Return to Activities
Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA), like the rest of society, needed to determine the safest and most prudent way to reopen after the shutdown caused by Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19). After thorough consultation and deliberation, a Return to Activities plan has been developed which prioritizes the health and safety of everyone involved.
Important Highlights

- Participation is OPTIONAL
- At-home virtual training and competition will always be available for those uncomfortable or unable to return to activities in person
- Any participant who is considered as high risk is not permitted to return to Special Olympics in-person activities until there are no reported COVID-19 cases
High Risk Participants

More is learned about COVID-19 every day, and the latest information is available on the website ebpage. As of July 17, 2020, the CDC notes that people of any age with the following conditions are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19:

- Cancer
- Chronic kidney disease
- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant
- Obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 or higher)
- Serious heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies
- Sickle cell disease
- Type 2 diabetes mellitus

Current clinical guidance and information from the CDC also indicates that people who live in a nursing home or licensed long-term care facility are at risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Residents of PA-licensed Intermediate Care Facilities (ICFs) or Personal Care Homes are not permitted to participate in in-person Special Olympics in-person activities at this time.

If participants have any condition the CDC notes places you at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19 or if you live in a nursing home or licensed long-term care facility, participants are not permitted to return to Special Olympics in-person activities at this time.

We are working to create a meaningful opportunity for all high risk individuals that will be rolled out soon!
Risk Assessment Form

- Every participant (athlete, coach, volunteer) is required to complete the COVID-19 Participant Code of Conduct and Risk Assessment Form
  - [COVID-19 Participant Code of Conduct and Risk Assessment Form](#)
- Forms must be submitted prior to practicing
- You will be educated about COVID-19 as well as all procedures and expectations for returning to practice
Practice Checklist

Make sure you come prepared for practice:

- Face Mask
- Hand Sanitizer
- Disinfectant Wipes
- Sports Equipment
- Your OWN water bottle
- Sunscreen
- Bug Spray
- Granola Bar Post-Practice Snack
- Hair ties/Headband
- Towel
Practice will look different

Here’s what to expect...

- We want to make sure that you protect yourself and STAY HEALTHY!!
- What does that mean for practice?
  - No high-fives, hugs, or fist bumps
  - No sharing of equipment
  - Drills and activities may look different to ensure physical distancing
  - Friends, family, and caregivers will be asked to stay in the car to watch practice
  - If you drive to practice with anyone other than your family members, you will need to wear a mask while traveling
Preparing the Venue
Travel to Activity & Onsite Screening
Screening when you arrive

Once you arrive at practice you will need to go through a health screening

- If someone drove you, they will be asked to stay on site until this screening is complete
- You may have to wait in line to have your screening completed
- You will be asked a few questions about how you are feeling
- You will have your temperature taken
- You will be reminded that you are to wear a mask and keep a physical distance from others at practice
- You will be reminded to only use the equipment that you brought with you, or that you were provided by the coach
Symptoms/Positive Tests

- If you have any COVID-19 symptoms you will be required to wait 7 days after symptoms resolve before you can return to activity or you must provide written proof of physical clearance to Special Olympics to return earlier
- If you test positive for/have COVID-19 you will be required to provide written medical clearance before returning to activity
- COVID-19 EDUCATION AND SYMPTOMS
Athlete "Medicals"

SOPA is offering up to a 6-month extension if an Application for Participation ("medical") expired from March 2020 through July 2020 following the provision that the athlete, family member or caregiver reports the following to the Local Program:

- The athlete has not had any major changes in their health status since their last valid Application for Participation was completed
- The athlete has not been infected with the COVID-19 virus (as this would require medical clearance)
- The athlete does not experience any of the following symptoms at rest or during exercise: difficulty breathing, chest pain, shortness of breath, loss of consciousness, lightheadedness, dizziness, visual changes, headache, cough, skipped heartbeats, irregular heartbeat or any other unpleasant physical symptoms.

Any athlete with a medical that expires August 1, 2020 or later must provide a new one.
What if I live in a different county than where I train?

- If your Local Program or Region consists of more than one county, the following process applies:
  - The Local Program or Region will make the decision (with SOPA approval) to either allow individual counties designated as Green to conduct in-person activities or wait until all counties within the Program or Region are designated as Green.
  - You will not be able to cross county lines for in-person activities if your county of residence is not Green.
What will Fall look like?
What is Virtual Competition?

- Virtual competition takes place when we can’t come together in person!
- There are different ways that virtual competition can be done
  - **Virtual Summer Games**
    - We all had a GREAT TIME at Virtual Summer Games, the challenges we did were fun and kept us moving!!
    - We didn’t compete for awards, but rather for FUN!
  - **Fall Season**
    - You will train and compete from your training site
    - Your coach will submit preliminary scores
    - These preliminary scores will be used to create divisions
    - Your coach will submit your final scores
    - These final scores will be used to determine Awards placement
Fall Season: Divisioning

- SOPA still follows standard divisioning process: ability, age, and gender
- Qualifying times/distances/scores submitted three weeks prior to virtual competition
  - These times will be taken at practice and submitted by your coach
  - These times will be used to determine divisions
- For sports where different competition venues impacts performance (i.e. long distance running course or golf course):
  - The same competition venue must be used for divisioning and in all competitions
Fall Season: Competition and Awards

- Virtual Competitions for local, Sectionals, and State Games
- Athletes compete within their assigned virtual divisions
- Final times/distances/scores submitted the Monday prior to competition
  - These times will be taken at practice and submitted by your coach
- Places of finish determined by athlete performance in each competition division
- Final results posted online the day of the scheduled virtual competition
- **Awards:** Official Special Olympics Awards will be given for Sectionals and State events
Individual Sports

Long Distance Running/Walking and Powerlifting
- No significant changes in process
- Important to focus on physical distancing and safety practices

Roller Skating
- Artistic: Level 1 and Level 2 Skills will be offered
- Speed: No significant changes in the process
Individual Sports

Bocce

- Participants will compete in a modified game
- Games will be conducted in 4 frame matches
- Each participant will roll 4 balls towards the pallina
- Participants will not alternate ends. All frames will be played from one end of the court
- These scores will be compared to others across the state
- Competition will be offered in:
  - Singles
  - Doubles
  - Unified Doubles
Team Sports

During Phase B and C, athletes will be able to compete in Level 1 (Traditional) or Level 2 (Advanced) Skill Competition

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<th>Level 2</th>
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<td>Agility and Speed: Ball Handoff</td>
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Questions?