

***Special
Olympics
Hawai'i***



Flag Football



Sport Information Guide

Rules and Guidelines

2018

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SOHI BASKETBALL GUIDELINES AND RULES

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SPECIAL OLYMPICS MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of Special Olympics 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.

Clarifications from the 2017 rules.

Section A, Number 7

Each player must play at least 1 full series of downs during the game.

For more information please go to www.sohawaii.org or e-mail sports@sohawaii.org.

SOHI FLAG FOOTBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS

These Official Special Olympics Hawaii (SOHI) Rules shall govern all SOHI Flag Football competitions.

SECTION A - GENERAL RULES

1. Each Special Olympics Athlete is required to have a valid Medical form (Application for Participation) filled out by a certified physician, and a signed Release form in order to participate. Each Unified Partner must fill out a Unified Sports® partner release form. Unified Partners ages 18 and above must fill out a Volunteer Information form, and meet Class "A" Volunteer criteria in order to participate. Athletes or Partners without the appropriate forms are ineligible to participate. These forms must be on file with their Area Director and with the State Office.
2. All Coaches and Assistant Coaches must fill out a Volunteer Information Form and meet Class "A" Volunteer criteria in order to participate.
3. All Head Coaches and Assistant Coaches must complete NFHS or CDC Concussion Training.
4. Each team must have a Head Coach with current SOHI certification in Flag Football to participate in competition. Additionally, all Unified Teams must have a Head Coach who has completed the Unified Sports Training.
5. Athletes and Unified Partners must participate in a training program run by a registered delegation. Athletes and Partners must comply with Delegation, Area, and State training policies and standards and must meet minimum attendance requirements set by the Delegation or Area to participate in Area, Regional, or State competition.
6. Each team is required to play in the qualifying tournament prior to participation in the final tournament. Only athletes who played in the qualifying tournament can play in the final tournament.
7. Each player must play at least 1 full series of downs during the game.
8. Injured players are not required to play. Players removed for disciplinary reasons are not required to play. Coaches must notify the scorekeeper prior to the game if players on the approved tournament roster will not be playing due to injury or disciplinary reasons.
9. Any player ejected from a game will be ineligible to play in the team's next game.
10. No make-up games will be allowed to qualify athletes who have missed the qualifying competition.
11. Delegations with multiple teams should identify these teams with different team names, not numbers or letters

SECTION B – IMPORTANT DATES – Flag Football

Event	Date/Deadline
Official Training May Begin	January 1 st
Official Training Must Begin for Delegations/ Teams	By January 28 th
All Athletes must begin training/ All Medicals due/ Last day to transfer delegations	By February 14 th
Flag Football Coaches Clinic	January 20 th
Registration Deadlines for qualifying Competition	February 14 th
Qualifying Competition	February 17 th
Final Competition	March 10 th

SECTION C – SPECIAL OLYMPICS HAWAII TRAINING POLICY

1. Delegations must offer enough training sessions so that athletes have the opportunity to gain the skills and fitness levels required to be successful in their specific events.
2. Athletes must attend enough training sessions gain the skills and fitness levels required to be successful in their specific events.
3. SOHI recommends that every athlete is offered at least two training opportunities per week with every training opportunity being at least 1 – 1 ½ hours in duration (Per the Global Strategic Plan). However, SOHI will accept a minimum of one training session a week for at least 90 minutes.
4. Area/Regional Competitions and scrimmages count as training sessions
5. SOHI requires that Athletes/ Unified Partners attend a minimum of 75% of training sessions offered by their delegation. Delegations may require a higher attendance percentage, but may not require athletes/Unified Partners to attend more than 90% of training sessions.
6. Athletes with documented injury or illness during a season may receive an exemption from the above policy, but must participate in a minimum of 50% of practices during the season and must have the requisite skills, and be physically capable (strength, fitness, injury/sickness fully healed with doctor's clearance) of successfully participating in the sport as determined by their Head Coach. Athletes still must play at Area or Regional competition in order to compete at the Holiday Classic.

SECTION D - DIVISIONS

Unified Team Divisions will be created based on the School/Age level of the team.

1. Separate divisions will be created for Middle School and High School Teams. Unified Flag Football is not available for adults. The school/age level of the oldest athlete or partner will determine the school/age level of the team. In certain circumstances, teams may play against teams from another school/age level, but only as long as it is safe to do so.
2. Separate divisions may be created within a school/age level if there are enough teams and if there is a great disparity among the skill levels of the teams within their school/age level.
3. Athletes/Partners may play “up” one age division if they are physically ready and have the requisite skills to play in an older age group. For example, a Middle School athlete may play on a team made up of High School students. If officials deem it unsafe for a player to play in a game, the player may be removed for safety reasons.
4. Unified Teams are still required to complete the assessment tests and follow all Division guidelines above

SECTION E - UNIFORMS

1. All players must wear numbered uniforms.
2. All players must wear closed toed shoes.
3. All players must wear a mouth guard.
4. All members of a team must wear the same color uniform jersey.
5. All players must wear athletic shorts with no pockets of the same color. Players cannot wear jeans or cutoffs. Sweatpants may be worn for religious or custom related reasons.
6. Those players who wear eyeglasses while playing are required to wear a strap to hold the glasses in place.
7. All athletes must remove all jewelry, watches, bracelets, earrings, necklaces, rings, etc. prior to each game.
8. Head coverings are allowed for religious reasons only and must be of a single, solid color, and unadorned.
9. If medical device is worn, it must be approved prior to competition.

