

Powerlifting Rules

2024

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 Powerlifting Federation (IPF), which is the international governing body for Powerlifting.

These rules shall be used to govern all Special Olympics New Hampshire Powerlifting competition through the end of 2025 when we next review these rules.

Events Offered

- Squat
- Bench Press
- Deadlift
- Combination (Bench Press and Dead Lift) or
- Combination (Bench Press, Dead Lift, and Squat)

Registration

- Competitors must be at least 14 years of age to compete.
- Competitors can participate in a maximum of 4 events.
- All coaches must submit a level (weight category) at the close of the registration period for each of their athletes prior to the on-site weigh-in.

Divisioning

- Athletes are placed in divisions according to weight class based on the weigh-in. Bodyweight categories are as follows in the table below.
- The IPF Formula (<https://goodlift.info/public/gl-calc/gl-calc.html>) should be used when there are not enough athletes to have at least three athletes per weight class or to place the combined score of an athlete and partner for Special Olympics Unified Sports® powerlifting.

MALE		FEMALE	
Kilograms	Pounds	Kilograms	Pounds
53 kg	116.75 lb	43 kg	94.75 lb
59 kg	130 lb	47 kg	103.5 lb
66 kg	145.5 lb	52 kg	114.50 lb
74 kg	163 lb	57 kg	125.50 lb
83 kg	183 lb	63 kg	139 lb
93 kg	205 lb	69 kg	152 lb
105 kg	231.5 lb	76 kg	167.50 lb
120 kg	264.5 lb	84 kg	185 lb
120+ kg	264.75+ lb	84+ kg	185.25+ lb

Equipment

- Athletes are required to wear a lifting suit.
- Athletes with physical disabilities (e.g., wheelchair, cerebral palsy, amputees), may wear a two-piece outfit both upper and lower pieces being form fitting; either snug-fitting track trousers or snug-fitting shorts may be worn.
- Athletes are required to wear sneakers or powerlifting/weightlifting boots.
- Lifting with prostheses is allowed and orthosis with shoes will be allowed.
- An undershirt (t-shirt) of any color must be worn under the lifting suit by all competitors during the performance of the squat, bench press, and deadlift.
- A weightlifting belt made of leather, vinyl, nylon or other similar non-stretch or non-metal (other than the buckle and stud attachments materials) may be worn on the outside of the suit.
 - Dimensions:
 - Width: a maximum of 10 centimeters
 - Thickness: a maximum of 13 millimeters.
 - Belts may not encircle the body more than once and shall not have additional padding.
- Wraps may be worn on the wrist. Maximum width shall be 8cm and maximum length 1m.
- Knee wraps or bandages not exceeding 2m in length and 8cm in width may be used.
- Only wraps or bandages of a one ply commercially woven elastic covered with cotton or a combination of both can be worn.
- Bandages of rubber or rubberized substitutes are strictly forbidden.
- Socks may be worn. They may be of any color or colors and may have manufacturer's logos. They shall not be of such length on the leg that they come into contact with the knee wraps or kneecap supporter. Full length leg stockings, tights or hose are strictly forbidden. Shin length socks must be worn to cover and protect the shins while performing the deadlift.
- The use of oil, grease or other lubricants is forbidden.
- Scales must be of an electronic digital type and register to the second place of decimals. They must have the capacity to weigh up to 180kg. A scales certificate to accompany the scales must be current to within one year of the date of the competition.
- Bars and Discs:
 - For all powerlifting contests organized under the rules of the IPF, only disc barbells are permitted.
 - The bar shall not be changed during the competition unless it is bent or damaged in some way as determined by the Powerlifting Competition Director or Referees.
 - Bars to be used at all IPF Championships shall not be chromed on the knurling.
 - The bar shall be straight and well knurled and grooved and shall conform to the following dimensions:
 - The total overall length not to exceed 2.2m.
 - Distance between the collar faces is not to exceed 1.32m or be less than 1.31m.
 - Diameter of the bar is not to exceed 29mm or be less than 28mm.

