



**Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania**



**LDR/W
Pre-Season Webinar**

July 18, 2023

Today's Agenda

- Welcome/Introductions
- Reminders
- Athlete Performance Training
- 2023 Sectional & State Events
- Training
- Rule Updates
- Questions

**Special
Olympics**
Pennsylvania





***Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania***



PRE-SEASON REMINDERS

SEASONS AT A GLANCE



	SPRING	FALL	WINTER
Coach Site Registration	Nov. 1 - Dec. 1	April 1 - May 1	August 1 - Sept. 1
Athlete, Unified Partner, Volunteer Signup	Dec. 15 - Jan. 15	May 15 - June 15	Sept. 15 - Oct. 15
Season Length	March - June	August - November	December - March
Sports Offered	Athletics (Track & Field), Basketball, Equestrian, Golf, Gymnastics, Softball, Swimming, Tennis	Bocce, Bowling, Flag Football, Long Distance Running/Walking, Powerlifting, Soccer, Volleyball	Alpine Skiing, Bowling, Figure Skating, Floor Hockey, Snowboard, Snowshoe, Speed Skating

Access Sign Ups on the

- **SOPA website:**

[https://specialolympicspa.org/
get-involved/sports-sign-ups](https://specialolympicspa.org/get-involved/sports-sign-ups)

Sports Season Prep

**Special
Olympics**
Pennsylvania



Important Fall Dates:

- Fall Season Calendar: [Central](#), [East](#), [West](#)
 - Since due dates are different for each Sectional, there is one calendar per section of the state.
- **REGISTRATION RESPONSIBILITIES**: Who does what and when??
- Eligibility Deadline: August 25
- Season Dates: August – November

Air Quality

*Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania*



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 & Volunteer Eligibility

**Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania**



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: Class A Trainings+ Background Check on file

- 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

*Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania*



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

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

The PIAA physical exam form is good for one year from the Dr's Signature date. If the date is 3/22/22 the exam expires on 3/22/23.

Attendance Tracker Updates

**Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania**



Age Calculator – fall is determined as of **6/15/2023**

Eligibility Tab: Deadline for all rostered individual to be eligible is **8/25/2023**

- Athlete Medical
- Volunteer: Background Check, Gen Orientation, Protective Behavior, Concussion Protocol
- Eligibility tab will be updated weekly from July 28th –Aug 25

Sport Specific Rosters/Tabs:

- Capture all athlete information in one place

Missing volunteer/athlete

- If No, ask to complete Sport Sign-up Form
- If Yes, contact RSD

QUESTIONS?

CONTACT YOUR REGIONAL SPORT DIRECTOR

Attendance Trackers

**Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania**



Coach will receive tracker when they submit Site Registration Form

Site Attendance Tracker has 4 tabs: Directions, Attendance, Eligibility, Competition

- **Tab 1: Directions: How to complete the form**
- **Tab 2 Attendance:**
 - Lists all participants that have signed up
 - Includes phone, email, DOB and age
 - 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

Attendance Trackers

**Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania**



Tab 3: Eligibility – If participant is NOT eligible...they cannot participate

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: Fall deadline August 25, 2023

Tab 4: Competition – sport specific

Tracker for athlete attendance, registration times for competitions

Allows you to track everything in once place – ability to copy and paste from here into event

Google registration forms

[LDR/W template](#)

Unified Partners Eligibility

**Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania**



NEW in 2023 – Unified Sports 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.

Athlete & Volunteer Eligibility

**Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania**



- The ELIGIBILITY tab on each of your attendance trackers will be updated on a weekly basis from July 28th-Aug 25 by your Regional Sports Director. **PLEASE encourage and assist your athletes and volunteers in meeting our eligibility requirements.**
- **The deadline to make sure athletes and volunteers meet eligibility requirements for the Fall is August 25th**
- Athletes and Volunteer CANNOT participate in trainings if they have not met all eligibility requirements - it is YOUR responsibility to track this.
- In the roster, if you see **RED highlight**, that person is not in compliance with eligibility requirements to participate and should NOT be training.
- In the roster, if they are **yellow highlight**, they will expire during the season in advance of state games and will not be eligible unless they update the identified requirement.

