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Preamble

Special Olympics PEI is dedicated to enriching the lives of Islanders with an intellectual disability through sport. Since volunteers are important role models for our athletes, it is important that we maintain high standards and values in recruiting, screening, educating, recognizing and retaining volunteers.

The screening of volunteers is of primary importance in providing a safe environment for our athletes to train and to meet the best interest of Special Olympics PEI.

In accordance with the Human Rights Codes, Special Olympics PEI does **NOT** tolerate or condone any discrimination based upon:

- Race
- religion
- color
- age
- disability
- marital status
- ethnic origin
- ancestry
- citizenship
- family status
- place of origin
- creed
- sexual orientation

The following pages will give you a step by step guide to the SOPEI screening process for potential and returning volunteers.

Volunteer Screening Procedure Goals

The screening process helps ensure the protection of our athletes from poor role models and inappropriate activity by volunteers. It also serves to protect our organization from claims and lawsuits arising from inappropriate activity by volunteers.

While it is important to protect our organization, our overriding concern is that there be no inappropriate treatment of the athletes who join Special Olympics PEI. We prevent inappropriate treatment so far as possible by ensuring that:

- no one becomes a volunteer who might act in an inappropriate fashion
- each volunteer is aware of the Code of Conduct set down by the organization
- each volunteer of the organization regularly provides the organization with a Criminal Record Check
- any instances of abuse are identified and made the subject of corrective action, and perhaps, termination of a volunteer

Where to start in the Selection Process?

"Class A" volunteers are those who (i) are or may be in regular close physical contact with athletes, such as coaches, program volunteers, drivers, and overnight hosts, or (ii) have or may have administrative and/or fiscal authority, such as board/committee members.

"Class B" volunteers are those who volunteer for Special Olympics for a single day or for a single event, and thus have the most limited contact with Special Olympics athletes. These may include but are not limited to: Healthy Athletes, fundraising events, sport competition/camp event, and officials.

Class B volunteers may register on the same day of their participation (but before that participation actually begins), by providing their full name, complete address, telephone number, and if applicable, the name of the civic group or corporate sponsor with which they are associated as outlined in Step 1 and by using an event volunteer application form for their role.

Class A volunteers must provide all of the information requested by Class B volunteers as outlined in Step 1 by submitting a volunteer application form (or volunteer agreement form for returning volunteers) for their role.

Class A volunteers shall also, in addition to providing all of the information requested above:

- New Volunteer – progress through all 5 Elements of Screening
- Returning Volunteers – satisfied Step 4 in the Elements of Screening

Elements of Screening

Screening in a continuous process consisting of:

The Selection Process for New Volunteers

1. Application form
2. Interview and Reference Checks
3. Conditional Job Offer to Potential Volunteer
4. Criminal Record Check and Vulnerable Sector Check
5. Volunteer Online Orientation

Declining Volunteer Applications

During the initial screening, an applicant can be refused at any point in the process. Make a conscious and unbiased decision at each stage of the process to decide if you want to go on to the next step.

Base your discussion for refusal on the job requirements and/or the findings in the screening. Do not go into a long explanation as to why you are refusing the applicant. You are acting on the best interests of our athletes and Special Olympics PEI.

Saying “No” early in the process is easier than waiting for problems to escalate. Filling volunteer positions with unsuitable candidates may create a bigger problem down the road. Screening is a much easier process than having to consider corrective action or dismissal later on.

The Five Steps to Volunteer Screening

Step 1 - Application

Our initial contact should be welcoming and enthusiastic. We must be willing to consider every applicant interested in becoming a volunteer. We must also explain that we do have a screening process and that, while we attempt to place all potential volunteers, acceptance is not guaranteed. Outline the screening process briefly, answer initial questions and initiate the steps outlined in the Selection Process.

All potential volunteers must complete the Volunteer Application Form while all returning volunteers must complete the Volunteer Agreement Form.

The following information will be given to the potential Class A volunteer roles about the organization. This ensures an informed decision on the part of the applicant.

New Members:

- Coaches section of the Code of Conduct signed (*full document provided upon request*)
- Volunteer Application Form
- Criminal Record Check and Vulnerable Sector Check Request Letter
- Job Description or Discussion of the Role
- Volunteer Online Orientation Instructions

Returning Members:

- Coaches section of the Code of Conduct signed (*full document provided upon request*)
- Volunteer Agreement Form (Returning Members)
- Criminal Record Check and Vulnerable Sector Check Request Letter (if requested)

The following information will be given to the potential Class B volunteer roles about the organization. This ensures an informed decision on the part of the applicant.

- Volunteer/Event Application Form (New Members)
- Volunteer Agreement Form (Returning Members)
- Volunteer Online Orientation Instructions

Create a pending file and record/update the applicants Volunteer Screening Status.

Step 2 - Interview and Reference Checks

This is an important part of determining whether the potential volunteer is suitable though may not be requested if the individual or organization they represent is well known to staff. This will be determined by the Program Director.

