

Special Olympics COVID-19 Transportation, Travel and Accommodations Considerations and Recommendations for Programs

IMPORTANT:

- All Programs should first consult the Special Olympics Return to Activities Framework (Issued June, 2021) to assess their Program's/event's risk category/color to see guidance and recommended measures specific to each level of risk.
- Follow local regulations if they are more stringent than requirements or recommendations found in the Return to Activities framework.
- More information can be found on the [Special Olympics COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions page](#)

Travel and Transportation

- Travel - Low risk event (green category of framework):
 - Permitted, with precautions. All participants must be from other low transmission area or must be vaccinated – tracked as part of planning and registration.
 - If air/train travel, strongly recommended that a negative PCR test be required prior to departing home location to attend event.
 - Individuals with positive results are instructed to stay home.
- Travel - Moderate risk event (yellow category of framework):
 - Permitted, with precautions. All participants must be from other low transmission area or must be vaccinated – tracked as part of planning and registration.
 - If air/train travel, negative PCR test should be required prior to departing home location to attend event. Individuals with positive results are instructed to stay home.
- Travel - Significant risk event (orange category of framework):
 - Not permitted outside local area, state, province/territory.
- Transportation for all risk levels (of framework):
 - Private transportation encouraged as much as possible. Social distancing on any shared transport organized by SO. Masking required for all on any SO transportation, unless all participants are vaccinated.
- If participants will be traveling to an event, they should practice social distancing and wear a mask while on transportation with non-household members or individuals not fully vaccinated.
- As much as possible, participants should travel with members of their families and or individuals with whom they live and/or who are fully vaccinated.
- Whether using public transportation, a rideshare service, taxis, or commercial air or train/rail for transportation, all individuals (or via their caregivers/families) should be educated about and willing to abide by any safety/masking requirements in place by the transportation operator. Individuals should also be aware of the potential consequences of not following the operator's required practices.
- For all forms of travel, be aware of all COVID-19 protocols, regulations or requirements in place at the host/event location, as well as any layover/stopover locations. Be aware of any re-entry/return requirements (e.g., proof of positive test within # days of travel, proof of vaccination, quarantine periods, etc.) in place in your country/state/territory.
- If Special Olympics is providing transportation such as busses or vans...
 - Programs should thoroughly understand what COVID-19 safety protocols the bus company or third-party transportation vendor they are going to contract with is implementing. For example: Are all drivers fully vaccinated and/or regularly tested (and how often, if so)? What are they doing to restrict/control entry onto the bus by others who aren't cleared personnel or approved Special Olympics delegates? What are their vehicle cleaning regimens? Will they/the driver play any role in enforcing COVID safety requirements or would the Program be expected to do that?

- Capacity must be limited so that any social distancing and/or masking requirements can be followed (e.g., limit or do not allow sitting side by side, skip rows to maintain distancing). This may require more vehicles than usual.
- Recommend every vehicle have a designated safety captain to monitor for compliance at all times. Determine if the bus can accommodate the whole delegation while maintaining social distancing (no sitting side by side, skip rows to maintain distancing, etc.).
- Ensure no one gets on or near the vehicle who hasn't been screened/tested/fully vaccinated. Recommend screening/verifying everyone in the meeting/gathering place PRIOR to allowing anyone on the bus.
- If masking is required, do not allow food or drink on the bus/vehicle that would necessitate taking masks off. If allowing food or drink on bus/vehicle: no shared food, use only individually packaged items. And place mask over nose and mouth whenever not actively eating or drinking.
- Hand hygiene/sanitization should also be followed
- School-provided Buses/Transportation. If a school is using its buses/vehicles to transport school-based athletes to a school or school district event, then the athletes and teachers would be subject to the school or school district's protocols and liability. If a school is using its buses/vehicles to transport school-based athletes to a sanctioned Special Olympics-run event, recommended the Program be aware of the school's protocols and compliment with guidance above for third party transportation providers.
- Also, see guidance on meals found in Special Olympics' Return to Activities Framework

Overnight Stays/Accommodations

- Low risk event (green category of framework):
 - For All Special Olympics Virginia multi-day events, all participants must be vaccinated.
- Moderate risk event (yellow category of framework):
 - For All Special Olympics Virginia multi-day events, all participants must be vaccinated.
- High risk event (orange category of framework):
 - Overnight events with accommodations organized by SO not permitted.
- Programs should consult their housing policy and modify supervision ratios as needed (without exceeding SOI's supervision ratio guidance of having no more than 4 athletes to every 1 chaperone).
- Programs should thoroughly understand what COVID-19 safety protocols the commercial (e.g., hotel), government (e.g., military barracks), educational (or other) institution (e.g., dormitories), or private housing provides/venue they are considering using has in place. For example: How often will the room(s) be cleaned? Can we opt out of having housekeeping staff come into our rooms? What sanitization measures are in place? Are there shared areas/spaces that have specific protocols? Are all staff fully vaccinated and/or regularly tested (and how often, if so)? If venue offers food and beverage, how is it packaged or served? Are additional rooms available during your stay in the event a delegation member must quarantine? What is there cancellation policy?
- All individuals (or via their caregivers/families) should be educated about and willing to abide by any safety/masking requirements in place by the housing venue. Individuals should also be aware of the potential consequences of not following the housing venue's required practices.
- Also, see guidance on meals found in Special Olympics' Return to Activities Framework