

**SNOWSHOEING****SNOWSHOEING**

The Official Special Olympics Rules shall govern all Special Olympics Snowshoeing competitions. Special Olympics, Inc. is the International Governing Body for Snowshoeing.

SECTION A – OFFICIAL EVENTS

The following is a list of official events available in Special Olympics.

The range of events is intended to offer competition opportunities for athletes of all abilities. Programs may determine the events offered and, if required, guidelines for the management of those events. Coaches are responsible for providing training and event selection appropriate to each athlete's skill and interest.

1. 25 Meter Race
2. 50 Meter Race
3. 100 Meter Race
4. 200 Meter Race
5. 400 Meter Race
6. 800 Meter Race
7. 1600 Meter Race
8. 5K Race
9. 10K Race
10. 4 x 100 Meter Relay Race
11. 4 x 400 Meter Relay Race
12. 4 x 100 Meter Unified Sports® Relay Race
13. 4 x 400 Meter Unified Sports® Relay Race

SECTION B – FACILITIES

1. The track course is a 400 meter continuous loop with a course width of at least 1 meter for each competitor in a race. The 400 meter track loop should be relatively flat. The course should be prepared so that conditions are similar for all parts of the track. The direction of competing shall be left-hand inside.

A long distance course shall offer a variety of terrain and loops around the area for distances of 1600 meters and longer.

2. Event specific layout should include the following.
 - a. 25, 50 and 100 Meter Races. Run on a straight area of the course or on a separate course to allow for events to run concurrently. Lanes should be marked and delineated on the track for the 25, 50 and 100 meter events. These lanes should be at least one meter wide each with wider lanes up to 1.7 meters wide being preferable.
 - b. 200 Meter Race. Run over a portion of the 400 meter course.
 - c. 400 Meter Race. Run one lap of the entire 400 meter course.
 - d. 800 Meter Race. Run two laps on the 400 meter course.



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- e. 1600 Meter Race. Run over varied terrain and may use the 400 meter loop as a start and finish.
- f. 5K and 10K Races. Run on varied terrain on a trail.
- g. 4 x 100 Meter Relays. Run over 400 meter course with 3 exchange zones. Each zone will be 20m in length and clearly marked. The start of the zone shall be nearest to the starting line.
- h. 4 x 400 Meter Relays. Run over 400 meter course with 1 exchange zone. The exchange zone will be 20m in length and clearly marked. The start of the zone will be nearest to the starting line.

SECTION C – EQUIPMENT

1. The snowshoe frame itself shall not be smaller than 20.32 cm x 63.5 cm (8 inches x 25 inches). This measurement shall be taken from the longest point of the snowshoe and at the widest point of the snowshoe. This measurement will be taken in two dimensions. The snowshoe frame measurement will not be taken along a curved line. Snowshoes shall have frames with at least 2 points on them a minimum of 20.32 cm apart (width) and at least 2 points on them a minimum of 63.5 cm apart (length). These measurements are taken in 2 straight lines in 2 perpendicular dimensions.
2. Factory installed toe and heel traction claws are acceptable. The attachment of any additional "spikes" is not permitted.
3. The snowshoe shall consist of a frame and webbing or solid decking material.
4. The foot must be secured through a direct mount binding system to the snowshoe.
5. Competition footwear may include, but not limited to running shoes, hiking boots or snow boots. All competitors are required to wear footwear.
6. The use of poles is optional.
7. Athletes should wear the same style, brand, type, size (or pair) of snowshoes and type of clothing throughout a competition.

SECTION D – PERSONNEL

1. Officials
 - a. Chief of Course
 - b. Chief of Race
 - c. Starting Line Judge
 - d. Assistant Starting Line Judge
 - e. Finish Line Judge
 - f. Field Judge

NOTE: Technical Delegates or other Officials may be added for larger events.



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2. Official Duties

- a. The chief of course is responsible for maintaining proper track dimensions and conditions.
- b. The chief of race oversees the competition and ensures that the equipment is legal and the race specifications are in agreement with the official rules.
- c. The starting line judge gives the start signal once the competitors have lined up. The starting line judge decides whether a start is good or false.
- d. The assistant starting line judge stands ten (10) meters from the starting line and stops the athletes from continuing the race if a false start is declared.
- e. The finish line judge registers the times and race number of the competitors as they cross the finish line.
- f. Field judges assigned to positions along the course to oversee the progression of the race and monitor compliance with rule on progress in SECTION E.4.c and SECTION E.4.d.

