

SPECIAL OLYMPICS GEORGIA VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION

2024 STATE SUMMER GAMES

Special Olympics
Georgia



OUR MISSION

To provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for all children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy, and participate in the sharing of gifts, skills, and friendship with their families, other Special Olympic athletes, and the community.





STATE SUMMER GAMES

- Nearly 2,000 athletes from around the state compete in athletics, cheerleading, flag football, gymnastics, soccer, swimming, table tennis, tennis and volleyball with over 500 coaches to guide them in competition.
- Over 2,500 volunteers will be on hand the weekend of the games.
- Competition begins on Friday and ends Sunday with the Opening Ceremony Friday evening and Victory Dance immediately following the Ceremonies.





VENUES

- Athletics
- Cheerleading
- Flag Football
- Flag Football Skills
- Rhythmic Gymnastics
- Soccer
- Soccer Skills
- Swimming
- Table Tennis
- Tennis
- Volleyball
- Olympic Town
- Opening Ceremony & Dance



SWIMMING VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

- Athlete check in – Check in athletes as they arrive. Verify their placement and numbers.
- Bull pen assistants - Keep athletes on task and assist in calling the next round of athletes to competition.
- Timers - keep time for the athletes during competition.
- Escorts - assist athletes in WALKING around the pool to their correct lane.
- Announcers – announces athlete names, heats, and awards
- Awards – assist with the presentation of medals and ribbons, announces winners, escorts athletes to awards area, assist athletes into position.
- Fans in the Stands – cheers for and encourages athletes as they compete.
Can make signs or use shakers when available.





ATHLETICS VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

- Athlete check in – Check in athletes as they arrive. Verify their placement and numbers.
- Heat tables - keep athletes on task; assist in calling the next round of athletes to competition.
- Heat tents - receive athletes preparing for competition and keep athletes on task and ready to compete.
- Escorts - assist athletes in WALKING around track and arriving to the correct event location.
- Timers - keep time for the athletes.



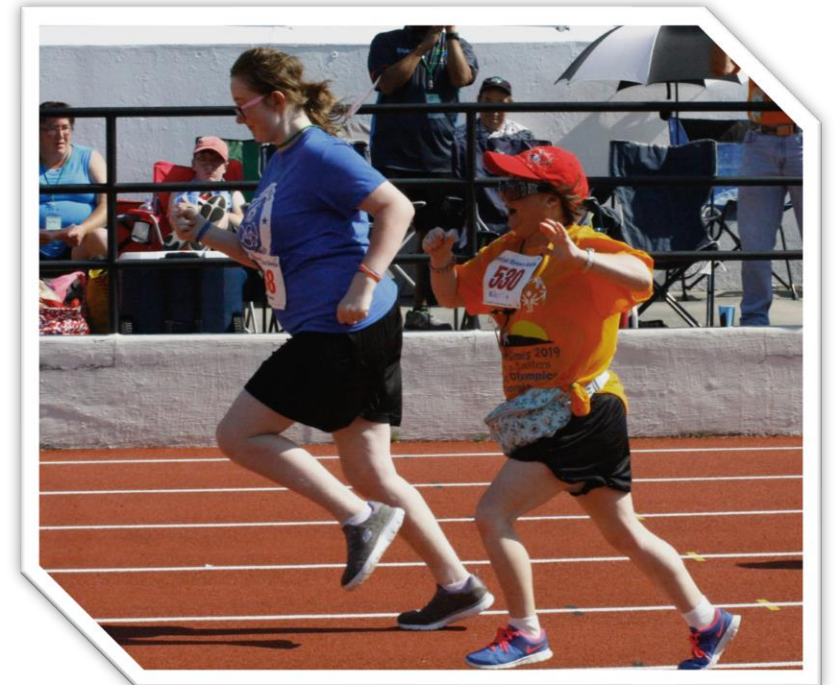
ATHLETICS VOLUNTEER POSITIONS (CONT'D)

- Runners - run times and scores to appropriate volunteers.
- Pick up tents - receive athletes after their competition and congratulate and wait for their coaches to pick them up.
- Station volunteers – assist athletes and officials and various stations including long jump, shot put, and softball throw.
- Awards – assist with the presentation of medals and ribbons, announces winners, escorts athletes to awards area, assist athletes into position.
- Fans in the Stands – cheers for and encourages athletes as they compete. Can make signs or use shakers when available.



