



Special Olympics Georgia 15 Passenger Van Policy and Release

Special Olympics Georgia is implementing a revised 15 passenger van policy and release effective 11-23-2009. The SOI policy states the following.

Special Olympics Programs are prohibited from using 15 passenger vans to transport athletes or other individuals to and from Special Olympics events, and Special Olympics strongly discourages other organizations from using 15 passenger vans to transport people to or from Special Olympics events.

Special Olympics recognizes that it is up to each non-Special Olympics organization to determine whether to use 15 passenger vans. A non-Special Olympics organization could be defined as one of the following: School Systems, Parks and Recreation Departments, Group Homes, Workshops and Mental Retardation Service Centers. By using 15 passenger vans, a non-Special Olympics organization understands that:

1. Anyone operating a 15 passenger van owned or that is rented by a non-Special Olympics organization for the purpose of transporting Special Olympics athletes or other persons to or from Special Olympics activities is acting as the employee or volunteer of the organization and not on behalf of Special Olympics.
2. The driver's operation of the 15 passenger van is considered to be in the course and scope of the driver's employment or volunteer responsibilities for the non-Special Olympics organization, and should not be on behalf of Special Olympics.
3. Non-Special Olympics organizations that operate 15 passenger vans should comply with the applicable safety standards promulgated by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

The U.S. Risk Management and Insurance Task Force strongly urge all U.S. Programs to discontinue use of 15-passenger vans for the transportation of athletes, volunteers, or staff. Programs should no longer rent or lease 15-passenger vans, and Programs that own 15-passenger vans should discontinue use of the vans to transport registered athletes and registered volunteers. This policy excludes the use of 15-passenger vans driven by specially trained drivers to transport equipment.

Although we cannot mandate the type of vehicles used by other organizations to transport athletes, Programs are encouraged to work with such organizations to avoid or at least to minimize the use of these vans.

Neither Special Olympics Georgia nor any of its affiliates/agencies can attend any sanctioned Special Olympics event in a 15 passenger van.

15 passenger vans may be used to transport athletes and coaches to sanctioned events by a Non-Special Olympics organization and a Non-Special Olympics volunteer as the driver. In other words the driver cannot be a Special Olympics Georgia registered volunteer, coach, assistant coach or staff member who is an official participant in:

_____ (Name of Event).

_____ (Name of Agency).

_____ (Name of individual filling out this form)

**Will your agency be using a 15 Passenger Van?
Please circle the appropriate answer. YES or NO.**

If you circled NO then you do not need to fill out any information below. If you circled YES you must fill out the remaining items listed below.

If the agency decides to use a third party driver then the agency Director and the third party driver must sign below acknowledging that they are releasing Special Olympics Incorporated, Special Olympics North America and Special Olympics Georgia from any and all liability and that they will not be covered under any Special Olympics insurance while loading, driving, parking and operating the 15 passenger van. **This form must be signed and returned to SOGA by the problem sheet deadline for each event. If you do not sign this release form prior to attending this event and you drive a 15 passenger van to this event SOGA reserves the right to deny your agency the opportunity to attend or participate in this event.**

I, the Director, (Name of Director) _____ understand the above policy and agree to its content on the following date _____.

I, the Van Driver, (Name of Driver) _____ understand the above policy and agree to its content on the following date _____.

****Note – SOGA will not issue any assistance awards to agencies using 15 Passenger Vans in the transporting of athletes or luggage per the SOGA 15 Passenger Van Policy.****

**** Any Agency that misrepresents themselves regarding bringing a 15 Passenger Van to a Special Olympics Event will be dismissed as ineligible to compete at that Special Olympics Event and will not be allowed to participate at any other Special Olympics Event for a six month period from the date of the event in which the violation occurred.****

9/14/2012