



State Competition Eligibility Criteria

Special Olympics Maryland – Montgomery County (SOMO)

To be eligible to attend the end-of-season Special Olympics MD final competition, the following criteria must be met:

- Must attend a minimum of 80% of practices and, at a minimum, complete 8 weeks and 10 total hours of training and competition experiences with a certified Special Olympics Coach prior to a state competition.
- Must participate in two preliminary competitions (i.e., if competition is offered in that sport - several sports do not currently have preliminary competitions)
- Must meet the sports minimum requirements for competition (e.g., swimmers must be able to swim a minimum distance).
- Must exhibit Good Sportsmanship and be responsive and respectful to Coaches and volunteers.

STATE COMPETITION SELECTION PROCESS

Athletes and parents must be aware that State slots are sometimes limited and participation each year is not guaranteed. If slots are limited, and after meeting the requirements above, the following will apply: Children of Coaches, Volunteers and Management will be guaranteed a slot for State Competitions in the sport of their choice if the athlete meets the minimum requirements of eligibility stated above. Their intentions must be known at the beginning of the season. For remaining slots, we will employ a rotating selection process to give all athletes a chance to eventually participate.

Note: Individuals that were approved to go to State Competition and fail to attend without giving one-week notification and do not have just cause (e.g., death in the family or unforeseen emergency) will forfeit their eligibility to be considered the next year.

SOMO offers sports training without a requirement to attend state competition. **With Coach approval**, it is possible to participate to train in a sport WITHOUT the intent to qualify for State Competition. These arrangements will be considered on a case-by-case basis and are a good alternative for the athlete who will not be available for either Qualifying Competition or State Competition OR for the athlete who may not feel a comfort level with competition. **This is not conducive with team sports!** • Some sports will make the season for non-competition athletes shorter than those attending state competition. To allow for higher concentration of training for the competition practices.