SECTION F - GAME ROSTER AND PLAYERS

1. A line-up must be submitted by the coach to the official scorekeeper ten minutes prior to the scheduled game time.
2. All team members must be listed on the roster and made available to the official scorekeeper and opposing team.
3. Rosters should consist of between 6 to 10 players. Teams with 12 or more players must split into 2 teams.
4. Each player must play at least 1 full series of downs during the game.
5. Injured players are not required to play. Players removed for disciplinary reasons are not required to play. Coaches must notify the scorekeeper prior to the game if players on the approved tournament roster will not be playing due to injury or disciplinary reasons.

SECTION G – UNIFIED FLAG FOOTBALL

1. The roster shall contain a proportionate number of athletes and partner. A full roster of approximately five Athletes and four Unified Partners is recommended.
2. **Five players are required per team to start a game. The on-court lineup shall always consist of three athletes and two partners, unless there are fewer than 5 eligible players. There can never be more partners than athletes on the field. With four eligible players a team can play with two athletes and two partners. A team will forfeit with less than four eligible players.**
3. Athletes must wear even number uniforms; Unified Partners must wear odd number uniforms.
4. Each team shall have a non-playing adult coach responsible for the lineup and conduct of the team during competition. The team should be organized under the guidance of a trained coach who understands and adopts the principles of Special Olympics and Unified Sports, and has knowledge of the rules, techniques, strategies and training regimens of the selected sport.
5. Every player must be meaningful involved in the team. This means that every player must be given an opportunity to contribute to the success of his or her team through their unique skills and qualities. Every teammate: (a) demonstrates sufficient sport-specific skills and game understanding; (b) plays a valued role on the team that emphasizes his or her personal talents; and (c) has an opportunity to play without a heightened risk of injury.
6. Team members should be made up of athletes and partners who are of similar ages and ability levels. In consideration of safety and dominant play, individuals with significantly greater skill than the majority of their teammates may be prohibited from competing during competition
7. All players on a Unified Sports team make the commitment to attend every practice, support each other as equal teammates, and demonstrate respect and sportsmanship.

Special Olympics Coaches Code of Conduct

Special Olympics is committed to the highest ideals of sport and expects all coaches to honor sport and Special Olympics. This is the SOI and SOHI Coaches Code of Conduct. Local Delegations and Area Programs may also have Codes of Conduct specific to their program with certain specifications not included below. All Special Olympics coaches agree to observe the following code:

Respect for Others:

I will respect the rights, dignity and worth of athletes, coaches, officials, 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 I coach, the time spent with Special Olympics is a positive experience.

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 athlete's 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 athlete's ability at all preliminary competition and finals competition 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, during competition, or at any Special Olympics event or function.

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 Hawaii and National Federation/Governing Body rules for my sport(s).

Health and Safety of Athletes

I will ensure that the equipment and facilities are safe to use.

I will ensure that the equipment, rules, training and environment are appropriate for the age and ability of the athletes.

I will review each athlete's medical form 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 toward sick and injured athletes.

I will allow further participation in training and competition only when appropriate.

Violations of the Code of Conduct:

I understand that if I violate this Code of Conduct I will be subject to a range of consequences, up to and including being prohibited from coaching in Special Olympics.

Furthermore, I understand that I accept the responsibility for the behavior of the athletes under my supervision.

Should the behaviors and/or attitude of any coach or other faction of the member organization be contrary to the principles, goals, or philosophies of Special Olympics, then one or more of the following steps may be taken by the Games Committee, Sport Officials, or other representatives of Special Olympics Hawaii in an effort to alleviate the situation without further affecting Special Olympic athletes or the competition:

The coach may be notified of the undesirable behavior and requested to remedy the situation for continued participation, **and/or** the coach may be requested to withdraw personally, or as a team or organization, from the remainder of the event or tournament.

In the event of extreme or repeated behavior contrary to the best interests of Special Olympics, Special Olympics may:

Prevent the coach, team organization, or specific members of the delegation from participating in any or all Special Olympics events for a specified period of time, **and/or** prevent the coach, team, organization, or specific members of the delegation from participating in Special Olympics indefinitely.

Special Olympics Athletes Code of Conduct

Special Olympics is committed to the highest ideals of sport and expects all athletes to honor sports and Special Olympics. This is the SOI Athletes Code of Conduct. Local Delegations and Area Programs may also have Codes of Conduct specific to their program with certain specifications not included below. All Special Olympics athletes agree to the following code.

Sportsmanship

I will practice good sportsmanship.

I will act in ways that bring respect to me, my coaches, my team and Special Olympics.

I will not use bad language.

I will not swear or insult other persons.

I will not fight with other athletes, coaches, volunteers or staff.

Training and Competition

I will train regularly.

I will learn and follow the rules of my sport.

I will listen to my coaches and the officials and ask questions when I do not understand.

I will always try my best during training, divisioning, and competitions.

I will compete to the best of my ability in all preliminary and final competition.

Responsibility for My Actions

I will not make inappropriate or unwanted physical, verbal or sexual advances on others.

I will not smoke in non-smoking areas.

I will not drink alcohol or use illegal drugs at Special Olympics events.

I will not take drugs for the purpose of improving my performance.

I will obey all laws and Special Olympics rules, as well as the International Federation and National Federation/Governing Body rules for my sport(s).

I understand that if I do not obey this Code of Conduct, I will be subject to a range of consequences by my Area or State Program, up to and including not being allowed to participate.