

## SPECIAL OLYMPICS BC POLICY MANUAL

Section: **SPORT**  
Policy: **Divisioning Process**  
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Special Olympics BC divisions athletes on the basis of ability. This process outlines the most equitable competition environment for all Special Olympics athletes.

### Divisioning Process for Individual Sports:

Step 1: Divide by gender.

Step 2: Divide by ability. Proceed on the premise that the recommended performance difference between athletes in a division is 25%.

Step 3: Divide number of athletes registered in an event.

- For three or more athletes, place athletes into division of no less than three, no more than eight. If you have more than eight athletes in a division, reduce the performance percentage to produce new ability groupings ( – 5% at a time is suggested). For example, an ability group could be reduced to 20% difference in performance to create two ability groupings.
- When two athletes are entered into an event, athletes compete against each other providing they are of the same gender.
- When only one athlete is entered into an event, the athlete would compete against their own divisioning time in the event. If they are competing against their own divisioning time medals would be awarded as follows:
  - Gold medal: Final performance is better than the divisioning performance.
  - Silver medal: Final performance is the same as or less than the divisioning performance by 10%.
  - Bronze medal: Final performance is less than the divisioning performance by 11% – 25 %.
  - For events that are not divisioned the athlete would be awarded a gold medal.

### Divisioning Process for Judged Sports:

Step 1: Divide by gender.

Step 2: Divide by ability, using predetermined levels of ability as outlined in sport rules.

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Step 3: If there are more than eight competitors in a level you would do the following:

- Figure Skating – Divide by ability using their element scores.
- Rhythmic Gymnastics – A divisioning round will be run and athletes will be divided by their final divisioning according to their all round scores.

### Divisioning Process for 10-Pin Bowling:

Step 1: Divide by gender.

Step 2: Divide by ability.

- Classification for divisioning will be based upon no more than eight competitors/teams per division.
- Handicapping for 10-Pin Bowling events will be 90% of the difference between the participants entering average and the scratch score of 180.  
Note: if a bowler has an average better than 180, then the number 180 can be adjusted.
- When establishing divisions for competition, use the following:
  - Individuals will be placed into categories based on their average.
  - Doubles teams will be placed into divisions based upon the bowler's combined averages.
  - Teams will be placed into divisions based upon the bowler's combined averages.
  - An individual athlete may or may not be assigned to the same division for the individual, doubles or team competition.

### Divisioning Process for Team Sports:

Step 1: Teams will submit a Team Skill Assessment sheet to assist in establishing divisioning rounds.

Step 2: Divisioning rounds will be run in accordance with the rules in the technical package for that sport.

Step 3: Following the divisioning round, teams will be placed in final divisions. A coach's meeting will be held to announce the divisions and coach's may express their thoughts on divisioning to the group but final divisioning may not be protested.

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### Maximum Performance Rule (MPR):

Divisioning heats are conducted to ensure that athletes compete against athletes of a similar ability level in their final competition. To ensure that athletes compete at the best of their ability during the divisioning round, the maximum performance rule will be implemented.

Maximum performance would indicate that there should be no more than 15% difference in performance between divisioning and final events. If an athlete exceeds their divisioning event performance by 15% in the final round of competition the following shall occur:

- Athlete is flagged under the Maximum Performance Rule (MPR).
- Athlete will be re-divisioned and placed in the correct division as indicated by their time/distance.
- Athlete will be eligible for a medal if their time/distance warrants.
- Re-divisioning will not affect the standing of athletes in the division where the flagged athlete is placed. (i.e. re-divisioned athlete places third in new division, the athlete in that division who currently holds third place will also be awarded third place).
- Flagged athlete will not receive any selection points (for advancement to higher levels of competition) for the event.
- The Maximum Performance Rule would not apply if an athlete, when re-divisioned, would still be placed in the same division.

If the coach is of the opinion that his/her athlete has not competed at the best of their ability in the divisioning race, and may be in danger of violating the MPR, they have the option to submit a faster time for their athlete so that they can be placed in a division which reflects their ability.

Divisioning is the responsibility of the tournament director in conjunction with the Provincial Office. Divisioning may not be protested.