

# FACT SHEET

## VISION

Our vision is an inclusive world for all, driven by the power of sport, through which people with intellectual disabilities live active, healthy, and fulfilling lives.

## MISSION

Special Olympics provides year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendships with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

## HISTORY

Founded by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, the first International Special Olympics Games were held at Chicago's Soldier Field in 1968. Indiana's involvement began with those first Games.

## PARTICIPATION

In 2023, 19,000 children and adults in Indiana trained and competed through county programs and school programs. To be eligible to compete in Special Olympics, an individual must be 8 years of age or older AND have been identified by an agency or professional as having an intellectual disability OR closely related developmental disability. For those under age 8, the Unified Champion Schools program is available.

## OUTREACH

Indiana's focus is on the development of community-based programs as well as Unified Champion Schools and Champions Together Unified Sports programs in each county to increase the number of participating athletes.

## VOLUNTEERS

Special Olympics Indiana (SOIN) is an organization run almost entirely by volunteers. More than 8,500 volunteers provide the help needed to offer the sports training and competition programs.

## SUPPORT

SOIN is a nonprofit organization funded through private donations and fundraising projects across the state.

## SCHEDULE

SOIN athletes train and compete year-round. Five statewide competitions highlight the annual schedule. Special Olympics World Games are held every two years, alternating between winter and summer sports. In addition, every four years Team Indiana competes in the Special Olympics USA Games.

## PROGRAMS

Special Olympics provides a variety of competition opportunities for athletes of all abilities. Most Special Olympics events have few differences from the sport played by individuals without disabilities. Additional program opportunities include:

- Athlete Leadership
- Community Programs
- Unified Champions Schools™ & Champions Together
- Healthy Athletes
- Unified Fitness Clubs
- Unified Sports®

## SPORTS

Alpine Skiing*	Figure Skating*+	Kayaking	Swimming*
Badminton	Flag Football*	Motor Activities	Table Tennis
Basketball*	Floor Hockey	Netball	Tennis*+
Bocce*	Floorball	Open Water Swimming	Track & Field*
Bowling*	Football (Soccer)*	Powerlifting*	Triathlon*+
Cricket	Golf*	Roller Skating	Volleyball*
Cornhole*	Gymnastics*+	Sailing	
Cross Country Skiing	Rhythmic Gymnastics	Snowboarding*	
Cycling*	Handball	Snowshoeing*	
Dancesport	Horseshoes*+	Softball*	
Equestrian*	Judo	Speed Skating*+	

\* Sports offered in Indiana  
+ Local sports only

# ORGANIZATION

## SPECIAL OLYMPICS INC. (SOI)

Special Olympics Inc. is the international governing body of the Special Olympics movement. Based in Washington D.C., SOI provides official rules and policies, and coordinates global initiatives and competitions.

## SPECIAL OLYMPICS INDIANA (SOIN)

Based in Indianapolis, SOIN is accredited to conduct all aspects of the program in the state. In addition to conducting competition events, the state office manages fundraising, public relations, coaches training, volunteer registration, area and county programs, outreach and general administration.

## REGIONAL MANAGERS

Three regional managers lead SOIN's efforts to increase participation and improve the athlete experience. Growth and quality improvement are accomplished by the development of new County Programs, cultivation and support of existing County Programs, and training volunteers who have the biggest impact on the athlete experience. Regional managers oversee the County Program accreditation process that serves as the framework for development of annual plans customized by locality — but with focus on recruitment of new athletes and development of the capacity to support quality growth.

## AREA PROGRAMS

Indiana counties are grouped geographically into 10 Area Programs, each run by a committee of volunteers known as the Area Management Team. The Area Director and Area Competition Director oversee the Area Program, which includes regular coaches' meetings, sectional competitions, and at least one bowling tournament and one track and field meet each year.

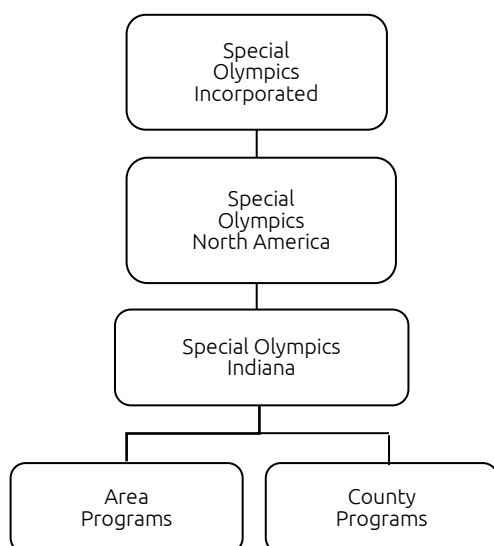
## COUNTY PROGRAMS

County Programs have a committee of volunteers responsible for making year-round sports training and competition available to all eligible athletes within its boundaries. Though usually made up of one county, some programs may consist of multiple counties in rural areas or a portion of a county in urban areas. The county coordinator is appointed to oversee the program's operation.

## COUNTY-ONLY POLICY

Only accredited County Programs can register, train and enter athletes in SOIN competition. Local teams must register, train and enter athletes for SOIN competition through a County Program. Local teams are any school, workshop, group home or family that provides Special Olympics training for its members (students, clients, employees, family member).