ATHLETICS EVENTS

- Long Distance Walking & Running
- 100M
- 200M
- 400M
- 800M
- 4X100 Relay
- Mini Javelin
- Pentathlon
- Long Jump
- Shotput
- Level A Skills



SOCCKER TEAM VOLUNTEER POSITIONS



- Athletes will compete in Traditional and Unified Team Play
- Escorts - Assist athletes in WALKING around the field.
- Ball Retrievers - Collect soccer balls as they are kicked off the field!
- Runners - Run scores and times to proper volunteers or staff person.
- Score Reporters - Report scores to crowd and teams.
- Keep Standing - Keep track of teams and their wins / losses.
- Monitor Substitutes - Ensure proper number / selection of athletes are playing.
- Keep Order - Keep fans in crowd and athletes in correct location.
- Water - Make sure water is available.



SOCCKER SKILLS VOLUNTEER POSITIONS



- Athlete Check-In – Register athletes / agencies.
- Water - Make sure water is available.
- Conducting Skills: In charge of conducting one of the three skills
- Score Reporter: Will be assigned to a division and go through the skills with the athletes and keep score
- Athletes will conduct 3 skills:
 - Dribbling
 - Shooting
 - Run & Kick
- Each skill will score in a particular way. Additional information will be on the volunteer job description
- Athletes will go through a divisioning round performing each skill once. They are then placed in a medal round where they perform each skill twice and given a final score.





FLAG FOOTBALL VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

- Athletes will compete in Traditional and Unified team play
- Score keeper – record and tally points by official’s signal.
- Timer – keep time of games/control timer on scoreboard.
- Ball retrievers – retrieve loose balls
- Down Marker – holds the marker and spot of the ball on the field
- Water station - assist with any water needs at the venue.
- Awards – assist with the presentation of medals and ribbons, announces winners, escorts athletes to awards area, assist athletes into position.
- Fans in the Stands – cheers for and encourages athletes as they compete. Can make signs or use shakers when available.





GYMNASTICS VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

- Athlete will compete in Rhythmic Gymnastics – All Around, Hoop, Floor, Ball, Clubs, Ribbons, & Rope
- Scorekeepers - record the judge's score on the appropriate sheet and rank the gymnasts according to the scores.
- Line judge assistant - inform the head judge when a gymnast steps out of bounds during the floor exercise routine.
- Score flasher - flashes the gymnast's score after performance.
- Escort - marches in with the delegation.
- Runners - takes scores from the judges table to the scorekeeper's desk.
- Awards – assist with the presentation of medals and ribbons, announces winners, escorts athletes to awards area, assist athletes into position.
- Fans in the Stands – cheers for and encourages athletes as they compete. Can make signs or use shakers when available.



CHEERLEADING VOLUNTEER POSITIONS



- Check in table – Athletes will check in with their teams
- Warm up – Athletes will stretch and warm up before competitions
- Floor Spotters - Volunteers will stand on the mat and spot athletes while competing.
- Music Table – Setting up and playing music for Teams
- Awards – Announce winners and pass out medals
- Photographer – Take photo of teams competing



TABLE TENNIS VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

- Athletes will compete in Singles and Skills
- Athlete check in – Check in athletes as they arrive.
- Ball chasers – retrieve loose balls.
- Timers - keep time for the athletes.
- Counters - keep track of the score.
- Water stations – distribute water to athletes as needed.
- Awards – assist with the presentation of medals and ribbons, announces winners, escorts athletes from courts to awards area, assist athletes into position.
- Fans in the Stands – cheers for and encourages athletes as they compete. Can make signs or use shakers when available.





TENNIS VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

- Athletes will compete in Short Court Singles, Doubles, and Unified Doubles; Full Court Singles, Doubles, Unified Doubles; Skills
- Ball chasers – retrieve loose balls.
- Scorekeepers - keep track of the score.
- Escorts – escort athletes to correct courts.
- Water stations – distribute water to athletes as needed.
- Awards – assist with the presentation of medals and ribbons, announces winners, escorts athletes from courts to awards area, assist athletes into position.



