

Cross Country Skiing Rules

Valid through 2027

Special Olympics
New Hampshire



Special Olympics New Hampshire has created this set of rules based on the rules outlined by Special Olympics International as well as the International Ski Federation (FIS), which is the international governing body for Cross Country Skiing.

These rules shall be used to govern all Special Olympics New Hampshire Cross Country Skiing competition through the end of 2027 when we next review these rules.

Events Offered

Category 1

- 10 M Walk
- 15 M Walk
- 20 M Walk
- 25 M Walk

Category 2

- 50 M
- 100 M
- 200 M
- 400 M
- 4x100 M Relay
- 4x100 M Unified Sports Relay

Category 3

- 500 M
- 1 KM
- 3 KM
- 5 KM
- 7.5 KM
- 10 KM

Registration

- An athlete may only compete in one category above.
- An athlete may compete in up to four events (not including time trials).
 - Note: For Category 3 athletes, event makeup may consist of up to four events 5 KM and under or three events 5 KM and under and choice of either 7.5 KM or 10 KM.
 - The relay counts as one event.
- A relay team can register one alternate athlete and/or one alternate partner.

Divisioning

- Each category will be divisioned separately.
- Divisions will be created using only ability level (not age or gender).

Equipment

- Competitors must wear assigned bib in a position visible to officials at all times. The bib shall be worn over the athlete's head, so the number shows on both their front and back. The bib is attached with two anchors, one on the left, and the other on the right side of the athlete, connecting the front and back.
- All competitors must use cross-country skis and poles.

Competition

COURSE LAYOUT

- For races 200 meters and below, the course will be on a straightaway.
- For any event 400 meters or longer, the course will be in a loop. In case of minimal snow for events 400 meters or less, the course will be set according to the snow conditions.

- Lanes will be approximately two meters wide.
- A long-distance course shall offer a variety of terrain.
- The start and finish lines for each course will be marked in the snow with either a red or a blue line.

RACE PROCEDURE

- For events ranging from the 400-meter race through the 10-kilometer race, the start command shall be as follows: “Racer...15 seconds...10 seconds...5, 4, 3, 2, 1. GO!”
- For events ranging from 200 meters or less, the start command shall be: “Racers ready. 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Go!” with a flag drop.
- Competitor has finished the race when his/her boots reach the vertical plane of the finish line.
- Interval start format (releasing one or two racers every 30 seconds) will be used for events 500 meters or longer.

RELAY PROCEDURE

- The designated exchange zone for relay races is 20 meters long, and the incoming racer must touch the outgoing racer with a hand in the exchange area.

Disqualification

A competitor may be disqualified for violating these rules. Common causes for disqualification include:

- Intentionally or improperly interfering with another competitor.
- Preventing another competitor from passing.
- Pacing of competitors - Pacing is defined as moving along with, ahead of, just behind or next to a competitor for more than 3 meters by persons not participating in the same race or use of any kind of timing device used to advise the competitor of their race time.
- Leaving the designated course area.
- Making two false starts:
 - Any competitor starting before the start signal is given will be charged with a false start.
 - A false start occurs when a competitor significantly moves any body part before the start signal after coming to a still set position after the “Racers ready” command and before the starting signal.
 - An official should identify and notify the competitor that is charged with a false start.
 - Any competitor making two false starts in the same race will be disqualified from that race.
- Making an improper exchange touch, i.e., outside of the designated relay exchange zone, or not touching within the designated exchange zone.
- Crossing the finish line without both skis on his/her feet.
- Receives unauthorized assistance.