



**SONM Return To Play Protocols
Questions and Answers**

Q: What sports can delegations participate in from July 1st - September 30th ?

A: None of the SONM sports are currently “in season”. Delegations that decide to begin training can choose to train in any sport as long as the protocols are met. Remember, there is no shared equipment and team sports can only focus on individual skill development. It is recommended that delegations focus on general fitness and conditioning and helping athletes with their virtual games training and score submission.

Q: How many times do Athletes/Unified Partners/Coaches/Volunteers/Spectators need to sign the COVID-19 Code of Conduct and Risk Assessment Form?

A: The COVID-19 Code of Conduct and Risk Assessment Form **ONCE** regardless of how many seasons, or sports they participate in.

Q: How do I keep track of who has signed the COVID-19 Code of Conduct and Risk Assessment Form?

A: By utilizing the Screening and Tracking form provided on the website you can keep track of who has signed the COVID-19 Code of Conduct and Risk Assessment Form.

Q: What do I do with the COVID-19 Code of Conduct and Risk Assessment Forms once they are signed?

A: Once you have collected signed forms, please submit them to the SONM State Office. You can scan and email them to Chrispage@sonm.org or Jena@sonm.org or you can mail them to the office at Attn: Sports office, 6600 Palomas Ave NE Suite 207, Albuquerque, NM 87109. The forms can also be faxed to: (505) 856-0346.

Q: How often do I need to complete the Screening and Tracking Form? Do I need a new form for each practice and why do I have to do this?

A: The Screening and Tracking form for each practice/gathering you hold under the name of Special Olympics New Mexico. New forms must be used every time you gather in any capacity. This form is extremely important because should positive case COVID-19 be linked to an SONM practice session, the New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) will require these forms as the first step in contact tracing which is an important part of analyzing how this virus spreads. Being able to document who an individual has had contact with, where that contact takes place and how long that interaction lasted over multiple weeks is extremely valuable in developing ways to eradicate this virus.

Q: On the Screening and Tracking Form it says “contact information”, what exactly do I put there?

A: You will need to put any contact information you can gather, address, phone number and email address. If you already have the information requested for athletes and key volunteers and it is readily accessible, then you do not need to complete that information each time. For all other’s the information should be included for each in-person training session.

Q: Where can I find Sport Specific information in regards to how to run a practice using the new guidelines?

A: You can find all resources related to Return to Play, including the Sport Specific Guidelines, on the Special Olympics New Mexico website. www.sonm.org

Q: Can we still do fundraising events?

A: Yes, Local programs can still have fundraising events as long as they are following the return to play guidelines.

- Comply with the maximum number of people in each phase
- Maintaining a social distance of at least 6ft
- All attendees using facial coverings
- Please see the rest of the return to play guidelines to ensure you are in compliance.

Q: Does the limit on the number of people at events/practices/competitions include volunteers or is this only athletes?

A: The maximum number of people laid out in the guidelines includes all personnel, athletes, Unified Partners, Coaches, Volunteers, Local Coordinators, Staff, Parents, and Spectators.

- Phase 1 – 10 or less (No Spectators)
- Phase 2 – 50 or less
- Phase 3 – No restrictions on group size

(Remember, New Mexico is still under an Executive Health Order that limits gatherings to 5 people)

Q: When the New Mexico Governor lifts group gathering restrictions and we can meet with more people in a group. Can we move into Phase 1?

A: When the Governor makes these changes we will not move into the coinciding phase for SONM for 2-4 weeks after her changes have been made. There will be an announcement from SONM in regards to when a phase can be moved in to.

Q: If an athlete has a doctor's note stating they can't wear a mask, can they still participate?

A: Facial Coverings must be worn at all times, unless athletes/Unified Partners are actively participating in a sport activity. However, if there is an athlete who has a medical reason they cannot wear a facial covering, then they will need to have a note from their doctor and the note needs to be given to the Head Coach/Local Coordinator.

Q: If we have to take everyone's temperature when they come to practice and ensure they have a mask, where can we purchase the needed PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)

A: Taking each participants temperature is required under the Screening and Tracking section of the Return to Play Protocols. Since this new requirement has been implemented after SONM athletes have already engaged in the SONM Virtual Games, delegations will be allowed to ask each participant if they have a fever until thermometers can be obtained. SONM and SONA are currently working with distributors to obtain all of the needed equipment and PPE needed at "reasonable" rates.

Q: Do all participants have to have their own equipment?

A: There is no shared equipment permitted under the new protocols. All athletes and Unified Partners must use their own equipment. However, in a case like bocce, if the pallina is sanitized after each frame and the athlete/partner use the same ball on each frame for the entire game, the risk of shared equipment can be mitigated to an acceptable level.

Q: If we are using multiple fields during a practice, can we have more than 10 people at the facility as a whole?

A: If you are utilizing a facility that has multiple fields, Local Coordinators may spread out individuals into groups that comply with the maximum number of people. You must ensure that there will not be large gatherings in the common areas of the facility, such as the parking lot, bathrooms, etc. If you have the ability to be at a facility with multiple fields,

we suggest scheduling groups with separate start, drop off, transition, and end times so you can minimize the chance of any larger gatherings.

(Before scheduling training time at any outdoor facility, indoor facilities are not allowed at this time, make sure to know what sanitation and mitigation measure the facility management has implemented so you can appropriately plan for a safe training environment.)

Q: I have someone on my team who is refusing to wear a mask, and they cannot produce a doctors note saying they have a medical reason they shouldn't wear one. What should I do?

A: As the Local Coordinator you can tell Athletes/Unified Partners/Volunteers/Parents and Spectators, if they refuse to wear a mask they are not allowed to participate, wearing a mask is a condition of participation under the Return to Play Protocols and a team rule.

Q: There is no way I can follow these guidelines at this time. We don't have the space or volunteers to screen everyone at a practice, we don't have a way to get enough PPE if people forget their own, I'm afraid to get people together at this time, what should I do? Can I say we are not participating till a certain phase is obtained?

A: Absolutely, this is your team and you choose what your team is capable of taking on in regards to the guidelines. Meeting the requirements of the Return to Play Protocols is the very first step in deciding whether or not to begin training. If you cannot meet these requirements, then you are not prepared then you cannot provide a safe training environment and should not move forward with in-person training and should focus on virtual training and events.

Q: What if someone on my team meets one or more of the High Risk categories, are they not allowed to participate with our team till Phase 3?

A: The High Risk Protocols are not meant to be exclusionary. These protocols are in place to protect those at high risk, not from contracting an infection but from **dying** from COVID-19. If you have a participant in any role who meets criteria to be considered High Risk you will need ensure they are **Strongly Advised** not to participate in in-person training and to continue participation in virtual events. Explain the different phases and go over in detail the COVID-19 Code of Conduct and Risk Assessment Form. If you believe they truly understand the risk to themselves and they want to continue to participate then they are allowed to participate.

Q: When I go to look at the Sport Specific Guidelines the sport I need is not there, it does not link to the material why?

A: We are currently developing the guidelines for each sport, as they become available they will be uploaded into the website.