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WELCOME

A POSITIVE SPORTS EXPERIENCE STARTS WITH THE COACH
Special Olympics Southern California athletes participate in more sports and at higher levels than ever before. Much of this success can be attributed directly to our coaches. As a coach, you provide the sports skills and spirit that, when instilled, define a true athlete. You are a role model and character builder. You give Special Olympics athletes the most immediate awareness of their self-worth, ability, courage, and capacity to grow and improve.

Special Olympics coaches play an indispensable role in the success of this sports program. Despite it being one of the most demanding responsibilities you may ever take on, we challenge you to find one more rewarding! Special Olympics Southern California (SOSC) local programs are always in need of good coaches. Whether you are a high school coach or the local librarian, we can use your help.

Coach’s Oath
“In the name of all coaches and in the spirit of sportsmanship, I promise that we will act professionally, respect others, and ensure a positive experience for all. I promise to provide quality sports and training opportunities in a safe environment for all athletes.”

Why Become a Special Olympics Southern California Coach?
Coaches play an indispensable role in Special Olympics, and coaching education helps to ensure each coach and athlete has the best sport experience possible. The coach’s attitude towards sports and competition will directly affect the athletes. Special Olympics believes that the athletic experience and the camaraderie shared by teammates are what benefits athletes the most.

Coach Responsibilities:
• Teach all coaching staff and athletes the rules of the sport.
• Organize and conduct a sports training program.
• Promote fair competition at all events.

SOSC FACTS
Special Olympics Southern California was founded in 1969 by Olympic decathlon gold medalist Rafer Johnson. Currently, Special Olympics Southern California serves over 17,000 athletes through the support of 15,000 volunteers.

Special Olympics Southern California recognizes the potential of growth in athlete participation numbers with the huge impact the 2015 Special Olympics World Games Los Angeles. Special Olympics Southern California recognizes the significance of this opportunity and is taking important steps to grow our athlete numbers.

Special Olympics Southern California offers sports training and competition in 12 sports on a seasonal basis from San Luis Obispo to San Diego. Special Olympics Southern California services athletes from ages 2 ½ and above, through the following programs:

Young Athlete Program, ages 2 ½ - 7  School or Community Based Setting
School Partnership Program, ages 8 - 22  School Setting
Traditional Local Program, ages 2 ½ & above  Community Based Setting
Becoming A Coach

The requirements to be a Special Olympics Southern California coach are very simple... have a big heart and enjoy having a good time. Through the Coach Education Plan, you will go through a required certification process, which enables you to learn the skills necessary to help athletes reach their sports potential. Depending on your background and experience, different options are available to become certified. Experienced and knowledgeable instructors will provide the resources you need.

Coaching: A Place for Everyone
The idea of coaching a team may seem overwhelming, but you don't have to coach alone. You can share the responsibility and joy of coaching with another coach, friend or family member. There are no limits to your coaching potential or staff.

Spring/Summer Season - Athletics (Track & Field), Aquatics, Basketball, Bocce, Golf and Gymnastics
Fall Season - Bowling, Floor Hockey, Soccer, Softball, Tennis and Volleyball

Coaching Assignments

Sports Volunteer - Must be a Class A Volunteer
Assistant Coach - Certification Required - Level 2
Head Coach - Certification Required - Level 3

Sport Volunteer
This position is for individuals who want to be out on the practice field or court, ready to help the athletes with drills and skill development, but not quite ready to take on a leadership position. It is helpful to have some sports knowledge but not a requirement. SOSC will provide sports training opportunities for individuals interested in this position. Sports Volunteers are responsible for assisting coaches with sports training and competitions as assigned by the coach. Special Olympics

Requirement
This position requires 2+ hours per week of 8-10 week season

Recommended Training
Must be a Class A Volunteer

Assistant Coach - Level 2 Required
This position is for individuals that will work with the Head Coach during all practices and competition. Assistant coaches are responsible for assisting with the training plan, skill development, athlete/team evaluations and competitions. It is recommended that an assistant coach have some knowledge of the sport. Special Olympics Southern California will provide sports training opportunities for individuals interested in this position.

