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# Foreword

by Mary Davis, Director, Special Olympics Ireland

Special Olympics Ireland recognises that the welfare of all persons involved in the programme is paramount. This document has been collated in line with the requirements defined by the Irish Sports Council (ISC) and the Sports Council of Northern Ireland (SCNI) in the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland (2000). In addition to this document, the organisation has developed editions relevant to two of its main stakeholder groups; athletes and volunteers.

This Code of Ethics and Good Conduct document is designed to help us to help you to understand how we need to work together to protect and serve all our members; athletes, coaches, volunteers, family and staff members and anyone who works with our athletes.

This code outlines the fundamental principles and addresses issues relating to the roles and responsibilities of all people involved in the programme. It aims to promote best practice and to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for all.

In Special Olympics Ireland we strive to implement best practice in everything we do; from sports training and competition to volunteer recruitment and training whilst at all times ensuring the organisation is athlete centred.

Please take the time to read this document and if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us in Special Olympics Ireland. This literature is designed to inform, enlighten and guard the safety of all our participants.....including you.

Thank you.

**Mary Davis**

Director, Special Olympics Ireland



# Introduction

In 2000 the Irish Sports Council (ISC) and the Sports Council of Northern Ireland (SCNI) published 'The Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland'. It specified that each National Governing Body (NGB) is responsible for overseeing the adoption and implementation of this Code by its affiliated members and outlined guidelines to ensure compliance.

Special Olympics Ireland as an NGB recognises that the welfare of all persons involved in the programme is paramount. Special Olympics Ireland also acknowledges that the primary disability of athletes participating in the programme is learning disability with a number of athletes participating having secondary disabilities e.g. hearing impairment, physical disability.

In the collation of the Special Olympics Ireland Code of Ethics and Good Practice a number of documents have been consulted (see Appendix 1). This code outlines the fundamental principles and addresses issues relating to the roles and responsibilities of all persons<sup>1</sup> involved in the programme. It aims to promote best practice and to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for all.

## Intended Audience

This document is for use by all persons involved in all aspects of the Special Olympics Ireland programme throughout the island of Ireland.

## Nomenclature

For the purpose of this document, the term Learning Disability has been used to refer to mental retardation, intellectual disability, intellectual impairment or mental handicap.

<sup>1</sup> Person/s refers to all athletes, family members/carers, coaches, volunteers, mentors, Special Olympics employees and external facilitators participating or working within the Special Olympics Ireland programme.



# Glossary of Terms

**Advancement:** process by which athletes can progress from one level to the next level of competition.

**Affiliated Group:** any club, centre, school or workshop that is registered with Special Olympics Ireland.

**Anti-doping Officer:** the person appointed in accordance with the requirements of the Sports Council to apply the Irish anti-doping rules.

**Athlete:** an individual who meets Special Olympics eligibility criteria and participates in Special Olympics sports. The term athlete also includes Unified Partners™

**Athlete Leadership Programme (ALPs):** Special Olympics programme that enables athletes to explore opportunities other than taking part in sports training and competition.

**Athlete Protection Officer (APO):** the person appointed in an affiliated group who endeavours to ensure all athletes are protected and kept safe from harm while they are engaged in activities within the organisation and whose particular responsibility is to act as a source of advice on athlete protection matters, to coordinate action and to liaise with the relevant authorities about alleged abuse.

**Club Management Team (CMT):** the team responsible for running an affiliated group effectively and democratically for the benefit of the athletes, in line with Special Olympics Ireland rules and regulations.

**Club Manager:** the leader of the Club Management Team (sometimes known as the Chairperson).

**Coach:** the person who is responsible for training and coaching one or more athletes. At games/events, a coach is the person who has specific athlete supervision or athlete support responsibilities for one to four athletes over a 24 hour period for the duration of the games/events.

**Divisioning:** the process of assigning athletes to groups/divisions prior to competition medal rounds. Athletes are grouped by age, gender and ability in an effort to promote fair and equal competition.

**Employee:** an individual who undertakes work for the benefit of others directly in return for wages and who is employed by Special Olympics Ireland.

**Event:** a single day sports competition or activity that involves athletes and their coaches gathering in one location with the primary aim of participating in a specific sports competition or activity.

**External facilitator:** a person working for Special Olympics Ireland who is neither a volunteer, nor an employee (e.g. an external contractor brought in to build a podium for awards ceremonies).

**Games:** a multi-day sports competition held on a residential basis involving a number of sports and other activities such as entertainment, cultural or educational activities including an opening and closing ceremony.

**Irish Sports Council (ISC):** Ireland's main statutory body dedicated exclusively to the development of sport through supporting and enhancing the capabilities of Ireland's existing sports structures.

**Note:** for the purpose of this document the term Sports Council refers to both the Irish Sports Council and the Sports Council of Northern Ireland.

**Learning Disability:** A person is considered to have a learning disability when the following factors are present: general intellectual functioning is significantly below average; significant deficits exist in adaptive skills and the condition is present from childhood (eighteen years or less) as defined by NAMHI the National Association for People with an Intellectual Disability.

**Mentor:** the partner of an ALPs participant, whose role is to work in partnership with, assist, and support the athlete on whatever task they are undertaking. Mentors must be at a minimum 18 years of age and possesses a basic level of knowledge and experience of working with people with a learning disability.

**National Governing Bodies (NGBs):** the organisations recognised by respective international federations as being responsible for administration of a particular sport on a country wide basis and/or the national body responsible for national games, e.g. Athletics Ireland, Special Olympics Ireland.

**Nominated Person:** the named person from an affiliated group, who attends the particular event or games, and who is responsible for liaising with the Athlete Protection Officer person at that event or games.

**Person(s):** refers to all athletes, family members/ carers, coaches, volunteers, mentors, Special Olympics employees and external facilitators participating or working within the Special Olympics Ireland programme.

**Programme Athlete Protection Officer (National Children's Officer):** the person appointed by Special Olympics Ireland in accordance with Sports Council requirements to ensure that athlete's interests are kept on the agenda of the Governing Body.

**Programme:** is the term that refers to all sporting and non sporting activities carried out under the auspices of Special Olympics Ireland.

**Regional Athlete Protection & Medical Officer (RAPMO):** the person appointed to a regional committee who has the overall responsibility for the direction and management of medical services and athlete protection in the region.

**Regional Development Officer (RDO):** a member of Special Olympics Ireland staff with responsibility

for strengthening and developing Special Olympics operations, events, games and support programmes in the designated region, ensuring that growth is in line with the Special Olympics Ireland strategy. There is an RDO for every region of Special Olympics Ireland.

**Regional Sports Development Officer (RSDO):** a member of Special Olympics Ireland staff with responsibility for building and developing a comprehensive Special Olympics sports programme in their designated region, ensuring that it is in line with the Special Olympics Ireland strategy. There is an RSDO for every region of Special Olympics Ireland.

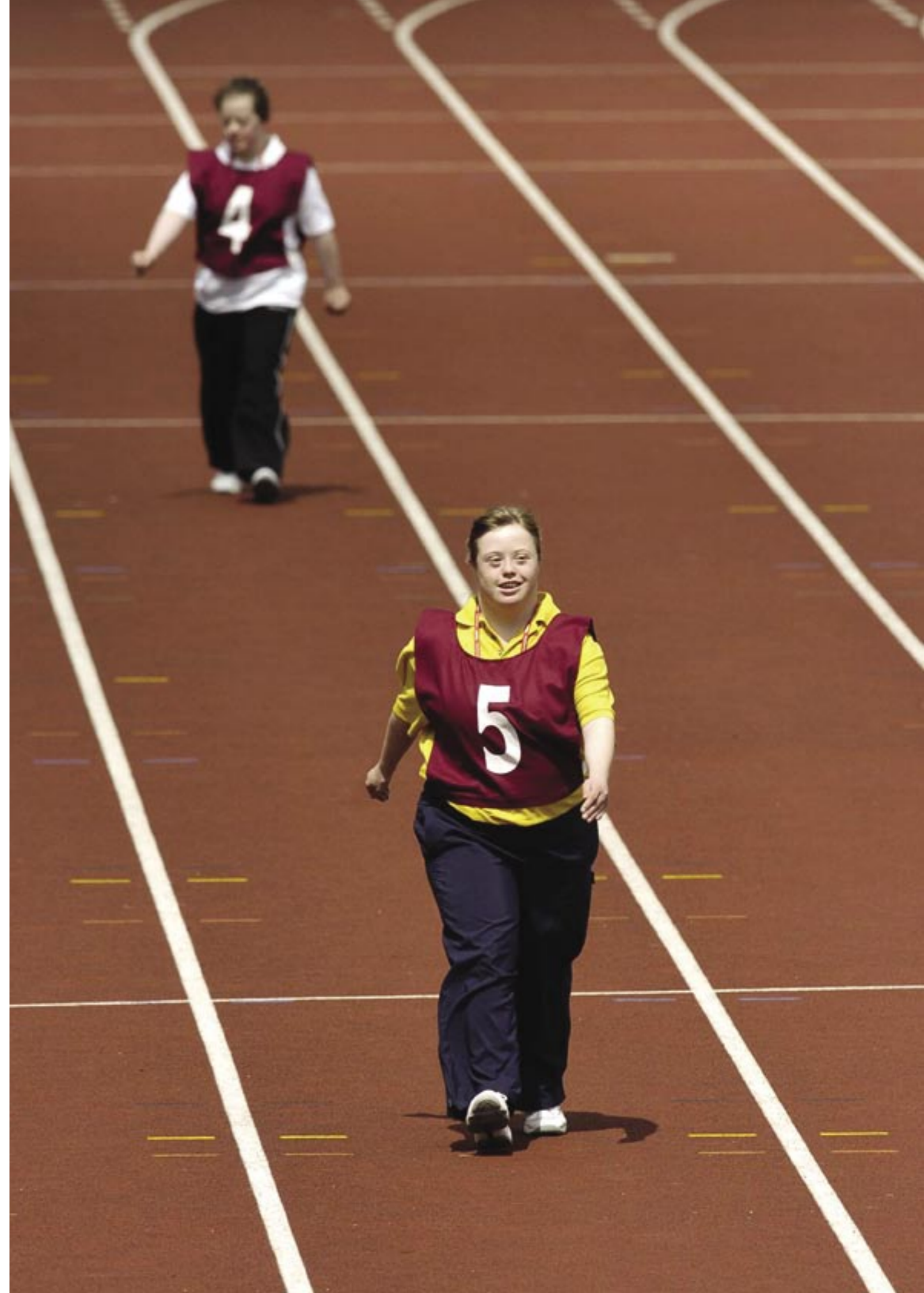
**Regional Director:** the director of any accredited sub-programme/region (e.g. Connaught) of Special Olympics Ireland.

**Relevant Authorities:** existing state bodies with responsibility to manage incidents of abuse or alleged incidents e.g. An Garda Síochána/Police Service of Northern Ireland (see appendices 8 and 9 for specific contact details).

**Sports Council of Northern Ireland:** statutory body dedicated exclusively to the development of sport through supporting and enhancing the capabilities of Northern Ireland's existing sports structures. Note: for the purpose of this document the term Sports Council refers to both the Irish Sports Council and the Sports Council of Northern Ireland.

**Volunteer:** an individual who undertakes work for the benefit of others (outside the immediate family) or the community undertaken by free choice and not directly in return for wages, i.e. coaches, helpers and drivers who are registered with Special Olympics Ireland.

**Unified Partners™:** athletes without a learning disability who train and compete on the same teams as athletes with a learning disability in Special Olympics programmes under the Unified Sports™ Rules.





# 1.0 Ethos & Core Values

The following section identifies for the reader the values and ethos that are central to Special Olympics Ireland and its programme.

## 1.1 Needs of the Athlete

Sport should be

- guided by what is best for the athlete
- conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere
- an athlete-centred approach will help to ensure that participation is the key and that winning and losing are kept in perspective. While competition is an important component it must be kept in perspective particularly in the advancement cycle of events and games.

## 1.2 Equality

All persons should be valued and treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of ability, age, gender, social and ethnic background, religion or political persuasion, with opportunities to foster inclusion encouraged, whenever possible.

## 1.3 Quality of Atmosphere and Ethos

Sports training and competition should be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere. Standards of behaviour and excellence for volunteers and athletes should be akin to those identified by Special Olympics Ireland for games and events.

## 1.4 Fair Play

The principles of fair play should always be emphasised with participation, best effort and enjoyment, rather than winning stressed. Athletes should be encouraged to win in an honest and fair way and to participate honestly and fully in both divisioning and final rounds.

