

# **Special Olympics Northern California and Nevada**

## **COACHES' CODE OF CONDUCT**

Special Olympics Northern California and Nevada (SONC/SONV) volunteer coaches are models whose behavior should serve as a positive example for their athletes. Their behavior should reflect a concern that the fairest and most positive competitive experience is equally available to every Special Olympics athlete in each training or competition. The coach has the unique opportunity to influence the development and personal growth of many individuals. For this reason, it is important that the coach adhere to the standards of ethical decision making and teaching.

In addition, it is the position of SONC/SONV that each volunteer coach shall agree to:

### **HAVE RESPECT FOR OTHERS**

- I will respect the rights, dignity and worth of athletes, other coaches and volunteers, SONC/SONV staff members, and friends and spectators in Special Olympics.
- I will treat everyone equally regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or ability.
- I will be a positive role model for the athletes I coach.

### **ENSURE A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE**

- I will ensure that for each athlete I coach, the time spent with Special Olympics is a positive experience.
- I will respect the talent, developmental stage and goals of each athlete.
- I will ensure each athlete competes in events that challenge that athlete's potential and are appropriate to that athlete's ability.
- I will be fair, considerate and honest with athletes and communicate with athletes using simple, clear language.
- I will ensure that accurate scores are provided for entry of an athlete into any event.
- I will instruct each athlete to perform to the best of the athlete's ability at all preliminaries/heats and finals in accordance with the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules.

### **ACT PROFESSIONALLY AND TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS/HER ACTIONS**

- My language, manner, punctuality, preparation and presentation will demonstrate high standards.
- I will display control, respect, dignity and professionalism to all involved in Special Olympics, including to the athletes, other

- coaches and volunteers, opponents, officials, administrators, SONC/SONV staff members, parents, spectators and the media.
- I will encourage athletes to demonstrate the same qualities.
- I will not drink alcohol, smoke or take illegal drugs while representing Special Olympics at training sessions or during competitions.
- I will not engage in any form of personal abuse towards athletes, other coaches and volunteers, SONC/SONV staff members, or friends and spectators in Special Olympics, including verbal, physical or emotional abuse.
- I will be alert to any form of abuse from other sources directed toward athletes or others in my care.

### **PROVIDE QUALITY SERVICE TO THE ATHLETES**

- I will seek continued improvement through performance evaluation and ongoing coach education.
- I will be knowledgeable about the Sports Rules and skills of the sport(s) I coach.
- I will provide a planned training program.
- I will keep copies of the registration, training, and competition records for each athlete I coach.
- I will follow the Special Olympics and National Governing Body rules for my sport(s) coached, as well as all SONC/SONV policies and procedures as amended.

### **ENSURE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE ATHLETES**

- I will ensure that the equipment and facilities for my sport(s) coached are safe to use.
- I will ensure that the equipment, rules, training and the environment are appropriate for the age and ability of the athletes.
- I will review each athlete's registration form and be aware of any limitations on that athlete's participation noted on that form.
- I will encourage athletes to seek medical advice when needed.
- I will maintain the same interest and support towards sick and injured athletes.
- I will allow further participation in training and competition only when appropriate.

Should the behaviors and/or abilities of any volunteer coach or other faction of a school/organization violate either the principles stated above (including the SONC/SONV policies and procedures as amended) or the philosophy of the Special Olympics movement, then any of the following actions may be taken by SONC/SONV in its sole discretion:

1. The coach may be notified by official warning of the undesirable behavior and be requested to remedy the situation immediately in order to continue his or her participation in Special Olympics;

2. The coach may be requested to withdraw personally or with his/her team from the remainder of any Special Olympics event or tournament;
3. The coach or sponsoring school/organization may be suspended from participating in any or all Special Olympics activities or events for a specified period of time; and/or
4. The coach or sponsoring school/organization may be permanently prohibited from participating in any or all Special Olympics activities or events.

I have read and understand the foregoing SONC/SONV Coaches' Code of Conduct, and agree to abide by its terms.

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Signature of Volunteer Coach)*

Print Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_