

How do I become a Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA) Volunteer?



1. Fill out a **volunteer application** from the SOPA website (<https://portals.specialolympics.org/>). You will be asked to verify your email and answer a few questions about yourself. Once completed, you will be taken to the Volunteer Zone of our Online Portal.

2. By default, everyone who completes the volunteer application starts as an Event Volunteer. The first thing that you will see in the Volunteer Zone is your checklist, where you will be asked to read and acknowledge our Release of Liability. Once this is complete, you are able to sign up to volunteer at an upcoming event! Click on the "Sign up for an Event" button on the Volunteer Zone to view and register for an event.

3. Looking to get involved beyond our events? To volunteer as an Assistant Coach, Coach, Mentor and more, click on the "Do More with Special Olympics" icon to see a list of volunteer opportunities and register for the role of your choice. Once you click on "apply" the requirements for that role will be added to your checklist.

If you are applying to a role that requires a background check, you will see the Background Check item added to your checklist. After answering the background check questions, you will automatically receive an email with a link to complete your background check.

4. When completing the Background Check checklist item, you will be asked: "Have you received a PA Child Neglect/Abuse Clearance within the last 5 years?"

- If you answer "no" to this question, Sterling Volunteers will add the PA Child Neglect/Abuse Clearance to your background check package. Upon completion of the PA State Police and National Background Check, you will be directed to the PA Compass website and provided with instruction on how to complete the PA Child Neglect/Abuse Clearance. You will be provided with a pre-paid authorization code that you will enter on the last page of the clearance application. The code allows us to directly receive the results of your clearance. [Click here](#) for a step- by-step user guide to completing this clearance.
- If you answer "yes" to this question, you will be able to upload a copy of your PA Child Abuse Clearance to your checklist. You may also email a copy of the clearance to classasupport@specialolympicspa.org.

5. Click on the remaining checklist items to view and complete your volunteer requirements. The status column will show you which items still need to be completed or need to be reviewed by staff.

6. Once your checklist items are complete, you are ready to volunteer! If you are not sure how to get started as a volunteer, please reach out to your [Regional Office](#) or you can email us at volunteer@specialolympicspa.org.