Qualifiers

*Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania*



All Fall sport athletes MUST attend their respective Sectional event to be considered for Fall Fest.

Games Advancement slots per Sectional will be dependent on total number of slots at Summer Games and % of interest in advancing from each Sectional

Qualifiers

**Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania**



Fall

- LDR-W
- Powerlifting
- Bocce
- Soccer: 5v5, 7v7, skills
- Volleyball: Team and skills
- Flag Football Team and skills

- [Allocation Process](#)
- Allocations will be placed on the SOPA Website under Games & Competition then State & Sectional Events
- [State & Sectional Events](#)

Allocations

*Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania*



- Fall 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](#)



ATHLETE PERFORMANCE TRAINING

Athlete Performance Training

Coaches Introduction





What is Athlete Performance Training (APT)?



- Designed to elevate the fitness levels of athletes and improve their sports outcomes, Athlete Performance Training consists of a combination of coach-facilitated sports practices and at-home fitness programs.



- During practices, coaches will apply an approach that includes education, exertion and evaluation.
 - **Education:** Time is taken during each sports practice to discuss physical activity, nutrition, and hydration as a team.
 - **Exertion:** A practice plan is followed that engages athletes in physical activity throughout the entire practice.
 - **Evaluation:** Athletes' health and fitness metrics are collected at the start and end of the season.



- At home, athletes and their families/caregivers are provided a fitness program to complement the in-person practices.



Key Aspects of APT:

- A minimum of 8 weeks of training are required to fully complete APT.
- Any size team and any sport can participate.
- No paperwork is required by coaches. Health metrics of athletes are collected; however, they are recorded electronically on a Google sheet provided to you by SOPA.
- Health metrics: Height, weight and blood pressure can be collected from athlete's previous doctor visits.
- Fitness metrics: Determined by coaches setting up a modified Coopers Test for athletes to complete at the start and end of training.





Registering for APT:



- Coaches interested should visit the Online Portal to complete the necessary online training.
- The training can be found under the “**Training Schools, Webinar and More**” tab, labeled as “**Athlete Performance Training.**” You will only be able to access the training if you’ve taken your other required trainings (Concussion Training, General Orientation and Protective Behaviors).
- You will need to complete a short quiz after the training
- Once video and quiz are completed you will be directed to the registration form to sign up your team and request materials
- You will be contacted by SOPA, after with additional information regarding mailings of materials as well as a link to the Athlete Performance Training Tracking.

To find more information on APT visit the SOPA website under **More Than Sports**

Why Participate in APT?



- **Athletes are at greater risk for being obese, suffering from long term health conditions, and dying 20 years younger.**
- **Incorporate APT and provide tools for athletes to make changes to their health and fitness and lower their risk of these health disparities.**
- **APT will become the standard in trainings**





Coaches Training and Progression Plan

By implementing Athlete Performance Training for a minimum of 8 weeks during training AND completing the “Athlete Performance Training Tracking” at the start and end of the season, you are eligible for the **Bronze Level** specifically the Athlete Performance Training component of the Coaches Training and Progression Plan.

Questions?

Contact Healthy Communities

Coordinator, Charla Stein

cstein@specialolympicspa.org

610-630-9450 ext. 254

**Special
Olympics**
Pennsylvania





STATE COMPETITIONS

Fall Sectionals

Western Fall Sectional:

- Slippery Rock University
- September 24

Central Fall Sectional:

- Juniata College
- October 1

Eastern Fall Sectional

- DeSales University
- October 1



Fall Fest: Nov. 3 -5

*Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania*



Villanova University

Important Dates:

- Reg Info: Will be out by 9/8
- LOI: Due 9/28
- Final Allocations: 9/29
- Rosters: Due 10/2
- Google links sent: 10/5
- Registration: Due 10/12
- Scratch/Activation: Due 10/26





**Special
Olympics**
Pennsylvania



TRAINING

Be Prepared for the Season!

*Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania*



- 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.

