

Experience Inclusion

Going forward to the new normal better
Massachusetts Moves to Phase IV, Step 2
updated for May 3, 2021

Special Olympics
Massachusetts



Guiding Principles

- The health and safety of all members of the Special Olympics movement is paramount.
- Beyond a sports organization, Special Olympics is a movement for and by people with intellectual disabilities (ID), and its guidance must be inclusive and directed at the unique needs and abilities of people with ID.
- Relevant WHO, CDC, State and Local guidelines will serve as minimum standards
- Guidance is based on current medical information available at the time of publication. As knowledge of COVID-19 is changing rapidly, guidance will continue to evolve.
- Guidance takes a phased approach that is dependent on local transmission rates as well as testing/monitoring/contact tracing/health system capacity.
- **All of this requires personal responsibility.**

Massachusetts Status – Phase IV, Step 2

Effective Monday, May 10, the state of Massachusetts will enter Phase IV, Step 2 and that effects Special Olympics MA as follows **(Boston will move to Phase IV Step 2 on a 3 week delay to State – gathering allowances for public facilities is 100/150):**

- Gathering allowances for all private facilities will remain at 10 for all indoor and 25 outdoors. **Gathering limits for public facilities will increase to 200 indoors and 250 outdoors effective Saturday, May 29.**
- ***Youth sports, high school sports and amateur adult sports programs are exempt from those limits and can be implemented under facility capacity limits. Facilities such as Bowling Centers and indoor recreation areas such as gyms must comply with the overall capacity limit which is now at 50%, so all facility limits should be confirmed prior to a scheduled practice and competition.***
- Mask order will be relaxed for some outdoor settings where you can practice social distance.
- Special Olympics Massachusetts office will adhere to the **50% capacity; will open August 2 completely.**
- **Check local jurisdictions for any additional guidance – i.e. Somerville and Boston**

Massachusetts High Risk communities as of 04/29/2021

- State guidance is as follows - potential restrictions or shutdowns for parks, playgrounds, businesses or other entities and locations believed to be contributing to the COVID-19 spread in higher risk COVID-19 communities. Due to this guidance, SOMA will monitor the local guidelines and may need to cancel scheduled competitive events.

Achusnet (1)

Berkley (2)

Brockton (5)

Chicopee (25)

Dracut (5)

Edgartown (4)

Fall River (27)

Hampden (3)

Haverhill (2)

Lawrence (32)

Littleton (1)

Lowell (7)

Lynn (6)

Methuen (7)

Nantucket (5)

New Bedford (6)

Palmer (6)

Revere (4)

Southbridge (1)

Southwick (2)

Springfield (5)

Taunton (4)

Tisbury (4)

Wareham (4)

Winchendon (4)

Yarmouth (7)

Participate virtually:

- People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility; *residential group homes can participate if affiliated agency allows*
- People of any age with certain medical conditions **are at increased risk** of severe illness from COVID-19.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html>

State of MA travel advisory and SOMA guidance

- As of Monday, April 26, Special Olympics Massachusetts will follow the State of Massachusetts Travel Advisory which took effect as of Monday, March 22. All visitors entering Massachusetts, including returning residents, are advised to quarantine for 10 days upon their arrival. Travelers in the following categories are exempt from this quarantine advisory:
 - Travelers who have received a negative COVID-19 result on a test administered not more than 72 hours prior to their arrival in Massachusetts. Travelers may also test out of the quarantine advisory after arrival in Massachusetts, as long as they quarantine until receiving a negative test result.
 - Anyone who is entering Massachusetts for fewer than 24 hours.
 - Anyone who is returning to Massachusetts after being out of the State for fewer than 24 hours.
 - Travelers who are [fully vaccinated](#) (i.e. who have received two doses of either the Moderna or Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines OR who have received a single dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, 14 days or more ago) and who do not have symptoms.
 - All travelers are encouraged to consult and follow the [CDC's guidelines and requirements for travel](#).



If you are sick or symptomatic stay home!

Regular education must be provided to all athletes, staff, volunteers, coaches, families and caregivers reminding them stay home if they have a fever/chills or any signs and symptoms (cough, shortness of breath/difficult breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea).

Individuals must not participate in any activities if they are sick, for their own health and to reduce transmission of any infections to others. Instruct anyone who is ill to contact their own health provider for further evaluation.

Screening Process

- All Participants at practices and events will be screened for temperature and asked the following questions:
 - Have you been in contact with someone with COVID 19 over the last 14 days:
 - Have you had a fever in the last week (temperature of 100.4°F/37.8°C or higher)?
 - Do you have a cough and/or difficulty breathing?
 - Do you have any other signs or symptoms of COVID-19 (fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea)?

