



Athlete and Unified Sports Partner Advancement to Higher Levels of Competition
(We follow the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules)

Advancement Protocol

- Special Olympics North America awards sports and events for USA Games, and Special Olympics International awards sports and events for Special Olympics World Games. The Local Organizing Committee may choose to add a sport that is a part of that locale.
- Special Olympics invites state Programs to apply for sport and event quotas.
- Based on sports, events and participation, SONH applies for specific sports and event quotas.
- SONA and SOI approve state Program quotas for their respective Games based on interest and participation.

Eligibility for Advancement

- SONH determines gender and category for each sport and event.
- Training and competition must be in the same sport the athlete will participate in at the next level of competition.
- Special Olympics New Hampshire identifies the number of athletes or teams eligible for advancement within the sport and/or event based on participation in competition at the lower level.

Procedure for Athlete and Team Selection

- Special Olympics New Hampshire, working with the Games Organizing Committee, determines the number of athletes or teams that will be allowed to participate at the competition by sport and/or event. This is the quota to be filled.
- For the individual sports, athletes are selected based on random draw of the gold medal winners. If the quota is more than gold medal winners the procedure is followed with silver medal winners and so on.
- For the team sports, athletes are selected based on tryouts.
- If the number of eligible athletes or teams does not exceed the quota, all athletes and teams shall advance.
- If the number of eligible athletes or teams exceeds the quota, athletes or teams that advance shall be selected as follows:
 - Priority is given to first-place finishers from all qualified divisions of the sport and/or event. If the number of first-place finishers exceeds the quota, athletes are selected to advance by random draw.
 - If there are not enough first-place finishers to fill the quota, all first-place finishers shall advance. The remaining quota shall be filled by a random draw of second place finishers from all qualified divisions of the sport and/or event.
 - If the quota is large enough for all second-place finishers to advance, the remaining quota shall be filled by a random draw of third place finishers from all qualified divisions of the sport and/or event.
- Repeat this process, adding each place of finish as necessary, until the quota is filled.
- Once selected, athletes, partners and their families must commit and sign off to being a member of the team and fulfill its requirements from 2024 through 2026.

Unified Sports

- Every athlete and partner interested in competing in the 2026 USA Games must train and compete in 2024 and selection will be based on advancement protocol above. This will help SONH determine its quota request.
- For the team sports, athletes and partners must participate in tryouts.
- Once selected, athletes and partners must train and compete together in 2024 and 2025 to become a “team.”