Job Description and Levels of Responsibility

**Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania**



HEAD COACH:

- Certified in the sport
- Supervises all coaches and athletes
- Ensures athletes and volunteers have completed sign-up for the season
- Responsible for eligibility, equipment, transportation, and lodging
- Develops **practice plans** and assigns duties to Assistant Coaches
- Completes all required paperwork (competition, attendance trackers)

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>

Athlete as Coach

**Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania**



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

- SOPA will host seasonal training webinars to review the responsibilities and steps for any athletes who would like to be part of our Athletes as Coaches Program.
- The Fall training was held on July 11th.
- If you do have an athlete and you don't want to wait for the Winter Webinar – Here is the recording of the Fall Webinar -
<https://www.facebook.com/specialolympicspa/videos/1327389408157502?idorvanity=128859894386473>
- Athlete as Coach Request form to be completed by athletes who wish to apply to be trained as a coach: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WZC14Ssl1IsilbBO_93WDmsaQq9-wmK3/view

Coaching Requirements

**Special
Olympics**
Pennsylvania



As of January 2021, Coach requirements for **training and competition:**

- **Team Sports:**
 - Must have at least one (1) certified coach per team
- **Individual Sports and Team Individual Skills:**
 - Must have at least one (1) certified coach per 25 athletes



Coaching Practicum Hours

*Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania*



- If a coach needs to complete 10 required practicum hours from sport training courses, that were taken in 2019, 2020, 2021 they have until December 2023 to submit these hours.
- **Hours must be submitted on their VSys Portal.**

Continuing Education Update

*Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania*



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](#).



Expired Sport Certifications

*Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania*



- If your sport certification expired between 2020 and 2022 you have until December of 2023 to complete your continuing education course to update your certifications.
- As noted above - Protective Behaviors and Concussion training will not be accepted as of February 1, 2023.
- **This extension expires on December 31, 2023.**
- On January 1, 2024, you will need to retake the Sport that has not been updated.

Get Certified!



Next (and LAST) Virtual LDR/W Training

Saturday, July 29th @ 9:30 am

Register on your VSys Portal



Webinar Series



**Special
Olympics**
Pennsylvania



- Every other month (Feb, Apr, June, Aug, Oct, Dec)
- Lunch & Learn - will be RECORDED and posted to SOPA website, on toolbar - Volunteer Resources, Trainings
- Entire listing and registrations links can also be found here:
<https://specialolympicspa.org/lunch-learn-webinar-series>
- Several qualify as continuing education

NEXT Lunch & Learn

August 9, 2023 – How To: Build Flexibility!

[August Lunch & Learn Registration](#)

Coaching Progression

**Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania**



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

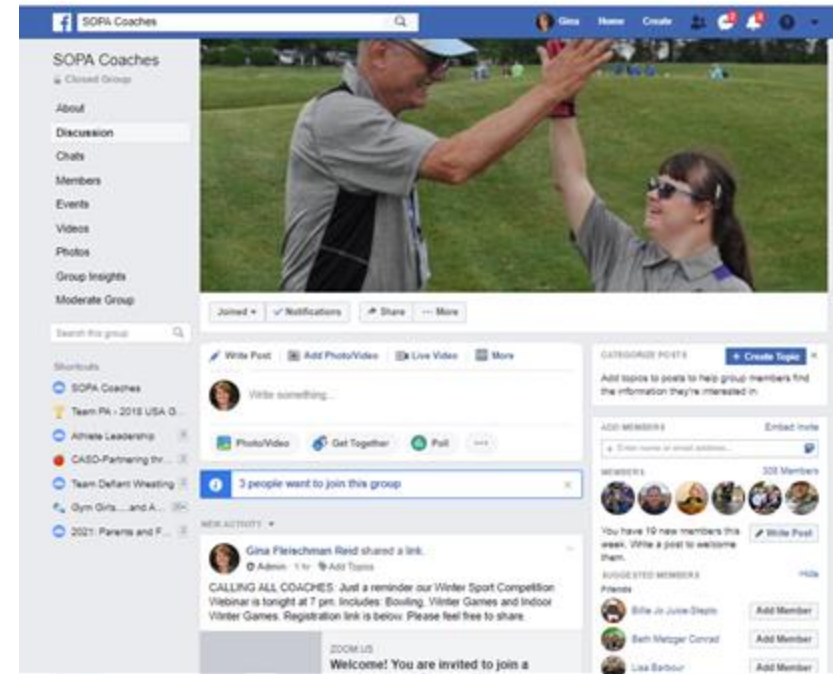
Improving Communication

**Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania**



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?



