



## **Special Olympics BC COVID-19 memo March 13, 2020**

We know many members of this amazing community feel Special Olympics BC is a huge part of their lives. We feel the very same. But in order to limit any possible risk to members of our community, Special Olympics BC is making the difficult decision to pause all community weekly training, all competitions, and all face to face fundraising events from March 13 to March 31, 2020.

Based upon what is unfolding in the greater community in terms of suspension of activities, we feel the decision to temporarily suspend Special Olympics BC activities is prudent. At this time, the Public Health Agency of Canada has assessed the public health risk associated with COVID-19 as low for the general population in Canada, but this could change rapidly. There is an increased risk of more severe outcomes for the following Canadians:

- aged 65 and over,
- with compromised immune systems, and
- with underlying medical conditions.

Special Olympics BC will continue to follow the rapidly evolving COVID-19 situation daily, and will communicate further with members.

We will assess, address, and communicate what the postponement of the Regional Qualifiers in this period means for qualifying for the 2021 SOBC Summer Games. Please stay tuned for further information. We commend and thank all the athletes who have been training hard for these competitions, and all the volunteers and families who have been working so hard to plan them.

To help athletes stay active during this hiatus, everyone can check out the [at-home training and health resources on the Special Olympics BC website](#). We will also continue our social media posts celebrating Special Olympics BC members as well as sharing wellness reminders and resources. So please do feel free to suggest everyone can talk with us on social media to stay connected and encouraged!

Thank you for your patience at this time. The health and safety of Special Olympics BC program and event participants remain our top priorities. If you have any questions or feedback, please contact Lois McNary, SOBC Vice President, Sport, at [lmcnary@specialolympics.bc.ca](mailto:lmcnary@specialolympics.bc.ca) or 604-737-3117 office / 604-616-1341 cell.

## **Further background and resources**

The BC Centre for Disease Control says the most important things you can do to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses are to:



- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Avoid touching your face.
- 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.

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

- The BC Centre for Disease Control – [www.bccdc.ca](http://www.bccdc.ca)
- The Public Health Agency of Canada – <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>

[Special Olympics International COVID-19 frequently asked questions](#)

[Hand washing tips from Special Olympics Health Messenger Nyasha Derere](#)