



**Special
Olympics**
Indiana

Athlete Leadership Council Handbook

Empowering Athletes to Lead



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Our 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.

Athlete Leadership Councils

Special Olympics Indiana (SOIN) Athlete Leadership Councils (ALCs) provide athletes the opportunity to develop skills and have impact off the playing field through inclusive leadership. ALCs give athletes a pathway to help set the direction of our organization and add value to the experience of all community members.

Benefits of ALCs

Athlete Leadership is an integral part of our organization. Supporting ALCs at the state and local levels benefits athletes and the program by:

- Providing state and local program leadership valuable insight into what interests and motivates athletes in the program
 - Having state-wide representation in discussions
 - Getting local input into issues that impact SOIN
 - Helping athletes work toward their leadership potential
 - Giving leaders opportunity to serve as role models
 - Building self-esteem and confidence
-

ALC Policy

On November 9, 2018 the SOIN Board of Directors amended the SOIN by-laws to ensure that athletes have input into the direction of the organization. On May 14, 2021, the Board of Directors approved the recommendation from the Indiana ALC to require all County Programs to have a local ALC.

ARTICLE I – Purpose

SOIN believes that participating athletes have an important role in making decisions on how to grow and improve the SOIN Program. The best way to ensure athletes' opinions are considered and impact every level of the organization is to implement **Athlete Leadership Councils** for all levels of the organization.

An ALC is a group of athletes who meet using a pre-determined agenda to discuss Special Olympics topics important to them and make recommendations to the State and/or County Program leadership. The ALC is designed to give every SOIN athlete a vehicle to communicate their ideas and concerns.

ARTICLE II – Athlete Leadership Council Membership

With SOIN athletes recruited and trained at the local level, all SOIN County Programs are required to form a **County ALC**, creating an avenue by which athletes are allowed to express their opinions and provide feedback. A County ALC meets routinely through the year, providing feedback to their respective County Management Team. A County ALC meeting is open to all registered athletes of that program.

SOIN will host at least one face-to-face **Indiana ALC** meeting per year open to the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson from each County Program's ALC for the purpose of obtaining recommendations regarding SOIN policies, programs, events, issues, and initiatives. Each County ALC has one vote to cast by the Chairperson. If a County ALC Chairperson is unavailable to attend the Indiana ALC, the Vice-Chairperson may cast the vote. Additional Indiana ALC meetings may be held as needed with elected representatives of the Indiana ALC. The athlete representative(s) on the SOIN Board of Directors serves as the Indiana ALC Chairperson (and Vice-Chairperson).

Items for the agenda of the annual Indiana ALC meeting are recommended by any Indiana ALC member and / or the CEO of SOIN. The Indiana ALC Chairperson and CEO decide the final agenda. Recommendations of the Indiana ALC are made to the CEO and reported to the Board of Directors by the Indiana ALC Chairperson.

ARTICLE III – Athlete Leadership Council Recommendations

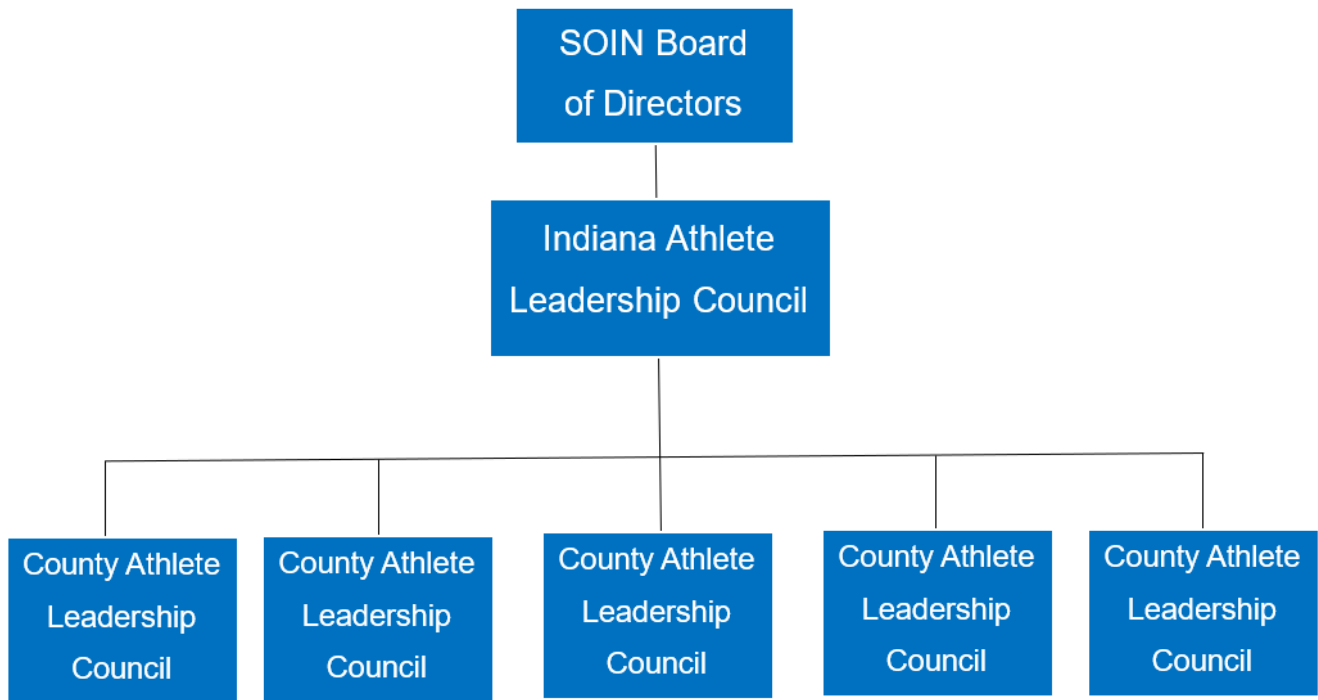
Recommendations from an ALC are given due consideration by appropriate level of SOIN management. ALC recommendations are considered by the CEO of SOIN and select members of the SOIN staff. The CEO of SOIN or a designated member of the SOIN staff submits a follow-up response to the ALC with a rationale for any recommendation not accepted for further consideration or implementation.