- Weight of the bar and collars are to be 25kg.
- Diameter of the sleeve not to exceed 52mm or be less than 50mm.
- There shall be a diameter machined marking, or the bar taped so as to measure 81cm between marking tape.
- An athlete may have the option of using a 15kg bar for the bench press only. This bar may be used up to the point that the 20kg bar can be used by the athlete. The bar will have the following characteristics and measurements:
 - Weight: 15kg
 - Length: 201cm
 - Outer Ends (sleeves): 5cm diameter/32cm long and must rotate
 - Grip section: 2.5cm diameter/131cm long
 - Two (knurled) grip sections spaced 42cm apart with non-knurled 0.5cm strip, 19.5cm from inner sleeves. Clip collars can be used for 15kg bar.
- Discs shall conform as follows: All discs used in competition must weigh within 0.25 percent or 10 grams of their face value.
 - The hole size in the middle of the disc must not exceed 53mm or be less than 52mm.
 - Discs must be within the following range: 1.25kg, 2.5kg, 5kg, 10kg, 15kg, 20kg and 25kg.
 - For record purposes, lighter discs may be used to achieve a weight of at least 0.5kg more than the existing record.
 - Discs weighing 20kg and over must not exceed 6cm in thickness. Discs weighing 15kg and under must not exceed 3cm in thickness. Rubber discs do not have to conform to the stated thickness.
 - Discs must conform to the following color code: 10kg and under-any color, 15kg-yellow, 20kg-blue, 25kg-red.
 - All discs must be clearly marked with their weight and loaded in the sequence of heavier discs innermost with the smaller discs in descending weight arranged so that the referees can read the weight on each disc.
 - The first and heaviest discs loaded on the bar must be loaded face in; with the rest of the discs loaded face out.
 - The diameter of the largest discs shall not be more than 45cm.
 - Rubber or rubber covered discs are acceptable provided there is a minimum of 10cm from the outside of the collars to the end of the bar, for spotter grip outside of the discs.
- Collars shall always be used and must weigh 2.5kg each.
- Squat racks shall be designed to adjust from a minimum height of 1.00m in the lowest position to extend to a height of at least 1.70m in 5cm increments.
 - All hydraulic racks must be capable of being secured at the required height by means of pins.

- Bench shall conform to the following dimensions:
 - Length: not less than 1.22m and shall be flat and level.
 - Width: not less than 29cm and not exceeding 32cm.
 - Height: not less than 42cm and not exceeding 45cm measured from the floor to the top of the padded surface of the bench without it being depressed or compacted. The height of the uprights, which must be adjustable, shall be a minimum of 75cm to a maximum of 110cm measured from the floor to the bar rest position.
 - Minimum width between insides of bar rests shall be 1.10m.
 - The head of the bench shall extend 22cm beyond the center of the uprights with a tolerance of 5cm either way.
 - Attached safety stands must be used in all events.
 - Minimum height of Safety Rack shall be 36cm, having 10 holes in increments of 2.5cm and 40cm in length
 - Disabled Flat Level Bench: Length: 2.1m overall, Head end width: 30.5cm, Height: 45-50cm, Main body width: 61cm.
- Lights
 - A system of lights shall be provided whereby the referees make known their decisions. A system of lights similar to those used in weightlifting may be used, whereby when a referee detects an infraction, he activates his control. If a majority activates their control a buzzer sounds, and the lifter knows that his lift has failed. He is not then required to finish the attempt.
 - Each referee will control a white and red light. These two colors represent a “good lift” and “no lift”, respectively.
- Failure Cards
 - After the lights have been activated and appeared, the referee(s) will raise a card or paddle or activate a light system to make known the reason(s) why the lift has been failed.
 - See following visual for more detail:

Referees numbered card system - reason for failure.

