ROLE	Alternate - Y/N	1:1 Name	Sport	Updates to Athlete Information	Dietary Restrictions

## Sport Specific Tab

Event 1	Event 1 - Time	Personal Best - Time	Event 2	Event 2 - Time	Personal Best - Time	Event 3	Event 3 - Time	Personal Best - Time	Non Diving/Outer Lane
25 Yard Freestyle - Traditional	12.05.05		25 Yard Backstroke - Tradition	12.05.05		25 Yard Breaststroke - Traditic	12.05.05		ND



# Event Registration

- Mark interest in participating in Local/Invitational, Sectional and State competition in columns J, K, L respectively on the Attendance Tracker – **COMPLETE THIS ASAP into the season**

## Google Registration:

- On the Coaches and Athletes tab, you will assign each role to their respective sport. That individual will then appear on the corresponding sport tab.
- On the Sport tab, you will add athletes' events and times.
- **Important:** Time entries should appear in the format **MM.SS.00**
  - ❖ Example: **12.14.05** = 12 minutes 14 seconds and 5 hundredths of a second.
  - ❖ Example: 00.15.08 = 15 seconds and 8 hundredths of a second
- REVIEW THE DELEGATION REPORT sent prior to events and make corrections as needed

# SOPA Website - Sports Offered Page



## Links to all the sport pages

- [Sports Offered](#)
- [Seasonal Sign-up](#)

## Sport specific resources:

- Warm-Up/Cool Down resources
- PDF & recording of this webinar
- Link to Sport Rules
- Scoresheets
- Best Practices

<a href="#">Athletics</a>	>
<a href="#">Basketball</a>	>
<a href="#">Equestrian</a>	>
<a href="#">Golf</a>	>
<a href="#">Gymnastics</a>	>
<a href="#">Softball</a>	>
<a href="#">Swimming (Aquatics)</a>	>
<a href="#">Tennis</a>	>

# Brand and Uniform Guidelines



- New Resource that include SO brand and uniform guidelines
- Includes mock-ups of sport specific uniforms

[SOPA Brand and Uniform Guidelines](#)

# Medication Reminders - All events

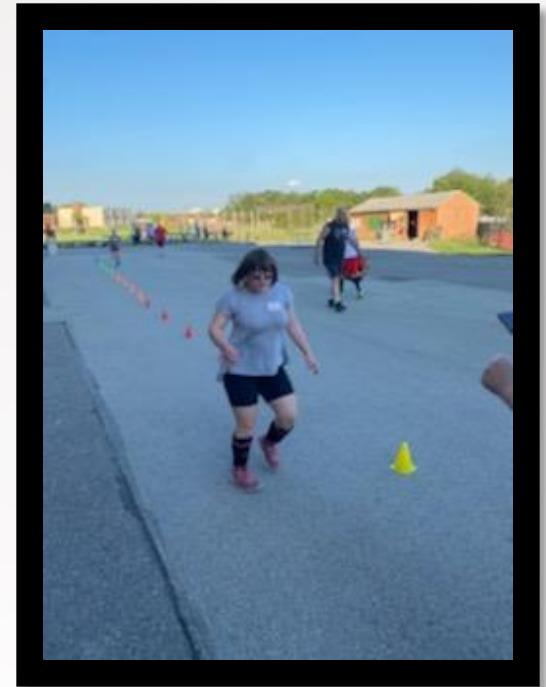


- **FORMS:** Medication Assistance Best Practices, Consent Form and Tracker - forms are located on SOPA website: <https://specialolympicspa.org/get-involved/resource-library>
- Coaches should be sharing this information with athletes, parents/guardians prior to all full day or overnight events. SOPA will no longer be emailing this information to all participants.
- Please ensure your athletes are completing the Medication Assistance Consent Form and your Class A volunteers traveling with the delegation are completing the Medication Assistance Tracker.
- Please reach out to [chammell@specialolympicspa.org](mailto:chammell@specialolympicspa.org) directly with any questions or concerns on the process.

# Athlete Performance Training (APT)



- APT is an in-season fitness program.
- Health education and fitness evaluations are embedded into sports practice for 8-weeks.
- Athlete Performance Training happens on the field of play.
- Any sport, any size team should implement.
- **Physical fitness is a key part of the Special Olympics mission. Physical activity, adequate nutrition and hydration enhance athletes' sports performance and improve health and overall quality of life.**



# Athlete Performance Training Outcomes



- APT works!
- Since the start of APT in Fall 2023 over **22%** have seen an improvement in their fitness assessment,
- **14.5%** of athletes who participated in APT have seen an improvement in their weight.
- Of those athletes who have participated and whose blood pressure was taken, over **16%** saw an improvement in their results by the end of the season.

