Special Olympics Virginia

SOVA CONDUCT REPORT FORM

Name of Athlete/Volunteer:						
Please check:		**Athlete**		**Coach**		**General Volunteer**
Date of Incident:						
Event Where Incident Occurred:						

Witnesses to Incident

Names	Role in SOVA Program

Please Describe the Incident

Action Taken at the Time of Incident

Information on Person Completing the Form

Form Completed By:		
Date Form was Completed:		
Street Address:		
City	**State**	**Zip Code**
Telephone Number:		
E-Mail:		

Area Coordinator's Name:
Date Received by Area Coordinator:

Immediate Action Plan for Incident (Completed by Area or Local Coordinator)

(Example: Nov. 14, 2016 - Notification sent to volunteer regarding incident from Area Coordinator	
Date	**Action to be Taken**

Special Olympics Virginia

CODE OF CONDUCT ACTION PLAN

Name of Athlete/Volunteer:
Date of Incident:
Event Where Incident Occurred:

Action Plan for Resolution of Incident

Date	Action Taken

Athlete's Signature: (if applicable)
Date:
Volunteer's Signature (if applicable)
Date:
Parent/Guardian/Approved Advocate for Athlete's Signature: (if applicable)
Date:

Information on Person Completing the Form

Form Completed By:		
Date Form was completed:		
Street Address:		
City	**State**	**Zip Code**
Telephone Number:		
E-Mail:		

Area Coordinator's Name:
Date Received by Area Coordinator:
Date Received by SOVA Section Director:

Code of Conduct Violation Recommended Actions

Special Olympics Virginia

Special Olympics Virginia strives to provide a safe and enjoyable experience for all athletes and volunteers. Towards that end, the **Codes of Conduct** were designed to assist each athlete, coach and volunteer in abiding by the philosophy of Special Olympics Virginia. It is the individual's responsibility to aspire to the highest possible standards of conduct.

Areas should review the Codes of Conduct with athletes, family members and volunteers prior to each sport season. A best practice is to ask all individuals involved in your Area program to sign the appropriate Code of Conduct annually and to keep the signed copy on file. The Athlete Registration Form will include the Athlete Code of Conduct form starting 8/1/25.

The guidelines below provide assistance to Area/Local Programs dealing with difficult behavior issues.

GUIDELINES

1) Incidents should be recorded on a Conduct Report Form within 24-48 hours of occurrence.

2) The completed Conduct Report Form should be forwarded to the Area/Local Coordinator and the appropriate Special Olympics Virginia (SOVA) Region Director within 48 hours of occurrence for review. SOVA Region Directors should forward the Conduct Report to the Richmond office to be kept in a confidential file.

3) The individual(s) involved in a Code of Conduct violation should be notified within one week of the violation. Communication at the beginning of difficult situations often avoids conflicts at a later date and is crucial in the resolution.

When notifying an athlete, include a parent, guardian or caregiver in the conversation. Two people should be present (either in-person or virtually) when notifying an athlete/volunteer of a Code of Conduct violation.

4) Ask the individual to respond to the violation and record their responses in the Code of Conduct Report Form.

5) If it is the individual's first Code of Conduct violation and the nature of the violation will only result in a Warning, send a written copy of the Code of Conduct Form and ask the individual involved to sign the form.

6) If the individual has prior Code of Conduct violations and/or the nature of the violation will result in punitive action, explain that information is being gathered from the individuals involved in the incident and individuals who witnessed the incident before an action plan is put into place.

If the occurrence does not violate SOVA or SOI policies, the Area/Local Coordinator, in consultation with their Region Director, may make the decision regarding the next course of action. This course of action should include:

a) Schedule a meeting within one month to implement actions to resolve the issue. The Area/Local Coordinator works with the athlete, coach or volunteer to assign an advocate for them if an advocate is needed.

b) Actions taken should be recorded on the Code of Conduct Action Plan and acknowledged via signatures by all parties involved.

7) Code of Conduct violations should be kept confidential. Only inform those volunteers who need to know about an individual's restrictions such as a coach or sport coordinator.

DEFINITIONS OF INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

1) Behavior that has a reasonable likelihood to jeopardize the health, safety and/or well-being of self or others, and/or has a reasonable likelihood to reflect badly on the organization.

- Physical altercations – Notify staff immediately. If the incident is during a competition, the players involve are automatically ejected and cannot play the rest of the day. Possible additional consequences include being placed on probation with restrictions such as not participating in the remaining competitions during the season, not traveling to overnight events or requiring a one-on-one chaperone at all times. Severe situations could result in a suspension.

- Unsportsmanlike behavior, inappropriate language or social media posts, unwelcome physical advances could result in a Warning, Probation or Suspension depending on the severity of the incident and if the incident was a first-time or a repeated violation. A requirement to seek professional services and be cleared by a licensed professional to resume participation could be included as part of the Probation or Suspension terms.

  Note: SOVA does not provide therapeutic and/or rehabilitation services.

2) Illegal activity, and/or alleged illegal activity, whether or not a formal criminal charge has been made.

- Notify SOVA staff immediately to ensure that the proper steps are taken to address the situation.
- Remember that all SOVA volunteers and staff are mandatory reporters, meaning that we have a legal duty to report suspected or known abuse of children, elders or dependent adults. Call one of the hotline numbers below to file a report.

  Child Protective Services Hotline: 800-552-7096

  Adult Protective Services Hotline: 888-832-3858

3) Violation of Special Olympics Virginia Policies.

- Violation of a SOVA policy at an overnight event, such as drinking alcohol/using illegal drugs, leaving the hotel without permission, etc. Possible consequences may include being placed on Probation with restrictions such as no traveling to overnight events for a year or Suspension.

PENALTIES AS OUTLINED IN SOVA'S PARTICIPATION POLICY

Penalties for actions that result in a criminal charge and/or conviction are addressed in SOVA's Policy Manual. The penalties outlined below deal with situations in which the health, safety and well-being of athletes, volunteers, staff or others may be at risk, whether or not a criminal charge has been made or could result.

Action taken will be predicated on a good faith belief that the disciplinary action is appropriate and corresponds to the seriousness of the infraction. Actions that may be taken include **Warning, Probation, Suspension or Expulsion from Special Olympics Virginia.**

Warning: A cease and desist warning for perceived inappropriate behavior which, if ignored, could lead to a more severe course of disciplinary action. Decision to be made and notification to be given by Area/Local Coordinators and/or SOVA staff.

Probation: A flexible, but defined period of time (usually two years or less), during which the probationer must demonstrate the corrective behavior required. Probation may include temporary participation restrictions in an activity/sport. Decision to be made and notification to be given by Area/Local Coordinators or SOVA staff.

Suspension: A temporary period of time in which a person is barred from participation in Special Olympics Virginia. Area/Local Coordinators or SOVA staff may suspend an individual for up to one year. SOVA's CEO/President may suspend an individual for a longer period.

The decision to **Suspend** an athlete/volunteer from Special Olympics Virginia is based upon available information and a determination that the conduct or the alleged conduct is so inherently harmful or egregious as to warrant immediate action, whether or not a criminal charge has been made or could result.

Expulsion: Permanent dismissal from Special Olympics Virginia. Decision to be made by the SOVA Board of Directors (or Executive Committee) and notification to be given by SOVA's CEO/President.

Action will be taken if the circumstances are so inherently harmful or egregious as to warrant expulsion, whether or not a criminal charge has been made or could result.

A Suspension or Expulsion may be appealed in writing to SOVA's CEO/President. SOVA's Board of Directors (or Executive Committee) will act on the appeal.