**The European Code of Sports Ethics defines fair play as:**

*'...much more than playing within the rules. It incorporates the concepts of friendship, respect for others and always playing within the right spirit. Fair play is defined as a way of thinking, not just a way*

*of behaving. It incorporates issues concerned with the elimination of cheating, gamesmanship, doping, violence (both physical and verbal), exploitation, unequal opportunities, excessive commercialisation and corruption'.<sup>2</sup>*

## 1.5 Integrity in Relationships

Athletes should be treated with respect, regardless of their ability, and actions should be guided by what is best for the athlete and carried out in the context of respect and open relationships.

## 1.6 Confidentiality

Confidentiality must be maintained in respect to the issues and persons involved concerning the welfare of a person or any bad practice within any element of the Special Olympics Ireland organisation.

## 1.7 Complaints

It is important that the rights of both the person making a complaint, and the person about whom a complaint is being made, are protected. However it must be noted that a guarantee cannot be given that the information offered will be kept absolutely confidential, as the welfare of the person making the complaint will supersede all other considerations.

<sup>2</sup> European Sports Charter and Code of Ethics, Council of Europe, 1993.



# 2.0 People

The organisational and personnel structures of Special Olympics Ireland are outlined below.

## 2.1 Central

A Board of Directors governs the organisation and leads strategy/policy development. The operational activities of the organisation are the responsibility of the Director, Special Olympics Ireland and the Executive Management Team, which consists of Departmental and Regional Directors. The contact details for relevant Central Office people are outlined in Appendix 2 of this document.

The Programme Athlete Protection Officer (PAPO)<sup>3</sup> appointed in accordance with Sports Council requirements is based in Central Office. See Appendix 3 for the roles and responsibilities of the PAPO.

## 2.2 Regional

Currently there are five (5) regions within Special Olympics Ireland: Ulster, Munster, Connaught, Leinster and the Eastern Region. The Central Office supports each of these regions in the delivery of the programme. Each region has a Regional Office and a Regional Committee. The Regional Office team is led by a Regional Director and includes a Regional Sports Development Officer (RSDO), Regional Development Officer (RDO) and administrative support (see Fig 1).

The Regional Office employees and the Regional Committee are responsible for organising and managing the Special Olympics programme in their region. Each Regional Committee has an identified person who is responsible for athlete protection issues and is known as the Regional Athlete Protection & Medical Officer (RAPMO). Contact details for Regional Offices are identified in Appendix 2 and the job specification for the RAPMO identified in Appendix 4.

## 2.3 Local

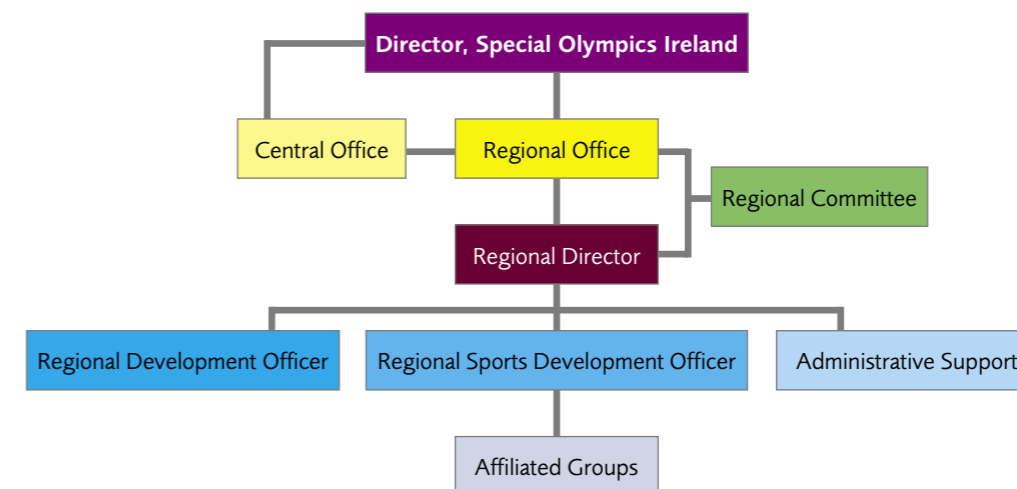
Within the five (5) Special Olympics Ireland regions there are a total of approximately 350 Special Olympics clubs, centres, schools, and workshops collectively known as affiliated groups.

Each affiliated group has

- a management structure and team with collective responsibility for running the programme. A Club Manager, Director of a centre or school principal leads and guides the team
- an Athlete Protection Officer who has responsibility to endeavour to ensure that all athletes involved in the organisation are protected and kept safe from harm while they are engaged in activities within the organisation

<sup>3</sup> The person appointed by Special Olympics Ireland in accordance with the Sports Council requirements to ensure that athletes' interests are kept on the agenda of the Governing Body.

Fig (1) Regional Organisational Structure



## 2.4 Recruitment, Selection and Training

### 2.4.1 Recruitment and Selection

Special Olympics Ireland takes all reasonable steps to ensure that only suitable people are recruited to work with athletes on either a voluntary or paid basis.

All applicants undergo the following recruitment process

- definition of roles of employees and volunteers
- completion of the appropriate written application form
- mandatory reference checks from two non-family referees
- obtaining the applicant's signed permission to provide personal information to Garda Síochána/PSNI/PECS for the purpose of conducting a background security check
- interview (employees only)
- setting a probationary period for employees (usually six (6) months)

The decision to ratify the assignment of a volunteer to an affiliated group is the responsibility of the Club Management Team following these successful checks. In addition to the aforementioned recruitment process, Special Olympics Ireland within the jurisdiction of Northern Ireland, is registered to use and uses the Pre-Employment Consultancy Service (PECS).

### 2.4.2 Training

Special Olympics Ireland is committed to the provision of effective training to volunteers and employees, at the appropriate time, to enable them to perform their roles efficiently and consistently.

There is a determined training path for each volunteer and employee to equip themselves with the necessary skills to perform their role. For example, the volunteer training path is comprised of

- general induction
- Special Olympics Ireland Code of Ethics and Good Practice training

- on site introduction for new volunteers in their chosen role
- job specific training including, as appropriate:
  - sports specific coaching skills
  - affiliate group management team development
  - network training
  - events and games planning
  - competition management
  - committee roles and responsibilities
  - ALPs mentor training
  - family messenger training
- Special Olympics trainer







## 3.0 Code of Conduct

This section provides information on Special Olympics Ireland's Code of Conduct for all persons<sup>1</sup> within the organisation. Appendix 7 provides an overview of learning disability and guidelines on working with people with a learning disability.

### 3.1 Code of Conduct for Athletes (including Unified Partners™)

#### 3.1.1 Athletes and Unified Partners' Rights

They have the rights to

- receive quality coaching from appropriately qualified coaches
- participate in fair and equitable competition
- train and compete in a safe environment
- have access to communication links throughout Special Olympics
- be safe in any aspect of the programme
- appeal a disciplinary action

#### 3.1.2 Athletes and Unified Partners' Code of Conduct

All Special Olympics Ireland athletes and Unified Partners must agree to uphold the following code of conduct

##### Sportsmanship

- practice good sportsmanship and acknowledge the success of others
- play with control and in a manner that brings respect to themselves, to their coaches, and to Special Olympics
- refrain from using bad or offensive language or from physically hurting another athlete

##### Training and competition

- train regularly
- learn and follow the rules of their sport
- listen to the coach/es and the official/s and at the end of competition, thank them and congratulate the winners and other athletes or teams
- always try one's best and participate fully during training and in divisioning and final rounds of competition

##### Responsibility for actions

- not make inappropriate or unwanted physical, verbal or sexual advances on others
- not to bully or verbally abuse others
- abide by the policies and procedures of Special Olympics Ireland
- obey all laws, Special Olympics rules and the National Governing Body rules for their sport

### 3.2 Code of Conduct for Family Members/Carers

**Note:** Family members/carers who are also volunteers, coaches or officials are expected to also adhere to the relevant Codes of Conduct for those areas.

#### 3.2.1 Rights of Family Members/Carers

They have the right to

- know their athlete is safe
- be informed of problems or concerns relating to their athlete
- be informed if their athlete is injured
- have their consent sought for taking their family member on a trip, i.e. a social outing
- through the Special Olympics Ireland, Family Management Team or Regional Families Team, have their opinions heard in relation to relevant Special Olympics issues

#### 3.2.2 Family Members/Carers' Code of Conduct

They have a responsibility to

- remember that athletes are involved in sport for their enjoyment, not the enjoyment of family members/carers
- ensure
  - that all relevant registration forms pertaining to their athlete/s are completed and in date
  - that athletes' coach/es are fully informed of the health status of athlete/s and report any changes in same
  - that appropriate arrangements are made to deliver and collect athlete/s punctually to and from all Special Olympics activities. Inform the coach if the athlete is to be collected early or if there is a change in who will collect the athlete/s
  - that athlete/s are properly and adequately attired for the weather conditions for the time of year

- help athlete/s to work towards skill improvement, good sportsmanship and not force an unwilling athlete to participate in any sport
- encourage athlete/s to play by the rules of his/her sport and teach that honest endeavour is as important as winning
- make sure that athletes are never ridiculed, humiliated or shouted at for making a mistake or losing a match
- set a good example by applauding other athletes and encouraging athletes to have mutual respect for team mates and other athletes
- as a spectator not to use foul or abusive language or harass officials, coaches or other athletes
- accept the official's judgement and recognise the value and importance of volunteers, coaches and officials
- abide by Special Olympics Ireland policies and procedures
- become familiar with Special Olympics advancement and selection procedures

### 3.3 Code of Conduct for Volunteers

#### 3.3.1 Rights of Volunteers

Volunteers have the right to

- be treated with dignity and respect as a co-worker, not just as free help
- be given as much information about the organisation as possible, including information about the athletes (where appropriate) and policies and programmes
- have adequate training provided to ensure he/she completes their roles to the best of their ability
- attend a place of work that is orderly, conducive to work and worthy of the job to be done, safe and compliant with health & safety regulations
- have the freedom to make suggestions and receive good feedback that shows respect for their opinion
- make complaints and have an effective complaints procedure
- be assigned to a role (if possible) that recognises his/her personal preference, life experience, education and employment background as well as recognising the needs of the organisation

#### 3.3.2 Volunteers' Code of Conduct

They have a responsibility to

- comply fully with the registration process and receive clearance from Central Office to work as a volunteer
- ensure that their attitude and behaviour towards the athletes at all times respect the rights, dignity and worth of every human being
- maintain appropriate boundaries and respect the privacy of athletes at all times
- make certain that the physical integrity of the athletes is maintained. This should not preclude any normal spontaneous expressions of warmth or happiness provided they are acceptable to all parties
- be sensitive to the possibility of becoming overly involved or spending a disproportionate amount of time with any particular athlete/s
- ensure that the facilities used for activities with athletes are safe and secure and that appropriate supervision is in place before organising sports and other activities
- ensure that there is access to the following where appropriate for your role and responsibilities:
  - a list of names, addresses and contact numbers for parent/guardian/carer of the athletes in your care
  - up-to-date Athlete Medical Forms and Athlete Consent Forms
  - a telephone for immediate contact to emergency services if required
  - any other relevant information concerning the athletes
- abide by Special Olympics Ireland policies and procedures

#### 3.4 Code of Conduct for Coaches

Coaches are volunteers and have the same rights and responsibilities as volunteers (section 3.3). In addition they have responsibilities towards the athletes they coach and therefore are required to observe the following Coaches' Code of Conduct.

#### 3.4.1 Coaches' Code of Conduct

- Respect for others
  - respect the rights, dignity and worth of athletes, coaches, other volunteers, friends and spectators in Special Olympics
  - treat everyone equally regardless of gender, age, ethnic origin, religion or ability
  - lead by example and be a positive role model for the athletes coached
- Positive experience
  - try to ensure that athletes participating in the Special Olympics programme and its activities have a positive experience
  - respect the talent, developmental stage and goals of each athlete
  - make certain that each athlete competes in events that challenge that athlete's potential and are appropriate to that athlete's ability
  - ensure that he/she performs to the best of the athlete's ability in divisioning and final rounds of competition
  - be fair, considerate and honest with athletes
  - communicate with athletes using simple, clear language
  - ensure that accurate records are maintained and that scores are provided for entry of an athlete/team into any event
- Act professionally and take responsibility for actions
  - thank competition officials, and if clarification is needed, follow the appropriate competition protest and appeals procedure
  - ensure that language, manner, punctuality, preparation and presentation demonstrates highest best practice standards
  - display control, respect, dignity and professionalism to all involved in the sport (athletes, coaches, opponents, officials, administrators, parents, spectators, media, etc.) and encourage athletes to demonstrate the same qualities

- abide by Special Olympics Ireland policies and procedures and obey all Special Olympics Rules, the International Federation and the NGB rules for the sport(s)
  - refrain from any form of abuse towards athletes and others as defined in section 4
  - be alert to any form of abuse from other sources directed towards athletes coached
- Quality services to the athletes
  - encourage athletes to develop skills, sportsmanship, to play for fun and enjoyment
  - seek continual improvement through performance evaluation and ongoing coach education
  - be knowledgeable about the sports rules and skills of the sport(s) coached
  - provide a planned training programme
  - keep copies of the medical, training and competition records for each athlete coached
- Health and safety of the athletes
  - ensure that the equipment, rules, training and the environment are appropriate for the age and ability of the athletes and are safe for use
  - in conjunction with the Medical Co-ordinator review each athlete's medical form and be aware of any limitations on that athlete's participation noted on that form
  - maintain the same interest and support towards sick and injured athletes and encourage athletes to seek medical advice when required

#### 3.5 Code of Conduct for Mentors

Mentors have responsibilities toward athletes in addition to their responsibilities as volunteers (outlined in section 3.3).