VOLLEYBALL VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

- Athletes will compete in Traditional, Modified, & Unified team play
- Escorts – escort athletes to correct courts.
- Scorekeepers – Keep track of the scores for each games while following rules of competition.
- Linesmen – you will be given a flag, and then stand on the back of the court, judging in/out of bounds lines watching for foot faults while athletes are serving
- Ball chasers – retrieve loose volleyballs during competition
- Water stations – distribute water to athletes as needed
- Awards – assist with the presentation of medals and ribbons, announces winners, escorts athletes from courts to awards area, assist athletes into position.



OLYMPIC TOWN VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

- Olympic Town is a carnival like atmosphere that athletes can participate in when they are not competing. It will take place on Saturday
- Booth volunteers – assist athletes with games, super slide, and crafts
- Food and Drinks – hand out water, soda, popcorn to athletes





OPENING CEREMONY & DANCE VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

- Friday Evening
- Volunteers:
 - Hand out program books
 - Organize the athlete parade line up
 - Escort attendees, greet athletes
 - Block aisles for the torch run
 - Hand out refreshments during dance
 - Crowd control during dance
 - Clean Up – chairs, tables, trash



EXPECTATIONS WHILE WORKING WITH ATHLETES

One of the biggest questions that new volunteers have is how to work with our athletes. If you are a new volunteer, here are a few things to keep in mind:

- Special Olympics offers competitions to children AND adults, so don't assume that an athlete is a child. Make sure to talk to athletes like adults and with respect.
- Many athletes like to hug, shake hands, give high fives, etc. You may reciprocate if the athlete initiates it and you are comfortable with that.
- Some athletes are in wheelchairs – do not lean on their chairs.
- Some athletes have speech impediments. If you cannot understand an athlete, ask them to repeat themselves or ask a coach or one of the athlete's teammates to help you to understand.
- There are some athletes that salivate excessively, are very stiff, or have other symptoms associated with their disability. Please do not stare.
- Remember that respect of the dignity and effort of the athletes is the priority at Special Olympics. Pity is not part of the game.



GENERAL GUIDELINES VOLUNTEER BEHAVIOR



- Volunteers may hug an athlete only when the athlete initiates the hug
- Volunteers should not disrupt competitions in any way
- Volunteers should encourage, not coach, the athletes
- Volunteers should be friendly, not threatening or harassing to other volunteers or staff
- All equipment, banners, t-shirts, and other materials used during competition is the property of SOGA or participating agencies. Please do not take any of these items including the blue volunteer bibs, which must be returned to volunteer registration when you have completed your assignment.
- A situation may arise that causes a delay in competition. Please be patient and understand that the SOGA staff is doing all they can to resolve any issues so that competition can continue. During any downtime, get to know the athletes.
- And above all else, HAVE FUN!





VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION

- When you arrive, please park in the Peavine Parking Deck. There will be road signs placed to guide you.
- Across the street from the parking deck will be the main volunteer registration check-in tent outside of the Woodruff PE Center.
- You will write your first name on a volunteer nametag. Please wear your tag so that athletes and other volunteers know your name.
- You will then be directed to your venue where, on arrival, you will be given a small training and placement by your volunteer coordinator.
- Any questions, find your volunteer coordinator or a SOGA staff person





THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Make sure to arrive at your venue on time! Be sure to provide yourself time to park, check in, and walk to your venue. There will be instructions given for each position and if you are not present in time, you will miss your placement. Competitions WILL start on time and all volunteers will be assigned before competition starts. If you are not present when instructions are given and volunteers are assigned, there may not be a volunteer spot for you.
- Food is not provided for volunteers. You are welcome to bring a snack, but you cannot stop to eat during your shift unless there is a break.
- Water will be available at all venues.





THINGS TO REMEMBER CONT'D

- You are responsible for your personal possessions.
- Check weather reports and dress appropriately & comfortably (t-shirt, tennis shoes, etc.)
- Competition goes on rain or shine so please plan on volunteering even if it rains. In cases of extreme weather, competitions may be delayed slightly or moved to a new location (you will be notified if competition has been moved).
- Make sure to stay for your ENTIRE shift. Interruptions can cause major delays in competition. You are a vital part of how well the competitions run.



**THANK YOU SO MUCH
FOR VOLUNTEERING AT OUR
STATE SUMMER GAMES!!
WE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO PROVIDE
QUALITY EVENTS FOR OUR ATHLETES
IF IT WASN'T FOR YOU!**

For questions or concerns, please contact
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BE A FAN. BRING OUT THE CHAMPION IN EVERYONE.