LDR/W

Sport Management Team

**Special
Olympics**
Pennsylvania



Technical Director LDR/W: Scott Otterbein
Email:

[Lester Loner](#)

[Amanda McIsaac](#)

SOPA Website - Sports Offered Page

**Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania**



Links to all the sport
pages
[Sports Offered](#)

Long Distance Running/Walking

LDR and LDW Training Season is usually year-round with a culminating event at Fall Festival in November at Villanova University.



2023 LDR/W Preseason Coaches Meeting

Tuesday, July 18, 2023 @ 7:00 PM

Register in advance for this meeting: [LDR/W Preseason Coaches Meeting](#)

Coaching Resources

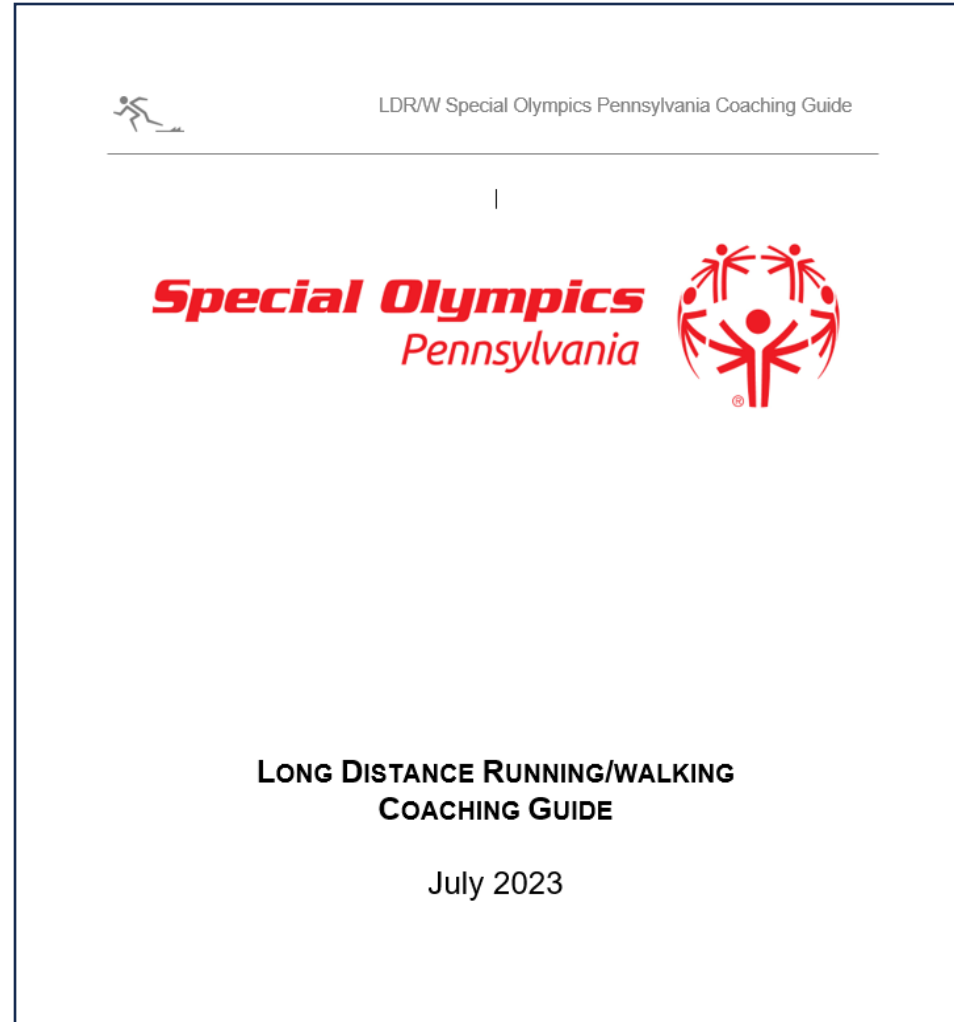
- [Athletics Resources](#) – rules, coaching guides, fact sheets, etc.
- [Long Distance Running - Race Walking Guide 2021](#)

Sport Director: Scott Otterbein

Sport Rules and Coaching Guide

Links to all the sport pages
[Sports Offered](#)

