

## Special Olympics Forsyth Coach Packet:

### Contacts:

- *Michelle Padgett, Athlete Coordinator*, will send you draft rosters. She is the person that athletes/parents contact to register for each season's games. Michelle also checks up on eligibility status of our athletes and informs parents/coaches of needed paperwork. Coaches need to send Michelle the following: confirmed roster with contact information and entry forms for the particular sport you are coaching ([mpadgett@forsyth.k12.ga.us](mailto:mpadgett@forsyth.k12.ga.us)).
- Sports and Competitions Coordinator, *Jim Brennan* is in charge of practice locations and equipment ([jimbrennan@forsythco.com](mailto:jimbrennan@forsythco.com)).
- Family Coordinator, *Linda Fitzpatrick* will communicate with your team parent about lodging, opening ceremony and other family related matters ([lindafso@yahoo.com](mailto:lindafso@yahoo.com)).
- *Adult Outreach and Uniform Coordinator, Laura Williams* will confirm uniforms ([LauraWilliams.FCSO@att.net](mailto:LauraWilliams.FCSO@att.net)). Laura will need uniform sizes from you as soon as possible. It is good to send them along with the final rosters and state score cards that are also due to Michelle.
- *Coaches Training Chair, James Parks* ([jeparks@forsythco.com](mailto:jeparks@forsythco.com)) will assist with program growth and expansion, and athlete/team evaluations as well as coaches certifications.
- *Mark Keesee* will connect the coach or assistant coach with additional training or necessary certification -if needed ([mark.keesee@att.net](mailto:mark.keesee@att.net)).
- Local Coordinator, *Susan Darlington* can answer all other questions you might have. ([sdarlington@forsyth.k12.ga.us](mailto:sdarlington@forsyth.k12.ga.us)).

### On-Line Resources and Manuals:

- Information about the Sports: [www.soforsyth.com/our-athletes/state-games](http://www.soforsyth.com/our-athletes/state-games)
- On-line Manuals for your Sport: <http://specialolympics.org/sports.aspx>
- Competition Schedules and Entry Forms (click on the state game and the actual competition for your specific sport's score sheet): <http://www.specialolympicsga.org/become-an-athlete/paperwork-state-games/> (be sure to click on the correct season and year).
- Coaches and Assistant Coaches Registration with SOGA: <http://www.specialolympicsga.org/become-an-athlete/resource-library/coach/> or [www.soforsyth.com/our-volunteers/coaches](http://www.soforsyth.com/our-volunteers/coaches)
- SO Forsyth Website: [www.soforsyth.com](http://www.soforsyth.com)

### Forms that must be completed prior to being a volunteer/coach/assistant coach for State Games:

- On-Line Protective Behaviors ([http://www.specialolympics.org/protective\\_behaviors.aspx](http://www.specialolympics.org/protective_behaviors.aspx)). Email James Parks and Susan Darlington when this has been completed.
- Volunteer/Coach Profile: found at [www.soforsyth.com/our-volunteers/coaches](http://www.soforsyth.com/our-volunteers/coaches). Sign and fax or email to James Parks.
- Code of Conduct: found at [www.soforsyth.com/our-volunteers/coaches](http://www.soforsyth.com/our-volunteers/coaches). Sign and fax or email to James Parks or Susan Darlington

### Forms/Terms that you need to know:

- Participation Form – Participation forms are SOGA's eligibility/waiver forms. Each athlete must have a form that is registered with the state. If s/he is a new athlete, an athlete with identified medical needs or the form has expired, a doctor's signature is also required. Refer your parents to Michelle Padgett

regarding these forms. Athletes cannot participate without current participation forms turned in to the state office by the paperwork deadline (see coaches calendar) for each sporting season. These forms can be found at ([www.soforsyth.com/our-athletes/registration](http://www.soforsyth.com/our-athletes/registration)).