Screening Guidelines for all activities

- Must record all names, results and contact information and keep in case needed for contact tracing or reporting
- If yes to any questions, participants **MUST** be isolated from the group (at minimum, kept 2m/6ft apart from others and with mask on), be sent home, and instructed to contact their healthcare provider for evaluation.
- If at any time, a practice has been exposed to a COVID-19; the practice must halt for 10 to 14 days.
- **All participants must sign the Communicable Disease Waiver before returning to play. The waiver language will be added to the Class A and Athlete Medical forms going forward but until that time, every participant must sign the waiver and it must be returned to SOMA for record keeping.**

Guidelines for COVID 19 diagnosis or exposure

- Participants who have been exposed to someone with COVID 19 but haven't shown symptoms or had a positive COVID-19 test must quarantine for 14 days. However, if 10 days after your exposure you have no symptoms, you can end quarantine. You can end your quarantine after 7 days if you get tested at that time and are negative for the virus.
- Participants who are found to have COVID-19 symptoms must wait 7 days after symptoms resolve to return to activity OR must provide written proof of physician clearance to Special Olympics to return earlier.
- Participants who test positive for/have COVID-19 must provide written medical clearance before returning to sport and fitness activities.

Guidance on those who have received the vaccination per the CDC

- There is not enough information is currently available to say if or when CDC will stop recommending that people [wear masks](#) and [avoid close contact with others](#) to help prevent the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Experts need to understand more about the protection that COVID-19 vaccines provide in real-world conditions before making that decision. Other factors, including how many people get vaccinated and how the virus is spreading in communities, will also affect this decision. We also don't yet know whether getting a COVID-19 vaccine will prevent you from spreading the virus that causes COVID-19 to other people, even if you don't get sick yourself.
- While experts learn more about the protection that COVID-19 vaccines provide under real-life conditions, it will be important for everyone to continue using **all the tools** available to help stop this pandemic. **Special Olympics Massachusetts will follow all state guidelines.**

Practice Guidelines

- All practices will be held under the guidance of the state for phase IV step 2 **unless specific town has moved back in phases such as Somerville and Boston**
 - *Youth sports, high school sports and amateur adult sports programs are exempt from those limits and can be implemented under facility capacity limits. Facilities such as Bowling Centers and indoor recreation areas such as gyms must comply with the overall capacity limit **which is now at 50%**, so all facility limits should be confirmed prior to a scheduled practice and competition.*
 - Masks must be worn at all times **even by those who have been vaccinated at all times on field of play; masks can be taken off only if social distance can be adhered to**
 - Social Distancing must be adhered to when applicable; wash hands frequently, cover mouth with elbow when sneezing, coughing
 - Indirect contact allowed through shared use of equipment only/No Direct contact
 - Sharing of equipment must be minimal and sanitized between use

At Home Activities

- Athletes can participate at home, Track & Field events, Fit 5 and/or strength and conditioning initiative
- Weekly Athlete chats via zoom
- Weekly Young Athlete programming via zoom
- Weekly trivia contests
- Monthly Dances via zoom

In Person – Sports Practices and Competitions

The following Sports can be offered in person following all guidance starting April 1:

Approved Outdoor Sports

Track & Field

Bocce

Corn Hole

Golf

Cycling

Tennis

Softball

Approved Indoor Sports

Swimming

Volleyball (*or outdoor*)

Power Lifting

Gymnastics

Winter sports such as bowling and basketball (*indoor or outdoor*) may continue if athletes are interested in order to keep them engaged and active. Floor Hockey may also be conducted outdoors as street hockey.

All guidelines for these sports can be found on the website under return to play.



Hiking, Biking, Walking, clubs

Participant information on website calendar, can join anytime:

<https://www.specialolympicsma.org/sports-skills-centers-and-walking-clubs/>

- Bridgewater Walking Club
- Boston Walking Club
- Cambridge Walking Club
- Framingham Walking Club
- Newton Walking Club
- Norfolk/Millis Medway area Walking Club
- Northeast walking club (cycling in spring)
- Leominster Fitness Club (with MASS local program)
- Marlborough Walking Club
- Medford Walking Club
- Plymouth Walking Club
- Revere Walking Club
- Pittsfield Walking Club
- Springfield Walking Club (with Greater Springfield local program)
- Seekonk Walking Club
- Springfield Hiking Club
- Wakefield Walking Club
- Wellesley Walking Club
- Weymouth Walking Club
- Worcester Walking Club

To Be Announced locations:

- Bristol County
- Merrimack Valley

Sports Hubs

Participant information will be on website calendar soon, can join anytime: <https://www.specialolympicsma.org/sports-skills-centers-and-walking-clubs/>

- Andover, Sundays from 12 pm to 3 pm
- Berkshires (Pittsfield – Taconic HS), Sundays from 9 am to 11:45 am
- Beverly YMCA, Sundays from 4 pm to 6 pm
- Fall River, Saturdays from 10 am to 1 pm
- Marlborough at the Yawkey Sports Center, Saturday's from 9 am to 1:45 pm
- Weymouth, Saturdays from 9 am to 12 pm

Young Athletes

- Weekly Young Athlete and Developmental Sports Zoom Sessions on Monday afternoons and Saturday mornings
- Weekly Story Time Series for Young Athletes on Thursdays at 5:30pm
- Weekly Young Athletes Sessions at the skills centers

Fitness

- **Fit 5**
 - SOMA can recruit volunteers to run Fit 5 for all Local Programs
- **Unified Strength & Conditioning**
 - Choose 7 exercises to compete in for the entire season. Earn points for improving the scores of each of the 7 exercises. Earn the most points at the end of the season to win your division!
 - 27 exercises to choose from

Questions????

- Any questions or comments you have after this call can be sent to Ops@SpecialOlympicsMA.org
- All materials available at specialolympicsma.org