ALC Structure

The foundation of the ALC system is athletes at the county level discussing topics of interest and having input to their County Program. In addition, County ALCs participate in discussions regarding topics that have state-wide impact. Their ideas and feedback are brought to meetings of the Indiana ALC.

Members of the Indiana ALC have a final discussion considering the input of the County ALCs. Discussions conclude with a vote on which recommendations are given to State leadership.

Athlete Leadership Council Organizational Chart



Operating Guidelines

Complementing the SOIN by-laws, there are operating guidelines for the county and state level ALCs. The Indiana ALC approved revisions to the operating guidelines in March 2025.

County Athlete Leadership Councils

1. County ALC meetings must be held at least twice a year but can be held more often.
2. Participants in a County ALC must be at least 16 years old.

3. Items for the agenda can be submitted by the athletes and/or the County Management Team.
4. At the first County ALC meeting each year, the ALC selects an athlete to be Chairperson through a simple majority vote.
5. Candidates for Chairperson must be approved by the County Coordinator.
 - a. The athlete receiving the second most votes serves as the Vice-Chairperson. It is recommended that officers are selected before the first Indiana ALC meeting of the calendar year.
 - b. The ALC Chairperson is the official representative of the County Program for the annual Indiana Athlete Leadership Council meeting.
 - c. An athlete selected as Chairperson may serve on the Indiana ALC for no more than three consecutive years. After which they must rotate out of the role for at least one year.
 - d. The County ALC must submit list of ALC officers and a membership count at the beginning of each year.
 - e. It is recommended that the ALC Chairperson is a member of the County Management Team (CMT).
 - f. Athletes serving as Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson are encouraged to attend Athlete Leadership University for Governance training.
6. The CMT must work with the ALC to provide a volunteer facilitator who assists the Chairperson in planning the meeting, taking notes, and supporting the work of the group without inserting his/her own opinions into the discussion.
7. By a majority vote ALCs may make recommendations to the CMT at regularly scheduled CMT meetings.

Indiana Athlete Leadership Council

1. Subject to the approval of SOIN, an ALC member who needs the support of a volunteer/mentor to meaningfully participate in the meeting may request such support.
2. Subject to the approval of the Indiana ALC, SOIN will appoint a facilitator and additional volunteers as needed to assist with meetings and calls.
3. Committees may be appointed by the Chairperson to study and report on significant issues.
4. SOIN staff may request discussion topics for Indiana ALC meetings.
5. The Indiana ALC recommendation requires approval by a simple majority of ALC members in attendance at any annual meeting.
6. Members of the Indiana ALC may apply to serve on the SOIN Board of Directors.

ALC Inclusion

An ALC is not simply a box to check—it plays a valuable role in the makeup of a County Program. Effective two-way communication between the ALC and CMT is essential to sharing ideas and getting the input of athletes in the county. Working hand in hand strengthens collaboration and the partnership between the ALC and CMT, which helps both athletes and the County Program thrive.

Including the ALC Chairperson on the CMT is not just about having a seat at the table but also giving the athletes served by the program true representation. The athlete's opinion should be heard, acknowledged, and valued by all members of the County Program. This includes giving the ALC Chairperson:

- A vote in all matters relating to the local program
- Time on the agenda to share updates, topics, or requests from the ALC
- Information related to the athletes that need a vote or decision made

Athlete leaders remind us of the saying “Nothing about us without us.” Their contributions are essential to the long-term success of the organization.

If your county does not have an ALC, contact your Regional Manager for assistance.