Color of the cards:
 Failure no. 1 = red card
 Failure no. 2 = blue card
 Failure no. 3 = yellow card



SQUAT	BENCH PRESS	DEADLIFT
<p>1. (red) Failure to bend the knees and lower the body until the top surface of the legs at the hip joint is lower than the top of the knees.</p>	<p>1. (red) Bar is not lowered to chest or abdominal area i.e. not reaching the chest or abdominal area, or is touching the belt.</p>	<p>1. (red) Failure to lock the knees straight at the completion of the lift.</p> <p>Failure to stand erect with the shoulders back.</p>
<p>2. (blue) Failure to assume an upright position with the knees locked at the commencement and at the completion of the lift.</p> <p>Double bouncing or more than one recovery attempt at the bottom of the lift or any downward movement during the ascent.</p>	<p>2. (blue) Any downward movement of the whole of the bar in the course of being pressed out.</p> <p>Failure to press the bar to straight arm length, elbows locked at the completion of the lift.</p>	<p>2. (blue) Any downward movement of the bar before it reaches the final position. If the bar settles as the shoulders come back this should not be reason to disqualify the lift.</p> <p>Supporting the bar on the thighs during the performance of the lift. If the bar edges up the thighs but is not supported, this is not reason for disqualification.</p>

<p>3. (yellow) Stepping backward or forward or moving the feet laterally. Rocking the feet between the ball and heel is permitted.</p> <p>Failure to observe the Chief Referees signals at the commencement or completion of the lift.</p> <p>Contact with bar or lifter by the spotters/loaders between the Chief Referee’s signals, in order to make the lift easier.</p> <p>Contact of elbows or upper arms with the legs, which has supported and been of aid to the lifter. Slight contact that is of no aid may be ignored.</p> <p>Any dropping or dumping of the bar after completion of the lift.</p> <p>Failure to comply with any of the requirements contained in the general description of the lift, which precedes this list of disqualification.</p>	<p>3. (yellow) Heaving, or sinking the bar after it has been motionless on the chest or abdominal area, in such a way as to aid the lifter.</p> <p>Failure to observe the Chief Referees signals at the commencement, during or completion of the lift.</p> <p>Any change in the elected lifting position during the lift proper, i.e. any raising movement of the head, shoulders or buttocks from their original points of contact with the bench, or lateral movement of the hands on the bar.</p> <p>Contact with the bar or the lifter by the spotters/loaders between the Chief Referees signals, in order to make the lift easier.</p> <p>Any contact of the lifters feet with the bench or its supports.</p> <p>Deliberate contact between the bar and the bar rest supports during the lift in order to make the lift easier.</p> <p>Failure to comply with any of the requirements contained in the general description of the lift, which precedes this list of disqualification.</p>	<p>3. (yellow) Lowering the bar before receiving the Chief Referee’s signal.</p> <p>Allowing the bar to return to the platform without maintaining control with both hands, i.e. releasing the bar from the palms of the hand.</p> <p>Stepping backward or forward or moving the feet laterally. Rocking the feet between the ball and heel is permitted. Foot movement after the command “Down” will not be cause for failure. Failure to comply with any of the requirements contained in the general description of the lift, which precedes this list of disqualification</p>
--	---	--

Competition

GENERAL RULES

- An athlete's weight category must be declared during registration period.
- Athletes must weigh-in 1 hour prior to the start of competition.
- Each competitor shall be allowed a period of one minute from the calling of his/her name to the starting of the attempt. If the delay exceeds one minute, the attempt shall be forfeited. The clock shall stop when the lifter starts the lift properly. Lifters with anatomical (physical) disabilities (should be noted on the top of the Speakers card at the time of the weigh-in) will be granted extra time, up to three minutes if needed.
- First round attempts will be submitted at the weigh-in.
- A lifter must submit his/her second or third attempts within one minute of completing his/her proceeding attempt. The one minute will begin from the time the lights are activated. If no weight is submitted within the one-minute time allowance, the lifter will be granted a 2.5kg increase on his/her next attempt. Should the lifter have failed his/her previous attempt, and not submitted weight for a further attempt within the one-minute time allowance, then the bar will be loaded to the failed weight.
- Three unsuccessful attempts in any of the lifts will automatically eliminate the lifter from a combination event.
- Scoring of the events shall be the maximum weight lifted for each event and a total combination maximum weight for all events.