### 3.5.1 Mentors' Code of Conduct

They have a responsibility

- to the athlete/s to attend any relevant training sessions, workshops etc.
- to always consider the needs of the athlete first and provide for the general welfare, safety, health and well-being of the athlete/s
- to lead by example;- conduct oneself in an appropriate manner
- to provide appropriate information and assistance when needed
- to work with the athlete to discover and develop their talents thus encouraging the growth of self-confidence and ability
- to listen when the athlete has a problem. Offer guidance if appropriate and confront negative behaviour and attitudes
- to encourage exploration of options for the athlete such as becoming involved in the ALPs Programme and check progress periodically
- to respect each athlete's right to privacy and encourage an open, positive and respectful relationship with the athlete
- to respect the athletes' right to privacy and not permit abusive behaviour as defined in section 4 including ridiculing or bullying
- to ensure that there is no inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others

### 3.6 Code of Conduct for Employees

Special Olympics Ireland employees have the same rights and responsibilities as volunteers and these are outlined below. In addition, each employee signs a written contract agreeing to abide by specified terms and conditions of employment.

#### 3.6.1 Employees' Rights

They have the right to

- be treated as a co-worker and with dignity and respect
- have adequate training provided and be given as much pertinent information about the organisation and athletes to their position
- attend a place of work that complies with the state health & safety regulations

- have the freedom to make suggestions, receive feedback and have contributions recognised
- make complaints and have an effective complaints procedure
- be assigned to a role (if possible) that recognises his/her experience, as well as recognising the needs of the organisation

#### 3.6.2 Employees' Code of Conduct

They have a responsibility to

- comply fully with the recruitment process
- ensure that their attitude and behaviour towards the athlete/s respects their rights, dignity and worth
- ensure that their attitude and behaviour towards volunteers, families members etc. respect their role, rights, dignity and worth
- be sensitive to the possibility of becoming overly involved or spending a disproportionate amount of time with any particular athlete
- ensure that the facilities adhere to the state safety regulations
- ensure that there is access to the following where appropriate for your role and responsibilities:
  - a list of names, addresses and contact numbers for parent/guardian/carer for the athlete/s in employees' care
  - up-to-date Athlete Medical Forms and Athlete Consent Forms
  - a telephone for immediate contact to emergency services if required
  - any other relevant information concerning the athletes
- abide by Special Olympics Ireland policies and procedures

### 3.7 Events and Games – Invitational, European and World

Special Olympics Ireland provides competition opportunities for athletes including Invitational, European and International events and games.

The Games' Organising Committee (GOC) of these events and games will issue the ratio of delegation members i.e; Head of Delegation, Assistant Head

of Delegation and coaches to the number of participating athletes.

The Special Olympics Ireland policy, Appointment of Management Teams, details other functions including sport specific Head Coach and medical support; however the inclusion of any additional person other than that allocated by the GOC has to be requested and if it is granted, it is general practice that a fee would be charged by the GOC to cover this additional cost.

#### 3.7.1 Minimum Requirements of a Management Team

- all volunteers must be officially registered with Special Olympics Ireland
- the ratio of one coach to four athletes will be in accordance with the policy issued by the GOC, but as a minimum will be in accordance with Special Olympics International guidelines of one coach to four athletes
- where additional volunteers are required this request should be made in writing to the GOC
- volunteers should understand that their responsibilities toward the athlete/s on the team is not only applicable on the field of sport, but also throughout the event or games

#### 3.7.2 Guidelines for Accommodation

- the Head of Delegation should obtain details of the type of accommodation being provided by the GOC prior to arrival of the team at the event or games
- same gender athletes may share rooms/dormitories, and where possible similar age groups should be housed together
- as the norm an adult should not share a room with a child (i.e; under 18's), where the presence of an adult is needed there should be more than one child in the room with the adult
- coaches and the support team should be allocated rooms/dormitories as adjacent as possible to their athletes
- if there is a requirement for a coach to share a room with an athlete (to assist with the athlete's

personal requirements), it should be done in consultation with the athlete's family/carer and the coach prior to the team's departure

- coaches should ensure that athletes in their care are familiar with room layout and location of their coach in case of emergency

#### 3.7.3 Guidelines for Affiliated Groups and Athletes

- affiliated groups should nominate eligible athletes for selection understanding that a personal coach or a coach with whom the athlete is familiar with may not necessarily be an official member of the delegation
- affiliated group coaches should support the Management Team in ensuring they have the relevant and necessary information in regard to their athlete to ensure he/she has the best possible opportunity to participate in the event or games
- emergency contact numbers for the athletes should be submitted to the Head of Delegation

More detailed guidelines for volunteers and coaches travelling with teams are available from Special Olympics Ireland Central Office.

### 3.8 Photography and Videography

Special Olympics Ireland has a duty to protect its athletes from inappropriate use of photographic images and video footage.

#### 3.8.1 Rules for volunteers, family members/carers, mentors and employees to remember

- Only use photographs of athletes in suitable dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use of the photograph. In sports such as athletics, aquatics and gymnastics the risk of potential misuse is much greater than in other sports. With these sports the focus of the image should be on the activity rather than the individual athlete.
- respect the privacy of athletes and be aware of the potential misuse of camera phones, videos and cameras inside changing areas, dormitories, showers and toilets

- make certain that the athlete and their parents/guardians understand fully the Athlete Consent Form and the waiver of use of image rights and likeness to the organisation

### 3.8.2 Guidelines for Media Personnel

- official photographers must be issued with identification that must be worn at all times
- accreditations or log name and organisation of the media representative must be recorded and professional identification such as an NUJ (National Union of Journalists) card or business card must be shown
- media personnel must be briefed on the type and content of photographs and code of behaviour
- athletes and parents/guardians must be informed that a photographer will be in attendance at events/games by way of public notice
- unsupervised access to athletes or one to one photo sessions at events/games is not permitted
- photo sessions outside events or at an athlete's home without the presence of a family member, coach, volunteer or Special Olympics Ireland employee is not allowed
- concerns about inappropriate or intrusive photography should be reported to the organiser of the activity and recorded as any other athlete protection concern
- media personnel are free to access and work in all public areas without prejudice at an event

**Note:** The Special Olympics Ireland policy regarding photography and videography of athletes during training, competition, events and games is available from the Regional Offices or Central Office.

## 3.9 Transporting an Athlete

The Special Olympics Ireland policy on the transportation of athletes for non family member does not advocate the transporting of athletes in private cars owned by volunteers and coaches who are not family members of the athlete. However the organisation recognises that there are circumstances where this is an essential element that allows an athlete to participate

in training and competition. In these incidents the following guidelines should be adhered to.

### 3.9.1 Guidelines for volunteers when transporting an athlete

The guidelines are

- a current valid driving licence applicable to the vehicle
- vehicle is insured to carry others in their car
- that the athlete is consulted and is comfortable with the person transporting them
- that athlete is aware of their rights and has someone who can be consulted if they have concerns and fears
- athletes must wear seat belts in accordance with the law
- contact numbers for families/carers must be held by the organiser of the trip and likewise families/carers should have a contact number for the trip organiser if arrangements for collection have to be changed
- volunteers must make it known within their affiliated groups that they are transporting athletes

It is recommended that

- there is an additional adult volunteer in the car
- the driver should always attempt to have more than one athlete in the car
- when leaving an athlete off after a training session, the driver should alternate wherever possible which athlete is last to be dropped off
- written permission for the athlete to travel with a volunteer is obtained from the parent/guardian
- drivers should always have a mobile phone in case of breakdown
- athletes being collected by families/carers from a collection point, should be provided with written instructions to the collection point and time of arrival

## 3.10 Substance Abuse

### 3.10.1 Substance abuse

Special Olympics Ireland prohibits the use of

recreational drugs and substance misuse at all Special Olympics Ireland activities except for those substances medically prescribed.

The above statement is primarily concerned with the non-medical and recreational use of drugs and the risks associated with their misuse.

In the context of substance misuse the meaning of the following terms are identified:

- **recreational use** - denoting the use of drugs for pleasure or leisure purposes
- **substance misuse** - refers to a drug or mood affecting substances, legal or illegal, consumption of which by an individual deteriorates work performance
- **the non-medical use of drugs** - drugs that are only intended for use in medical treatment, and the use of drugs that have no accepted medical purpose.

Substance examples:

**Legal:** alcohol, prescription drugs, tranquilizers and analgesics

**Illegal:** cannabis, ecstasy, amphetamines, LSD, cocaine, heroin

It is the responsibility of all persons involved with the Special Olympics programme to educate and inform those in their care as to the short and long-term effects of substances taken to enhance performances.

Special Olympics Ireland as an NGB has appointed an Anti-doping Officer (see Appendix 2 for contact details) and adopted the anti-doping rules of the Sports Council.

The organisation recognises that

- the well-being of all persons can be put at risk by the misuse of alcohol or other mood altering substances, to such an extent that it adversely affects the person's job performance, their sporting performance or the public image of the organisation

- it has a legal responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for all activities that occur under its auspices

### 3.10.2 Alcohol

In accordance with Special Olympics Ireland Policy and in line with Article 4 Section 4.09 of the General Rules of Special Olympics Incorporated (2004) the service and consumption of alcohol beverage by any person associated with Special Olympics Ireland in particular athletes, volunteers, family members and staff is prohibited during the course of Special Olympics activities in any location being used for training, competition, accommodation or entertainment purposes. The only exception to this policy is events where alcohol is deemed a necessary element. The requirements to serve alcohol at an event are identified within the Special Olympics Ireland Policies available from the Central and Regional offices.

### 3.10.3 Tobacco products

The organisation's tobacco policy, in accordance with Article 4 Section 4.09 of the General Rules of Special Olympics Incorporated (2004) and Public Health tobacco Act 2002 and 2004 states that the use of tobacco products by any person associated with/or attending Special Olympics activities, in particular athletes, volunteers, family members and staff, is prohibited except in a designated smoking area.

## 3.11 Stress and Burnout

*"Burnout may be defined as a process resulting from an activity that was once a source of personal satisfaction but later becomes associated with progressive physical and psychological distress".*

Stress and burnout amongst athletes may result from a combination of factors including increase in the level of training and pressure of high expectations from family members and others. There may be an over emphasis on winning on the part of some family members and coaches, resulting in the athlete experiencing a loss of enthusiasm for

their sport. While the application of the Special Olympics divisioning process offers athletes an equal opportunity in competition, this must be balanced with support and encouragement for effort and achievement.

Due to the public awareness created by the 2003 Special Olympics World Summer Games and the increasing opportunities for athletes to participate in a range of competitive experiences, it is important that all persons involved in the programme take responsibility to educate themselves on the topic of stress and burnout.





## 4.0 Understanding & Recognising Protection and Welfare Concerns

The objectives of this section of the Code is to provide persons<sup>1</sup> involved in all Special Olympics activities<sup>5</sup> with an understanding of some types of abuse and also key information that may assist them should they encounter an incident of alleged abuse.

Special Olympics Ireland acknowledges that there are various categories of abuse; the first four types of abuse outlined below (neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse) are recognised as the principle types of abuse<sup>6</sup>. Material abuse and bullying are additional forms of abuse. Abuse of any type will be dealt with by Special Olympics Ireland in an appropriate manner and by the appropriate professionals in conjunction with the relevant authorities.

The ethos of Special Olympics Ireland encourages

- all persons involved in the programme
  - to report any incidents of non-accidental injury and abuse
  - to use the reporting procedures of the organisation to address this problem
- for affiliated groups/regional committee
  - provide comprehensive supervision of athletes at all activities<sup>5</sup>
  - provide a supportive environment for victims of non-accident injury and any type of abuse as defined below
  - obtain the co-operation of all persons, particularly parents/guardians/carers

### 4.1 Susceptibility to Abuse of a Person with a Learning Disability

People with a learning disability may be more at risk of abuse for the following reasons<sup>6</sup>:

- difficulties in communicating
- sensory disabilities
- vulnerability due to isolation
- dependence on goodwill of carers
- limited ability to recognise inappropriate sexual behaviour
- need for intimate care such as washing and toileting
- contact with multiple care services and carers
- compliant behaviour towards adults
- need for attention, friendship or affection
- limited sense of danger and inability to see warning signs
- fear of not being believed

### 4.2 Neglect

Neglect can occur when there is failure to provide adequate care, nutrition and protection from harm for an individual. This occurs over a period of time rather than one specific occasion. It can be either intentional or unintentional.

