



2022 Athlete Congress Registration Information
From Saturday, August 26th at 9:00 AM
Through Sunday, August 27th at 11:00 AM
Penn Stater Hotel & Conference Center
215 Innovation Blvd, State College, PA 16803

Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA) prides itself on Athlete Leaders building positive change to better the overall Special Olympics experience for athletes of all ages and ability levels. Every two years, Special Olympics Pennsylvania hosts its biennial Athlete Congress. Athlete Congress is a forum for Athlete Representatives to vote on high-level topics that athletes from around the state would like to see presented to the Board of Directors.

Each Program/Team may only send one Athlete Representative (**trained through Athlete Leadership University***) so there is equal representation from across the state. Programs/Teams with multiple Athlete Representatives might choose who they want to send by:

- Athlete Leadership Team Chair automatically going.
- Athlete Leadership Team/Management Team vote.
- Rotate every other year.
- Conversation between Athlete Representatives.

*Starting in 2022, in the event a Program/Team does not have a trained Athlete Representative or their current Athlete Representative(s) are unavailable, the following individuals may attend Athlete Congress under the condition they agree to be trained as an Athlete Representative in 2023:

- Any athlete with no prior Athlete Leadership experience that a Program/Team would consider as an Athlete Representative.
- Any current Athlete Leader (Global Messenger and/or Health and Fitness Coordinator) that has completed their practicum(s).

Registration Form Link (It is highly recommended to fill out this registration form in Google Chrome): <https://forms.gle/KWhc9j1XFTFvmMcDA>

The deadline to register is Friday, August 12th at 5:00 PM. If an Athlete Representative and Mentor cancel their registration less than 2 weeks prior to Athlete Congress, their Program/Team will still be billed.

When filling out the Registration Form, it will ask for your Manager/Director's email address, where it will then automatically send them an update saying you registered. If you do not place your Manager/Director's email address, SOPA will follow up with them to confirm they approved your registration.

To offset the cost of Athlete Congress, each Local Program will be charged \$198 for one night and \$262 for two nights per Athlete Representative/Mentor pair. Anyone traveling more than 2 hours away is asked to arrive on the 25th as Athlete Congress will officially begin at 9:00 AM on the 26th. SOPA continue to underwrite a large portion to ensure our Athlete Representatives are given this leadership opportunity. Programs/Teams will be invoiced following the conclusion of Athlete Congress. If Program/Team cancels less than 2 weeks prior to arrival, they will still be billed.

Tentative Schedule

All sessions will take place at the Penn Stater Hotel and Conference Center. Final schedule will be sent 2 weeks prior to Athlete Congress.

- Friday:
 - Anyone that chooses to arrive Friday evening will have the opportunity to have dinner at the Penn Stater with other Athlete Congress attendees, SOPA Staff and Board Members.
- Saturday:
 - Anyone that chooses to arrive Friday evening will have the opportunity to take part in an optional exercise activity and have breakfast with Athlete Congress attendees, SOPA Staff and Board Members.
 - Session will take place from 9:00 AM-4:00 PM with lunch scheduled at 12:00 PM.
 - All attendees will also attend the 2022 Athlete Leadership University Social Hour and Ceremony from 5:00-8:00 PM.
 - This ceremony will also recognize Athlete Leadership University graduates from 2020 and 2021.
 - All Athlete Congress attendees taking part in the graduation ceremony do not need to re-register, however, they will receive additional information separately.
- Sunday:
 - All attendees have the opportunity to take place in another optional exercise activity prior to breakfast.
 - Closing session will take place from 9:00 AM-11:00 AM.

Attire:

Business Professional attire is strongly encouraged by all attendees both Saturday and Sunday. Please refer to this chart to understand the difference between Business Casual vs Business Professional:



Lodging Accommodations:

All lodging will be at the Penn Stater Hotel and Conference Center.

- If you have housing requests such as early arrival or preferred roommate, please indicate within the Registration Form. These requests are not guaranteed...
- Lodging will be assigned by SOPA with the Housing Policy strictly adhered to.
- You will receive confirmation of lodging assignment at the close of Registration.

Meals:

All meals, with the exception of the Graduation Banquet on Saturday, will be buffet style.

- If you have dietary requests, such as gluten free or vegetarian, please indicate within the Registration Form. SOPA and the Penn Stater will try to accommodate these requests as best they can.

Regional Input Council (RIC) Elections Moving Forward:

In 2021, as a result of regionalization, the RIC decided that all elections for Regional Representatives will take place internally within the region. This will allow all interested and appropriate Athlete Representatives an equal opportunity to nominate themselves, regardless of how many other Athlete Representatives are in their Program/Team.

Elections for the RIC Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary will still take place at Athlete Congress, however, those positions of office will not open up until 2024.

Point of Contact:

For any questions about Athlete Congress, please contact Manager of Athlete Leadership & Young Athletes, Jordan Schubert at:

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