Getting Started

Select ALC Members

ALC members should be athletes who demonstrate interest in their County Program, can share opinions, and have the capability of engaging with others. Not all members of the County ALC need high levels of ability. They only need motivation, interest, and a level of engagement to consider topics that impact their program. Some of the selection requirements to consider are:

- Actively engaged in Special Olympics
- Have the ability to contribute to meetings (either verbal or non-verbal or both)
- Are ready to commit to the time required
- Have the ability to follow guidelines for engagement and meeting expectations

ALC Size

The number of athletes on the council will vary depending on the size and needs of the County Program. It is important to have enough athletes to get different perspectives from your

program. The recommended size of a County ALC is 8 to 15 members, however, smaller programs may have councils with fewer than 8.

Large counties should determine a rotation for members, so more athletes have a chance to participate. The rotation process should be stated in the ALC by-laws (see example in the Resource section).

Elect Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson

Once your ALC is formed, elect members to serve as Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. The ALC members choose the candidates for these roles and then ask the County Coordinator to approve them before elections take place. The County Coordinator **does not** select the candidates. They only give their approval for the candidates to serve in the Chair or Vice-Chair role.

Role of Chairperson

The Chairperson is responsible for the following with or without the support of a facilitator:

- Creating the meeting agenda
- Communicating meeting details to ALC members
- Opening and closing the meeting
- Facilitating the meeting
- Explaining agenda items during the meeting
- Encouraging discussion during the meeting
- Sharing meeting minutes with members and the CMT
- Representing the County Program at the Indiana ALC meetings
- Representing the County ALC at CMT meetings
- Sharing information from the Indiana ALC meetings with their County ALC and CMT

Role of Vice-Chairperson

The Vice-Chairperson is responsible for the following with or without the support of the Facilitator:

- Assisting with meeting preparation as requested by the ALC Chairperson or Facilitator
- Attending all meetings
- Participating in the meeting discussions
- Leading meetings and discussions in the absence of the ALC Chairperson
- Representing their County ALC at CMT meetings and the Indiana ALC meetings when the ALC Chairperson cannot attend

Select an ALC Facilitator

The ALC gets the best results if there is a volunteer who works closely with the ALC Chairperson and helps facilitate meetings. It is important that the facilitator strongly believes athletes should have input into the organization and is able to listen, clarify information, restate comments, and help to keep discussion on track.

Role of Facilitator

The facilitator must have the ability to support the ALC without giving their personal views on the topics discussed or voted on by the ALC. The main responsibilities are:

- Supporting the ALC Chairperson in preparing for meetings
- Assisting with meeting facilitation
- Advocating for the ALC at CMT meetings as needed
- Ensuring topics of discussion are covered in meetings
- Assisting with explaining agenda items to ALC members to support comprehension
- Taking meeting minutes
- Assisting with logistics for meetings
- Ensuring the ALC Chairperson knows the CMT meeting schedule
- Supporting the ALC Chairperson with meeting and presentation skills as needed
- Attending the Indiana ALC meetings

Role of the County Coordinator

It is recommended that the County Coordinator is not the facilitator for their local ALC. As the head of the County Program, the County Coordinator has the following responsibilities:

- Supporting the ALC Chairperson and Facilitator
- Approving the candidates for ALC Chairperson
- Considering addition of the ALC Chairperson as a member of the CMT
- Communicating on a regular basis with the ALC Facilitator
- Ensuring ALC updates, topics, or requests are on the CMT meeting agenda
- Attending County ALC meetings as requested
- Engaging in continuous improvement of the partnership between the County ALC and CMT

Register Your ALC (for new ALCs)

Once a County ALC has established their membership and the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson are selected, the next step is to register the ALC with the SOIN State Office.

1. Go to: <https://soindiana.org/athlete-leadership/athlete-leadership-council-registration-form/>



2. Be prepared to give this information:
 - How often will the County ALC meet
 - When are the County ALC Chair and Vice-Chair elected annually
 - Approximately, how many athletes will participate in the County ALC
 - Roster of current members
 - Chairperson information (name, email, phone number)
 - Date elected as Chair
 - Vice-Chairperson information (name, email, phone number)
 - Date elected as Vice-Chair
 - Facilitator information (name, email, phone number)
 - Submitted/Approved by the County Coordinator (name, email, phone number)
 - Submission date

Submit ALC Roster (for established ALCs)

Each County ALC submits an updated roster each year. Annual rosters are submitted through an online form provided to each County ALC at the beginning of each year.

ALC Meetings

Thoughtful planning helps ensure a successful meeting. There are a few core tasks you should complete to prepare for meetings.

Determine the Meeting Schedule

The minimum requirement for meetings is twice per year. However, your program may benefit from meeting more regularly. For example, your ALC may meet once per month or once per quarter. If possible, determine meeting dates and times for the full year calendar. Planning dates well in advance helps all members make necessary arrangements to attend the meetings. Consult the SOIN ALC meeting schedule when choosing meeting dates for your ALC. Allow time for your ALC to consider and discuss topics provided by the Indiana ALC.

