

SPECIAL OLYMPICS ONTARIO

7000-313 Provincial Games: Athlete Assistant

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 2026

REVIEW DATE: September 2026

PREAMBLE

SOO coaches, managers and mission staff are trained to support Special Olympics athletes and many of their accommodation needs to ensure success through the Major Games pathway.

It is understood that some athletes normally travel with, or require the service of, an Athlete Assistant to complete **essential daily life activities**, outside the scope of our volunteer members.

POLICY STATEMENT

Special Olympics Ontario (SOO) believes in the inclusion of all eligible athletes. This policy serves to ensure that athletes who require assistance with **essential daily life activities** will be given the necessary support to participate at the Games.

This policy does not afford Athlete Assistants for those with behavioral problems or disorders as expectations outlined in the Athlete Code of Conduct is perpetual throughout all Special Olympic activities/events etc.

INTENT

This policy is intended to assist athletes who would otherwise be unable to attend the Games. A request for an Athlete Assistant must only be submitted if an athlete would be otherwise unable to attend the Games in the absence of support with **essential daily life activities**, and this support would be unable to be given by coaches, managers, or mission staff.

SOO will work with the appropriate Stakeholders to make the decision whether to grant the request for an Athlete Assistant since not all requests will be automatically granted.

DEFINITION

An **Athlete Assistant** is a caregiver that accompanies an athlete to the Games to assist that athlete with **essential daily life activities**. The Athlete Assistant is not a coach, manager, or member of the mission staff and must not act in any of these capacities at the Games. The Athlete Assistant will be given the same accreditation access as the athlete and will reside in the Games' Village (will be required to stay in the same room) in order to assist the athlete. The Athlete Assistant will travel with the athlete to and from the Games, remain with the athlete at all times, provide all assistance required by the athlete for daily life activities and be responsible for the well-being of the athlete.

Essential Daily Activities

Essential daily activities include; bathing, dressing, toileting, and medical needs such as blood glucose monitoring, intravenous medication, catheterization/colostomy management etc.

REQUIREMENTS

The following are minimum requirements for Athlete Assistants wishing to participate at a Games:

- Minimum 18 years of age, or older;
- Must be familiar with the athlete (Athlete and Assistant will room together anytime overnight accommodation is required);
- Special Olympics Canada Orientation Course – TRAINED;
- Make Ethical Decisions (NCCP) – ONLINE EVALUATION COMPLETED;
- Safe Sport (CAC); and
- A Registered Special Olympics Ontario volunteer, with a Criminal Record Check with a Vulnerable Sector Search.

All requirements must be satisfied no later than sixty (60) days prior to the Games.

ATHLETE ASSISTANT APPLICATION PROCESS

[Athlete Assistant Application Form](#)

Applications for an Athlete Assistant can be submitted through the form linked above. Applications must be received within **30 days** of the family being sent the policy/application.

The SOO Athlete Assistant Eligibility Committee will be convened to review all applications. The Eligibility Committee will be composed of three volunteer members of the organization, with extensive knowledge of Provincial Games structures and supporting athletes with intellectual disabilities.

A decision will be reached, and the respective parties involved will be notified within 30 business days.

Decisions of the Eligibility Committee are considered final and are not subject to further appeal.

Athletes approved for Athlete Assistance at Provincial Games are automatically approved for National Games.

Athlete Assistants are not currently supported at the World Games. Athletes identified for the World Games must be able to participate without the support of an Athlete Assistant.

ATHLETE ASSISTANT FEE'S

The fee for an athlete assistant will vary depending on the level of Games and the location. Provincial Games fees may range in price from \$350 - \$500 (includes ground transportation, accommodations and meals. Uniform and airfare fees are extra).

National Games fees may range in price from \$1500 - \$2000 (includes registration fees, ground transportation, accommodations and uniform costs. Airfare is extra).

The Athlete Assistant fees are payable directly to Special Olympics Ontario no later than thirty (30) days prior to the commencement of the Games.