Example: A person who suffers a series of minor injuries is not having his or her needs met for supervision and safety.

<sup>5</sup> Activities refer to both sporting and non-sporting activities that are held under the auspices of Special Olympics Ireland.

<sup>6</sup> Reference Children First - National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children, Department of Health and Children, (1999).

### 4.3 Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse occurs when a person's need for affection, approval or safety is not met. Unless other forms of abuse are present, emotional abuse is rarely manifested in terms of physical signs or symptoms.

Examples of emotional abuse include

- expressions of persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming
- under or over-protective of the person
- use of unreasonable or over-harsh disciplinary measures

### 4.4 Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is any form of non-accidental injury that results from wilful or neglectful failure to protect a person.

Examples of physical injury include

- shaking
- use of excessive force in handling
- deliberate poisoning
- allowing or creating substantial risk to a person resulting in significant harm to them
- misuse of medication
- unexplained burns, bites, bruises, broken bones or black eye/s
- burning with cigarettes, scalding water or other hot objects bruises or welts on body or face
- lacerations and abrasions (especially around the mouth, lip, eye, or external genitalia)
- many unusual injuries or injuries that cannot be explained
- seems sad and cries a lot and/or agitation, anger and rage
- human bite mark
- avoids social contact or seem withdrawn
- behaves aggressively
- hard-to-believe stories about how accidents occurred
- loiters at club, displays reluctance to go home
- seems afraid of a parent or other adults

### 4.5 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when another person uses a person for his or her gratification, sexual arousal or for that of others. It involves an abuse of a position of authority and trust for either sexual gratification or intimidation.

**Note:** The definition of child sexual abuse presented in this section is not a legal definition and is not intended to be a description of the criminal offences of sexual assault.

Examples of sexual abuse include

- exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a person
- intentional touching or molesting of the body of a person whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification
- masturbation in the presence of the person or the involvement of the person in an act of masturbation
- non-consensual sexual intercourse with the person whether oral, vaginal or anal
- sexual exploitation of a person
- inciting, encouraging, propositioning, requiring or permitting a person to solicit for, or to engage in prostitution or other sexual acts
- involvement in the exhibition, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual acts, including its recording (on film, video tape, digital camera, mobile phone or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of the image by computer or other means
- consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person<sup>7</sup>.

The decision to initiate protection action in such cases is a matter for professional judgement and each case should be considered individually. Police under the relevant legislation will deal with the criminal aspects of the case.

<sup>7</sup> An underage person for the purpose of criminal law and consensual sexual intercourse is 17 years of age.

### 4.6 Material Abuse

Material abuse is the deliberate exploitation or manipulation of a person's legal or civil rights including misappropriation of monies or property.

Examples of material abuse include

- financial embezzlement, theft of property (direct and indirect)
- mismanagement of monies, misuse of benefits, intimidation and extortion

### 4.7 Bullying

Bullying is behaviour, which is intentionally aggravating and intimidating, and is conducted by an individual or group against others whether it is verbal, psychological or physical.

Examples of bullying include

- teasing
- taunting
- threatening
- hitting
- extortion by one or more individuals against a victim



# 5.0 Managing an Alleged Incident

This section outlines the organisation's management, advisory and support structures and identifies guidelines for reporting incidents and explains the disciplinary processes.

## 5.1 Management Structure

### 5.1.1 Overall Structure

Special Olympics Ireland has identified a management structure to provide guidance for persons who may have reasonable grounds for concern about the safety and welfare of persons involved in the organisation

- at all island level this individual is known as the Programme Athlete Protection Officer (PAPO)
- at regional level this individual is known as the Regional Athlete Protection & Medical Officer (RAPMO)
- at local level each affiliated group; event, games and region will have a designated person called the Athlete Protection Officer (APO)

**Note:** at an event/games the remit of athlete protection i.e; APO will be the responsibility of the Medical Co-ordinator of the event/games.

The management structure is identified in Figure 3 below; the roles and responsibility of each of these officers are outlined in appendices 3, 4, 5.

### 5.1.2 Advisory & Support Team

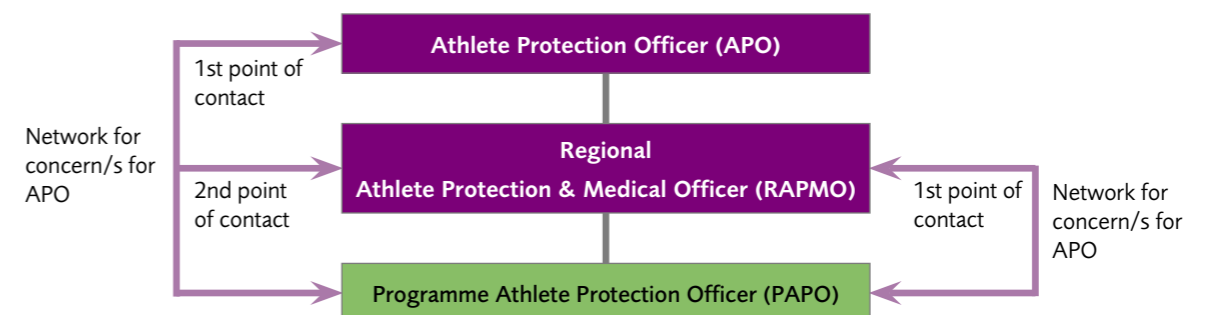
The following sections identify the network of advisory and support teams that is available to an APO. It is important that all incidences are managed in a confidential and professional manner. This is particularly relevant when it is not possible to contact the relevant statutory authorities or if it is outside of weekday office hours.

#### 5.1.2.1 Advisory/Support team to the Athlete Protection Officer

The point/s of advice/support are identified as

- the 1st point of contact for APO is the RAPMO
- the 2nd point of contact for the APO is the PAPO (if unable to contact, the RAPMO)

Fig. (3) Special Olympics Athlete Protection structure and advisory support structure



The Athlete Protection Officer does not have the responsibility of investigating or validating athlete protection concerns and has no counselling or therapeutic role within the affiliated group or at the event or games. These roles are filled by the Statutory Authorities.



### 5.1.2.2 Advisory/Support team to the Regional Athlete Protection & Medical Officer

- The point/s of advice/support is the RAPMO the PAPO

It is recommended that there should be a deputy RAPMO at regional level.

### 5.1.2.3 Advice/support team for an event or games

At a Special Olympics Ireland games/event an Advisory & Support Team is available for consultation and support to the Athlete Protection Officer.

**Note:** The APO at an event or games is the medical manager.

#### Composition of Advisory Support Team

- Programme Athlete Protection Officer (PAPO) Games' Director
- Regional Athlete Protection & Medical Officer (RAPMO) (from the location where the games/event are held)

## 5.2 General Guidelines for Reporting an Incident

### 5.2.1 Who can make an allegation or complaint?

Any person involved in Special Olympics Ireland activities may make a complaint.

### 5.2.2 Grounds for Concern

Special Olympics Ireland has a dual responsibility to both the alleged victim and the person against whom a complaint is made (an athlete, employee or volunteer etc.). The same person will not have responsibility for dealing with both the reporting issues and the disciplinary issues.

#### 5.2.2.1 Establishing Grounds for Concern

Where the complaint is about the behaviour of an employee, volunteer or athlete it is important to establish the grounds for concern, i.e; is the proposed allegation a case of alleged abuse or is it a matter of poor practice or breach of the Code of Conduct/ misconduct?

### 5.2.3 Management of an alleged abuse complaint

The steps for the management of a complaint of an alleged abuse are

- for a complaint made about an alleged incident of abuse by an individual that is from **outside of the Special Olympics** organisation the reporting procedure for External Concern section 5.3.1 and fig 3 should be followed
- for a complaint made about an alleged incident of abuse / poor practice by an individual that is **from within (involved) in the Special Olympics organisation** the reporting procedure for Internal Concern section 5.3.2 and fig 4 should be followed

### 5.2.4 Management of an alleged incident of poor practice

If the incident is one of poor practice or misconduct, the disciplinary complaints and appeals procedures outlined in section 5.4 should be followed.

### 5.2.5 Initial receipt of a report of alleged abuse

If a person becomes aware or suspects that a person is being abused, s/he has a duty to report the situation to the APO in order that the welfare of all persons concerned is protected.

The person receiving the report does not have the responsibility of investigating or validating athlete protection concerns and has no counselling or therapeutic role within the affiliated group or at the event or games. These roles are filled by the Statutory Authorities.

#### It is crucial on receiving a report of alleged abuse to

##### DO:

- stay calm
- allow the person to talk and you listen (where the person making the report does not have speech or writing abilities you should contact the APO to facilitate communication)
- act promptly without undue delay and record the discussion as carefully as possible on the Incident Report Form
- follow the procedures outlined in this document

##### DON'T:

- do not ask leading questions or offer an opinion to the person making the allegation
- do not discuss the details with any person other than those detailed in this document
- do not contact the alleged abuser

### 5.2.6 Nominated Person

At events and games, the parents/guardians/carers of an athlete who makes a complaint may not be readily available to consult to help clarify the facts. A nominated person is the lead person (person in charge) from the affiliated group who is in attendance at the event/games with the athlete.

The nominated person can assist the APO at the venue to clarify the facts of a complaint. It is of paramount importance that all alleged incidences are managed in a confidential manner.

## 5.3 Procedures for Reporting an Alleged Incident

### 5.3.1 External Concerns

When the alleged perpetrator is someone other than a person<sup>1</sup> involved in the Special Olympics Ireland Programme, e.g. external to the organisation, the management of the alleged incident is identified in Figure 3.

### 5.3.2 Internal Concerns

When the individual is someone involved in the Special Olympics Ireland programme, e.g. internal to the organisation, the management of the alleged incident is identified in Figure 4.

APO & relevant personnel decide if there are reasonable grounds for concerns about poor practice/misconduct.

