

Special Olympics Pennsylvania Training School Clinicians

Special Olympics Pennsylvania offers opportunities throughout the year for our coaches to receive additional sports specific training to better prepare them to train their athletes.

To provide the best training possible for our coaches, we recruit individuals with a background and expertise in the sports in which we offer training and competition to serve as clinicians. During the training schools, clinicians work with the Special Olympics coaches to teach them the rules of the sport and show them drills they can use to teach their athletes the skills of the sport. Clinicians also answer questions from coaches on problems they are having teaching a particular skill or on advice on how best to work with a particular athlete who is struggling with a particular skill.

The sports Special Olympics Pennsylvania currently offers training and competition in are Alpine Skiing, Aquatics (Swimming), Athletics (Track and Field), Basketball, Bocce, Bowling, Cross Country Skiing, Equestrian, Figure Skating, Floor Hockey, Golf, Gymnastics, Long Distance Running, Powerlifting, Roller Skating, Soccer, Softball, Speed Skating, Snowshoeing, Tennis, and Volleyball.

Special Olympics Pennsylvania has opportunities available for individuals interested in serving as clinicians for any of the sports in which we currently offer training and competition opportunities. Trainings are offered throughout the year, generally about 2-3 months prior to the start of the training season for that sport and are offered throughout the state.

Depending upon the sport, coach trainings generally last between 2-4 hours and are held at facilities typical of where one would train or compete in the sport. A typical coach training would have between 5-15 participants. Special Olympics Pennsylvania staff provides the resources and training necessary for clinicians to conduct the coach trainings and are usually on-site at trainings to offer assistance and answer any Special Olympics specific question.

In order to provide our coaches with the best training possible, we do ask potential clinicians to complete and submit the attached Special Olympics Pennsylvania Training School Clinician Application for approval before teaching at one of our coach trainings.

What do we look for when choosing a clinician?

Here are some of the qualifications that we look for when reviewing the Special Olympics Pennsylvania Training School Clinician Application.

1. Current Special Olympics sport coaching experience of 5 years or longer.
2. Current or previous experience as a Special Olympics Pennsylvania Sport Director.
3. Current or previous coaching experience of 3 or more years at the Middle School Level or higher within the sport.
4. Current or previous officiating experience in the sport of 5 years or longer.
5. Current or previous experience playing the sport competitively at the high school level or above.
6. Current or previous experience leading coach training within the sport for Special Olympics or any other organization.

7. Submission of list of rules and drills that will be covered during the course including expected length of training, how coaches will be engaged during the training and if Special Olympics athletes will be invited to participate in the training.
8. Completion of Level 4 (Certified Skills Course Instructor) of the Special Olympics Pennsylvania Coach Education Program.
9. Serving as a co-clinician or shadowing an approved clinician in the sport for at 2 or more Special Olympics Pennsylvania coach trainings.
10. Certified trainer within the sport through the National Governing Body or other recognized organization covering the sport.
11. Current Special Olympics Coach Certification in the sport.
12. Recommendation from a current Special Olympics Pennsylvania clinician.
13. Recommendation from a Special Olympics Pennsylvania Sports Director.

When reviewing a submitted clinician application, we look for the **totality of experience** within the sport and how that experience would translate to providing our coaches with the tools they need to properly train their athletes. Current and past Special Olympics coaches often make great clinicians as they have the sports background and can share with coaches the challenges and keys on how to apply and adapt that knowledge to working with our athletes.

What do I do if I want to be a clinician?

If you are interested in donating your time and talents, to share your sports experience, with our coaches so they can provide the best training possible for their athletes you should:

1. Complete the attached Special Olympics Pennsylvania Training School Clinician Application.
2. Submit the application to Shane Kiesner, Senior Sports Director at skiesner@specialolympicspa.org, 724-375-9183 (fax) or Special Olympics Pennsylvania, 200 Cedar Ridge Dr, Suite 214, Pittsburgh, PA 15205.
3. Prepare and submit an overview of what rules and drills you would teach during a training course, the expected length of the training, how you would engage the coaches in the training and if you would utilize Special Olympics athletes during the training (encouraged).

What happens after I submit my application?

Once submitted your application will be reviewed and we will either notify you that your application has been approved or we will contact you for additional information to consider in making our decision. If your application is approved you will be added to our database of approved clinicians and you will be contacted about training opportunities as they come up in your sport.

In addition, once your application is approved someone from the Special Olympics Pennsylvania staff will contact you to go over the clinician requirements of a training school for your sport.



TRAINING SCHOOL CLINICIAN APPLICATION

Individuals must complete and submit this application for each sport for which they would like to serve as a clinician. Applications must be sent with Training School Application and Agenda at least 45 days prior to training school. Please be as specific as possible in your answers.

NAME: _____ PROGRAM/COUNTY: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

PHONE: Day () _____ Evening () _____ EMAIL: _____

SPORT IN WHICH YOU ARE APPLYING FOR: _____

1. Are you currently certified as a SOPA coach in this sport? ___ yes ___ no
 - a. For how many years have you been a certified SOPA coach in this sport? _____
2. Do you have any experience as a coach in this sport at the middle school level or above outside of your current Special Olympics experience? ___ yes ___ no
 - a. If yes, where did you coach previously? _____
 - b. For how many years? _____
3. Have you ever been certified as an official in this sport? ___ yes ___ no
 - a. If yes, how many years did you serve as an official in this sport? _____
4. Did you play this sport competitively at the high school level or above? ___ yes ___ no
 - a. If yes, at what levels have you competed? _____
 - b. For how many years did you play this sport competitively? _____
5. Have you ever led a coaches training in this sport for SOPA or any other organization? ___ yes ___ no
 - a. If yes, for whom and when _____
6. Have you completed Level 4 of the SOPA Coach Education Program? ___ yes ___ no
7. Are you a certified trainer in this sport for any other organization? ___ yes ___ no
 - a. If yes, for which organization _____
 - b. For how many years have you been a certified trainer for this organization? _____
8. Is there anyone involved with SOPA who would recommend you as a trainer in this sport? ___ yes ___ no
 - a. If yes, please provide their name and contact information _____
9. On a separate sheet of paper, please provide an overview of what rules and drills you would teach during a training course, the expected length of the training, how you would engage the coaches in the training and if you would utilize Special Olympics athletes during the training (highly encouraged).

All Applications must be reviewed and approved by the SOPA Senior Sports Director.

Please Return To: skiesner@specialolympicspa.org or 724-375-9183 (fax) or 200 Cedar Ridge Dr, Suite 214, Pittsburgh, PA 15205.