



Special Olympics Minnesota 2019 Swimming Handbook

CONTENTS

Swimming Events	3
Rules of Competition	7
Competition and Divisioning	10
Example Registration Form	11

New in 2019!

- 50m assisted swim
- 4x50 unified relay

Practice ideas, skill assessment and development, and rules can be found in the SOI Quick Start Guides and SOI Rules for each respective sport at www.specialolympics.org/sports.aspx

Special Olympics Minnesota Swimming Handbook

SWIMMING EVENTS

Please note, all swimming events and distances may not be offered at Area competition.

Freestyle

Athletes may start in either a front or back position and may use any stroke style. Athletes may switch strokes during the race and does not have to be a recognized stroke. However, athletes may not walk during freestyle events.

Distances Offered: 400, 200, 100, 50, 25, and 15

Backstroke

The backstroke, also known as the back crawl, is probably the easiest of all competitive strokes to teach and learn, as the swimmer has his/her head out of the water, unlike front crawl, where the face is in the water and breathing and arm coordination must be mastered.

Some learners prefer backstroke because their faces are out of the water and breathing is not an issue. Backstroke and front crawl have similarities. These similarities are useful when beginning swimmers are reminded of a skill or part of a skill which may be familiar to them.

Athletes must start with two feet and two hands touching the wall and have an alternating arm motion with a flutter kick. The most common DQ is flipping to the stomach, non-alternating strokes, for more than 1 ½ strokes.

Distances Offered: 200, 100, 50 and 25

Breaststroke

When swimming the breaststroke the swimmer is prone in the water, and the arm and leg actions are symmetrical. The swimmer breathes in at the beginning of each arm stroke.

Breaststroke is the only competitive stroke where the arm recovery is carried out under water and where a greater amount of frontal resistance is experienced. The arm action is an out sweep, down sweep, in sweep and up sweep with recovery in a streamline position.

The leg kick in breaststroke is probably the most difficult of all kicks for swimmers to master and may take some time. The leg action is simultaneous and is sometimes described as a whip kick. In addition to the breathing, the correct timing of the arms and legs is very important.

Athletes must start with two feet and at least one hand touching the wall. At each turn and the finish of the race, the touch shall be made with both hands simultaneously at, above, or below the water level. The most common DQs are for one-handed touches and using a flutter kick.

Distances Offered: 200, 100, 50 and 25

Butterfly

The butterfly stroke is generally taught after the swimmer has established basic skills in the other three competitive strokes. The butterfly stroke relies on good timing and simultaneous arm and leg actions. The stroke is best taught by breaking it down into three phases: kick, arm action and breathing.

Athletes must start with two feet and at least one hand touching the wall. At each turn and the finish of the race, the touch shall be made with both hands simultaneously at, above, or below the water level. The most common DQs are for one handed touches and using a flutter kick.

Distances Offered: 100, 50 and 25

Individual Medley

The swimmer must change strokes throughout the race using the correct turns and tempo for each of the strokes. In the individual medley event, the swimmer must swim the race using the four competitive strokes in the correct order (butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle). The athlete swims each stroke for one-fourth of the race.

Distance Offered: 100

Flotation Race

Each athlete entered in a flotation event is responsible for having their own flotation device. **Athletes signed up for a flotation race are not allowed to have an assistant for the race.** If an athlete needs assistance (in addition to floatation device), they must register for assisted swim. The device must be U.S. Coast Guard approved and support the athlete with their face out of the water (flotation devices such as aqua joggers or other waist belts, kickboards, inner tubes or floats that wrap around the arms are not acceptable). Athletes with an unapproved flotation device will not be allowed to participate.

Distances Offered: 50, 25 and 15

Assisted Swim

Each athlete is responsible for having their own coach/assistant. The assistant may touch, guide, or direct the athlete but may not assist the athlete's forward movement. **The swimmer is allowed to use a flotation device** (see above specifications). The assistant may be in the pool or on the deck. Make sure to notify the state office if special considerations need to be made for athletes with visual impairments.