Fig. (3) Management for reporting an alleged External Concern incident

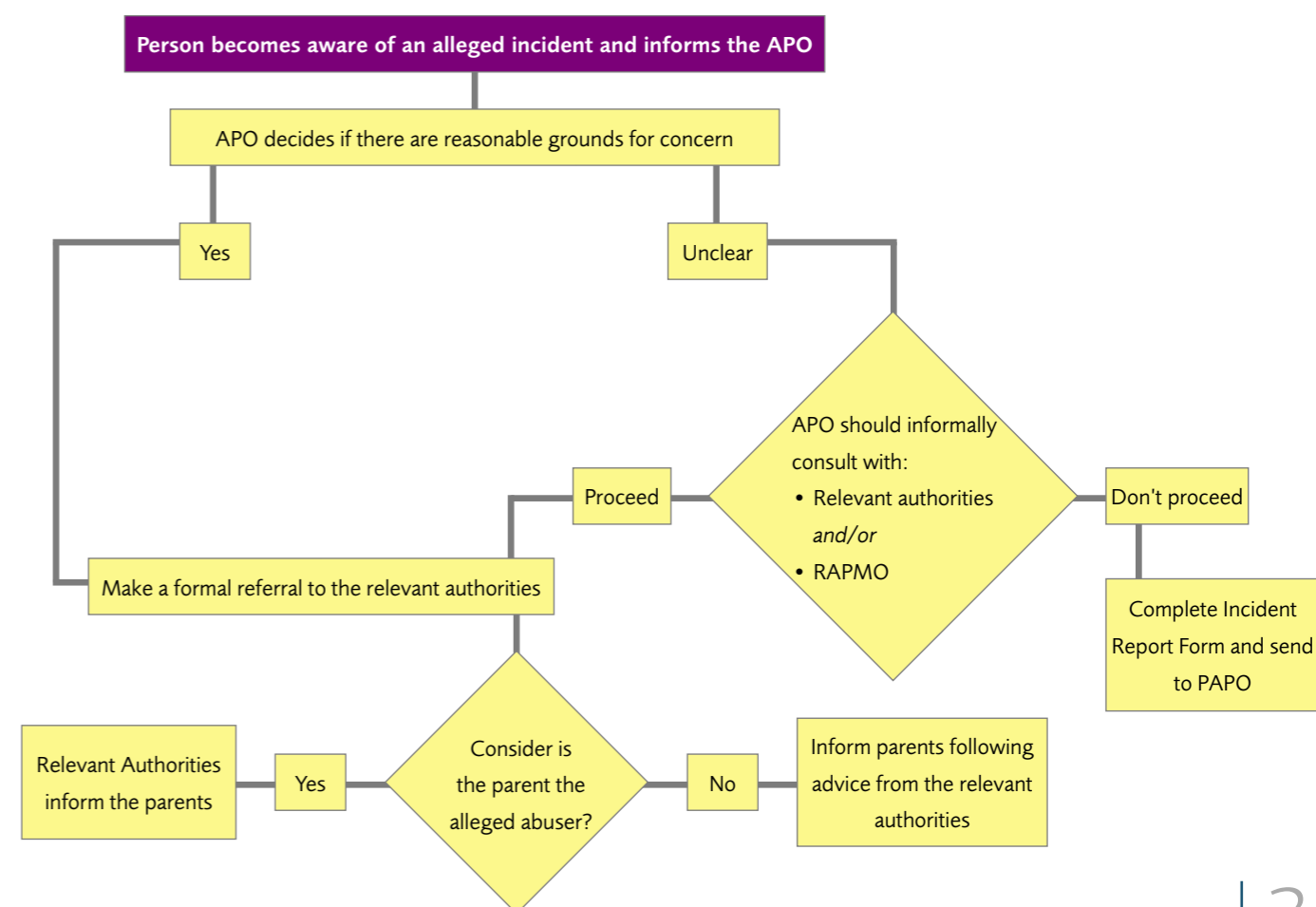
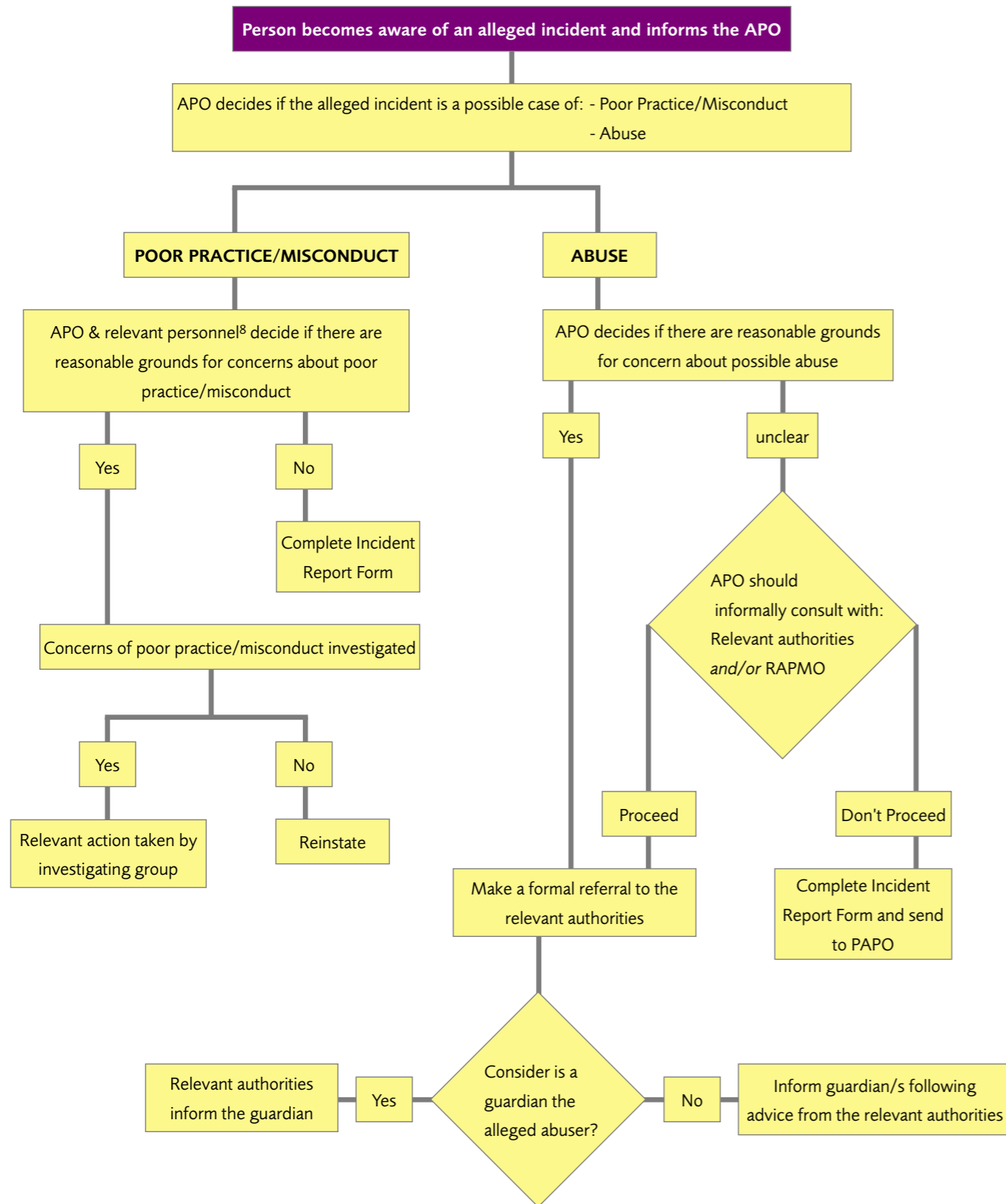


Fig. (4) Management for reporting an alleged Internal Concern incident



<sup>8</sup> For volunteers: This is the Volunteer Co-ordinator and/or Club Management Team, for athletes is the Club Management team or the Event Management Team and for Special Olympics Ireland employees it is the HR Manager.

## 5.4 Disciplinary, Complaints and Appeals Procedure

The following sections identify the system to manage disciplinary, complaints and appeals issues within the organisation.

Issues of this nature for Special Olympics Ireland employees will be managed by the Human Resource Manager and by the Athlete Protection Officer for volunteers and athletes.

The APO will liaise with the PAPO who is responsible to ensure that the relevant person/s within Special Olympics Ireland i.e Volunteer Manager are aware of any incident inclusive of disciplinary, complaints and appeals.

### 5.4.1 Investigations of Complaints and Disciplinary Issues

Investigations within a club/affiliated group will be carried out by the disciplinary committee comprising of the Club Chairman, the Athlete Protection Officer and one other member from the Club Management Team and for an employee by the Human Resource Manager and or Director.

### 5.4.2 Process and Management of Complaints and Disciplinary Issues

- Complaints should be received in writing by the relevant Athlete Protection Officer. In the event that an individual making the complaint is unable to write, the complaint may be verbally given to the Athlete Protection Officer who will record the incident in writing. The record should be read to the individual making the complaint and verbal agreement sought that the written record is accurate.
- The complaint should outline all relevant details about the parties involved.
- If the complaint involves a potential criminal offence (relates to suspected or actual abuse) the Athlete Protection Officer should inform the relevant authorities and PAPO as soon as possible and suspend the individual pending advice from the

relevant authorities (as outlined in the reporting procedures in section 5.3)

- A complaint about poor practice should be brought to the attention of the Athlete Protection Officer who will convene the disciplinary committee.
- The disciplinary committee should hear the case of all parties involved and decide if a rule or regulation has been infringed.
- The committee should inform those involved, in writing, of any sanctions to be imposed. Written notification should be given to parents/guardians if the complaint is against a person under 18 years of age.
- All records must be kept safe and secure on file by the APO.

### 5.4.3 Appeals

All persons have the right of appeal after any stage of the process

- if any party does not agree with the disciplinary committee they can appeal the decision within three (3) working days of receiving notification of the disciplinary action

#### 5.4.3.1 Notification of intent to appeal must be made to the appeals committee

- for affiliated groups this is the Club Chairperson
- for employees this is the Director of Special Olympics Ireland, the Human Resource Manager and/or his/her Director
- the appeals committee chairperson within an affiliated group should be a member of the Club Management Team and those who have not been on the original disciplinary committee
- the appeals committee should confirm or set aside or change any sanction imposed by the disciplinary committee
- the disciplinary code in the General Terms and Conditions of Employment for Special Olympics Ireland employee will be adhered to
- if any party is not satisfied with the outcome, the matter can be referred to Special Olympics

Ireland. However efforts to resolve the matter at local level should be exhausted before Special Olympics Ireland is engaged in attempts to resolve the matter.

### 5.5 Dealing with Rumours and Anonymous Complaints

Anonymous complaints and rumours must always be followed up and clarified. Any such complaints relating to inappropriate behaviour should be brought to the attention of the Athlete Protection Officer. The information should be checked out and handled in a confidential manner.

### 5.6 Record Keeping & Data Protection

#### 5.6.1 Storing Incident Report Forms

All incidents reported are recorded on a Special Olympics Ireland Incident Report Form as outlined in Appendix 6.

**Note:** One copy only of this form should be produced (i.e; the original).

- The PAPO in Central Office will be responsible for the storage of all completed Incident Report Forms.
- Where a decision is taken to report an incident to the relevant authorities, the Incident Report Form may be handed over to the relevant authorities. In this case a copy of all documentation handed over is made and sent to the PAPO for safekeeping. The original Incident Report Form (if not required by the relevant authorities) must also be sent to the PAPO.
- All records of allegations of abuse in the organisation will be kept in one safe, secure environment in Central Office accessible only by the PAPO and the appropriate local Athlete Protection Officer.

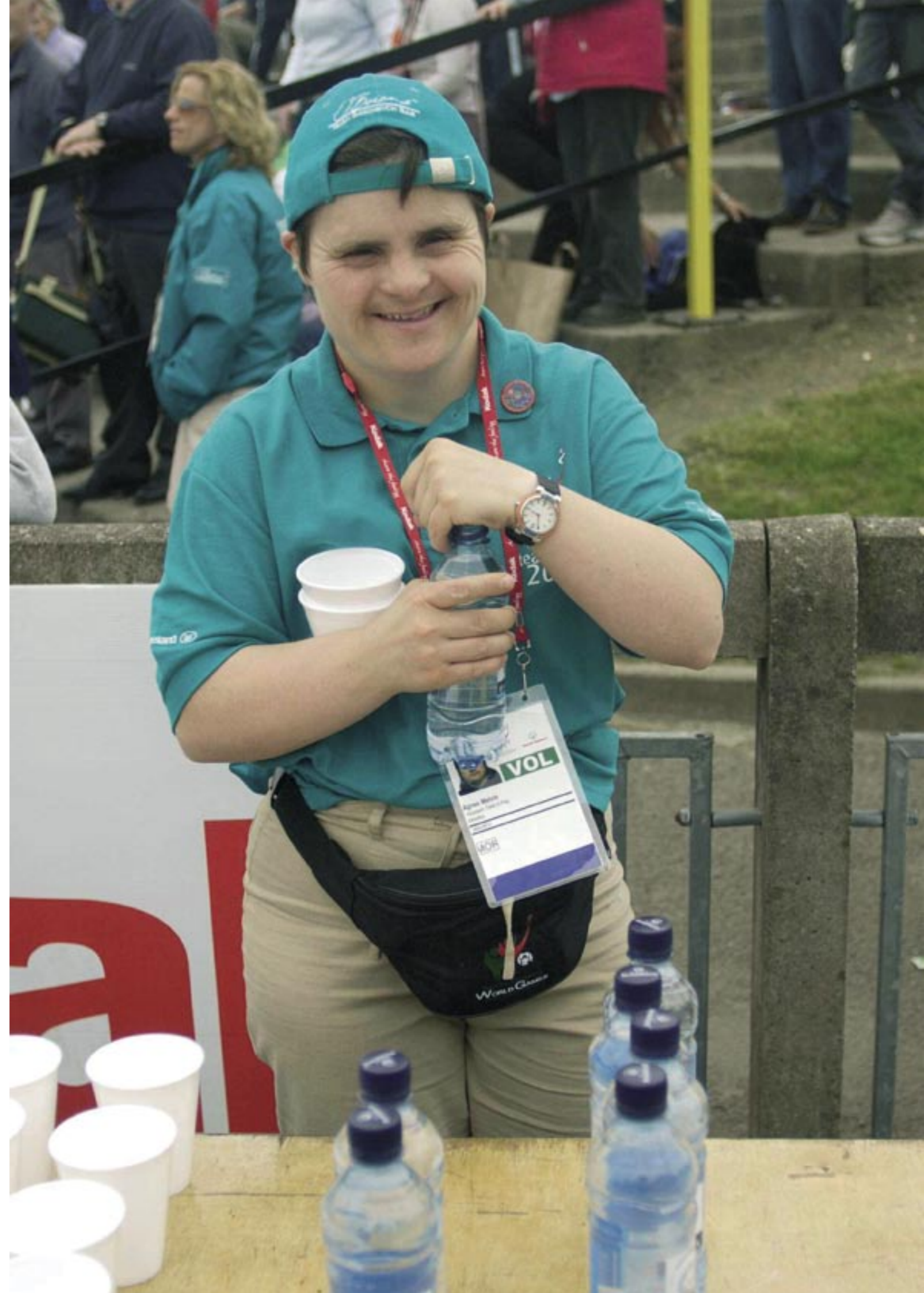
#### 5.6.2 Data Protection

Special Olympics Ireland is committed to ensuring that any information gathered on individuals will be

maintained in line with the Data Protection Act 1988, as amended by the Data Protection Act 2003 in the Republic of Ireland and the Data Protection Act 1998 in Northern Ireland.