# Athlete Performance Training



## Interested Coaches

- Learn More by visiting the [APT webpage](#)
- Participation qualifies coaches for Bronze level certification

## How to sign-up

- **Contact Charla Stein, [cstein@specialolympicspa.org](mailto:cstein@specialolympicspa.org)**
- Watch a short video, take the quiz and then complete the registration form

## Benefits of APT

- FREE to programs/teams
- Turn-key, easy to execute
- HQ will provide coaches and athletes with materials
- Provide health, fitness and wellness education to athletes and coaches



# 2024 Sectional & State Events

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# Qualifiers

- Basketball (3x3, 5v5, individual skills)
- Golf (all levels including individual skills)
- Tennis (all levels including individual skills)
- Softball (team and individual skills)
- **SWIMMING is NOT A QUALIFIER**
  - Athletes/Unified Partners are not required to attend Sectional to participate in State Games.
  - All athletes **MUST** have competition at the local, regional level before competition in a State Games

# 2026 USA Games



- 2026 Special Olympics USA Games
  - June 20-26
  - University of Minnesota – Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN
  - 2024 SOPA State Games will be qualifiers for USA Games, SOPA will not be allocated specific slots until late 2024
  - Coach applications will be available July 1



SPECIAL OLYMPICS  
**USA GAMES**  
MINNESOTA 2026



# Allocations

- Spring Allocations can be found on the SOPA Website, State Games tab
  - [SOPA State Games Paperwork Webpage](#)
- As always, please remember that you can request additional allocations through the LOI process.
- Previous Lunch & Learn about the allocation process. This riveting presentation can be found here: [Allocation L&L](#)

# Spring Sectionals



- West: Carnegie Mellon University
  - Saturday April 20th

- Central: Saint Francis University
  - Sunday, April 28th
  - Athletics will be held at Central Cambria HS



- East: Kutztown University
  - Saturday May 4th



[2024 Competition Calendar: Important Dates](#)

# Summer Games: June 6 - 8th



- Penn State University
- Important Dates:
  - Reg Info: Will be out by **4/12**
  - LOI: Due **5/2**
  - Final Allocations: **5/3**
  - VSys Rosters: Due **5/7**
  - Google links sent: **5/9**
  - Registration: Due **5/16**
  - Scratch/Activation: Due **5/30**
- **Arrival 6/8, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.**
- **Departure 6/10 3 – 6 p.m.**



# Swimming Rule Updates

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# Sport Management Teams



- Special Olympics Pennsylvania Sport Management Teams are comprised of key regional leadership volunteers who represent each of SOPA's sponsored sports. These individuals represent a variety of levels within their respective sports, both inside and outside of Special Olympics.
- **Coaches needed to represent The Wilds, Northeast and Ridge and Valley Regions**
- Request or recommend someone for a Sport Management Team
  - [Sport Management Interest Form](#)



# Sport Management Team



Region	County	Name
Northwest	Erie	Mark Eulanio
Wilds		VACANT
Susquehanna Valley	Columbia/Montour	Stacy Banyas
Northeast		VACANT
<b>GLVPR</b>	<b>Bethlehem</b>	<b>Alice Moat – Sport Director</b>
Greater Philadelphia	Delaware	Kathryn McKeone
Capital Area	Lancaster	Anne Phillips
Ridge & Valley		VACANT
Three Rivers	Lawrence Allegheny	Dan and Carrie Spencer Melody Geer
Official	Tom Hilands (SG Committee)	Jeff Reitz (Certified official)

# Rule Book



<https://resources.specialolympics.org/sports-essentials/sports-and-coaching/swimming>





# Updated Rules

## Fundamental Events

15M Walk

15M Floatation

15M Kick Board

15M Assisted Swim

15M Unassisted Swim

25M Assisted Swim

25M Floatation

**25M Kick Board**



# 15M, 25M-Kick Board Rules



**Event Start** - The swimmer must be in the water with one hand placed touching the pool deck edge, or, with both hands holding the kick board with the swimmers back against the pool edge.