SECTION E – RULES OF COMPETITION

1. All snowshoes will be measured and checked by an official prior to each competition.
2. Competitors must wear their assigned number in a position visible to the officials at all times.
3. The Start
 - a. At the start of the race, competitors must have both tips of his/her snowshoes behind the starting line, which is identified, in the snow with either color or some form of marking. No part of the competitor's body or clothing can be in contact with the starting line or the snow ahead before the start.
 - b. All supports, such as blocks or holes, which give an athlete an advantage at the start, are prohibited.
 - c. All competitors in each division shall start on the starting line side by side at the same time. There will be no timed interval starts.
 - d. Competitors may begin the race/ leave the start area after the start command "Racers ready – Go."
 - e. Starting command will be as follows:
 - 1) Verbal "Racers Ready" (competitor is expected to hold position).
 - 2) Verbal "Go" or firing of a starting pistol.
 - 3) An additional visual start indicator (flag) may be used to assist athletes with a hearing impairment.
 - f. 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 athlete that is charged with a false start. Any competitor making two false starts in the same race will be disqualified from that race.



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4. The Race

- a. Only the officials and athletes competing in the race are allowed on the course.
- b. When using a curved course, Race Director must insure that all athletes must cover the same distance, either by a waterfall start or other means dictated by the shape of the course.
- c. If during a race a competitor falls, has difficulty with a snowshoe or binding, or leaves the track, he/she has two minutes to correct the problem. In any race 100 meters or longer a competitor must progress at least 20 meters toward the finish line every two minutes. A competitor who fails to adhere to the two-minute limit or receive assistance of any kind shall be disqualified. The closest field judge will be responsible for providing a one-minute warning and timing of the violation.
- d. Officials should allow the competitor 2 minutes to return to the course before intervening, unless the situation poses a safety concern for the competitor or other competitors on the course.
- e. A competitor may not progress forward more than three (3) meters unless they have both snowshoes attached to their feet.
- f. Pacing of competitors is not allowed. 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.
- g. In the 25 m, 50 m and 100 m races, each competitor must keep in the allotted lane from start to finish. Unless a material advantage has been gained, or impedance or interference with another athlete occurs, a competitor shall not be disqualified if he or she leaves the lane
- h. Any competing athlete who jostles or obstructs another athlete, so as to impede his or her progress, shall be liable to disqualification from that event. The action must be judged to be intentional and beyond incidental to result in disqualification. The Referee shall have the authority to order the race to be re-held excluding any disqualified athlete.

Regardless of whether there has been a disqualification, the Referee, in exceptional circumstances, shall also have the authority to order the race to be re-held if he considers it just and reasonable to do so.

5. The Finish

- a. A competitor has finished the race when his/her torso reaches the vertical plane of the finish line. The torso is distinguished from the head, neck, arms, legs, hands and feet.
- b. To be official, a competitor must have both snowshoes on his/her feet when crossing the finish line.

6. Relay Races

- a. The designated exchange zone is the 20 meter long space within the vertical planes extending up from two lines on the track 20 meters apart. The zones shall start and finish at the edges of the zone lines nearest the start line in the running direction.

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- b. A proper exchange (tag/ touch) shall consist of the incoming competitor touching any part of the body of the outgoing competitor with his/her hand. Clothing covering the hand or body will be considered part of that hand or body. Snowshoes are not considered part of the body.
 - c. The tag/touch must occur within the designated exchange zone. The bodies of the athletes may be outside the zone at the time of the touch/ tag. Making the touch/tag outside the exchange zone shall result in disqualification.
 - d. Athletes, before receiving and/or after the touch/ tag should keep in their lanes or zones until the course is clear to avoid obstruction to other athletes. If an athlete willfully impedes a member of another team by running out of position or lane, his or her team shall be disqualified
 - e. The runners in the second, third and fourth legs of the relay races shall, under the direction of a designated official, place themselves in their waiting position in the same order (inside to out) as the order of their respective team members as they complete their legs.
 - h. Unified Sports® relay teams shall be made up of two Special Olympics athletes and two Unified Sports partners. The competitor order in the relay is up to the decision of the coach.
 - i. A relay team consists of 4 competitors, any team with fewer than 4 competitors must forfeit.
 - j. Each competitor must complete one-fourth of the distance of the total relay. No competitor may complete more than one leg of any one relay.
7. Disqualification
- a. A competitor or relay team will be disqualified for the following.
 - 1) Improperly overtaking or impeding another competitor, or in any other way intentionally interfering with another competitor.
 - 2) Preventing another competitor from passing.
 - 3) Leaving the designated the course.
 - 4) Making two false starts.
 - 5) Making an improper exchange on the relay exchange zone.
 - 6) Failing to adhere to progress within the two-minute time limit.
 - 7) Progressing more than three (3) meters without both snowshoes attached to his / her feet.
 - 8) Crossing the finish line without both snowshoes on his / her feet.
 - 9) Receiving physical assistance at any time after he/she crosses the start line to begin the race or before he/she crosses the finish line.
 - 10) Using improper (not approved) snowshoes.
8. Protest Procedures
- a. All protests must be submitted in writing.
 - b. Protests involving the judgment of an official will not be given consideration.