Select a Meeting Location

Choose a location that is central and convenient for the ALC members if possible. Decide how to notify the ALC members enough in advance of each meeting so that they can make arrangements (transportation, avoid work conflicts, etc.) to attend. Some alternative ways to meet are:

- Virtually using Zoom if it suits the needs of the group
- Before or after practice when everyone is already gathered
- Before or after a County Program event that everyone has attended

Invite the Attendees

Send meeting details to all ALC members, the ALC facilitator, and any guest speaker. Who you invite to attend your ALC meetings may change depending on the topics you want to discuss.

Note: Parents, mentors, caregivers, or chaperones **should not** attend ALC meetings. Consider choosing meeting locations so that people not attending the meeting have somewhere to wait for their athlete leader.

Communication Methods

Decide how you will communicate with ALC members. You need to let them know information including meeting dates, times, location, agendas, and cancellations due to bad weather or other unforeseen situations. You may use more than one method to make sure everyone receives information. It may be helpful to ask members to check and update their contact information a couple times per year.

Plan the Agenda

All ALC meetings should be structured in a way that ensures ideas and calls to action are clear. A typical agenda includes:

- **Attendance.** Record who attended the meeting. This provides needed information for your attendance policy.
- **Reports/Announcements.** Share new information. For example, is there a new member, a cancelled event, a request from the Indiana ALC, an issue since the last meeting, or an upcoming Athlete Leadership training deadline?
- **Old Business.** Review and approve the minutes of the last meeting and pick up the conversation where you left off. This is a chance for members to report on work they were assigned. Old business remains on the agenda from meeting to meeting unless it is completed or cancelled.
- **New Business.** Share any new topics added to the agenda. For example, is there a new issue or opportunity that either an ALC member or the CMT has requested for the agenda? Are there new discussion topics assigned by the Indiana ALC?
- **Review of Action Items.** Remind everyone of the actions assigned. Be clear about what is to be done, who will do it, and date of completion.
- **Next Meeting/Adjournment.** Make sure everyone knows the date and location of the next ALC meeting. If there is no further discussion, adjourn the meeting.

Conducting Meetings

ALC meetings are run by an elected ALC Chairperson with help from the ALC Facilitator. Here are some guidelines to help everyone prepare.

Share Meeting Expectations

Start each meeting with expectations for engagement in the meeting. For example, review the Respect Code or Zoom etiquette if your meetings are virtual.

Prepare for a Vote or Input

If your meeting includes a vote on a topic, decide how you will conduct the vote. Prepare any materials or voting supplies needed ahead of the meeting. Some ideas on how to vote are provided in the Resources section.

Follow Up After a Meeting

Regular reports (minutes) should be completed after each ALC meeting to have a record of discussions and votes. Copies of the minutes should be distributed to all members and the CMT. Usually, the facilitator assists by taking minutes and distributing them. **Note:** You **do not** need to submit meeting minutes to the SOIN State Office or the Indiana ALC Facilitator.

Meeting Expectations

These are guidelines that set the expectations for all ALC members. Having clear expectations helps the ALC Chairperson and Facilitator lead a meeting that is respectful of all members. Here is an example list you can share with participants to set meeting expectations.

- Make the ALC meetings a priority. **DO NOT** try to use meeting time to accomplish other tasks, such as being at a workplace, running errands, eating a meal, exercising, being at team practice location, or a noisy environment.
- Be respectful of the person speaking. This includes the facilitator and other council members. Please pay attention to the speaker and do not interrupt.
- Engage in the conversation. You will have opportunities to share your ideas and participate following the Zoom etiquette and discussion guidelines.
- Ask questions. If you do not understand something, please raise your hand, and let the speaker know. Someone else may have the same question as you, so please let us know when you need more information.
- Minimize distractions. The meeting is time together to discuss ALC topics. Please refrain from having side conversations that are not a part of the discussion topic.

Respect Code

As advocates for inclusion in our communities, it is our call to action to create safe welcoming spaces. One essential way we can do this is through making a commitment to one another to have mutual respect in all our interactions. Consider these guidelines:

- Be present and bring your full self
- Complete open listening without judgement or assumption
- Embrace discomfort and difference of opinion
- Applaud vulnerability
- Right to pass on commenting if you do not want to participate in a topic
- Support each other, we are here to learn
- Create a safe space where stories are heard, lessons are shared

Frequently Asked Questions

Can the County Program bring issues for athlete comment?

Yes. The ALC exists so the program can gather athletes' ideas and opinions.

Can athletes bring issues for County Program consideration?

Yes. If the ALC identifies an issue shared by members, they should develop a recommendation, vote on it, and present it to the CMT.

Are athletes younger than 16 years old allowed to participate in their local ALC?

The guidelines state that a member of the ALC should be at least 16 years old. It is up to the County ALC leadership to decide if an athlete younger than 16 years old has the skills to participate as a member of the ALC. Athletes younger than 16 years old are **not** allowed to be the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson.

Is there a recommended attendance policy?