If an interview is requested, follow the interview questions on the Interview Form in appendix 2. Record answers to the questions and inform the applicant that the information gathered is confidential.

The interview should be conducted as soon as possible following the receipt of the application form. Remember to explain the process before starting.

Applicants must give permission for follow up with the reference checks. Their signature on the Volunteer Application Form provides this.

Step 3 - Conditional "Job" Offer to Potential Volunteer

A conditional "job" offer is made when you are satisfied with Steps 1 and 2, and are awaiting the results of the Criminal Record Check and Vulnerable Sector Check.

(Within this conditional "job" offer, a two-month probationary period will be introduced and close supervision will be initiated. It is preferred that the potential volunteer will be partnered with a current volunteer for the duration of his/her probationary period. At this time, the potential volunteer will have to submitted all of the requested screening elements satisfactory and has submitted his/her Criminal Record Check and Vulnerable Sector Check.)

The effective date is the day the volunteer starts with the organization conditionally. This will become his/her join date and the date from which long service is calculated.

Step 4 - Criminal Record Check and Vulnerable Sector Check

Criminal Record and Vulnerable Sector Checks are conducted for any Class A Volunteer wishing to volunteer with Special Olympics PEI for the following reasons:

- Special Olympics PEI owes a duty of care to our athletes, volunteers, our staff and our organization. The Criminal Record Check and Vulnerable Sector Check is one way by which Special Olympics PEI demonstrates that we accept and support our duty.

Police procedures vary. However, standard process is that Criminal Records and Vulnerable Sector Checks are done by the police force responsible for the potential volunteer's home addresses - not the location of the program in which he or she wishes to volunteer for.

The Special Olympics PEI office will supply the potential volunteer with a letter, so that he or she will not incur the cost of the Criminal Record and Vulnerable Sector Check.

Subsequent Criminal Record Checks

Special Olympics PEI has established three (3) years as the interval in which a new Criminal Record Check and Vulnerable Sector Check will be requested for volunteers who have served for three (3) years or more with SOPEI.

Volunteers with fewer than three (3) years of service, or who have had more than a twelve (12) month absence in volunteering, shall present a new Criminal Record Check and Vulnerable Sector Check in the first fiscal year, and a Criminal Record Check only each consecutive year until they surpass three (3) years of service.

SOPEI members must disclose, without exceptions and within 48 hours of the offense, any know probable changes to their Criminal or Vulnerable Sector records.

Special Olympics PEI reserves the right to request that a member provide a Criminal Record Check and/or Vulnerable Sector Check at any time.

Step 5 - Volunteer Online Orientation

When a individual becomes a volunteer of Special Olympics PEI, completion of the SOPEI Online Orientation is requested with three (3) months of the conditional "job" offer. Through the orientation modules, the volunteer will be introduced to all aspects of Special Olympics on a Provincial and National level. If the volunteer does not have access to the online orientation, the Program Director will ensure they receive an adequate orientation.

Section: PROGRAM
Topic: VOLUNTEER SCREENING GUIDELINES
Effective Date: October 2002
Revised Date: June 2018

5000-15

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Appendix 1

Code of Conduct - See Appendix 2000-14: Pan Canadian Code of Conduct Policy

Head Coach Job Description

DESCRIPTION:

The position of Head Coach in a Special Olympics program can be overwhelming to some, but we encourage you to have confidence that Special Olympics PEI are prepared to be a resource at any time you need. It is important for our athletes to have fun and enjoy their time at weekly youth, community and competitive programs. Every athlete deserves a well-trained coach and it is important that in the role of Head coach you are continually assessing your coach education resume to determine what training could benefit both you and our athletes.

In the role of Head Coach, it is expected that you are:

1. Instructing athletes the proper sport skills,
2. Attending competition(s) at an appropriate level for each athlete in your program
3. Modeling and instilling socially appropriated behavior including fair play and fun
4. Mentoring program volunteers and assistant coaches on the role of Head Coach

QUALIFICATIONS:

- ✓ Must be at least 18 years of age
- ✓ Must Adhere to Special Olympics Prince Edward Island Coaches Code of Conduct
- ✓ Must Adhere to Special Olympics Prince Edward Island Constitution & By-Laws
- ✓ Must comply with the philosophy of Special Olympics Prince Edward Island as presented in the Mission statement
- ✓ Must complete and submit a Volunteer Application Form and Criminal Record Check as described in policy 5000-15
- ✓ Reasonable knowledge of chosen sport

COACH EDUCATION PATHWAYS

1. Special Olympics Online Orientation (within 3 months)
2. Emergency First Aid and CPR (within 3 months)
3. NCCP Coach Education Pathway appropriate for your involvement (within 1st year)

*Will remain as a **Program Volunteer** until step three is completed*

Youth Head Coach

NCCP Multisport

**Fundamental
Movement Skills**
and

**Special
Olympics
Canada**

**Coaching Young
Athletes**

Community Sport Coach

**Special Olympics Canada
Competition Sport Coach
Workshop**

and
**Making Ethical Decisions
Online Evaluation**

Competition Sport Coach

**Special Olympics Canada Competition
Sport Coach Workshop**
and

**Making Ethical Decisions Course with
Online Evaluation**

*And for National/International Games:
NCCP Minimum Sport Specific Technical
training or Coaching Hours*