Requirement
This position requires up to 4+ hours per week of 8-10 week season.

Training Requirements
Coaching Special Olympics Athletes (CSOA)
Sport Specific Training - Recertification Required every 3 years
Must be a Class A Volunteer
Becoming A Coach

**Head Coach - Level 3 Required**
This position is for individuals who want to lead a team of athletes through training and competition. Coaches create training plans, oversee practice and work with other coaches and sport volunteers to create a positive and fun environment for all athletes. It is recommended that a Head Coach have knowledge of the sport. Special Olympics Southern California will provide sports training opportunities for individuals interested in this position.

**Requirement**
This position requires 6+ hours per week of 8 - 10 week season.

**Training Requirements**
- Coaching Special Olympics Athletes (CSOA)
- Sports Specific Training - Recertification Required every 3 years
- Principles of Coaching
- Must be a Class A Volunteer

**Simple Steps**
1. Review information as to How To Become a SOSC Coach.
2. Submit completed Coach Interest Form
3. Interact with SOSC Regional Office as to opportunities and assignment
4. Complete Class A Volunteer Application - if instructed to do so
5. Attend required meetings.
6. Attend required training courses.

SOSC Headquarters and Regional Staff will review all completed Coach Interest Forms to determine the best ‘match’ for your volunteer experience. It will be incumbent upon you to complete all required steps in the process.
Coaches Code of Conduct

Coaches Code of Conduct Agreement
The Coaches Code of Conduct Agreement is designed to assist the coach in abiding by the mission and philosophy of Special Olympics. In return, coaches are treated with respect and openness and have access to self-improvement training opportunities.

Code of Conduct: Coaches
Special Olympics is committed to the highest ideals of sport and expects all coaches to honor sport and Special Olympics.

All SOSC coaches and sports volunteers are required to abide by the following Code of Conduct:

Respect for Others
- I will respect the rights, dignity and worth of staff, athletes, coaches other volunteers, friends and spectators in Special Olympics
- I will treat everyone equally regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or ability.
- I will be a positive role model for the athletes I coach

Ensure a Positive Experience
- I will ensure that for each athlete, the time spent with Special Olympics is positive.
- I will respect the talent, developmental stage and goals of each athlete.
- I will ensure each athlete competes in events that challenge that athlete’s potential and are appropriate to that athletes’ ability.
- I will be fair, considerate and honest with athletes and communicate with athletes using simple, clear language.
- I will ensure that accurate scores are provided for entry of an athlete into any event.
- I will instruct each athlete to perform to the best of the athletes’ ability at all preliminaries/heats and finals in accordance with the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules.

Act Professionally and Take Responsibility For My Actions
- My language, manner, punctuality, preparation and presentation will demonstrate high standards.
- I will display control, respect, dignity, and professionalism to all involved in the sport (athletes, coaches, opponents, officials, administrators, parents, spectators, media, etc.).
- I will encourage athletes to demonstrate the same qualities.
- I will not drink alcohol, smoke or take illegal drugs while representing Special Olympics at training sessions or during competition.
- I will refrain from any form of personal abuse towards athletes and others, including verbal, physical and emotional abuse.
- I will be alert to any form of abuse from other sources directed toward athletes in my care.
Quality Service to the Athletes

- I will seek continual improvement through performance evaluation and ongoing coach education.
- I will be knowledgeable about the Sports Rules and Skills of the sport(s) I coach.
- I will provide a planned training program.
- I will keep copies of the medical, training, and competition records for each athlete I coach.
- I will follow the Special Olympics and the National Governing Body rules for my sport(s).