It is up to each County Program to set their own attendance policy. One approach is to consider the number of meetings your County Program ALC has per year and what percent your ALC considers adequate attendance. For example, if you have 6 meetings per year, then a member must attend at least 4 meetings. If you have 12 meetings per year, then a member must attend at least half the meetings. When making decisions, you may need to consider the size of your ALC, expectations for engagement, and/or frequent scheduling conflicts, such as practices.

Are term limits strictly followed?

Yes. The Chairperson must roll off after 3-years of **consecutive** service but may return after a 1-year break.

Is the Chairperson required to serve for 3 years?

No. Each county can set the term limits for their County Program ALC. For example, a large ALC or one with high interest by its members to serve as the chair may choose to rotate every two years to give the opportunity to more people. The only state-level guideline is that a chair cannot serve for more than 3 **consecutive** years.

Is there a recommended minimum term for a Chairperson?

In general, a two-year term allows the Chairperson to get used to the role. However, your County Program ALC may have factors that lead to one-year minimum term or even a 3-year minimum term.

Does the Vice-Chairperson automatically succeed the Chairperson?

No. It is up to each County Program ALC how they replace the Chairperson. It is recommended that the Vice-Chairperson moves up to the Chairperson role assuming they have been training for the position. However, circumstances may influence the decision not to have the Vice-Chairperson succeed the Chairperson. For example, the ALC members do not support the Vice-Chairperson as a candidate.

Does the CMT pick the candidates for Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson?

No. The ALC members select the candidates. The CMT **only approves** the candidates; they do not pick the candidates.

Should the County Coordinator attend the ALC meetings?

The general recommendation is no; the County Coordinator should not attend so they do not accidentally impact the discussion or sway a vote. However, there may be meetings when the County Coordinator attends as a guest speaker or when the County ALC votes to have the County Coordinator regularly attend ALC meetings.

What do we do if we cannot find a new Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson?

Terms limits and finding individuals to serve at the end of a term can be a challenge. For assistance contact the Indiana ALC Facilitator to discuss options.

Should we require the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson to attend ALU?

It is highly recommended that they attend ALU for governance training. If they cannot complete a full ALU degree, they are welcome to at least take the entry leadership course and the two governance courses.

For more information or questions send an email to ALC@soindiana.org

Resources

Facilitation Tips

The ALC Chairperson and the facilitator work together to make sure each meeting is fun, informative, and productive. Here are some ways to accomplish these outcomes.

Ask Expansion Questions

To help members make their thoughts clear to the rest of the group, ask expansion questions such as:

- How?
- Why?
- Who?
- Tell me more about...
- Tell us how that might work...

Go Deep

Rarely should you accept the first simple answer – always encourage more explanation and thought. This not only gives that member more time to think through a position but also provides other members the opportunity to hear something that will spark their thoughts.

Allow Silence

After asking a “starter” question about a topic, allow the members time to form their responses. Give them a count of 12 before you react. Silence is OK. After a count of 12, restate your question in a different way and wait again.

Don't Be the Answer Person

As Chairperson or facilitator, if you answer your own questions, you are sending the members the message that you do not want or expect them to answer. You have put the spotlight on you, not the other members of the ALC.

Listen, Listen, Listen

Don't Be Negative

When an idea comes up, don't start saying all the reasons it won't work. Give the ALC members a chance to figure out how it could work.

Create a Safe Environment

It is the Chairperson and facilitator's role to create an emotionally safe environment for participation. This includes providing clear behavioral ground rules at the beginning of the session, clearly expressing that there are no bad ideas or opinions, respecting all members, and valuing and recognizing participation.

Working with People in Meetings

Overly Talkative

Why they may do this

- Eager to share or show off
- Exceptionally well-informed and anxious to show it
- Naturally wordy

What to do

- Don't embarrass them or be sarcastic. You may need their eagerness to participate later.
- Slow them down with some difficult questions.
- Interrupt with, "That's an interesting point. Now let's see what the group thinks of it."
- In general, let the group take care of them as much as possible.

Highly Argumentative

Why they may do this

They may be:

- A combative personality
- A professional heckler
- Upset by personal or job problems

What to do

- Keep your own temper in check; don't let the group get excited either.
- Try to find merit in one of their points. Express your agreement and then move on to something else.
- When they make an obvious mistake, ask the group their thoughts and let them turn it down.
- As a last resort, talk to them privately during a break. Try to find out what's bothering them and see if you can win their cooperation.

Side Conversation

Why they may do this

- Need to share a story related to the subject
- Need to share a personal story
- Wants to distract members or you

What to do

- Don't embarrass them.
- Call on them by name and ask an easy question, or call on them, restate last opinion expressed by group, and ask their opinion of it.
- Remind the whole group to give the speaker their attention.
- If you are in the habit of moving around the room, go over and stand casually behind members who are talking. This should not be made obvious to the group.