RESPONSIBILITIES:

A) Training and Competition

1. Plan the club activities for the season (weekly lesson plans and yearly goals)
2. Regularly communicate with assistant coaches, parents/guardians, and athletes
3. Facilitate practices putting safety and the well-being of the athletes first
4. Ensure that all athletes/volunteers in your program are registered members of SOPEI and have a list of emergency information
5. Attend regularly scheduled provincial coaches meetings
6. Know all safety concerns of athletes in your program (Atlanto-axial instability, epilepsy, asthma etc.)
7. Devote adequate time to prepare athletes for events
8. Coaches are not responsible for transportation to/from practices/competitions but are permitted to do so with permission from the athlete's legal guardian
9. If an incident occurs, follow the incident reports procedure

B) Administrative

1. Submit program and equipment budget requests annually
2. Update coach and athlete participant lists regularly throughout the season
3. Be a positive ambassador for Special Olympics
4. Ensure an Emergency Action Plan is in place
5. Communicate regularly with SOPEI staff

C) Support, Supervision and Program Evaluation

1. Annual Coaches Meeting to review policies and procedures
2. Support, inform, and encourage all program volunteers to be certified and trained
3. Participate in initial feedback questionnaire
4. Participate with SOPEI staff in program visits
5. Participate in an exit interview upon completion of volunteer position if requested

DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE TO: SOPEI Program Director and Program Coordinator_

I, _____, have read and agree to the above position description.
(Print Name)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Assistant Coach Job Description

DESCRIPTION:

The position of Assistant Coach or Program Volunteer in a Special Olympics program can be overwhelming to some, but we encourage you to have confidence that Special Olympics PEI are prepared to be a resource at any time you need. It is important for our athletes to have fun and enjoy their time at weekly youth, community and competitive programs. Every athlete deserves a well-trained coach and it is important that in the role of Assistant Coach or Program Volunteer you are continually assessing your coach education resume to determine what training could benefit both you and our athletes.

In the role of Assistant Coach or Program Volunteer, it is expected that you are:

1. Instructing athletes the proper sport skills,
2. Attending competition(s) at an appropriate level for each athlete in your program
3. Modeling and instilling socially appropriated behavior including fair play and fun
4. Actively being mentored by a Head Coach

QUALIFICATIONS:

- ✓ Must Adhere to Special Olympics Prince Edward Island Coaches Code of Conduct
- ✓ Must be at least 18 years of age to travel with the team as the only volunteer from the program
- ✓ Must Adhere to Special Olympics Prince Edward Island Constitution & By-Laws
- ✓ Must comply with the philosophy of Special Olympics Prince Edward Island as presented in the Mission statement
- ✓ Must complete and submit a Volunteer Application Form and Criminal Record Check as described in policy 5000-15

COACH EDUCATION PATHWAYS

1. Special Olympics Online Orientation (within 3 months)
2. Emergency First Aid and CPR (within 3 months)
3. NCCP Coach Education Pathway appropriate for your involvement (within 2 years)
*Will remain as a **Program Volunteer** until step three is completed*

Youth

NCCP Multisport
Fundamental Movement
Skills
and
Special Olympics Canada
Coaching Young Athletes

Community Sport Coach

Special Olympics Canada
Competition Sport Coach
Workshop
and
Making Ethical Decisions
Online Evaluation

Competition Sport Coach

Special Olympics Canada
Competition Sport Coach Workshop
and
Making Ethical Decisions Course
with
Online Evaluation
And for National/International Games:
NCCP Minimum Sport Specific
Technical training or Coaching
Hours

RESPONSIBILITIES:

A) Training and Competition

1. Attend practice and competition on a regular basis
2. Communicate with head coach regarding practices and events
3. Assist in facilitating practices, putting safety and the well-being of the athletes first
4. Know all safety concerns of athletes in your program (Atlantoaxial instability, epilepsy, asthma etc.)
5. Supervise activities when deemed necessary by head coach
6. Coaches are not responsible for transportation to/from practices/competitions but are permitted to do so with permission from the athlete's legal guardian
7. If an incident occurs, ensure to follow the incident reports procedure

B) Administrative

1. Assist head coach in preparing program and equipment budget requests annually
2. Be a positive ambassador for Special Olympics
3. Assist head coach to ensure an Emergency Action Plan is in place
4. Communicate regularly with head coach

C) Support, Supervision and Program Evaluation

1. Support, inform, and encourage all program volunteers to be certified and trained
2. Participate in initial feedback questionnaire
3. Participate with SOPEI staff in program visits
4. Participate in an exit interview upon completion of volunteer position if requested

DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE TO: Program Head Coach

INDIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE TO: SOPEI Program Director and Program Coordinator

I, _____, have read and agree to the above position description.
(Print Name)

Signature: _____ Date: _____