HERE ARE SOME THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU ATTEND THE EVENT:

- First and foremost, bring yourself with a smile on your face and a willingness to learn.
- Identification – if you are over the age of 18, we ask that you bring a state-issued picture I.D.
- Water Bottle
- Outdoors - sunscreen and hat
- Indoors - a mask
- If bringing personal items (which we advise against or ask that you limit what you bring) please be sure they can be secured in your pockets or on your person as there will not be a secure area for you to leave any belongings. SOKS will not be responsible for any lost or stolen items.

WHAT IS PROVIDED FOR VOLUNTEERS DURING THE EVENT?

- A day full of fun, joy and excitement! You will get back more than you give when you interact with our athletes. Cheer them on and encourage them!
- T-shirt – All volunteers will receive a t-shirt to ensure that they are identifiable during the event. They must be worn while volunteering. You will receive your t-shirt during the registration process at the event.

WHO SHOULD I LOOK FOR WHEN I ARRIVE ONSITE?

- Look for SOKS signage: this will lead you to the registration area. There you will check-in for the day and double check your assignment. Upon arrival to the venue, you should be able to identify the following individuals:
  - SOKS Staff – These individuals can be identified by their Special Olympics Kansas polo/t-shirt.
  - Volunteer Coordinator – These individuals can be identified by their polo or t-shirt and are typically only available at larger state events. When present, they will be in charge of volunteer schedules and training.
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.

Special Olympics Kansas is dedicated to empowering individuals with intellectual disabilities to become physically fit, productive and respected members of society through sports competitions, health and nutrition programs, and leadership development.

## ABOUT SPECIAL OLYMPICS

### HOW CAN I STAY INVOLVED AND HELP BEYOND TODAY?

- **Visit our website at** [www.ksso.org](http://www.ksso.org) **to learn more about the movement and how you can get involved.**
- **Volunteer** – There is a place for everyone in our organization. Contact the city/county Special Olympics program nearest to you for more information via our website.
- **Donate directly to the local program nearest to you,** or to our state office. If you donate by check, 100% of your donation will benefit Special Olympic Athletes in Kansas. You can, however, also make a contribution online via our website.
- **Fundraise to support our organization.** Check out our website for local fundraising events (i.e. Polar Bear Plunges, Law Enforcement Torch Runs, etc.) or contact the local program nearest to you to learn more about local events.

## GUIDE FOR DAY OF EVENT

### WHAT DO I DO IF THERE IS AN EMERGENCY OR SITUATION THAT I AM UNSURE ABOUT?

**If there is an imminent threat to a person or facility:**
- Contact the proper authorities or emergency personnel (ex. fire, police, ambulance) if there are health or security issues.
  - Collect critical information (who, what, where, when, why, how)
  - Be able to provide exact locations, giving facility name and address
  - At a venue, get the attention of the Special Olympics Games Management Team (GMT), SOKS Staff, or the event officials. Those specific individuals will take all necessary follow-up steps.
- In the meantime, remain calm and assure the safety of those around you.
- Recruit other volunteers to help evacuate the immediate area or venue as necessary. Be sure to remove uninvolved individuals from the area for the safety and comfort of all involved.

**If the emergency involves unconscious or injured persons:**
- Ensure there is no danger to you or the injured party
- Do not remove the injured party unless their life is in danger (fire, collapsed building)
- Remain on the phone with the 911 dispatcher
- Remain with the injured party until help arrives

**If the situation poses no immediate danger, call for the Games Management Team, SOKS staff, or medical staff.**

For non-emergency first aid or medical conditions, contact the SOKS Staff or the Games Management Team. The Medical Staff is trained to provide guidance as to how serious the situation is and if an emergency team is needed. Medical Staff personnel are trained in first aid and have first aid kits.
THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING TO VOLUNTEER WITH SPECIAL OLYMPICS KANSAS!

Volunteers are the backbone of our organization. The time, energy, and enthusiasm of volunteers fuel our movement and make our athletes’ dreams a reality. You are playing an integral role in the successful operations of our organization.

As a “Day-of-event” volunteer, you will be supporting the overall coordination of the competition.

YOU ARE NOT to oversee and/or chaperone any athletes or other volunteers, and therefore, are not to assume any oversight of athletes (however minor) at any time.

WHAT IF I AM UNCLEAR ABOUT WHAT I AM SUPPOSED TO BE DOING?

If you have questions or concerns about your assignment, please ask! If you have a question, chances are other people in your group do too. Each volunteer holds an essential role; therefore, it is important that you understand your responsibilities and properly engage in your assigned venue activities. This will ensure that the Games run smoothly. Please do not leave your assignment even if there is a lull in competition. Ask questions, we would be happy to help.

WHAT IF I NEED TO LEAVE EARLY?

If you need to leave before the end of your scheduled shift, for any reason, please let a SOKS staff member know upon your arrival, or as soon as you possibly can become aware, so that they can account for that change during the day and fill your spot. Alert a SOKS staff member prior to leaving.

I’VE NEVER WORKED WITH SOMEONE WITH A DISABILITY. WHAT DO I DO?

- First, introduce yourself! Remember that people with intellectual disabilities and people without intellectual disabilities are more alike than different.
- Both children and adults participate in Special Olympics, so please refer to all participants as “athletes” rather than “kids.”
- A common misconception is that Special Olympic athletes need to be talked down to or talked to as if they were very young children. While athletes’ reasoning abilities may be delayed, talk with them, and treat them according to their age.
- Athletes thrive on receiving encouragement, but let them take the lead as to what type of recognition they are comfortable with; pat on the back, high five, handshake, etc. You should also be comfortable setting your own limits and should caution an athlete if an action makes you feel uncomfortable.
- Be yourself. Use your normal voice and give support but try not to overpraise. Don’t exaggerate the accomplishments of athletes. Special Olympic athletes will gain the most from being judged fairly and without overstatement.
- As a volunteer, you will want to do everything you can to respect the dignity of the athletes that you will meet. Respecting dignity and being sensitive to cultural differences is probably as important as anything you will do at the games.
- The athlete’s coach or chaperone will be in the area overseeing the athlete during their participation and will be a great assistance if you have questions.
- Whenever possible, always deal directly with the athlete. Direct all questions, comments, or concerns directly to the individual, and do not hesitate to ask an athlete for advice. We learn together.

WHAT IS DIVISIONING AND WHY DO WE DO IT?

The goal of divisioning is to give every athlete a fair, reasonable chance to excel. You will see several gold medals passed out at one sport/event. Athletes are being awarded based on the age, ability, and gender of their competitions. This is what we call “Divisioning” and it is unique to Special Olympics.

TOGETHER, WE WILL ACHIEVE.