To achieve this, the following guidelines will be adhered to

- the organisation will use the same registration form for athletes and application form for volunteers to ensure consistency of information and the athlete/parent/guardian/volunteer will be made aware of why the information is required
- every effort will be made to ensure the information entered on the central database from paper records are accurate and kept up to date
- the paper record will be stored in a secure place and to the same standards as the central database
- the central database will be password protected and will only be accessible by eligible employees or volunteers
- any individual's name and address will not be forwarded to a third party without the prior permission of that individual or their parent/guardian





# 6.0 Support for Persons Concerned

The support structure for the persons with a concern are outlined in the subsequent section.

## 6.1 Person Making the Allegation

It is the policy of Special Olympics Ireland (in consultation with the Health Service Executive (HSE)/ HSS Trust) to provide all necessary support to any person involved in Special Olympics activities that has been the subject of suspected or actual abuse.

The Athlete Protection Officer will immediately ensure the supervision of the person by a confidant while he/she clarifies the facts of the report. The Athlete Protection Officer will make a decision on the extent of support needed and will ensure its implementation.

The Athlete Protection Officer will take the following points into consideration when determining the support required

- the individual's wishes
- the extent to which the person has been affected
- whether or not the person needs to be taken away from the affiliated group/event/games immediately for his/her own safety
- the amount of supervision needed by the person and who will have this responsibility
- future risk to the alleged victim and what measures need to be put in place to prevent a recurrence of this type of abuse
- date for review and evaluation

## 6.2 Person Making the Report

### 6.2.1 The Law of Protection for Persons reporting in Republic of Ireland

The Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act (1998), provides immunity from civil liability to persons who report child abuse "reasonably and in good faith" to the Health Board or An Garda Síochána

- This means that, even if a reported suspicion of child abuse proves unfounded, a plaintiff who took an action would have to prove that the reporter had

not acted reasonably and in good faith in making the report. This Act came into operation on 23 January 1999.

### 6.2.1.1 Provisions of the Act

The main provisions are

- the provision of immunity from civil liability to any person who reports child abuse "reasonably and in good faith" to designated officers of HSEs or any member of An Garda Síochána
- provision of significant protections for employees and registered Special Olympics Ireland volunteers who report child abuse; these protections cover all employees and all forms of discrimination up to and including dismissal
- creation of a new offence of false reporting of child abuse where a person makes a report of child abuse to the appropriate authorities "knowing that statement to be false"; this is a new criminal offence designed to protect innocent persons from malicious reports

### 6.2.2 The Law of Protection for Persons reporting in Northern Ireland

The law referred to in 6.2.1 above does not exist in Northern Ireland, but an individual who reports a concern in 'good faith' is not deliberately attempting to slander another person's name. In Northern Ireland, there is legislation, the Criminal Law Act (1967), which places the responsibility on everybody to report offences or to forward that information to the police by emphasising the, 'duty of every other person, who knows or believes, that the offence or some other arrestable offences has been committed; and that he has information which is likely to secure, or to be material assistance in securing, the apprehension, prosecution or conviction of any person for that offence;'

**NOTE:** The person who reported the allegation (in both legal jurisdictions) will receive support from the Athlete Protection Officer, will be advised on all their rights, and will be reassured they have done the right thing.

## 6.3 Athlete Protection Officer

### 6.3.1 Responsibility

The Athlete Protection Officer is responsible for coordinating the support to athletes, volunteers and parents/guardians affected by a reported incident.

The Athlete Protection Officer through extensive training and consultation with the Advisory & Support Team (section 6.3.2) has the ability and knowledge to make a decision on the extent of support required for each individual incident.

### 6.3.2 Advisory & Support Team available

As mentioned earlier, the Athlete Protection Officer may need advice and support from an experienced person within Special Olympics Ireland regarding athlete protection concerns. Sometimes it is difficult to clarify the facts of an allegation where a person with a learning disability is concerned.

It is important that the Athlete Protection Officer is equipped to deal with a situation and does not feel isolated and vulnerable. The Advisory & Support Team operates in a supportive and advisory role and comprises two persons with extensive experience and knowledge of Special Olympics, learning disability, concerns of abuse and associated issues.

The Advisory and Support Team are

- Regional Athlete Protection & Medical Officer (from the region where the incident is/has occurred)
- Programme Athlete Protection Officer

This team is available for consultation to the Athlete Protection Officer during the affiliated group, event, or games training or competition period. This is particularly important in the Republic of Ireland, as the local Health Board professionals are only contactable from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

### 6.4 Person against whom the allegation is made

Where an allegation of abuse is made against an employee, volunteer or athlete, Special Olympics Ireland will ensure that everyone involved gets a

proper response. This involves making sure that two separate procedures are followed

- the reporting procedure in respect of the person making the allegation
- the procedure for dealing with the person against whom the allegation is made

The same person will not be responsible for dealing with both these issues, they will be managed independently. The primary goal is to protect the alleged victim while taking care to treat the person against whom the allegation is made fairly. Any allegation should be dealt with sensitively.

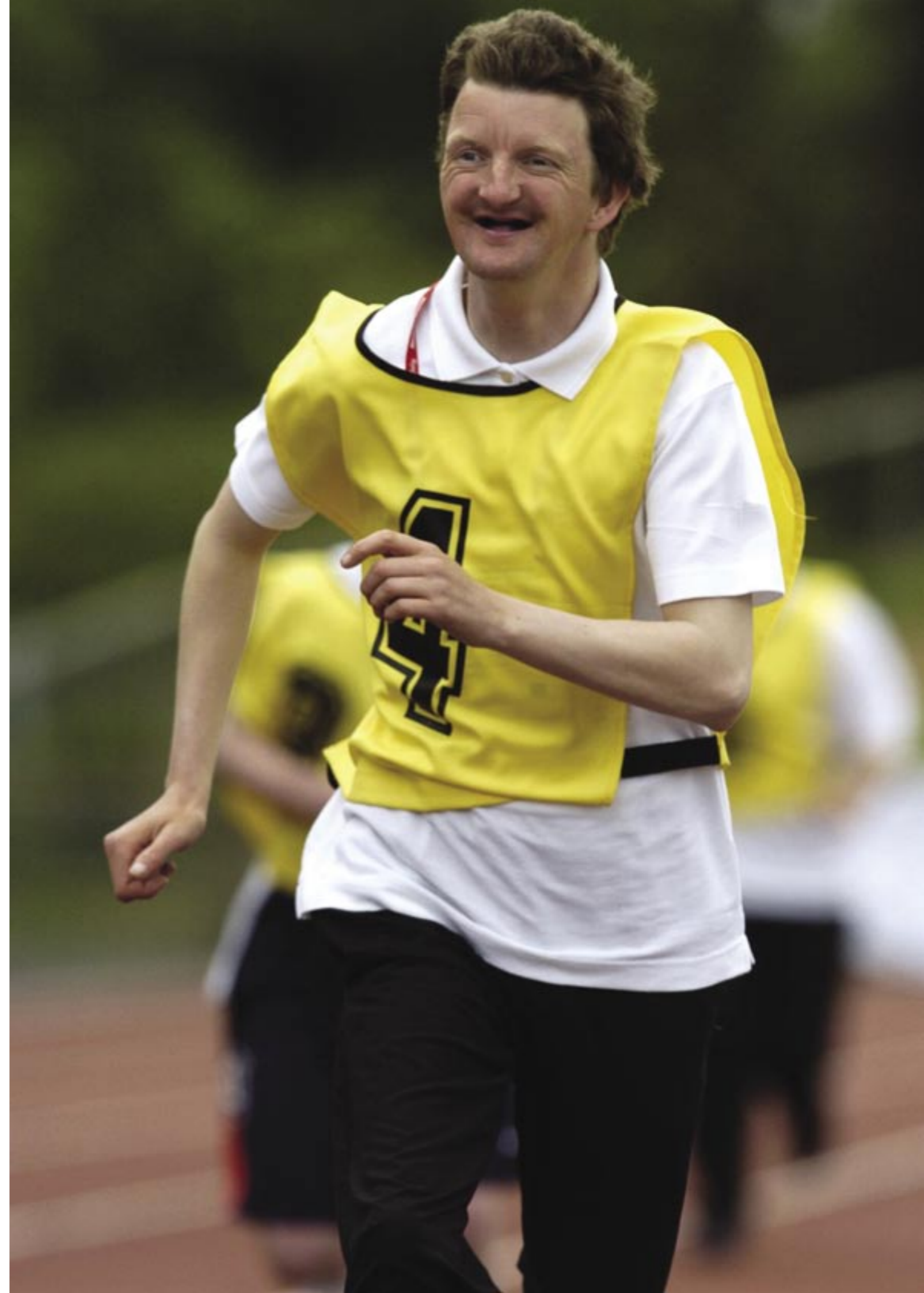
In the case of the alleged abuser, the person managing this issue should consider

- when, where and how to remove the person from his/her position as either a volunteer or an athlete
- the amount of supervision needed by the person, when it will cease and who will have this responsibility
- ensure the person understands the procedures and is informed on their rights under such circumstances
- assess the future risk to the organisation and take measures to minimise this as much as possible
- date for review and evaluation

## 6.5 Training

The day to day operation of the Code of Ethics and Good Practice within Special Olympics Ireland is dependant on providing an efficient training programme to all persons involved. The training module has been developed in association with the Sports Council and the training department within the organisation. It will be delivered by Local Sports Partnership Groups and Special Olympics Ireland trainers.

A minimum of four (4) hours training will be available to all persons involved within the organisation. Additional training will be provided to persons who have key roles in the operation of the Code of Ethics and Good Practice on a day to day basis.





# Appendix 1

## Consultation Documents

Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland: The Irish Sports Council and Sports Council Northern Ireland (2000)

Children First - National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children: Department of Health and Children (1999)

Children (NI) Order (1995)

Co-operating to Safeguarding Children, DHSS&PS (2003)

Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order (2003)

Our Duty to Care Department of Health and Children (2002)

The General Rules Book of Special Olympics International (2004)

# Appendix 2

## Special Olympics Ireland Offices' contact details

### Central Office

Special Olympics Ireland,  
4th Floor, Park House, North Circular Road, Dublin 7,  
Republic of Ireland.

**Tel:** +353 1 8823972

**Fax:** +353 1 8688250

**Email:** info@specialolympics.ie

**Website:** www.specialolympics.ie

Programme Athlete Protection Officer:

**Tel:** +353 1 8691637

**Mobile:** +353 87 6183596

Director, Special Olympics Ireland:

**Tel:** +353 1 8823972

Anti-doping Officer:

**Tel:** +353 1 8691637

**Mobile:** +353 87 6183596

### Connaught

Special Olympics Connaught,  
Methodist Building, Wine Street, Sligo,  
Republic of Ireland.

**Tel:** +353 71 9141200

**Email:** connaught@specialolympics.ie

### Leinster

Special Olympics Leinster,  
Unit 60, Parkwest Enterprise Centre, Nangor Road,  
Dublin 12, Republic of Ireland.

**Tel:** +353 1 6296999

**Email:** leinster@specialolympics.ie

### Munster

Special Olympics Munster,  
Unit 3, Cleve Business Park, Monahan Road, Cork.

**Tel:** +353 021 4977192

**Email:** munster@specialolympics.ie

### Ulster

Special Olympics Ulster,  
7 Silversprings, Market Street, Ballymoney,  
Co. Antrim, BT53 6RD, Northern Ireland.

**Tel:** +44 28 27 668736

**Email:** ulster@specialolympics.ie

### Eastern Region

Special Olympics Eastern Region,  
4th Floor, Park House, North Circular Road,  
Dublin 7, Republic of Ireland.