**Race** - Both hands should remain on the kick board at all times.

- The swimmer may swim in a Prone or Supine position.
- Arm stroking is not permissible.
- Standing on the bottom of the pool for the purpose of resting is permissible but no walking or jumping is permitted.



# 15M, 25M-Kick Board Rules

**Finish**—the finish will take place when the kick board touched the pool edge at the finish line, or when some part of the swimmer's body touches the pool edge at the finish point.

The swimmer must have one hand on the board at the finish.

## **Type of Kick Board permitted:**

- Length – maximum length is 470 mm
- Width – maximum width is 330 mm
- Thickness – maximum thickness is 45 mm
- Material – A material that provides appropriate floatation



# Use of Whistles

**SOPA is adopting the National Standard of whistle starts to start aquatics events. This is required for ALL meets. You will need to practice with your athletes.**

- 1.** Prior to the start of each race the referee will **blow short whistles** notify swimmers to get ready to swim. The initial whistles will be **at least four distinct, staccato bursts.**
- 2.** When the athletes are ready he/she will blow **one long whistle** to signal the swimmers to get onto the blocks, stand on the side of the deck or enter the water.
- 3.** The athletes should hear “Take your Mark” indicating that the swimmers should be ready to start.
- 4.** The horn will sound indicating the start of the race. If a horn is not accessible verbal command “Go” can be used.

For the backstroke a **second long whistle** (when swimmers have surfaced and can hear it) to “place feet” get ready for backstroke start.

**SMT is working to produce video of this for coaches – will be shared in next few weeks**



# Honest Effort Rule (HER)

Maximum Effort or Honest Effort Rule (HER) will be **15% at all State level events this season** (Sectionals and Summer Games)

- EXCEPTIONS: All events shorter than 25 yards, as well as 25 freestyle, 25 flotation, and the 4 x 25 freestyle relay will remain at the 25% limit for HER.



# Event Time Guidelines

- The SMT will issue time guidelines for each event
- These are not minimum/maximum standards – just guidelines
- Developed based on SOPA event data from past 5 years
- To be shared in February

## Purpose:

1. Enable coaches to select the most appropriate events for the athletes
2. To help coaches set goals for athletes





# Event Selection Guidelines

- Recommendation: an athlete should not jump more than 2 distances (For example, if participating in 25m select events up to 100m, if participating in 50m select events up to 200m)
- Coaches should be training athletes in ALL strokes and then choosing their best strokes for competition

# Coaches Guide



## Table of Content Includes:



Basics of Swimming

Getting Started

In the Water

Learn to Swim Skills

Stroke Development

Drills

Planning a Swim Season

Example: Stroke Development –  
Freestyle  
Coming Up!

# Stroke Development



## Freestyle

Freestyle is regarded as the fastest of all competitive swim strokes and one of the first taught to the beginning swimmer. The stroke action involves the arms moving forward alternately with the legs kicking continuously throughout the stroke. The swimmer's body remains horizontal, streamlined and balanced in the water with the swimmer's head turning to one side to breathe after each full arm cycle. The teaching and development of the stroke can be achieved by breaking down the skill into its various components.

### Stroke Coaching Points

#### Body Position

The body position is horizontal and streamlined in the water.

#### Key Points

- Horizontal with a slight slope down to hips. The waterline is between the eyebrows and hairline.
- Slight head adjustments change the position of the legs. If the head is held high out of the water, the legs will drop and if submerged, the legs will rise out of the water.
- Eyes look downward.
- Shoulders rotate into the stroke.

#### Leg Action

The freestyle leg action helps the body stay in the horizontal position and balances the arm action. It contributes to the propulsion within the stroke.

Note: A common fault is when a swimmer during the pull phase will cross over the centerline of their body, thus causing over-rotation.

#### Key Points

- Leg action starts at the hips.
- The legs work almost within the body depth. This creates the least resistance to forward motion.
- Alternating action is required.
- There is a slight bend in the knees.
- Ankles are relaxed to allow toes to point and give a natural in-toeing effect.
- The number of leg kicks may vary for each arm cycle.
- Usually there are six leg kicks in one arm cycle.



## Arm Action

The continuous, alternating arm action is the strength within the stroke and enables constant propulsion.

### Key Points – Entry

- Hand entry is fingertip first.
- Hand enters gently between the head and shoulder line with a slight bend in the arm.
- Hand then reaches forward under the surface. Note: this is a natural stretch, not overreaching.