POWERLIFTS AND RULES OF PERFORMANCE

- Squat
 - The lifter shall face the front of the platform. The bar shall be held horizontally across the shoulders, hands and fingers gripping the bar. The hands may be positioned anywhere on the bar inside or in contact with the inner collars.
 - After removing the bar from the racks, (the lifter may be aided in removal of the bar from the racks by the spotters/loaders) the lifter must move backwards to establish the starting position. When the lifter is motionless, erect (slight deviation is allowable) with knees locked, the Chief Referee will give the signal to begin the lift. The signal shall consist of a downward movement of the arm and the audible command "squat". Before receiving the signal to "squat" the lifter may make any position adjustments within the rules, without penalty. For reasons of safety the lifter will be requested to "replace" the bar, together with a backward movement of the arm, if after a period of five (5) seconds he/she is not in the correct position to begin the lift. The Chief Referee will then convey the reason why the signal was not given.
 - Upon receiving the Chief Referee's signal, the lifter must bend the knees and lower the body until the top surface of the legs at the hip joint is lower than the top of the knees. Only one decent attempt is allowed. The attempt is deemed to have commenced when the lifters knees have locked.
 - The lifter must recover at will to an upright position with the knees locked. Double bouncing at the bottom of the squat attempt or any downward movement, is not permitted. When the lifter is motionless (in apparent final position) the Chief Referee will

- give the signal to rack the bar.
- The signal to rack the bar will consist of a backward motion of the arm and the audible command “rack”. The lifter must then return the bar to the racks. Foot movement after the rack signal will not be cause for failure. For reasons of safety, the lifter may request the aid of the spotter/loaders in returning the bar to, and placing it in the racks. The lifter must stay with the bar during this process.
- Not more than five (5) and not less than two (2) spotters/loaders shall be on the platform at any time. The referees may decide the number of spotters/loaders required on the platform at any time two (2), three (3), four (4) or five (5).
- Causes for disqualification of a squat:
 - Failure to observe the Chief Referee’s signals at the commencement or completion of a lift.
 - Double bouncing at the bottom of the lift, or any downward movement during the ascent. Failure to assume an upright position with the knees locked at the commencement or completion of the lift.
 - Stepping backward or forward or moving feet laterally. Rocking the feet between the ball and heel is permitted.
 - Failure to bend the knees and lower the body until the top surface of the legs at the hip joint is lower than the top of the knees, as in diagram below.
 - Contact with the bar or the lifter by the spotters/loaders between the Chief Referee’s signals in order to make the lift easier.
- Note - An athlete with Down syndrome who has been diagnosed with Atlanto-axial Instability may not participate in the squat lift in powerlifting.
- Bench Press
 - The bench press shall be placed on the platform with the head facing the front or angled up to 45 degrees.
 - The lifter must lie on his/her back with head, shoulders and buttocks in contact with the bench surface. The feet must be flat on the floor (as flat as the shape of the shoe will allow). His/her hands and fingers must grip the bar positioned in the rack stands with a thumbs around grip. This position shall be maintained throughout the lift. Foot movement is permissible but must remain flat on the platform. The hair must not hide the back of the head when lying down on the bench. The Jury or Referees may require the lifter to affix his/her hair accordingly.
 - To achieve firm footing the lifter may use flat surfaced plates, or blocks not exceeding 30cm in total height and a minimum dimension of 60cm x 40cm, to build up the surface of the platform. Blocks in the range of 5cm, 10cm, 20cm and 30cm, should be made available for foot placement at all international competitions.
 - Not more than five (5) and not less than two (2) spotters/loaders shall be on the platform at any time. After correctly positioning his/herself, the lifter may enlist the help of the spotters/loaders in removing the bar from the racks. The lift off, if assisted, by the spotters/loaders must be at arms’ length.
 - The spacing of the hands shall not exceed 81cm measured between the forefingers (both forefingers must be within the 81cm marks and the whole of the forefingers must be in contact with the 81cm marks if maximum grip is used). The use of the reverse grip is forbidden.