**Tel:** +353 1 8691622

**Email:** eastern.region@specialolympics.ie

# Appendix 3

## Job Description: Programme Athlete Protection Officer (PAPO)

<b>Job Title:</b>	Programme Athlete Protection Officer (PAPO)
<b>Reporting to:</b>	Health Services Manager
<b>Brief summary:</b>	The Programme Athlete Protection Officer is a member of the Health Services Management Committee. He/she has responsibility for the overall direction and management of athlete protection within the programme.
<b>Term of Office/ Requirements:</b>	<p>The term of office is two years (with the possibility of one further term).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appointment must be approved by the Health Services Manager</li><li>• Minimum 3 years' management experience required, including co-ordinating groups</li><li>• Preferable to have a health related professional qualification (first aid, nurse, physiotherapist etc.) and be currently registered to practice</li><li>• Must be currently registered as a Special Olympics Ireland volunteer</li><li>• Good listening/feedback skills, ability to discuss emotional or sexual matters</li><li>• Minimum age: 21 years</li></ul> <p>It is desirable to have a minimum of two years experience of learning disability, knowledge of Special Olympics and familiarity with the topic of child protection.</p>

### Key tasks & responsibilities

- Plan, manage and audit the introduction and ongoing operation of the Athlete Protection Programme against identified objectives
- Develop, review and update policies and procedures relevant to athlete protection
- Provide a yearly written report on progress to the Health Services Manager
- Communicate with Regional Athlete Protection and Medical Officers (RAPMOs) to ensure widespread dissemination of the Special Olympics Ireland Code of Ethics and Good Practice
- Monitor changes in membership and report unusual dropout in affiliated group athlete numbers
- Act as a point of contact/advisor for RAPMO level for information and for alleged incidents related to athlete protection
- Create and maintain links with health-related agencies and statutory services (e.g. police) to ensure assistance with Special Olympics activities and management of alleged incidents
- Monitor incident reporting to ensure all incidents are recorded and managed, in a confidential manner, following the correct procedures
- Ensure that statutory, legal and mandatory obligations are clearly communicated to volunteers
- Plan and co-ordinate athlete protection training programmes and publicise related education programmes, materials and events
- Act as a liaison between the programme and the Sports Councils
- Attend relevant regional and programme meetings and training (including cross-functional)
- Collate a budget for the Athlete Protection Programme and ensure the effective use of resources

# Appendix 4

## Job Description: Regional Athlete Protection and Medical Officer (RAPMO)

<b>Job Title:</b>	Regional Athlete Protection & Medical Officer (RAPMO)
<b>Reporting to:</b>	Administration: Regional Sports Development Officer Clinical: Programme Athlete Protection Officer
<b>Brief summary:</b>	The Regional Athlete Protection and Medical Officer is a member of the Regional Committee. He/she has responsibility for the overall direction and management of medical services and athlete protection within the region.
<b>Term of Office/ Requirements:</b>	<p>The term of office is two years (with the possibility of one further term).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointment must be approved by the Regional Director and Health Services Manager in consultation with the Regional Chairperson</li> <li>• Minimum 2 years' management experience required, including co-ordinating groups</li> <li>• Preferable to have a health related professional qualification (first aid, nurse, physiotherapist etc.) and be currently registered to practice</li> <li>• Must be currently registered as a Special Olympics Ireland volunteer</li> <li>• Good listening/feedback skills, ability to discuss emotional or sexual matters</li> <li>• Minimum age: 21 years</li> </ul> <p>It is desirable to have a minimum of two years experience of learning disability, knowledge of Special Olympics and familiarity with the topic of child protection.</p>

### Key tasks & responsibilities

- Be familiar with Special Olympics Ireland's Code of Ethics and Good Practice, keep abreast of any changes in policy and provide information as required
- Act as a point of contact/advisor for volunteers at a regional level for information, and for alleged incidents related to athlete protection and for games/events
- Create and maintain links with health-related agencies and statutory services (e.g. police) to ensure assistance with Special Olympics activities and management of alleged incidents
- Be familiar with Special Olympics Ireland policies and procedures, ensuring that relevant Health Services policies and procedures are clearly communicated to volunteers in the region
- Ensure all incidents reported from an affiliated group are recorded and managed, in a confidential manner, following the correct procedures
- Ensure that statutory, legal and mandatory obligations are clearly communicated to volunteers responsible for Special Olympics sporting and non-sporting activities in the region
- Plan and co-ordinate medical and athlete protection training programmes as required in the region
- Develop a sub-committee to provide guidance and operational management expertise to support health and medical-related activities in the region
- To act as a liaison between Special Olympics Ireland Health Services Management Team and Regional programme on medical/health related issues
- Attend relevant regional and programme meetings and training (including cross-functional)
- Collate a budget for health services within the region and ensure the effective use of resources
- Ensure that structures and operational documents are in place for events and games in the region
- Assist with the recruitment, management and training of medical volunteers
- Communicate regularly with APO in clubs, monitor changes in membership and follow up unusual dropout in affiliated group athlete numbers as required

# Appendix 5

## Job Description: Athlete Protection Officer (APO)

<b>Job Title:</b>	Athlete Protection Officer (Clubs)
<b>Reporting to:</b>	Regional Athlete Protection and Medical Officer
<b>Brief summary:</b>	The Athlete Protection Officer (APO), in keeping with Sports Council guidelines, is a member of the Club Management Team. The APO's role is to a) oversee the adoption and implementation of the Code of Ethics & Good Practice by the club's members, b) act as a point of contact for information and for alleged incidents related to athlete protection, and c) liaise with external agencies as required.
<b>Term of Office/ Requirements:</b>	<p>The term of office is two years (with the possibility of one further term).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointment must be approved by the Club Chairperson and Regional Athlete Protection and Medical Officer</li> <li>• Essential to have a health related professional qualification (first aid, nurse, physiotherapist etc) and must be currently registered to practice</li> <li>• Must be currently registered as a Special Olympics Ireland volunteer</li> <li>• Good listening/feedback skills, ability to discuss emotional or sexual matters</li> <li>• Minimum age: 21 years</li> </ul> <p>It is desirable to have a minimum of two years experience of learning disability, knowledge of Special Olympics and familiarity with the topic of child protection.</p>

### Key tasks & responsibilities

- Provide information to members on the Code of Ethics & Good Practice, and on the role and function of the APO
- Act as a point of contact for information and for alleged incidents related to athlete protection, including regular attendance at club sessions (training, meetings, etc)
- Liaise with external agencies, such as health authorities and police services, as required.
- Complete all of the approved training of Special Olympics Ireland, or a similar course/s approved by Special Olympics Ireland, for athlete protection
- Be familiar with Special Olympics Ireland's Code of Ethics and Good Practice and keep abreast of any changes in policy
- Ensure policies & procedures relating to allegations are adhered to and carried out
- Ensure all incidents reported within an affiliated group are recorded and acted upon
- Ensure the confidentiality of all records

An Athlete Protection Officer **DOES NOT** have the responsibility of investigating or validating athlete protection concerns within the club and has no counselling or therapeutic role. These responsibilities lie with the Health Authorities and the Gardaí/PSNI



# Appendix 6

## Incident Report Form

### Incident Report Form

Private and Confidential

- Please read carefully the guidance notes on how to complete this form
- Always remember to maintain maximum confidentiality
- Do not discuss the content of this form with anyone other than the Athlete Protection Officer

#### Part A - To be completed by the person who became aware of the alleged incident

##### 1) Details of person filling out this form (Part A)

Your Affiliated Group or Functional Area (if Event):

First Name:  Surname:

Your Role:  Tel:

Time you became aware of the alleged incident:  Date:

##### 2) Details of the alleged victim

First Name:  Surname:  Male:  Female:

Affiliated Group (if known):

##### 3) What were the circumstances in which you became aware of the alleged incident?

##### 4) Please give details of the exact information given to you by the alleged victim and/or what you saw:

(NB - Do not lead the affected person, write down only what s/he said including date, time, location etc.)

(Please attach additional sheets to this form if you need more space to write on)

##### 5) Who did you pass this form on to?

Name:  Time:

Role:  Date:

Signed:  Time:  Date:

Form should be immediately handed over to the Athlete Protection Officer

#### Part B - To be completed by the Athlete Protection Officer

##### 1) Details of Athlete Protection Officer

First Name:  Surname:

Tel:

Time you become aware of the incident/allegation:  Date:

##### 2) Details of athlete

First Name:  Surname:  Male:  Female:

Address:  Date of Birth:

##### 3) Details of athlete's parents/guardians

Mother's/Guardian's Name:

Address: (if different to athlete's)

Tel:

Father's name:

Address: (if different to athlete's)

Tel:

##### 4) Details of athlete's service provider (if applicable)

Name of Service Provider:

Name of Contact Person:

Tel:

Address of Service Provider:

##### 5) Were there any witnesses?

Yes:  No:

**Witness 1** Name:

Address:

Tel:

**Witness 2** Name:

Address:

Tel:

**6) Details of person(s) allegedly causing concern in relation to the alleged victim (if known)**

First Name:  Surname:  Male:  Female:   
 Address:  Age:   
 Tel:           Relationship to Athlete:

**7) If any relevant authorities or Special Olympics personnel have been contacted please give details:**

(e.g. - Gardai Síochána/PSNI/Health Authorities/Social Worker/Regional APMO, HR Manager etc.)

a. Agency:  Contact Person:   
 Tel:           Time:  Date:        
 Advice received:

b. Agency:  Contact Person:   
 Tel:           Time:  Date:        
 Advice received:

c. Agency:  Contact person:   
 Tel:           Time:  Date:        
 Advice Received:

**8) Did the alleged victim receive any first aid or medical attention?**

Yes  No  If yes, please attach medical encounter form

**9) Have the necessary people been informed?**

Have the athlete's parents/guardian/service provider been informed? Yes  No   
 Informed by:  Location:   
 Time:  Date:

Has the alleged person been informed? Yes  No   
 Informed by:  Location:   
 Time:  Date:

Signed:  Time:  Date:

**Guidance notes:**

**General**

- All information on this form is strictly private and confidential and should always be treated as such
- Form must be completed in **BLOCK CAPITALS** using a black ball point pen
- No questions are to be left blank. If the question does not apply write N/A (non-applicable) as the answer
- All names are to be written with full first name followed by the surname. E.G. JOHN SMITH
- All telephone numbers are to be written in the boxes provided with full country code, followed by area code, followed by the number

e.g.              or

- 'Affiliated Group' refers to the club, centre, workshop or school in which a person is involved  
e.g. 'Ballytown Flyers Special Olympics Club'
- 'Functional Area' refers to the area within an Event or Games that a person is working. e.g. Catering; Event Services; Awards; Staging etc.

**Question Specific**

**Part A**

**Question 4** Do not investigate or ask any questions. Write down only what was said to you or what you saw.

**Part B**

**Question 6** Write down the information on the alleged person only if it is known to you. Do not let the alleged person know of the concern at this point.

**Question 7** The 'contact person' refers to the person within the outside agency whom you dealt with and from whom you received advice.

# Appendix 7:

## Guidelines for Working with People with a Learning Disability

### Definition

Learning Disability involves a greater than average difficulty in learning. A person is considered to have an intellectual disability (ID) when the following factors are present: general intellectual functioning is significantly below average; significant deficits exist in adaptive skills and the condition is present from childhood (eighteen years or less). (NAMHI) ([www.namhi.ie](http://www.namhi.ie)).

### What is general intellectual functioning?

General intellectual functioning is defined as 'an intelligence quotient (IQ) obtained by assessment with one or more of the individually administered standardised general intelligence tests'. Significantly sub-average intellectual functioning is defined as an IQ of 70 or below on an individually administered test.

### What are adaptive skills?

Adaptive skills are those everyday skills needed to live, work and play in the community. They may include but are not limited to: communication, self-care, home living, social skills, health and safety, basic reading and writing and mathematical skills.

An individual who, as a result of an accident or illness, has below average general intellectual functioning and where significant deficits exist in adaptive skill may only participate in a Special Olympics programme when they comply with the criteria identified in Article 6 section 6.01(d) of the Special Olympics General Rules book (2003).

**Note:** The term mental handicap continues to be used by people in Ireland. However, in recent years the term "learning disability" has become increasingly popular. The Department of Health & Children, however, uses the term "intellectual disability". The preferred terminology of Special Olympics Ireland is learning disability.

### Causes

There are two main categories of causes for learning disability which are identified as:

- (a) Genetic causes; ones that originate prior to conception or during the development of the foetus in the early stages of pregnancy
- (b) Environmental causes, such as extreme poverty, malnutrition and inadequate medical care which may effect or may lead to an individual developing a learning disability, as they effect the developing foetus or occur:
  - before the birth of the baby, examples include substance or alcohol abuse by a pregnant mother, bleeding during pregnancy, illness or injury to the mother during pregnancy
  - at the time of the birth of the baby e.g. cerebral palsy
  - after the birth of the baby, examples may include: meningitis, measles, whooping cough and trauma such as head injury

**Note:** In some instances these categories may also overlap.

### Degree of Learning Disability

There are various degrees of learning disability which are subsequently described.

### General Learning Disability

This degree of disability until recently was known as mild learning disability/borderline. Frequently the physical appearance of these individuals is akin to that of the general population and any sensory or motor deficits are slight.