- **Score Cards** – Some sports have score cards where multiple skills are assessed and gathered into one final score. The score cards are provided by SOGA as a worksheet to obtain final scores that will be placed on the Entry Forms.
- **Entry Form** – Each team/individual sport must have an entry form with the name of the coach(es) and athletes, along with their birthdates and scores. If it is a team, a team name must be listed. Entry forms are due to Michelle Padgett by the assigned due date (along with Final Rosters).
- **Draft Roster** – Each draft roster sent to coaches provides the coach with a list of athletes that have contacted her to register for the sport you are coaching.
- **Final Roster** – Once the coach confirms athletes, s/he will update the draft roster with email addresses and final list of athletes by the due date. The draft roster then becomes the Final Roster.

### **Preseason Checklist:**

- Jim Brennan or James Parks will send out practice locations and dates. Contact Jim Brennan if you have not heard from him right after registration closes.
- Check the soforsyth website calendar for registration deadlines if needed.
- A draft roster (includes last year's athletes and those who registered with Michelle Padgett by the registration deadline) will be emailed to you by Michelle Padgett for the particular sport. Participation expiration dates will be listed on this roster to indicate athletes that might need to renew or update their information. Athletes who do not have updated participation forms by paperwork due date will not be able to compete at the state games.
- Contact your parents to confirm practice locations and their commitment for the practices and state games.
- Once you have a set roster along with athlete contact info (email addresses), send your final roster to Michelle Padgett. Michelle will then check on the additional athletes listed on your roster for needed state paperwork (participation form) and identify who is up to date and who needs a new form signed by parent or parent and doctor. She will contact each family member directly to make sure that paperwork is in on time so that they can practice. *Athletes cannot practice or compete without a current participation form on file.* Michelle will contact you when the form has been turned in. If a form is turned in to you, send to Michelle Padgett as soon as possible (by email or fax: 770-888-1278). These must be turned in no later than the due date given on the coach's calendar for each season.
- Inform Jim Brennan of any equipment needs you might need and make arrangements for pick up or drop off.

### **First Practice Checklist**

Discuss or turn in the following:

- Participation Forms (participation forms must be signed by the parent. If s/he is a new athlete, an athlete with medical needs identified or the form has expired, a doctor's signature is also required. Refer your parents to Michelle Padgett regarding these forms. Athlete cannot participate without current participation forms turned in to the state office by the paperwork deadline (see coaches calendar).
- Gather Uniform sizes and send to Laura Williams (name and size) – [LauraWilliams.FCSO@att.net](mailto:LauraWilliams.FCSO@att.net). You can use the same form as the roster. Be sure to send her coaches shirts needs as well. Uniform sizes should be turned in as soon as possible so that orders can be turned in well in advance.

- Give State Game Dates to your parents and refer them to our website for more information – [www.soforsyth.com/our-athletes/registration](http://www.soforsyth.com/our-athletes/registration).
- Identify a “Team Parent” and send that name and contact info to Linda Fitzpatrick at [lindafso@yahoo.com](mailto:lindafso@yahoo.com). This team parent (or coach if no team parent) will receive announcements that they will share with the rest of the parents and coach as needed (such as hotels and travel).
- Gather initial scores for the first practice, place on the entry forms (reminder: these will be sent to you by Michelle Padgett) for your sport and send to Michelle Padgett ([mpadgett@forsyth.k12.ga.us](mailto:mpadgett@forsyth.k12.ga.us)) by deadline (see coaches calendar).
- Handout volunteer forms for parents (in case we need to use them as chaperones). These need to be turned in to Susan Darlington. They can fax them to 770-888-1278. Volunteer forms can also be found on our website at [www.soforsyth.com/our-volunteers/coaches](http://www.soforsyth.com/our-volunteers/coaches). Click on Volunteer profile.

## **Miscellaneous Information:**

### ***Practice Schedules and Equipment***

Once last year’s roster has been emailed to the coach, it is up to each coach to contact his/her athlete families for practice dates and locations. Times and Location will be assigned/determined by Jim Brennan. (See Preseason Section and Coaches Calendar information as well)

### ***Athlete Commitment and Eligibility***

Because of the time and expense we invest on each athlete, we expect our athletes to attend at least 85% of the practices. Especially for teams, it is imperative that you get parent commitment that the athlete will travel and participate in the state games. Otherwise, the team may have to forfeit at the last minute. It’s acceptable to have an alternate at practice. SOForsyth will pay for this athlete to attend the games even if s/he cannot compete.

