

ESTABLISHING A LOCAL PROGRAM

Steps for Creating a Local Team

- Special Olympics Texas divides the state into 19 areas for your convenience and accessibility. Look at the map on page V-7 to find out in which area you live, then contact your program/area director (area phone numbers and addresses are listed on page V-6). The area office will have information on hand that will help you become familiar with Special Olympics.
- New local programs, that wish to be officially sanctioned by SOTX, must apply for official delegation status. The Request for New Delegation Form found on page D-6 must be turned into the area office. The area office and Area Sports Management Team reserve their right to deny a request if the responsible leadership is not in good standing with SOTX.
- Attend the next coaches certification school for the sport you are interested in coaching. Check with the area office to see when the upcoming training opportunities are available. The first step will be to attend General Orientation, approximately one and a half hours in length. This session will provide you with an overview of the Special Olympics history and philosophy. General Orientation may be taken online. Following the General Orientation, you will need to attend the sports-specific session, which is about four to five hours. After completion of 10 practicum hours with athletes, you will be recognized as a coach for the team. Contact the training director for your area listed in Section V for assistance. The website also has the latest coaching information - visit www.specialolympicstexas.org.
- Contact your area Special Olympics Texas office for rule books or other items you may need.
- During this time, you should be identifying potential athletes, if you don't already have them, as well as facilities to train them. Or, find a group that needs a coach or additional transportation and equipment (balls, cones, batons, shot puts, etc.). Be sure that your athletes meet the criteria for Special Olympics Texas, as outlined in Section B. Your area director can help you make contact.
- Keep track of your training sessions with athletes on the Coach Practicum Form, which can be obtained from your area training manager/director or area office. Coaches must complete 10 hours of practicum after completing a sports-specific training school. Mail the completed form to your area training director. The form must be in the area office at least one day prior to the area competition.
- Each athlete must have a physical exam, and you must submit the results of this exam on an Athlete Enrollment/Medical Release Form to the area office. Anytime you complete a competition entry form, attach a copy of only new or updated medical information. It is wise to keep at least one copy of the original in your files. A copy must be kept with you at all times during Special Olympics activities. The athlete's parent or guardian must sign the form unless he/she is at least 18 years old.
- Train your athletes. SOTX rules require a minimum of eight weeks of training prior to competition.
- All sports offered at the area level are also available at the chapter level. Participation in local competitions is required prior to area competitions. Additionally, you may wish to compete in invitational events or events in an adjacent area.
- Each event has a deadline for entry. You must submit a copy of the Athlete Enrollment/Medical Release Form to the area office for every athlete, along with the proper entry forms, by the deadline designated by the area office. All chapter entries must be on three-part forms.





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- There may be coaches meetings, area conferences or other meetings you must attend to keep up with current information. There will be a mandatory coaches meeting the night before an event or early in the morning before the event begins.
- Athletes must compete at the area level before they are eligible to compete at the chapter level. Athletes must be at least 12 years old on the first day of chapter level competition to be able to compete at the chapter level (8 years old for area/local competitions). Also, there may be quotas or special criteria to be able to compete at the chapter level.
- Submit local, invitational and area entry forms to the appropriate meet director or area office. For the three chapter level events offered annually, all entries must be sent through the area office, which will then forward them to the chapter office.
- There must be one certified coach for each delegation in individual sports and one certified coach per team for team sports. There should be at least one other certified coach present to fill in for the head coach if he/she becomes unable to complete his/her duties.
- The official ratio for Special Olympics Texas is 4 athletes to 1 adult, and for the purpose of supervision, all minor Unified Sports™ partners (17 years old or younger) are included in the athlete count. For an event with no overnight stay, the 4 to 1 ratio is required, but the gender specific ratio is not; it is advised that delegations have at least one chaperone of both genders to handle certain situations. For an event with an overnight stay, the 4 to 1 ratio of four athletes/minors to one adult is required by gender, meaning every four athletes/minors need one male chaperone and every four female athletes/minors need one female chaperone. However, we urge all delegations to strive to maintain the 4 to 1 by gender ratio at all times.
- Develop a budget for each sport, and for the year.
- You may wish to establish a booster club comprised of family members and interested community members. The booster club functions as a fund raising arm and support system. See Section S for more information regarding team fund raising.
- Special Olympics provides the framework for which athletes with intellectual disabilities can train and compete. The organization will either recommend or require certain policies or processes to be followed. However, this is not to say that Special Olympics delegations may not also have their own policies and processes that should be in place as long as they are not opposed to Special Olympics policies. For example, Special Olympics requires a 4 to 1 chaperone to athlete ratio which is gender specific for housing during chapter games. A delegation may have a lower ratio if they choose. The safety and well-being of our athletes should be first and foremost when making decisions.
- Delegations are not allowed to form boards of directors or to have By-laws. Delegations may form steering committees, which can function to assist with decision-making within the delegation.