Health and Safety of the Athletes

- I will ensure that the equipment and facilities are safe to use.
- I will ensure that the equipment, rules, training and the environment are appropriate for the age and ability of the athletes.
- I will ensure that each athlete’s medical form is current and be aware of any limitations on that athlete’s participation noted on that form.
- I will encourage athletes to seek medical advice when required.
- I will maintain the same interest and support towards sick and injured athletes.
- I will allow further participation in training and competition only when appropriate.

By signing below, I agree that I have read the Code of Conduct, agree to abide by it, and that if I violate the Code of Conduct, I may be terminated as a Special Olympics coach.

Signature ___________________________ Date ___________________________

Certification may be revoked if a coach fails to meet these requirements, or if he or she behaves in a significantly negligent or incompetent manner.

Special Olympics coaches are role models whose behavior serves as a positive example for their athletes. They must strive to provide the fairest and most positive competitive experience to every Special Olympics athlete in a competition.

A coach is expected to uphold the Olympic ideals and values. The coach must exhibit, above all, respect for the athletes, coaches, volunteers, families and officials (game and staff). They must have positive interpersonal relationships; uphold the highest of moral values; and be honest, trustworthy and courteous to all people at all levels of the organizations. Furthermore, the coach’s principles of coaching must be compatible with the philosophy and objectives of Special Olympics. If a coach’s philosophies are in conflict with those of Special Olympics, then he or she should not seek or accept a coaching position.

The coach’s verbal and physical behavior is expected to reflect a positive and constructive attitude toward Special Olympics competition and toward those volunteers, coaches, officials and event coordinators whose time and efforts provide that competitive opportunity. This attitude should reflect a confidence in the decisions of the games committee and sports officials, and belief that their decisions are made with the best interests of a fair competitive experience in mind and are in keeping with the goals and philosophies of Special Olympics.
Special Olympics Southern California is a nonprofit organization that empowers individuals with intellectual disabilities to become physically fit, productive and respected members of society through sports training and competition. It is one of 52 Chapters within the United States and part of Special Olympics, Inc., which serves 3 million athletes in 180 countries worldwide.

The mission of Special Olympics Southern California is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

Our vision is to provide sports and training programs for any individual with intellectual disabilities who chooses to participate, thereby improving their lives and the lives of everyone they touch.

Coaching Athletes
As a coach, your attitude toward sports and competition will directly affect your athletes. Special Olympics believes that the athletic experience and the camaraderie shared by teammates is what benefits an athlete the most. Coaches should be aware of how they influence their athletes, and should follow these guidelines in all aspects of their interactions with athletes.

- Successful coaches help athletes master new skills, enjoy competition with others and feel good about themselves.
- Successful coaches are not only well-versed in techniques and skills, they know how to teach these skills to people.
- Successful coaches not only teach athletes the skills of the sport, they also teach and model the skills needed for successful living in society.
- Successful coaches are those who can learn new skills, who are flexible enough to change old ways when change is needed, who can accept constructive criticism and who are able to critically evaluate themselves.

Coaching Objectives
- To have fun – both the coaches and athletes.
- To help athletes develop:
  - Physically, by learning sports skills and rules, improving physical conditioning, developing good health habits and avoiding injuries.
  - Psychologically, by learning how to control their emotions and develop feelings of self-worth.
  - Socially, by learning how to cooperate in a competitive context and by learning appropriate standards of behavior, including sportsmanship.
- To cooperate and exercise sound judgment in every decision that affects athletes, coaching staff, volunteers, family members, officials (volunteers and staff) and the organization.
- To be a positive role model exhibiting good interpersonal relations, moral values, respect, honesty, trust, fairness and courtesy towards the athletes, coaches, volunteers, family members and officials.

With proper leadership, sports programs produce athletes who accept responsibilities, who accept other and, most of all, who accept themselves.
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Regions

Inland Empire
Los Angeles/San Gabriel Valley
Kern County
Orange County
San Diego County
San Luis Obispo County
Santa Barbara County
Santa Clarita/Tri-Valley
Ventura County