### Pull

After entering the water, the arms should perform a 3 sweep motion. With your elbow slightly bent, sweep forward, then back towards the centre of the body then out towards the thighs, imitating an hourglass shape.

### Recovery

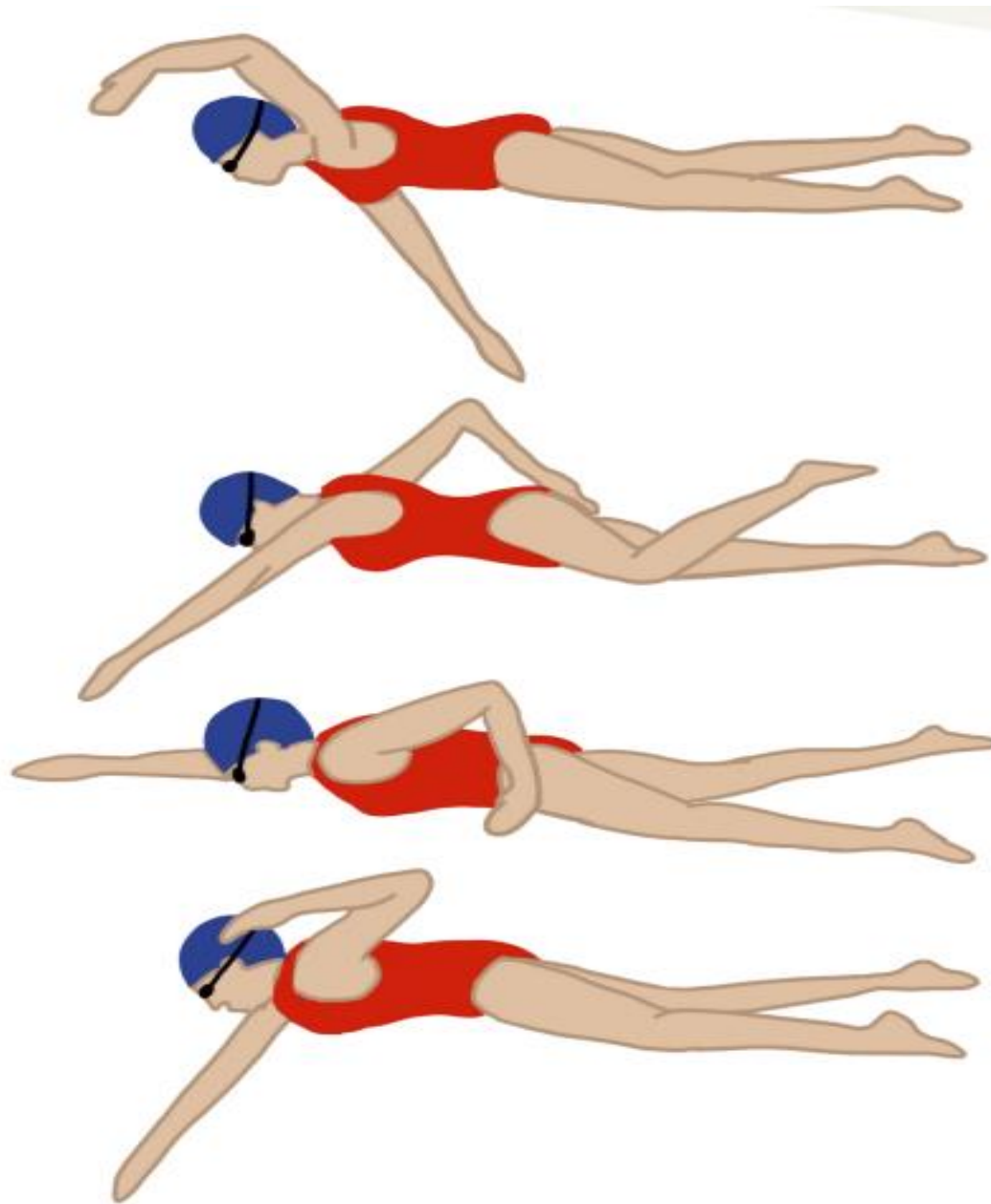
- This movement is relaxed and uses the momentum from the pull.
- Elbow will exit first and is kept higher than the hand.
- Hand passes as close to body as possible. Once the hand passes shoulder level, the arm will reach forwards to the entry position.