**Special
Olympics**
Pennsylvania

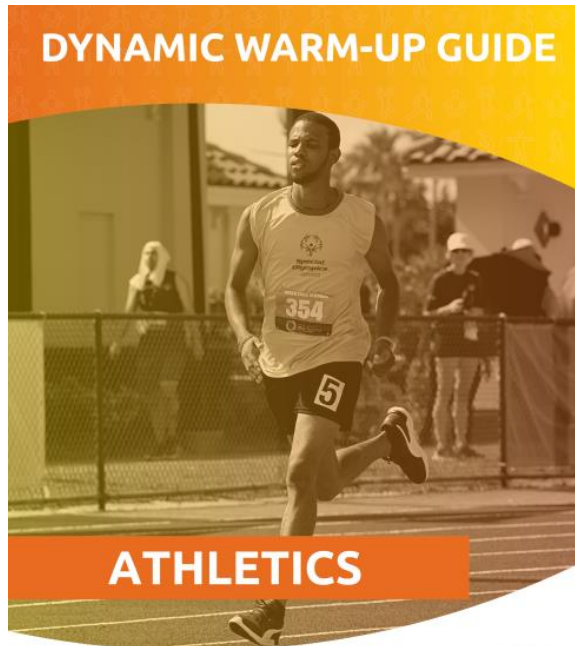


Warm-ups and Cool Downs

**Special
Olympics**
Pennsylvania

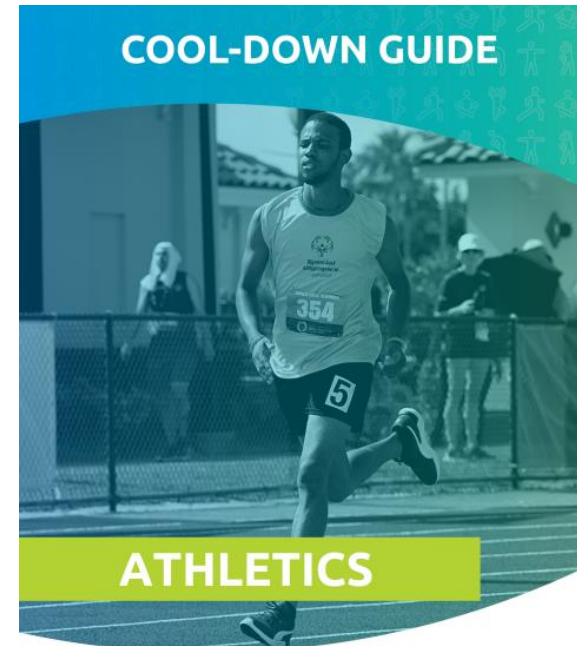


LDR/W Warm-Up Guide



**Special
Olympics** 

LDR/W Cool Down Guide

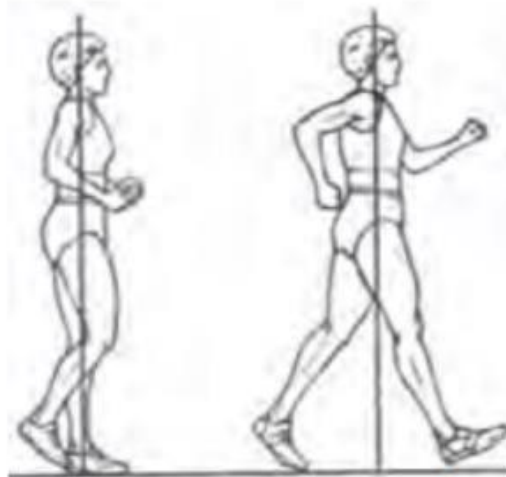


**Special
Olympics** 

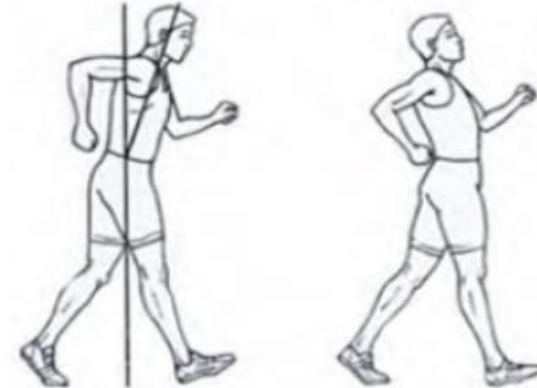


Race Walking Form

- Correct form - upright

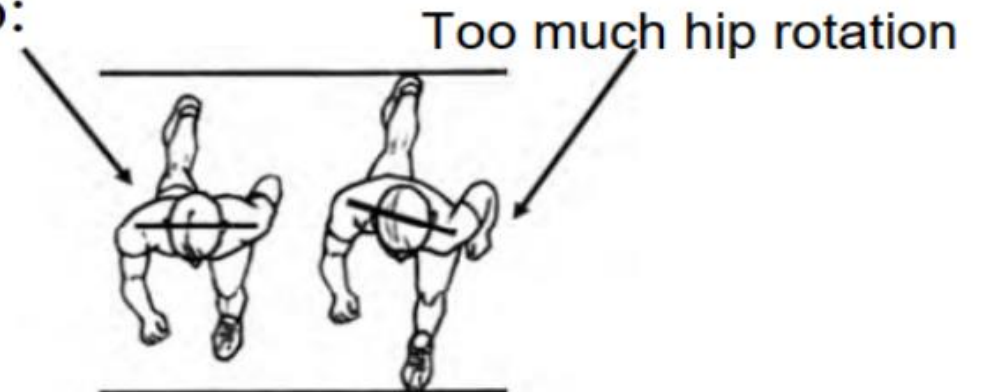


- Incorrect form - leaning forward or backward



- And do not twist across the torso:

One foot on the ground **at all times!**
Heel to toe, heel to toe



Long Distance Running

*Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania*



Reminders:

- This is not a sprint!
- Take shorter strides
 - Prevents pain
 - Prevents Injury
- Arms swing front to back, not sided to side
- Keep shoulders & upper body aligned over the hips

Events Offered

**Special
Olympics**
Pennsylvania



- 1500 meters (.94 miles) - Walk, Run & Unified Walk, Run
- 3000 meters (1.8 miles) - Walk, Run & Unified Walk, Run
- 5000 meters (3.1 miles) - Run & Unified Run
- 10,000 meters (6.2 miles) Run Only
- 5000 meters (3.1 miles) - Walk

Events

*Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania*



- Athletes and Unified Partners must elect to run in all their events or walk in all their events.

Event Participation:

- Sectionals – 3 events
- States – 3 Events + the 10,000 meters.

Attire

**Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania**



- ✓ Sneakers – good soles and padding. Good fit!
- ✓ Socks – No holes in the heel
- ✓ Shorts, track suit, or running tights - Should be well fitted
- ✓ T-shirt/sleeveless shirt - Should be clean, covers the entire torso and comfortable.