## ORGANIZATION CHART



## REGIONAL & AREA MAP



# ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY

Persons are eligible to compete in Special Olympics provided they are 8 years of age or older (those ages 2 to 7 are eligible for the Unified Champion Schools™);

**AND**

have been identified by an agency or professional as having an intellectual disability;

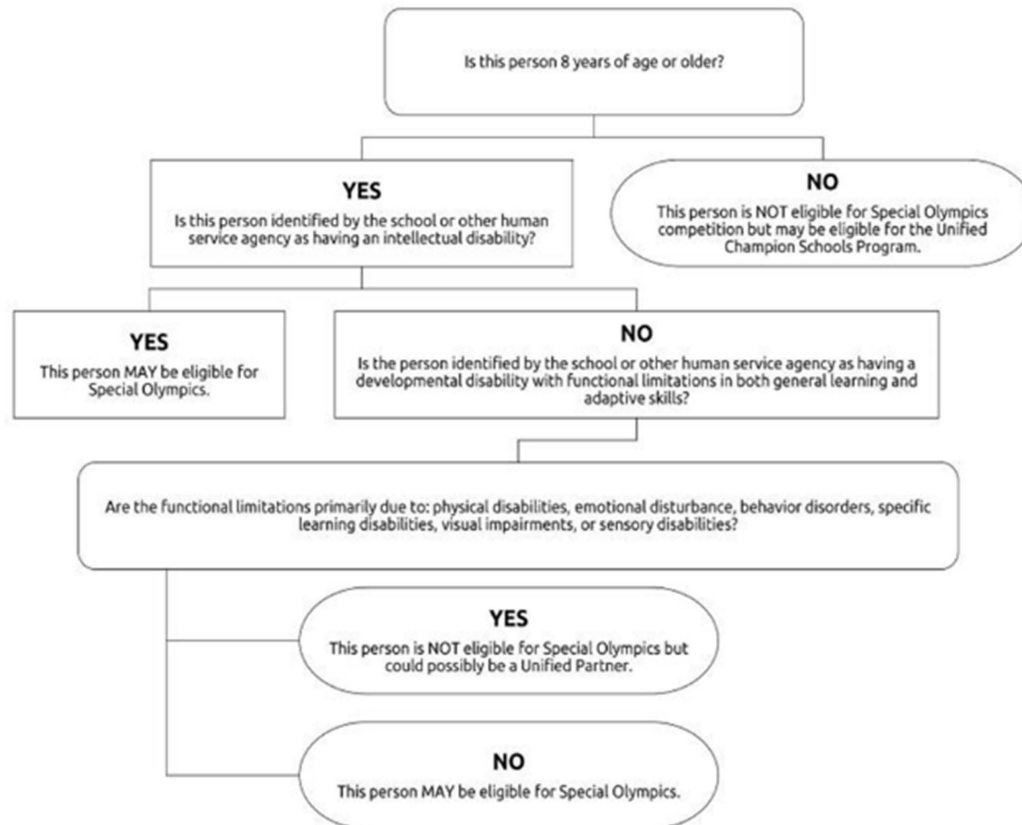
**OR**

have a closely related developmental disability such as those who have functional limitations, both in general learning and in adaptive skills such as recreation, work, independent living, self-direction or self-care.

NOTE: People with functional limitations based solely on a physical, behavioral, emotional, specific learning disability or sensory disability are not eligible. Special Olympics does not determine whether a person has an intellectual disability, but bases eligibility on the identification made by an agency or professional.

For specific questions on eligibility, contact the State Office.

## Who is eligible?



# ATHLETE REGISTRATION & MEDICAL FORM

County Management teams are the first and direct contact for assisting athletes and families in the registration process.

## ATHLETE REGISTRATION

The Athlete Registration and Eligibility is a 2-part process.

1. **ATHLETE REGISTRATION.** This is web-based, completed online. This is not login or account based. All information will need to be completed in one session and could take 15-20 minutes. Have contact information, medications, and health history available before beginning.
  - A. Athletes/Caregivers will go to this website, [medform.specialolympics.org](http://medform.specialolympics.org)
  - B. Complete all required information; sign the form using the electronic signature.
  - C. The Athlete Registration form comes electronically to SOIN, is signed and then uploaded to the GMS database. The athlete/caregiver also gets an email if it was successful and they can print the blank medical form to take the doctor.
2. **ATHLETE MEDICAL FORM—PHYSICAL EXAM:** Take the blank copy printed (as noted above), to a qualified medical practitioner. Physician completes this form and the caregiver returns to the County Coordinator. The County Coordinator then emails that to the State Office at:
  - A. [medapp@soindiana.org](mailto:medapp@soindiana.org)
  - B. PDF format only—it is the only format that will upload into GMS
  - C. Name the file: LAST NAME, FIRST NAME 04.04.2024 (Date of Exam)

Medicals need to be renewed every 3 years. It is best practice to renew the line athlete registration at this time to update health history, medications, and contact information.

## ATHLETE MEDICALS ARE REQUIRED AT ALL SPECIAL OLYMPICS ACTIVITIES/ EVENTS.

The following options are acceptable for meeting the requirement to have medical information on site at all Special Olympic activities:

1. Medical Report exported from GMS: includes name, DOB, contact information, health history, medications, etc.
2. PDF Medical Report downloaded to Tablet or phone
3. Computer on Site where GMS can be accessed; Health History and Medical Exam forms are accessible through GMS Access.
4. Physical copies of Medicals

## ATHLETE COMPLIANCY

To confirm Athlete Eligibility, Athlete Listings can be exported from GMS and area available upon request by emailing [medapp@soindiana.org](mailto:medapp@soindiana.org).

## RETAINING APPLICATIONS

Applications for inactive athletes or Unified partners shall be retained for a minimum of seven years, this also includes Paper Athlete Applications used prior to the use of electronic applications.