### Breathing

Integrating a relaxed, side-breathing pattern is one of the most important elements of the freestyle stroke. It not only ensures the swimmer's body can provide adequate oxygen to the active muscles but also allows the swimmer to maintain an efficient body position.

- Head is turned smoothly (not lifted) in time with the natural roll of the body.
- The breath is taken when the breathing arm is completing the pull phase.
- The non-breathing arm enters the water when the breath is taken.
- Head is turned back to the center in a smooth action as soon as the breath is taken.
- The breath is released gradually.
- Breathing occurs every two arm pulls (one stroke cycle). This is called unilateral breathing. It may also be taken after every three arm pulls. This is called bilateral breathing.

**Note:** When teaching breathing in freestyle, it is recommended to start with the swimmer breathing to their preferred side.





## Progressions

- Practice breathing to one side:
  - Holding onto edge
  - With Kickboard using kick action
  - With kickboard- introduce arm action/breathing
  - Full stroke (no kickboard) using catch up- breathing to side short distance – could use fins to assist stroke and breathing short distance
  - Full stroke with/without fins short distance then extend

## Drills

- With fins- Right side lateral breathing every 6 kicks- swimmers right arm should be extended, left shoulder should be pointing to ceiling- left arm/hand should be placed on swimmers thigh, head relaxed and laying on extended right arm. Swimmer will do 6 kicks then gently place face in water with eyes looking to bottom of pool. Swimmers should be encouraged not to roll onto their front and the only movement (apart from the leg kick) will be moving the head from breathing to side to exhaling with face in.
- With fins- Left side lateral breathing every 6 kicks
- Same as above but the swimmer will have their left arm extended.

# Invitational Events



## **May 11** Lancaster XL meet:

- ▶ This meet is for 200, 400 and beyond, all 4 strokes
- ▶ Contact Anne Phillips: [anne.phillips23@gmail.com](mailto:anne.phillips23@gmail.com)

Others? Drop into the chat with detail and contact information.

# Training

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# Be Prepared for the Season!

- Get everyone eligible
- Understand and be aware of Air Quality levels
- Keep a pulse on illness/disease outbreaks within your community, remind athletes not to attend training if they are sick and to practice healthy habits and good hygiene.
- Know your facilities Emergency Action Plan and Evacuation route
- Updated yourself on sport rules and work with assistant coaches on a seasonal plan – identify who will manage each task during practice. Recruit additional assistance if needed.

# Air Quality



If air quality levels are in an Unhealthy Zone (151) or above, no outdoor activities should occur (social or active); as indicated within the documents these activities should be rescheduled or moved indoors.



You can monitor Air Quality levels at <https://www.airnow.gov/> enter your location and the current status will be provided.



You can use this [Air Quality Guide](#) document as an overall reference.

# Athlete as Coach



Do you have an athlete who would like to be a coach?

- Link to [Athlete as a Coach Webinar](#)

[Athlete as Coach Request form](#) to be completed by athletes who wish to apply to be trained as a coach

[Athlete as Coach FAQ](#)

Questions contact: Jordan Schubert, [jschubert@specialolympicspa.org](mailto:jschubert@specialolympicspa.org)

# Coaching Requirements



- **As of January 2021, Coach requirements for **training and competition:****
- **Team Sports:**
  - Must have at least one (1) certified coach per team
- **Individual Sport (and Skills):**
  - Must have at least one (1) certified coach per 25 athletes



# Continuing Education Update



- **Protective Behavior and Concussion Training** has been removed from the list of approved courses for Continuing Education and from the Continuing Education Request form.
- **Effective February 1, 2023, these two courses will not be accepted for continuing education**
- There are plenty of Continuing Education options available on the [SOPA website](#).

# Cont Ed – Advanced Swimming Courses



- SMT is working with Swim organizations – USA Swimming and ASCA to provide advanced coaching resources
- Any information/resources acquired will be shared with all SOPA certified swimming coaches
- Information will also be posted under Swimming on the SOPA Sports Offered page

# Get Certified!



## SUMMER SPORTS

Athletics, Basketball, Golf, Gymnastics, Equestrian, Softball, Swimming, and Tennis

- Coach trainings will be held regionally based on need
- **If you need coaches trained let your Regional Sports Director know ASAP**
- Trainings are currently being scheduled for February/March, check the SOPA Website and SOPA Coaches Facebook page for announcements – these will also be shared in the Weekly Team Leader email
- Training School registration will now be done within survey format, no longer within the VSys portal
- Registration will close Wednesday at 5:00pm prior to Saturday or Sunday training. You MUST register to attend