Most will live independently in accommodation like their family home, or in their own houses, apartments/flats with or without supervision. They may need assistance in securing housing and employment or when under some unusual stress. The majority of individuals are able to initiate and

hold conversations and make their needs known. Generally, they can achieve full independence in relation to self-care skills e.g. washing, dressing, and bowel and bladder control.

Many of these individuals will have hobbies, interests, and social relationships like most people. A number of this group may marry and have children. These individuals work in supported/non-supported employment.

### Moderate Learning Disability

Individuals within this group can talk or learn to communicate. Individuals can care for themselves with some supervision i.e. they may need to be reminded to change clothes or they may need help in cooking basic meals.

Many of these individuals will attend special education schools for both primary and secondary education. Following this many attend training centres to attain employment skills. Such facilities frequently provide employment for these individuals for their adult lives. As adults they can usually undertake simple or routine work and find their way about within their local environment.

They live either in supervised accommodation within their own home or within healthcare services.

### Severe Learning Disability

In pre-school years their development is delayed. Some may eventually acquire some skills to look after themselves although under supervision. They may also be able to communicate in a simple way. As adults they can undertake simple tasks.

### Profound Learning Disability

Individuals within this group are usually severely limited in their ability to understand normal interactions or comply with requests. Frequently they have sensory deficits and remain incontinent of bowel and bladder. Many of these individuals need assistance in activities such as dressing, feeding,

washing etc. Few people within this group learn to care for themselves although some eventually acquire some simple speech and social behaviour.

### Prevalence

In the Republic of Ireland the Annual Report of the National Intellectual Disability Database Committee (2002) states that there were a total of 23,969 persons with a learning disability broken down as follows:

- 9,412 persons with a general/mild learning disability
- 9,495 persons with a moderate learning disability
- 4,004 persons with a severe learning disability
- 1,058 persons with a profound learning disability

A study into the Administrative Prevalence of Learning Disability in Northern Ireland, reported to the DHSS&PS in September 2003 led by the University of Ulster undertook to identify the people who were recorded as having a 'learning disability' on existing databases commonly used in Northern Ireland. The two main sources of data were information systems held by HSS Trusts and Social Security Data.

In the HSS Trusts an estimated total of 16,366 persons with moderate, severe and profound learning disabilities were recorded, with 27% in the severe/profound category.

An additional total of 7,439 persons with a learning disability were recorded on the Social Security Systems, where 27% were in receipt of the higher rate of disability allowance.

### Health Needs

People with learning disabilities have a higher number of health needs, and more complex<sup>9</sup> health needs than the rest of the population.

Common health needs<sup>10</sup> that an individual with a learning disability may present with are

- communication challenges, visual, hearing
- displays of aggression and behavioural issues
- epilepsy, cardiac issues, diabetes, coeliac, asthma

### Key Points

Persons with a learning disability in the main can communicate their feelings, value secure loving environments and inclusion and generally respond positively to kindness. They have a sense of humour and place great value in relationships that reiterate their dignity. Many have the same interest and hobbies as most people i.e; music, reading, sport etc. Some individuals with a learning disability due to biological, social and/or cultural reasons live with additional challenges. These challenges in many instances may be portrayed as

- communication difficulties i.e; the clarity of their speech may be poor and therefore the individual(s) may have difficulty in being understood or some individuals may not be able to verbally communicate
- dependent on others for help in acquiring basic skills i.e; they require assistance/supervision in performing activities such as tying their shoe laces, brushing their teeth or crossing the road
- prone to mental and behavioural disturbance; a number of individuals with a learning disability may have a mental health illness such as depression, manic depression etc., with some due to poor ability to communicate their needs or due to the medical diagnosis display aggressive and self-injurious behaviour
- prone to social stigmatisation i.e. may be excluded from activities due to their learning disability
- prone to physical difficulties i.e. may not have the same fine or gross motor movements as most people

- persons with a learning disability experience cognitive impairments that affect language, attention, long and short term memory

### Language Guidelines

#### Words matter

Words can open doors, but they can just as easily create barriers or stereotypes. The following language guidelines have been developed for use by anyone writing or speaking about persons with a learning disability to ensure that all people are portrayed with individuality and dignity.

#### Appropriate Terminology

- a person has a learning disability, rather than is suffering from, is afflicted with, or is a victim of a learning disability
- refer to individuals as persons or people with a learning disability
- refer to participants in Special Olympics as Special Olympics athletes rather than Special Olympians, in no case should the words appear in quotation marks
- a person uses a wheelchair rather than is confined to or restricted to a wheelchair
- distinguish between adults and children with a learning disability
- Down Syndrome has replaced the terms Down's Syndrome and Mongoloid
- a person is physically challenged or disabled rather than crippled
- when writing, refer to persons with a disability in the same styles as persons without a disability: full name on first reference and last name on subsequent references. Resist the temptation to refer to an individual with a learning disability as "Bill" rather than the journalistically correct "Bill Smith" or "Smith"

<sup>9</sup> Individuals with a learning disability have a higher incidence of one or more medical conditions

<sup>10</sup> The author acknowledges that this list is not an exhaustive list of all health issues for persons with a learning disability. Similarly all individuals with a learning disability may not experience all or some of these health needs.

### Terminology to Avoid

- Do not use the label kids/children when referring to Special Olympics athletes. Adult athletes are an integral part of the programme .
- do not use the adjective unfortunate when talking about persons with a learning disability. Disabling conditions do not have to be life defining in a negative way
- use the word special with extreme care when talking about persons with a learning disability. The term, if used superfluously, can become clichéd in continuous references to Special Olympics
- do not sensationalise the accomplishments of people with a learning disability. Respect their achievements as you would any athlete
- Do not use the word 'the' in front of Special Olympics unless describing a specific Special Olympics event or official programme. Refer to the Irish Programme as Special Olympics Ireland rather than The Special Olympics.

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### What key pieces of information will assist me with working with an individual(s) with a learning disability?

One of the key things to do when meeting an individual(s) is to learn about the individual(s).

This may be directly from the individual himself or herself or information may be attained from other key persons within the affiliated group, family or care providers.

This information should include

- their first name and surname or name they like to be called by (some people may have a pet name i.e; official birth name may be John and are called by family etc. as Johnny)
- What are their hobbies and interests?
  - sports they watch or play
  - music; the types and/or favourite band
  - favourite food
  - sporting team they support
  - favourite TV programmes
  - clubs etc. they are involved in
- Do they work attend school or training centre etc?

- Where do they live? At home, in their own accommodation, community based homes or residential services
- Can they communicate verbally? If they cannot verbally communicate do they use other methods to communicate i.e. sign language, pictures etc.
- If they cannot communicate how do I know what they want or need?
- Is there any behaviour that I should know about?
- Are there any triggers/warning signs that indicate that the individual is becoming agitated/aggressive<sup>11</sup>?
- How does the individual/family/carer do/deal with if the individual becomes aggressive?
- Are there any medical conditions that I need to know about?
- Do they take medications?
- Do they any assistance i.e; in dressing, eating? If yes, what assistance do they require?

#### How do I greet an individual with a learning disability?

You greet them in the same manner as you would any other person that you are meeting either for the first time or subsequently. Use simple language until you identify the level of language the individual has.

#### What should I speak to them about?

The individual themselves may initiate the conversation. If this occurs, let them lead the conversation. If not, use information that you may know about the person i.e; hobbies interests etc.

#### If an individual has an aggressive outburst what should I do?

Use the information that you have attained from family members etc. If no information is available identify if there is an individual within the affiliated group who has a good relationship with the individual and who can manage the situation or who has more experience in dealing with incidents of this nature. Complete a written record of the incident and inform the relevant people i.e; family member coach etc.

<sup>11</sup> Aggression can be verbal i.e; using foul language etc. or physical i.e; hitting themselves or others

# Appendix 8

## Contact details: Health Boards - Area Social Worker Manager

Opening Times: Monday to Friday 9am-5pm

**IN CASE OF EMERGENCY CONTACT; An Garda Síochána**  
**Confidential Line Free Phone : 1800 666 111 (24 hours) Telephone +353 1 666 0000**

### What should I do if I see an individual displaying inappropriate behaviour i.e; exposing themselves to others, breaching Special Olympics rules?

Ask the individual to refrain from the behaviour and inform them, dependant on the nature of the behaviour that you have seen to report the incident to the relevant person within the affiliated group or at an event. You should inform the relevant person within the affiliated group and complete any required forms.

### Can I accompany an athlete into the toilet area?

The dignity of the individual is paramount. Help should only be given if an athlete is unable to do it for themselves. You should where possible accompany an individual of your own gender. If it is necessary to accompany an individual to a toilet area inform another volunteer/coach that where you are going, who you are accompanying and inform them of your return.

### What level of behaviour is expected of individuals with a learning disability?

In line with all governing bodies of sport, persons who are registered on a Special Olympics Ireland database<sup>16</sup> must uphold the Special Olympics Ireland Code of Ethics and Good Practice.

<sup>16</sup> Database used in Special Olympics Ireland is the Special Olympics Affiliate Management System (SOAMS)

#### Eastern Regional Health Service Executive

##### East Coast Area Health Service Executive

Area	Telephone	Fax
Area 1	01 2808403	01 2844955
Area 2	01 2680320	01 2680406
Area 10	0404 68400	0404 69044

#### Northern Area Health Service Executive

Area 6	01 8680444	01 8825153
Area 7 North	01 8575432	01 8575449
Area 7 South	01 8556871	01 8550589
Area 8	01 8164200	01 8479593

#### South-Western Area Health Service Executive

Dublin South City District	01 6486650	01 6799303
Dublin South West District	01 4154700	01 4154804
Dublin West District	01 6206387	01 6206388
Kildare/ West	045 896120	045 896455

#### Midland Area Health Service Executive

Longford/ Westmeath	044 84450	044 84396
Laois/ Offaly	0506 22488	0506 21136

#### Mid-Western Area Health Service Executive

Limerick	061 483711	061 483757
Clare	065 6863907	065 6863984
North Tipperary	067 41934	067 42069

#### North Eastern Area Health Service Executive

Cavan/ Monaghan Health Care Centre	047 30460	047 77908
Louth	041 9875282	041 9875244
	042 9392220	042 9392265
Meath	046 9078844	046 9071377

#### North-Western Area Health Service Executive

Sligo/Leitrim	071 9155136	071 9155187
Donegal	074 9123739	074 9129752

#### South-Eastern Area Health Service Executive

Carlow/Kilkenny SEHB	056 7784781	056 7762741
Waterford	051 842884	051 842811
Wexford	053 47718	053 47706
South Tipperary	052 77311	052 77301

#### Southern Area Health Service Executive

South Lee	021 4923001	021 4312960
North Lee	021 4927055	021 4927001/2
North Cork	022 30200	022 30211
West Cork	028 40580	028 23172
Kerry	066 7184887	066 7184890

#### Western Area Health Service Executive

Galway	091 546380	091 527601
Mayo	094 9042283	094 9026110
Roscommon	090 6626732	090 6626776

# Appendix 9

## Contact details: Health and Social Services-Northern Ireland

Opening time: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

**IN CASE OF EMERGENCY CONTACT: Police Service of Northern Ireland**

**PSNI Headquarters, Brooklyn, 65 Knock Road, Belfast BT5 6LE . Tel +44 28 90650222**

**Ask for your local District Command Unit**

**\*Ask for the 'Programme Manager Family & Child Care' in your local HSS Trust**

### Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) – Northern Ireland

Area	Telephone
Castle Buildings, Stormont, Belfast BT4 3SJ	028 90520500
Altnagelvin Hospitals HSS Trust	028 71345171
Armagh & Dungannon HSS Trust	028 37522262
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	028 9032924
Causeway HSS Trust	028 27666600
Craigavon & Banbridge HSS Trust	028 38831983
Down Lisburn HSS Trust	028 92665181
Foyle HSS Trust	028 71266111
Homefirst HSS Trust	028 25633700
Newry & Mourne HSS Trust	028 30260505
North & West Belfast HSS Trust	028 90327156
South & East Belfast HSS Trust	028 90565656
Sperrin Lakeland HSS Trust	028 82835285
Ulster Community and Hospital HSS Trust	028 91816666

# Appendix 10

## Additional Contact Numbers

### Republic of Ireland

Childline Listens to Children	1800 666666 (24 hours)
ISPCC	+353 1 6794944
Irish Sports Council	+353 1 8608800
Volunteering Ireland	+353 1 8722622

### Northern Ireland

NSPCC	028 90351135
Helpline Freephone: <a href="http://www.thecpsu.org.uk">www.thecpsu.org.uk</a>	0808 800 5000 (24 hours)
Pre-Employment Consultancy Service	028 90524290
The Sports Council for Northern Ireland	028 90381222
Volunteer Development Agency (NI)	028 90236100

# Notes