



Job Title: Senior Director of Local Program Development

Department: Programming

Location: Statewide Role (home base within PA with ability to travel)

Reports To: Chief Operating Officer

FLSA Status: Full Time, Exempt, Salaried

Position Summary:

The Senior Director of Local Program Development at Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA) provides statewide leadership to support regions in delivering high-quality, volunteer-led local teams. Serving in a headquarters-level role, this position acts as the subject matter expert in local team design, structure, and standards, developing systems, resources, training, and tools that enable regions to plan, launch, and sustain effective teams. While not directly creating or managing local teams, the Senior Director equips regions with frameworks, guidance, and consultation to ensure volunteer teams succeed and supports opportunities for athlete leadership, fitness, health, and local fundraising initiatives. By promoting consistency, fostering best practices, and aligning regional efforts with SOPA's strategic plan, this role drives structured growth and enhances the experience of athletes and volunteers statewide.

This position requires heavy travel across the state to support regional teams and local program development. Travel will vary depending on organizational needs, with some periods busier than others.

Key Responsibilities:

Local Program Development:

- Develop a comprehensive annual statewide plan that defines strategies, priorities, and standards to guide regional-led local team growth in alignment with SOPA's strategic plan. This includes setting growth targets, creating timelines for new local team development, and establishing the resources and standards necessary to achieve these goals.
- Create and maintain the Local Teams Playbook, defining structures, roles, and processes for starting and sustaining local teams.
- Collaborate and meet regularly with Regional staff, developing strategies and guidance for maximizing opportunities and addressing issues and challenges.
- Design training resources, onboarding tools, and implementation guides for regional staff to use when developing local programs.
- Produce marketing templates, campaign concepts, and outreach strategies that regions can adapt to attract participants and volunteers.

- Provide ongoing consultation and feedback to regions during the planning, onboarding, and implementation phases of new local programs.
- Collaborate with Regional Sports Directors to design seasonal program planning templates that reflect community needs and sport diversity.
- Develop frameworks for multi-sport pipelines aligned with SOPA's four athlete participation types (Entry Level, Recreational, Competitive, Maximum Potential).
- Establish quality standards and evaluation tools to help regions measure and maintain consistency in athlete, coach, and volunteer experiences statewide.

Coach Education & Training

- Directly supervise the Coach/Fitness Education & Training Director, providing guidance, oversight, and accountability for statewide coach education initiatives.
- Lead the statewide coach education strategy in collaboration with HQ training staff, ensuring effective implementation across all regions.
- Oversee the design and execution of scalable onboarding and continuous learning pathways for coaches, ensuring accessibility and impact in every region.
- Approve and guide the development of tools and resources that support regions in recruiting, developing, and retaining a diverse and qualified pool of volunteer coaches.

Staff Support & Performance

- Act as a coach and mentor to Regional Sports Directors, offering guidance, tools, and accountability measures to support their success.
- Develop and maintain shared workflows, operational toolkits, and performance metrics for consistent execution across all regions.
- Facilitate opportunities for regional teams to share best practices, troubleshoot challenges, and engage in continuous improvement.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree required, master's degree in Sports Management, Nonprofit Leadership, or related field preferred.
- Minimum 3-5 years' experience in program design, resource development, volunteer leadership management, and multi-site support, preferably in a sports or nonprofit environment.
- Proven ability to develop tools, training, and systems that drive consistent execution across multiple teams.
- Strong communication and facilitation skills, both verbal and written.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office and social media or marketing tools.
- Experience working with and supporting volunteers.
- Ability to lift, carry, push, and pull items weighing up to 50 lbs. as needed to perform essential job functions.
- Occasionally required to stand, walk, bend, kneel, or reach.

- Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions of this position.
- Ability and willingness to travel, including occasional weekends.
- Travel frequency may be heavy and will vary depending on organizational needs, with some periods busier than others.
- Background Check: Employment is conditional upon successful completion of a criminal history check and fingerprinting, as required for all SOPA employees.

Application Instructions:

Serious applicants should send a cover letter, resume, and salary requirement to careers@specialolympicspa.org.

No phone calls will be accepted. Resumes sent for positions other than this posting will not receive a response, and communications from recruiters will not be acknowledged.

Special Olympics Pennsylvania is proud to be an equal-opportunity employer. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender identity or expression, national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, neurodiversity, age, parental status, socio-economic background, military service, or any other characteristic or status protected by applicable law.

We strive to create a workplace that reflects our communities and where everyone feels empowered to bring their whole, authentic selves and can do their best work.

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA) provides year-round training and competition in 21 Olympic-type sports to 15,000 children and adults with intellectual disabilities or closely related developmental disabilities. For 50 years, SOPA and its nine regions have used the power of sports to transform the lives of people with intellectual disabilities and unite everyone by fostering community and building a more acceptable and civil society. SOPA is much more than a sports organization. Through its Athlete Leadership Programs, athletes assume meaningful leadership roles, influence change within the Special Olympics movement, and take on roles as Global Messengers (trained as public speakers for Special Olympics), athlete representatives, coaches, board members, and more. SOPA also addresses significant challenges facing its athletes, including healthcare. The Healthy Athletes program offers athletes free health screenings in the form of eye, ear, dental, and podiatry assessments. Athletes are also taught to live active lifestyles, eat healthily, and more. Additionally, SOPA strives to create a unified world by promoting inclusion, uniting communities, and changing attitudes. Through Unified Sports, SOPA brings together individuals with and without intellectual disabilities as equal teammates in training and competition, which promotes respect and acceptance and facilitates meaningful relationships between people of all abilities. For more information about Special Olympics PA, visit www.specialolympicspa.org.