# Coaching Progression



## Certified Coach

- Class A volunteer with at least 1 sport certification

### Bronze

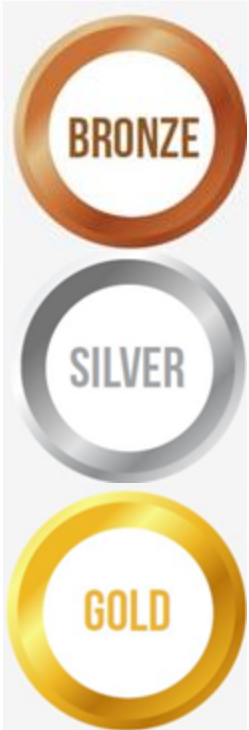
- Adds: Athlete Performance Training activation, personal best performance goals, **Coaching Special Olympics Athletes** course

### Silver

- Adds: Athlete goal setting, training minimum of 10 weeks, **Principles of Coaching** course, **Coaching Unified Sports**

### Gold

- Adds: advanced sport skills course, training at least twice a week for minimum of 10 weeks, develop year-round training/wellness plan for athletes





# Job Description and Levels of Responsibility



## HEAD COACH:

- Certified in the sport
- Supervises all coaches and athletes
- Responsible for equipment, transportation, and lodging
- Develops **practice plans** and assigns duties to Assistant Coaches
- Check athlete medical and volunteer Class A
- Completes all required paperwork (competition, training numbers)

## ASSISTANT COACH:

- Assist head coach/help supervise athletes (1:4)
- Performs duties assigned by head coach
- Assist in evaluating training
- Arrives on time for practice/stays throughout practice
- Assists with uniforms, collection of medicals and taking attendance

Full position descriptions for both head and assistant coaches can be found here: **SOPA Website on the Resources/Training**

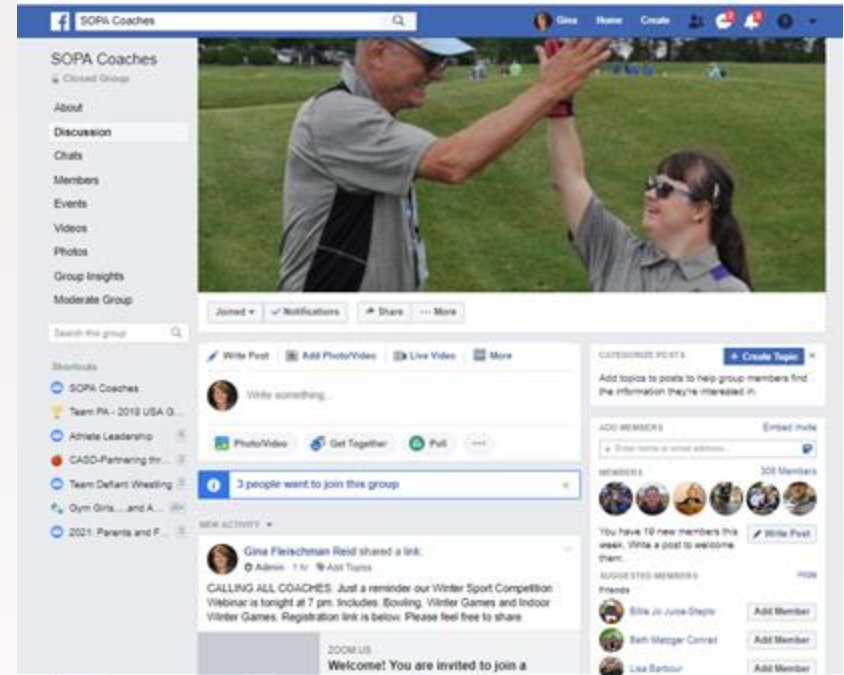
<https://specialolympicspa.org/resources>

# Improving Communication



## Closed Facebook Group for Coaches:

- 100% Optional
- Direct connection to coaches
- Share Competition Information/Reminders
- Share Training/Coaching Tips
- Encourage sharing of best practices between coaches
- Q&A
- [Coach Page](#)



☺ Which SOPA local program to you coach for?

☺ What sport/sports do you coach?

**THANK YOU  
COACHES!!!**

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