Rambler

Why they may do this

- Loses track of the main the subject
- Offers comments or ideas unrelated to the subject
- Has difficulty getting to their point

What to do

- When they stop for a break, thank them, refocus their attention by restating the relevant points, and move on.
- Tell them their point is interesting, refer to the slide, whiteboard, or topic in discussion, and in a friendly manner indicate we are a bit off subject.
- As a last resort, thank them and state, "We need to move on."

Personality Clash

Why they may do this

- Does not get along with one or more members
- Does not want to follow the expectations for the meeting

What to do

- Emphasize points of agreement; minimize points of disagreement if possible.
- Draw attention to objectives; use a question on topic to refocus the discussion.
- Bring a member into the discussion that everyone respects.
- Frankly ask to put personality differences aside for the greater good.

Won't Talk

Why they may do this

They may feel:

- Bored
- Indifferent
- Superior
- Timid

What to do

- Your action will depend upon what is motivating them.
- Get their interest by asking for their opinion.
- If they are the “superior” type, indicate respect for their experience and ask for their point of view.
- Be sure to sincerely compliment them the first time they talk.
- If they are timid, let them know they can put their comments in the chat.
- If you are meeting in-person, draw out the person next to them. Then ask the quiet one to tell the person next to them what they think of the opinion expressed. If they are seated nearby, ask their opinion so they feel they are talking to you.




Zoom Etiquette

These are some guidelines for conducting a successful virtual meeting no matter the platform you are using.




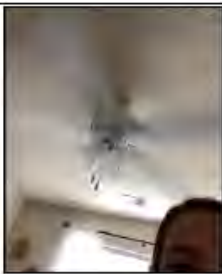

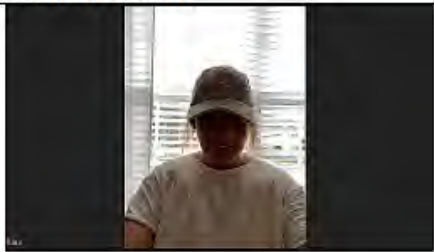

- Stay muted unless it is your turn to speak.
- Leave video on with appropriate background. (See examples below).
- Be mindful of what you are doing on camera. Please don't excessively move around on camera. This is not the time to get your steps in or make your dinner.
 - Try to have an appealing camera angle on your face.
 - Turn off your camera if you need to step away or blow your nose.
- Use the “Raise Hand” feature to let the facilitator know you have a question or a comment.
- Use “Chat” to ask and answer questions.
- Use “Reactions” icons to show you are engaged.

The Zoom website has many resources on how to use Zoom features. You can find how to videos at: <https://learn-zoom.us/show-me>

Examples of **GOOD** Zoom window settings

 <p>Jeff is wearing an appropriate shirt, the backlighting does not wash out his face, and it is a good camera angle of his face.</p>	 <p>Lesia is wearing an appropriate shirt, okay camera angle of her face, there are several items in the background, but it is neat, tidy, and professional.</p>	 <p>Chris is wearing an appropriate shirt, great camera angle, a neat and tidy background.</p>
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Examples of **BAD** Zoom window settings

 <p>Yikes! This is an okay camera angle of Jeff's face, but it is not an appropriate background.</p>	 <p>Who is That? We cannot see Jeff's whole face. The background is very messy and not professional looking.</p>	 <p>On the Move Looks like Jeff decided to go on a walk. This is not appropriate during a course or meeting. Stay sitting at a desk or table so you can do classwork and give the instructors your attention. This is not the time to walk around.</p>
 <p>Not a Fan Try to set up your phone or camera so it points at your face and not at your ceiling.</p>	 <p>Being Nosy Try to set up your phone or camera so it is not pointing up your nose.</p>	 <p>Witness Protection If you sit in front of a light source, make sure it does not wash out your face. Try to adjust the light or close the curtains if possible.</p>
		<p>The Cat Nap This is not the time for a nap or to lie down on your desk, couch, or bed. Stay sitting up in your chair. If you must be on a bed, sit up as best you can.</p>

Meeting Preparation Checklist

Date:

Time:

Location:

How many people will be at the meeting?

Who is invited to attend?

How are they invited? Email Phone call Announcement

Agenda:

- Attendance
- Reports/Announcement
- Old Business
- New Business
 - Items from ALC members
 - Items from the County Coordinator
 - Items from the Indiana ALC
- Review of Action Items

Facilitator:

Checklist

- Assign who will take notes (Facilitator or Secretary)
- Minutes of previous meeting (handed out at meeting or sent before)
- Agenda for this meeting
- Meeting room reserved and set-up (for in-person meeting)
- Meeting link sent out; polls and/or presentations are ready (for virtual meeting)
- Necessary materials ready (ex. flip chart, markers, projector)
- Confirm if any special guests are invited and they have needed information

Sample Agenda: New ALC

Sample Athlete Leadership Council Agenda (for the first meeting of a new ALC)

1. Welcome and Introductions (15 minutes)

Introduce yourself and provide an icebreaker activity for the athletes to get to know each other better.

