

## **Article 6 – Special Olympics General Rules**

### **Special Olympics Athletes**

---

#### **Section 6.01. Eligibility for Participation in Special Olympics.**

(a) **General Statement of Eligibility.** Every person with an intellectual disability who is at least eight years of age is eligible to participate in Special Olympics.

(b) **Age Requirements.** There is no maximum age limitation for participation in Special Olympics. The minimum age requirement for participation in Special Olympics competition is eight years of age. An Accredited Program may permit children who are at least six years old to participate in age-appropriate Special Olympics training programs offered by that Accredited Program, or in specific (and age-appropriate) cultural or social activities offered during the course of a Special Olympics event. Such children may be recognized for their participation in such training or other non-competition activities through certificates of participation, or through other types of recognition approved by SOI which are not associated with participation in Special Olympics competition. However, no child may participate in a Special Olympics competition (or be awarded medals or ribbons associated with competition) before his or her eighth birthday.

(c) **Degree of Disability.** Participation in Special Olympics training and competition is open to all persons with intellectual disabilities who meet the age requirements of this Section 6.01, regardless of the level or degree of that person's disability, and whether or not that person also has other mental or physical disabilities, so long as that person registers to participate in Special Olympics as required by these General Rules.

(d) **Identifying Persons with Intellectual disabilities.** A person is considered to have an intellectual disability for purposes of determining his or her eligibility to participate in Special Olympics if that person satisfies any one of the following requirements:

(1) The person has been identified by an agency or professional as having an intellectual disability as determined by their localities; or

(2) The person has a cognitive delay, as determined by standardized measures such as intelligent quotient or "IQ" testing or other measures which are generally accepted within the professional community in that Accredited Program's nation as being a reliable measurement of the existence of a cognitive delay; or

(3) The person has a closely related developmental disability. A "closely related developmental disability" means having functional limitations in both general learning (such as IQ) and in adaptive skills (such as in recreation, work, independent living, self-direction, or self-care).

However, persons whose functional limitations are based solely on a physical, behavioral, or emotional disability, or a specific learning or sensory disability, are not eligible to participate as Special Olympics athletes, but may be eligible to volunteer for Special Olympics.