

Special Olympics BC continues to proactively monitor the situation with COVID-19. The health and safety of program and event participants are our top priority, and we encourage everyone to follow public health best practices and current information.

At this time we are not postponing or cancelling any Special Olympics BC programs or events, since the Public Health Agency of Canada states that the public health risk associated with COVID-19 is currently low for Canada.

The BC Centre for Disease Control says the most important things you can do to prevent coronavirus, COVID-19, and other illnesses are to wash your hands regularly and avoid touching your face.

The BC Centre for Disease Control recommends following the same advice that public health officials suggest for the cold and flu season:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
- Avoid others who are unwell, and if you are sick yourself, stay away from others. Contact your health-care provider ahead of time so you can be safely assessed.

These are all general precautions that should always be observed in cold and flu season, but we are taking the time to remind ourselves and everyone now, in light of the heightened awareness of this topic.

As best practices in this cold and flu season, we ask that Local Coordinators kindly remind all coaches, athletes, and families to do the following at programs:

- Please remind all participants to regularly wash their hands with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds – try singing the Happy Birthday song twice!
- If you feel sick, please do not attend a practice or event. Your health comes first!
- If an athlete or coach arrives at a program sick, the Head Coach should ask that participant to return home – or if they can't immediately do so, please give them isolated space where they are not touching others.
- If a sick person can't attend an event, but wants to stay active, please encourage them to check out the [at-home training and health resources](#) on the Special Olympics BC website.
- Please discourage high fives or handshakes – everyone loves a celebratory elbow bump instead!

Special Olympics BC recommends using B.C. and Canadian health authorities for information on COVID-19, including:

- [The BC Centre for Disease Control](#)
- [The Public Health Agency of Canada](#)
- [Your Regional Health Authority](#)

We will have upcoming social media posts with wellness reminders and resources in order to help the Special Olympics family and everyone stay well this cold and flu season!

We will also be issuing a separate bulletin with best practices and resources for organizers of Regional Qualifier competitions.

If you have any questions or feedback, please contact Lois McNary, SOBC Vice President, Sport, at lmcnary@specialolympics.bc.ca or 604-737-3117 office / 604-616-1342 cell.