Distances Offered: 50*, 25 and 15

*5-minute race time maximum for event.

Freestyle Relay

Each athlete will swim one 25m leg or one 50m leg of the race using any stroke style. Athletes who participate in the 25m flotation or assisted race can compete in the 4x25 relay with a flotation device. If a relay athlete needs assistance, contact SOMN staff.

Relay Exchanges: Swimmers in positions 1, 2 and 3 must touch the wall prior to the next swimmer leaving the wall. Athletes must be in the pool to start, no dive starts.

Athlete Relay Substitutions: In an attempt to create an equitable system to allow for relay substitutions but maintain the intent of the divisioning process, we will allow a relay team to make ONE substitution. The newly created team may swim any time slower than their qualifying score, but only 5% faster. If a team making a substitution swims more than 5% faster than their qualifying score, they will receive a participation ribbon.

Distances Offered: 4 x 25, 4 x 50

Unified Freestyle Relay

Unified Relay teams must have two athletes and two Unified partners. Teams must have competed as a relay team at an area competition.

1. Each relay is only allowed one substitution, regardless if it's an athlete or UP
2. Athlete substitutions are allowed at the area and state level and will swim under the rules outlined under the Freestyle Relay on page 5.
3. If a Unified relay has a Unified Partner with an excused absence at the area level, another Unified Partner may sub in the day of the meet but that Unified Partner must be registered for competition. The relay team will receive a participation award. The area qualifying score will be used for state divisioning and the original relay team registered for area will run at state. This would count as the relay's one substitution.
4. Unified Partner substitutions are not allowed at state.

Distance Offered: 4 x 25 and 4 x 50

SWIMMING RULES OF COMPETITION

The Meet

- Starts: All starts will consist of two commands ... "Take your marks," and then upon all swimmers being stationary, the start signal.
- Staging & Competition Area: A closed competition policy, which includes staging and competition areas, will be enforced. This is being done to provide a more controlled and manageable event. We do, however, realize that a small percentage of athletes may need individualized assistance in order to perform to the best of their ability. In cases when the individual performance of an athlete may be affected or when their behavior may affect the performance of other athletes, coaches or chaperones will be allowed to accompany those athletes in competition areas otherwise considered closed.
- Divisions: To maximize pool time, some divisions will be run simultaneously in the pool.
- At State, we will not be providing finish line towels. We will provide a plastic caddy for each athlete in which to place any personal items (towels, glasses, deck shoes, etc). Volunteers will bring caddies to the finish line for athletes.
- As a general rule, please bring athletes to staging at least 15 minutes prior to their scheduled start time, but note staging postings in case we are running ahead or behind schedule.

The Events

- Starts: Breaststroke, Butterfly and Freestyle, athletes must have two feet and one hand touching the wall. Backstroke, athletes must have two feet and two hands touching the wall. No dive starts, relay participants must start in the water.
- Turns: Breaststroke and Butterfly, at each turn the touch shall be made with both hands simultaneously at, above, or below the water level. Backstroke and Freestyle, at each turn the touch shall be made with one hand at, above, or below the water level. Flip turns are allowed in the backstroke and freestyle.
- Finish: Breaststroke and Butterfly, at the finish of the race both hands must touch simultaneously at, above, or below the water level. Backstroke and Freestyle, at the finish of the race one hand must touch the wall.
- Touching the Ground or Lane Rope: If during competition an athlete touches the ground they are okay. Athletes can use this or the lane ropes for a break, but cannot propel forward from the ground or rope. If athletes propel themselves forward they will be disqualified and receive a participation ribbon.