- After removing the bar from the racks, with or without help of the spotters/loaders, the lifter shall wait with straight arms, elbows locked, for the Chief Referee's signal. The signal shall be given as soon as the lifter is motionless and the bar properly positioned. For reasons of safety, the lifter will be requested to "replace" the bar, together with a backward movement of the arm, if after a period of five (5) seconds, he is not in the correct position to begin the lift. The Chief Referee will convey the reason of why the signal was not given.
- The signal to begin the attempt shall consist of a downward movement of the arm together with the audible command "start".
- After receiving the signal, the lifter must lower the bar to the chest or abdominal area (the bar shall not touch the belt), hold it motionless, after which the Chief Referee will signal the audible command "press". The lifter must then return the bar to straight arms' length, elbows locked. When held motionless in this position, the audible command "rack" shall be given together with a backward motion of the arm. If the bar is lowered to the belt or does not touch the chest or abdominal area, the Chief Referee's command is "rack".
- Lifters with physical disabilities shall be given the opportunity to use either the standard or the special bench for disabled lifters. The hands must grip the bar with the thumbs around the grip, thus locking the safely in the hands. The use of the reverse grip is forbidden. Lifters with physical disabilities may be strapped to the bench from the ankles to the hips using a strapping belt not to exceed 10cm in width.
- Causes for disqualification of a bench press:
 - Failure to observe the Chief Referee's signals at the commencement, during or completion of the lift.
 - Any change in the elected lifting position during the proper lift, i.e. any raising movement of the head, shoulders, or buttocks from the bench, or lateral movement of hands on the bar.
 - Heaving, or sinking the bar into the chest or abdominal area after it is motionless in such a way as to make the lift easier.
 - Any downward movement of the whole bar in the course of being pressed out.
 - Bar is not lowered to chest or abdominal area, i.e. not reaching the chest or abdominal area, or the bar is touching the belt.
 - Failure to press the bar to straight arms' length, elbows locked, at the completion of the lift.
 - Contact with the bar or the lifter by the spotters/loaders between the Chief Referee's signals, in order to make the lift easier.
 - Any contact of the lifter's feet with the bench or its supports.
 - Deliberate contact between the bar and the bar rests support.
 - Failure to comply with any of the items outlined under the Rules of Performance.
- Deadlift
 - The lifter shall face the front of the platform with the bar laid horizontally in front of the lifter's feet, gripped with an optional grip in both hands and lifted until the lifter is standing erect.
 - On completion of the lift, the knees shall be locked in a straight position and the shoulders back.
 - The Chief Referee's signal shall consist of a downward movement of the arm and audible

command “down”. The signal will not be given until the bar is held motionless and the lifter is in the apparent finished position.

- Any rising of the bar or any deliberate attempt to do so will count as an attempt. Once the attempt has begun no downward movement is allowed until the lifter reaches the erect position with the knees locked. If the bar settles as the shoulders come back (slightly downward on completion) this should not be the reason to disqualify the lift.
- Causes of Disqualification of a Deadlift:
 - Any downward movement of the bar before it reaches the final position.
 - Failure to stand with the shoulders back.
 - Failure to lock the knees straight at the completion of the lift.
 - Supporting the bar on the thighs during the performance of the lift. If the bar edges up the thigh, but is not supported, this is not reason for disqualification. The lifter should benefit in all decisions of doubt made by the referee.
 - Stepping backward or forward or moving the feet laterally. Rocking the feet between the ball and heel is permitted. Foot movement after the command “down” will not be cause for failure.
 - Lowering the bar before receiving the Chief Referee’s signal.
 - Allowing the bar to return to the platform without maintaining control with both hands, i.e. releasing the bar from the palms of the hand.
 - Failure to comply with any of the items outlined under Rules of Performance.
- Combination Divisions
 - An athlete is required to compete in the bench press and dead lift combination, or the squat, bench press and deadlift combination to qualify for final score in the combination event.
 - An athlete’s final score is calculated by adding together the maximum weight he/she successfully lifted in the bench press and dead lift, or the squat, bench press and dead lift. Three unsuccessful attempts in any of the lifts will automatically eliminate the lifter from a Combination Event.

Disqualification

- Failure to comply with any of the requirements contained in the rules will result in disqualification.
- On the completion of an attempt, a lifter shall leave the platform within 30 seconds; failure to comply with this rule may result in disqualification of the attempt at the discretion of the referees.