



## SOMO ATTENDANCE-TRANSPORTATION-PICKUP POLICY

### Special Olympics Maryland – Montgomery County (SOMO)

**Attendance:** "The purpose of Special Olympics is to provide sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports....." To that end, athletes are encouraged to attend all practices. Attendance at a minimum of 80% of the practices and participation in at least two competitions are required; several sports require three qualifiers to be eligible for state competition. Regular attendance is most critical in team sports, where the athletes must learn to operate as a team. Athletes who cannot attend at least 80% of team sports practices should participate in our individual sports.

**Transportation:** Coaches, team managers, and other SOMO volunteers are not responsible for transporting athletes to or from practices and competitions. Athletes, with caregiver support as appropriate, are responsible for arranging their transportation. Athletes that cannot consistently arrange transportation to practices or competitions should reconsider whether they are able to participate in that sport.

However, we understand that an athlete sometimes requires transportation from someone other than their provider or family. When that occurs, a volunteer may provide transportation. If an athlete needs transportation to any required competition, they should talk with the Head Coach for possible coordination with another family.

**Arrival/Pick-up of Athletes:** Our policy has always been that parents/guardians check-in athletes with the Coach or Team Manager before the practice starts. If the parent/guardian leaves the practice, they must provide a cell phone number to the Head Coach or Team Manager. Some sports require Parents/Caregivers to stay during practice. Team Managers will let you know if it's okay to leave the facility. Parents/Caregivers who leave should return 15 minutes before the scheduled end time to collect any news from the Coach and be ready to pick up their athlete. The consequences of a late pick-up (defined as 5 minutes after the conclusion of practice) are as follows:

- First instance – SOMO will send a warning letter or email to the family member or counselor. If a Service Provider employs the counselor, SOMO may also send a copy of the letter or email to their agency.
- Second instance – The Head Coach may suspend the athlete for the remainder of that season.

Our Coaches and Team Managers are volunteers who give willingly of their time. Our programs depend entirely on their generosity. Consistently asking our volunteers to stay beyond the end of practice to watch an athlete whose transportation is late disrespects their generosity and commitment to our athletes.