- Walking Events: Only at some Area competition. Check with Area Sports Program Managers/Associates.
- Flotation Events: In accordance with SOI Swimming rules, each athlete entered in a flotation event is responsible for having their own flotation device. Athletes signed up for a flotation race are not allowed to have an assistant for the race. If the athletes need assistance, they must register for assisted races. The device must be of the body wrap around type such that if the athlete were to not be able to hold on to the device, it would still support the athlete with the face out of the water (flotation devices such as aqua joggers or other waist belts, kickboards, inner tubes or floats that wrap around the arms are not acceptable). No exceptions. Do not expect to use flotation devices outside of this definition.
- Assisted Events: Each athlete is responsible for having their own coach/assistant. The assistant may touch, guide or direct the athlete but may not support or assist the athlete's forward movement. **The swimmer is allowed to use a flotation device** (see above specifications). The assistant may be in the pool or on the deck. Make sure to notify state office if special considerations need to be made for visually impaired athletes.
- Unassisted Events: Athletes must swim the full distance without assistance. All events are considered to be unassisted unless titled assisted. In flotation races, athletes may use a flotation device but do not have assistance.

*Using the above guidelines, please check to make sure you have entered athletes in the correct events.

- Athletes may wear a flotation device in a relay.
- Relay Exchanges: Swimmers in positions 1, 2 and 3 must touch the wall prior to the next swimmer leaving the wall. Participants must start in the pool.
- Relay Substitutions: In an attempt to create an equitable system to allow for relay substitutions but maintain the intent of the divisioning process, we will allow a relay team to make ONE substitution. The newly created team may swim any time slower than their qualifying score, but only 5% faster. If a team making a substitution swims more than 5 percent faster than their qualifying score, they will receive a participation ribbon.
- Relay Order: Recommend practicing in the same order that you will compete in. Order of teammates submitted at registration can change if needed though.

Assistance Needed Definitions

All teams must provide assistance with their own registered Level 1 coaches.

- Entry/Exit- Assisting the athlete getting into/out of the pool. The assistant does not stay in the pool during the event.
- Touch Start- Athlete requires someone to tap them to indicate the start of the race.
- Visual Start- Athlete requires a visual prompt to indicate the start of the race.
- Staging- Athlete needs an assistant present with them throughout the staging process (assistant not allowed beyond staging area).
- On-Deck- Athlete needs someone on the deck during the actual race. Also allowed in staging
- Outside Lane- Athlete requires a lane next to the wall of the pool (ex. Athlete may have a seizure and needs someone very close by.)
- Middle Lane- Athlete requires middle lane of pool (ex. Athlete is significantly distracted by crowd and will not complete race).
- Pool Lift- Athlete needs a mechanical lift to get them into and out of the water (note: not available at all event sites).

Safety Considerations

- There shall be at least one certified lifeguard on duty for every 25 swimmers in the water.
- The sole function of the lifeguard shall be to guard. If no relief lifeguard is available, the pool must be cleared, even for a short duration, when a lifeguard must leave the pool side.
- If a lifeguard cannot be present, the event/practice must be cancelled.

Event Information

Area Competitions

Area	Date	Location	City	Register	Contact
Area 1	March 21	Franklin Middle School	Thief River Falls	March 6	dani.druse@somn.org
Area 2	April 26	Bemidji High School	Bemidji	April 11	dani.druse@somn.org
Area 3	May 11	Lincoln Park Middle School	Duluth	April 26	dani.druse@somn.org
Area 4	May 3	Discovery Middle School	Alexandria	April 19	leah.wolkow@somn.org
Area 5	March 27	Little Falls Middle School	Little Falls	March 13	leah.wolkow@somn.org
Area 7	April 14	Becker High School	Becker	March 31	emily.garness@somn.org
Area 8/9	April 27	Gustavus Adolphus College	St. Peter	April 14	zak.armstrong@somn.org
Area 10	April 14	Rochester Rec Center	Rochester	March 31	zak.armstrong@somn.org
Area 11	April 14	South View Middle School	Edina	March 31	jake.krier@somn.org
Area 12	April 7	Washington Tech	St. Paul	March 24	sarah.richardson@somn.org
Area 13	May 18	Centennial High School	Circle Pines	May 5	emily.garness@somn.org

