



In 2005, Special Olympics Incorporated instituted a volunteer screening process and policy for all U.S. programs. In Minnesota, we elected to adopt a more stringent screening process, driven by our obligation to not only protect the organization but also, and most importantly, to provide the safest environment possible for all participants while they are involved in Special Olympics activities. This Screening Policy includes all Class A volunteers as defined below, as well as Special Olympics athletes with a criminal history.

Special Olympics Minnesota Participant Screening Policy

***Class A Volunteers (regardless of criminal history) and athletes with a criminal history (charged or convicted)** must have a criminal background check that includes a check against a national vendor database and the sex offender registry for each state in which the sex offender registry is available. In addition, Special Olympics Minnesota will conduct any available and additional searches as warranted by the initial background check.

***Class A Volunteers Include:**

- Volunteers who have regular, close physical contact with athletes such as coaches, chaperones, Unified Partners, area and local sports management team members, heads of delegation, ALPs mentors, drivers for athletes and volunteers who have administrative or fiscal authority.
- Staff, fundraising committee and games management team members, finance officers and law enforcement volunteers.
- Parents and siblings of athletes are subject to a criminal background check when they are serving in a Class A Volunteer capacity. Please note that a parent who serves as a Special Olympics coach for his/her child will be considered a Class A Volunteer and is subject to the required criminal background check – even if the only child who is being coached is the parent's own child.

Types of Screening:

- **Adult Class A Volunteers** – Completed Volunteer Application form and screen for criminal record which will include sex offender registry.
- **Minor Class A Volunteers (Ages 17 and under)** – Completed Volunteer Application form and two references (one from applicant's school).
- **Athletes with a Criminal History** - Completed Application for Participation form and screen for criminal record which will include sex offender registry.

Frequency of the Background Checks:

- All new Class A volunteers will be screened upon receipt and entry of their respective application for participation in the program.
- All athletes with a criminal history will be screened upon receipt and entry of their respective application for participation in the program.
- All previously screened participants will be re-screened every three years.

Special Olympics Minnesota has the authority to make the final decision regarding any participant.

Results of a Background Check using National Vendor:

A. Automatic disqualifiers from participation with no appeals process

1. Conviction for:
 - a. Child abuse
 - b. Domestic abuse
 - c. Sexual abuse or physical abuse of a minor/adult
 - d. Causing a child's death
 - e. Neglect of a child or any other individual for whom the potential participant has/had responsibility
 - f. Kidnapping
 - g. Murder
 - h. Manslaughter
 - i. Felony assault or battery
 - j. Misdemeanor assault or battery (Class A Volunteers)
 - k. Threats of violence (Class A Volunteers)
 - l. Arson
 - m. Criminal sexual conduct
 - n. Identity theft

B. Automatic disqualifier for driving on behalf of Special Olympics (for offenses that have occurred within a specified time frame)

1. DWI, DUI, or comparable offenses within seven years of application
2. Three or more moving violations within the past three years of application

C. Other potential disqualifiers from participation

1. Adverse judgement for damages or civil penalty involving sexual or physical abuse of a minor
2. Conviction for:
 - a. Theft of funds
 - b. Burglary
 - c. Misdemeanor assault or battery (athletes only)
 - d. Threats of violence (athletes only)
 - e. Fraud
 - f. Larceny or other financial crime
 - g. Prostitution related crime
 - h. Controlled substance crime
3. Being the subject of any court order involving sexual abuse or physical abuse of a minor that restricts contact with a minor.

D. Appeals Process

1. **Participants with Automatic Disqualifiers:** The only appeals that will be considered by Special Olympics Minnesota are those based on inaccurate data from the background check. Such appeals will be handled on a case-by-case basis within 30 days of receipt.
2. **Participants with Other Potential Disqualifiers:** Participant must complete a Consumer Report Individualized Evaluation and return to Special Olympics Minnesota. Such appeals will be handled on a case-by-case basis within 30 days of receipt.