Fund Raising/Banking Policy

- Special Olympics Texas, Inc. (SOTX) is the sole entity in the State of Texas which is authorized to use the name, logo, trademark, or any other representation of Special Olympics. SOTX may authorize a team/delegation to use the name and/or logo, when a request is submitted following the guidelines in Section U. No other entity is allowed to make reference to Special Olympics including use in public relations/media outreach, in any fund raising activities other than as described in the next bullet below, or in any of its organizational documents on record with the State of Texas.
- A team/delegation/booster club that is established as a component-related service of an entity such as a school district, group home, state school, and other similar entity may conduct fund raising activities using the name of SOTX, only with the expressed, advance permission of SOTX for each such event. All funds raised in this manner must be made payable to the entity, and be held and accounted for by the entity. Any external team bank account that is not in the name of or not under the exclusive control of the entity must be centralized with SOTX.
- No team/delegation may have the same name as another corporate entity that supports or raises funds for a team/delegation. No team/delegation/booster club may incorporate.
- No entity other than SOTX may negotiate (cash, deposit, endorse) any check or any other financial instrument which is made payable to SOTX or to the team/delegation/booster club. A team/delegation/booster club must deposit all checks payable to SOTX or to the team/delegation/booster club into SOTX's centralized bank account.
- A team/delegation/booster club may conduct fund raising activities after receiving approval from SOTX Chapter Headquarters. No team/delegation, head of delegation or coach may accept any direct or indirect financial contribution from any source, unless that contribution is deposited into the SOTX centralized bank account. This contribution will be held for the benefit of that team in the team's centralized account. Indirect financial contributions include, but are not limited to, any payment made by any contributor to any other party on behalf of the team/delegation. All contributions to the team/delegation/booster club must be made payable to Special Olympics Texas, Inc. - FBO *team name*. The "FBO" may be written on the memo line of the check.
- No head of delegation, coach or Class A volunteer with a team/delegation may hold any position of authority or responsibility with any other organization which constitutes a conflict of interest with SOTX or provides support/funding for that team/delegation.
- No team/delegation/booster club may maintain any outside bank account to hold contributed funds. All such funds must be centralized with SOTX or centralized with an entity, as described above in the second bullet.
- Any violations of this policy by heads of delegation, coaches, Class A volunteers or teams will be subject to disciplinary actions including, but not limited to, probation, suspension, or disbanding.
- Violations of this policy by other entities may be referred for legal action, if voluntary compliance is not achieved.

Procedures Relating to Team Funds Held by SOTX

Each head of delegation will be required annually to sign a statement acknowledging the banking policy. This requirement will occur as part of the re-certification process.

In the event of the dissolution of the team/delegation, all funds held for the team in the SOTX centralized account will be maintained for a period of time not to exceed 12 months to allow a successor team to be established. If a successor team is not established within this time frame, the funds will revert to the Special Olympics Texas, Inc. operating account.

Team funds may not be spent for any service that is considered wages and as such, requires reporting to the Internal Revenue Service as wages. Generally, acceptable expenditures include



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tangible products and certain services which directly benefit the athletes or the team as an entity. Examples of these expenditures include, but are not limited to, hotel accommodations for events, uniforms, etc.

Within the SOTX centralized bank account, each team will be issued its own deposit slips which are coded to identify which team has made a deposit to the account. Each team shall maintain copies of checks which it has deposited.

When expenses need to be paid, either in advance or on a reimbursement basis, the team will submit appropriate documentation to the chapter finance department by fax or email. Upon receipt of the documentation, a check will be issued within one business day and the team's cash balance will be debited. If the team does not have a sufficient balance to cover the check request, a check will not be issued. Area offices may not issue any checks on behalf of a team.

Quarterly statements of the team accounts will be issued by email to the heads of delegation for review and reconciliation. More frequent statements are available upon request.

Acknowledgement of SOTX Policy Regarding Bank Arrangements

The purpose of this document is to provide clarifying information to that which is presented in the Sports Information Guide (SIG) regarding acceptable banking arrangements for all delegations/teams that engage in any public fund raising and whose accountability for such funds is not assumed by another responsible entity (e.g., a school district, another corporate entity, etc.). All other delegations/teams are accountable to Special Olympics Texas, Inc. (chapter office) and are required to deposit all funds with the chapter office. No funds are to be held in any bank account bearing the Special Olympics name or its tax identification number. No funds are to be held in any other bank account regardless of how the account is titled.

Public fund raising includes any appeal to the general citizenry, the business community, or governmental entity for support through grants, donations, purchases of services/products, or any other activity which results in the transfer of funds to the delegation for its use in Special Olympics activities. Any such appeal which uses a delegation name similar to Special Olympics, or that is likely to result in the public perception that Special Olympics is involved, is covered by this rule.

Each head of delegation or his/her representative acknowledges by signature that he/she has read and understood this policy and that any violation may result in disciplinary action.

Date

Printed Name (HoD)

Delegation Name/Code

Signature (HoD)

E-mail Address

Telephone

Request for New Delegation

Proposed name for the delegation: _____

Name of person in charge (Head of Delegation - HoD): _____

HoD Address: _____

HoD Phone Numbers: (Day) _____ (Evening) _____

(Cell) _____

HoD Email Address: _____

Number of athletes participating with the delegation: _____

Sports to be offered by the delegation (please list): _____

**Please fill out and return to the
area office for approval.**

For Office Use Only:

Delegation Code Assigned: _____

This Delegation is:

- Primarily a School District Team
- Primarily an Adult Team made up of athletes from group homes or other agency
- Is an Independent team - athletes are mostly
 - School Aged
 - Adults

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