2. What is an Athlete Leadership Council (10 minutes)

We are a group of athletes who discuss Special Olympics topics important to us and make recommendations to the State and/or our County Program leadership. We use a prepared agenda to guide the topics we discuss. The ALC is designed to give every Special Olympics Indiana athlete a way to communicate their ideas and concerns. (Discuss this idea and answer questions).

3. What's Next (30 minutes)

This is the part of the meeting when you want to get members interacting and thinking.

- Election of officers: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary (vote at the next meeting)
- Establish rules of order: meetings – where, when, how often, attendance, membership, by-laws
- Brainstorm ideas for possible topics.
- Discuss topics from the Indiana ALC.

4. Plan for the Next Meeting (5 minutes)

Identify agenda items for the next meeting and plan a time for the next meeting.

Sample Agenda: Established ALC

Sample Athlete Leadership Council Agenda (for an established County ALC)

[County Program] Athlete Leadership Council Meeting

November 4, 20XX

1. Minutes from last meeting

2. Announcements

- a. New County Coordinator
- b. Date for the next Indiana ALC meeting

3. Report on the annual Indiana ALC meeting (John)
4. Old business
 - a. Proposal to have a County picnic (Itzel)
 - b. Athlete newsletter on Facebook (Jillian)
 - c. Bowling – what is being done so more can participate? (Omar)
5. New business
 - a. Divisioning of women’s state basketball tournament
 - b. Election of ALC officers in January
6. Review of Action Items (all members)
 - a. Ask your teammates if they are interested in attending a County picnic
 - b. Submit your Summer Games theme ideas by Friday
7. Next meeting date
8. Adjournment

Different Ways to Conduct a Vote

Voting is the process of formally indicating your choice between two or more candidates or options. During an ALC meeting, members normally vote on a motion (a suggestion or proposal) that someone brings during a meeting, which is debated and then voted on.

There are several ways voting can take place during a meeting.

By Ballot – this type of voting is often used in meetings where members make their decisions privately regarding a particular issue or individual. After privately indicating your choice (vote) on the voting paper (ballot), the papers are then collected and counted after all votes are received.

By Voice – this type of voting is called the **voice vote**. As the name implies it lets members state their decision about a particular motion by saying it out loud to the Chairperson and the other members at a meeting. During voice-voting, the Chairperson of the meeting would normally ask the members in favor of a particular motion to cast their votes by saying ‘yes’ or ‘aye.’ The Chairperson would then ask those who are against the motion to cast their votes by saying ‘no’ or ‘nay.’ Based on the number of voices that say, ‘yes’ or ‘no’, results are declared.

By Show of Hands – this type of voting is another very common method. Voting in this manner is very simple. The Chairperson tells those in favor of a particular motion to show it by raising their hands. When their hands are raised, they are counted. The Chairperson then asks the members who are not in support of the same motion to show it by raising their hands. Based on the number of hands raised for or against the motion, the Chairperson then declares the result.

By Poll – this method is used for virtual settings and can be conducted by the poll or chat feature during the meeting. A poll is created in the polling feature of the meeting software. For example, you can create a poll in Zoom. Members cast their vote electronically by answering the poll question(s). Another option is for each person to type their vote in the chat feature.

Different methods of voting may be used in the same meeting. It's usually the decision of the Chairperson on which method to use. The decision is usually based on the need for privacy. For example, when voting to elect the next Chairperson, members may be more comfortable voting by ballot or poll because they don't want to offend the other candidates.

Sample Meeting Minutes

[County Program] Athlete Leadership Council Meeting

November 4, 20XX

Attendance:

- Members: John Doe, Itzel Hernandez, Jillian Glenn, Kamika Johnson, Omar Habib, Jim Brown
- Absent: Maddison Moss
- Facilitator: Jae Yoon
- Special Guest: Debi Wise, County Coordinator

Notes

1. The meeting started at 6pm. Minutes from last meeting were read and approved.
2. Announcements
 - a. Debi Wise is the new County Coordinator (comments from Debi)
 - b. The date for the next State ALC Meeting is October 26 in Noblesville.
3. Report on the fall Indiana ALC
 - a. ALC Chairperson John Doe reported that 47 ALC Chairs attended this year's meeting in Noblesville. Three recommendations were approved by the ALC,

including 1) starting pickleball as a new sport next year, 2) requiring coaches to complete training every other year, and 3) eliminating unhealthy food choices at Summer Games.

4. Old business

- a. Kamika presented the proposal for the County ALC picnic. The council discussed and approved, but would like an idea of how many athletes are interested in attending. John and Kamika asked Debi to present at the next County Management Team meeting for final approval.
- b. Jillian showed a sample of the Facebook newsletter used by another county. She volunteered to create a pilot newsletter for the next meeting.
- c. Jim did not have a report on bowling recruitment. Carry over to next meeting.