[SOPA Brand and Uniform Guidelines](#)

Unified Events

*Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania*



- The two-member Unified team runs (walks) with all other individual and Unified teams in that event.
- The entry time is the total of the Athlete and Unified Partner times.
- During the race athlete/partner run (walk) separately and as fast as they can.
- They do not stay side by side.
- Their finish times are totaled and compared against the total times of other Unified teams in their division to determine the place award.



Honest Effort Rule (HER)

If a participant competes 25% faster than their entry score the athlete will receive a participation ribbon.

Remember to :

- ✓ Accurately time your athletes
- ✓ Check the distance of the course your participants are using to ensure it is the correct distance
- ✓ Use a competition like setting when gating entry times



Safety

Along with Air Quality checks make sure you check the following:

- ✓ Know the address of the location you are training
- ✓ Remind athletes to have water bottles with them and have water coolers available for refills
- ✓ Walk the venue prior to practice to ensure there is no glass or trash on the paths
- ✓ Sunscreen, sunglasses and hats!
- ✓ Predetermined safety zone! Where is it, make sure everyone is aware



Thunder & Lightning

Every time you see lightening or hear thunder:

Stop practice and seek shelter for 30 minutes.

Remember this is every time you see lightening or hear thunder





Practice

Practice running on different surfaces:

Grass

Dirt trail

Concrete

Asphalt

All Weather Track

Add hills

This way your athletes will be prepared for whatever surface the venue has.

THANK YOU

