

PAN-CANADIAN POLICY

<p>SPECIAL OLYMPICS CANADA</p> <p>CONCUSSION POLICY</p>	
<p><i>This Policy has been prepared by Special Olympics Canada and is a Pan-Canadian Policy applicable to Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters. This document cannot be modified by a Chapter without consultation and approval from Special Olympics Canada.</i></p>	
<p>EFFECTIVE DATE:</p>	<p>LAST REVISED: August 2020</p>

Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters recognize that participation in any sport or physical activity has some inherent risk of head injuries, including concussions. Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters are committed to maintaining the health and safety of its members and recognizes that concussions are a significant public health issue because of their potential short- and long-term consequences.

Definitions

1. The following terms have these meanings in this Policy:
 - a) *“Concussion”* - A brain injury that affects how the brain functions. A concussion may be caused by an impact to the head, face, neck or body.
 - b) *“Suspected Concussion”* – Any time an individual appears to have either experienced an injury or impact that may result in a concussion, or is exhibiting one or more signs or symptoms that may be the result of concussion.
 - c) *“Athlete”* – An individual registered as an Athlete with Special Olympics Canada or a Chapter
 - d) *“Chapter”* – The Provincial or Territorial Special Olympics organization recognized by Special Olympics Canada as a provincial or territorial governing body of Special Olympics
 - e) *“Organization-sanctioned event or activity”* – Any local, regional, provincial, territorial or national games, competitions, events, programs, or activities sanctioned by Special Olympics Canada or the Chapter.

Purpose

2. The purpose of this Policy and the related protocols is to provide guidance to ensure members have appropriate information in order to take appropriate action in the event of a suspected and/or diagnosed concussion. This Policy aims to ensure that athletes with a suspected concussion are removed from sport, seek medical assessment, and follow appropriate procedures to return to participation safely.

Scope and Application of this Policy

3. This Policy applies to all coaches/volunteers, athletes, and parents/guardians of athletes participating in an Organization-sanctioned event or activity.

The policy recognizes certain jurisdictions across Canada have legislation that govern the management of concussions within their jurisdiction. Government legislation supersedes this Policy.

Concussion Prevention

4. The risk of concussions occurring can be reduced by the proper implementation of prevention strategies:
 - a) *Concussion awareness and education* – Special Olympics Canada and Chapters will make concussion awareness resources available on their public websites, including this Policy and related protocols.
 - b) *Safe participation environment* – Organization-sanctioned event and activity venues will be properly prepared and free of hazards.
 - c) *Equipment* – Equipment worn by athletes should fit properly, be in good condition, and replaced as needed.
 - d) *Limiting contact* – Where possible, contact should be limited during practices and competitions, in particular for younger athletes
 - e) *Fair play and respect for opponents* – These ethical values should be encouraged in all activities.

Concussion Recognition and Management Procedures

5. The Special Olympics Canada Concussion Protocol will be implemented at all Organization-sanctioned events and activities in the case of a suspected or diagnosed concussion.

Surveillance

6. Special Olympics Canada and the Chapters will determine appropriate methods to collect information regarding suspected concussions, concussion diagnoses and return to play. Data will be reported in an aggregated format without personal identification of any individual.

Policy Review

7. Special Olympics Canada will review this policy on an annual basis.

Appendices

Special Olympics Canada Concussion Protocol
Concussion Recognition Tool
Medical Assessment Letter
Medical Clearance Letter