State Competition

Date	Location	City	Quota Due	Register By
June 21-23	University of St. Thomas	St. Paul	May 1	May 28

Competition Details

- Summer Games Celebration Ceremonies will be Friday night at the University of St. Thomas
- Athletes may enter three individual events and one relay.
- **All Unified Relay teams must have competed as a relay at an area competition. Refer to relay rules for substitution rules**
- Although the pool depth would now allow it in some events, we will continue to not offer diving starts at the area or state level
- Athletes can only compete in one sport at Summer Games
- **Unified Partners can register for one 4X25 team and one 4X50 team**

Swimming events offered at State

- Backstroke – 200, 100, 50, 25
- Breaststroke – 100, 50, 25
- Butterfly – 100, 50, 25
- Freestyle – 400, 200, 100, 50, 25, 15
- Individual Medley – 100
- Flotation Race – 50, 25, 15
- Assisted Swim – 50, 25, 15
- Relay – 4 x 50 Freestyle, 4 x 25 Freestyle, 4 x 25 Unified Freestyle, 4 X 50 Unified Freestyle

Divisioning

- Coaches need to include an athlete's practice qualifying time for each event that an athlete is registering for
- At State Swimming, divisions are based on an athlete's area results

COACHES CERTIFICATION RATIO TABLES

Individual Sports and Individual Skills

Athletes	Level II	Level I
1-4	1	0
5-8	1	1
9-12	1	2
13-16	1	3
17-20	2	3
21-24	2	4
25-28	2	5
29-32	2	6
33-36	3	6
37-40	3	7
41-44	3	8
45-48	3	9
49-52	4	9
53-56	4	10
57-60	4	11
61-64	4	12
65-68	5	12
69-72	5	13
73-76	5	14
77-80	5	15
81-84	6	15
85-88	6	16
89-92	6	17
93-96	6	18
97-100	7	18

Team Sports**

Coach ratios for team sports are per team, not the total number of athletes registered

Athletes	Level II	Level I
3-4	1	0
5-8	1	1
9-12	1	2
13-16	1	3
17-20	1	4

Team Sport Roster Size

Sport	Team
Half-Court Basketball	4-7
Full-Court Basketball	6-16
Unified Basketball	6-16
Poly Hockey	6-16
Unified Flag Football	6-16
Traditional & Unified Softball	11-20
Traditional & Unified Volleyball	6-16

* Unified Individual Sports Coach Ratio: Delegations are allowed to count Unified Partners who are certified coaches toward their ratios provided that any delegation bringing more than one athlete to a competition has at least one Level II coach on site who is not playing and still meets the appropriate coach ratio. Coach ratios for individual skills must still be met by non-playing coaches.

** Unified Team Sports ratios are the same as traditional team sports, teams still need one non-playing Level II coach on the bench at all times. Unified Partners will be included in coach ratio if they are 16 years of age or older.

SPORTSMANSHIP

Good sportsmanship is both the coach's and athlete's commitment to fair play, ethical behavior and integrity. In perception and practice, sportsmanship is defined as those qualities which are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. Below we highlight a few focus points and ideas on how to teach and coach sportsmanship to your athletes. Lead by example.

Competitive Effort

- Put forth maximum effort during each event.
- Practice the skills with the same intensity as you would perform them in competition.
- Always finish a match/event: Never quit.

Fair Play at All Times

- Always comply with the rules.
- Demonstrate sportsmanship and fair play at all times.
- Respect the decision of the officials at all times.
- Coaching
- Strategy discussions with any athlete and/or partner are prohibited once the match begins.
- If an official determines that a coach, partner or spectator is violating this rule, the official may sanction the offending individual. Sanctions may include verbal warning, citing the coach/partner with unsportsmanlike conduct or expulsion from the game.