5. New business

- a. Itzel expressed her concerns about divisions at the women's state basketball tournament. Our team lost 42-10. Debi will contact the State Office.
- b. Election of ALC officers is scheduled for the January meeting. If any members are interested in serving as an officer, please let Jae know. John is willing to serve a second year as Chairperson.

6. Review of Action Items

- a. Omar volunteered to survey athlete leaders on their interest in attending a County picnic.
- b. Jim will complete the report on bowling recruitment.

7. Next meeting date: February 5, 20XX (same time and place)

8. Adjournment – 7:08pm

Minutes submitted by Jae Yoon (facilitator)

Sample ALC By-laws Template

Please customize the following template to fit the needs of your ALC. You may add any expectations for attendance, behavior, or how you want to conduct the ALC. The by-laws must be discussed and approved by the County ALC.

[COUNTY PROGRAM] ALC BY-LAWS

1. PURPOSE

Special Olympics Indiana (SOIN) believes that participating athletes have an important role in making decisions on how to grow and improve the SOIN Program. The best way to ensure athletes' opinions are considered and have an impact on every level of the organization is to implement Athlete Leadership Councils (ALCs) for all levels of the organization.

The [County Program] ALC supports this purpose by sharing the opinions of athletes in our local program with our County Management Team (CMT) and SOIN.

2. MEMBERSHIP

The [County Program] ALC consists of [number] members who are selected by [your selection process] for a term of [length].

3. OFFICERS

The committee shall have a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, elected [when] by a simple majority vote of members in attendance. Candidates are nominated by the ALC members and approved by the County Coordinator prior to the election.

4. MEETINGS

Meetings are held [how often].

5. ATTENDANCE

Members are expected to attend all [County Program] ALC meetings. Any member who misses three (3) consecutive regular meetings of the [County Program] ALC, may be removed from the council. If a council member is removed, the Chairperson will inform the council member in writing and the council member shall have fourteen (14) days to submit a request for reconsideration by the ALC Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Facilitator at the next regular meeting of the [County Program] ALC.

6. CONDUCT

Members of the [County Program] ALC are expected to follow the Athlete Code of Conduct and SOIN Respect Code. Issues with member behavior are addressed by the ALC Facilitator, Athlete Leadership Coordinator, and County Coordinator.

7. DECISIONS

Decisions are made by majority vote / consensus. Each member has one vote. The ALC Chairperson has [the deciding vote / no vote] in a tie.

8. MEETING MINUTES

Meeting minutes are recorded by the ALC Facilitator and kept [location of meeting minutes].

9. AMENDMENTS

These by-laws may be amended by a majority vote after one meeting to discuss proposed changes and [notice period] notice.

10. ADOPTION

Adopted on [date].

Chairperson: [signature]

Vice-Chairperson: [signature]

Example Discussion Topics from the Indiana ALC

These are examples of topics shared by the Indiana ALC for discussion at the county level and then at the state level.

Summer Games Feedback

Please discuss these three questions with your County ALC. Be ready to share your ALC's preferences at the September virtual meeting.

Summer Games Parade of Athletes

We would like to gather feedback on the entrance into the Opening Ceremony and the Parade of Athletes at this year's Summer Games. The feedback will be presented to the Indiana ALC for discussion and a vote at the October in-person meeting during the State Conference.

What style of Opening Ceremony entrance do you prefer?

- The traditional entrance with everyone from the county delegation entering together.
- The 2025 entrance with the county delegation sitting down when they arrive and two members of the county delegation parading in.
- No preference

Summer Games Dance

Do you prefer having the dance indoors or outdoors in Olympic Town? Please explain your preference.

- Outside in Olympic Town
- Inside
- No preference

Summer Games Theme (for next year)

The SOIN staff will review the themes shared in the July meeting. They will select their favorite themes. We will send the options to share with your ALC. Please be prepared to **vote in September** for the final theme.

Who to Contact

General Questions: ALC@soindiana.org

Indiana ALC Facilitator: Maddison Glenn (mglenn@soindiana.org)

SOIN Staff Liaison: Elesia Yoon (eyoon@soindiana.org)

Regional Managers:

- Area 7 & 10: Francie Smith (fsmith@soindiana.org)
- Area 2 & 9: Greg Townsend (gtownsend@soindiana.org)
- Area 4 & 8: Ella Strimple (estrimple@soindiana.org)
- Area 3 & 6: Julie Burkholder (jburkholder@soindiana.org)
- Area 1 & 5: TBD

General Information: Athlete Leadership Webpage

<https://soindiana.org/athlete-leadership/>



Athlete Leadership Resources: SOIN Resource Library

<https://soindiana.org/resource-category/leadership/>



The First Indiana Athlete Leadership Council - 2019



The Indiana ALC Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson convene the meeting. Both are also members of the SOIN Board of Directors.



Presentations are made on each of 3 recommendations being considered at this meeting.



Small breakout groups discuss the pros and cons of each recommendation.



All ALC members had a chance to speak for or against each recommendation.



Votes were held, and results were not always unanimous.