### ***Athletes Who Choose Only to Practice but Not Attend State Games:***

Athletes who request to attend practice but do not want to attend the state games are welcome to do so as long as it does not disrupt the training of the athletes planning to compete. Parents should convey this to the coach by first practice so that uniforms and state fees are not spent on the athlete unnecessarily. The coach makes the call and basis his/her decision on the athletes to coach ratio and the type of sport.

### ***Uniforms:***

Uniforms purchased for teams/athletes have been agreed upon by the management team and cannot be altered unless a proposal is submitted and agreed upon the S.O. Forsyth management team. This not to micromanage but to ensure that SO Forsyth keeps its uniformity and equality with all teams and the cohesion of team at each state event. A few things that must be kept in mind when looking at uniforms:

- 1) No cost can be placed on the athlete in order for him/her to participate. Therefore, an athlete cannot be asked to purchase the uniform or a portion of the uniform except for socks, shoes, undergarments

and bottoms that are not required to match other team members such as shorts, pants and skirts. A coach can request that the team wear black shorts (or any other common color that is easily matched despite the style/vendor, but a coach cannot dictate a particular style of shorts or vendor (or unusual color which will require parents to go out and purchase the unique colored attire) unless SO Forsyth provides the shorts as part of the uniform.

- 2) SO Forsyth uniforms must have the SO Forsyth logo and the SOGA logo.
- 3) Some uniforms require numbers on the front and/or back of the uniform. Please make sure you have read the rules so that the uniform coordinator is aware of your team/athlete needs.
- 4) According to the SOGA rules, no athlete can wear a shirt/uniform with business names and/or sponsors. However, sponsors can be placed on athlete bags, water bottles, etc.
- 5) No uniform or coaches shirt may be altered in appearance, style or graphics.
- 6) All uniform inquiries can be sent to Laura Williams at [LauraWilliams.FCSO@att.net](mailto:LauraWilliams.FCSO@att.net).
- 7) Uniforms can be turned in to the coach and given to Laura (or the coach can keep them for next year). If it is decided that athletes will turn in the uniforms and not keep them for the following year's competitions, email Laura to let her know the athletes, sizes and shirt number (on back of shirt), so that she can keep an accurate record of all uniforms.

## **Evaluations for Teams**

Athletes new to a team sport who are interested in joining a team must participate in the evaluation (see coaches schedule developed by Jim Brennan/James Parks). The evaluations will be organized by James Parks. Coaches are asked to attend the evaluation and remain on site to discuss team assignments following the evaluation. If there are not enough athletes to make a team, the athlete(s) remaining will be given alternate sports to compete and will be placed on the draft roster for the following year.

## ***Lodging and Travel***

Our athletes and coaches are our priority for travel to state games and lodging during the games. SO Forsyth pays a small fee for each coach and athlete for lodging and rooms are assigned 4 individuals per room. However, we do try to put 2 athletes per adult or 3 athletes (1 on a blow up mattress) and 1 adult per room.

Linda Fitzpatrick will contact the lead parent with information about family hotels that they can reserve on their own. Hotel costs for the family usually run between \$74 - \$99 per night (depending on the location). Hotel Lodging fills up fast, so it is important to make reservations as soon as possible. If the family plans on having the athlete stay with them rather than using hotel lodging, the lead parent should inform Linda Fitzpatrick.

It is also helpful for the team parent to gather the following information and send to Linda Fitzpatrick:

- 1) Will the athlete need a chaperone or will they be staying with parents who are getting a hotel?
- 2) Does the athlete who needs overnight chaperoning also need transportation to the games?
- 3) Will the athlete who does not need a chaperone only attend the games (not stay over-night)?

## ***Practice Locations and Times***

Practice locations and times will be set on an annual basis by Jim Brennan and are placed on the "coaches' calendar". Special Olympics Forsyth uses school based facilities, churches, local recreational facilities (such as

Stars and Strikes) and FC Parks and Recreation Facilities. If there is a particular need you have, please contact Jim Brennan as soon as possible.

### ***Equipment***

Equipment is dispersed through Jim Brennan when needed. At times, some athletes prefer to use their own equipment, such as tennis racquets, softball gloves, bowling balls, etc. However, Special Olympics Forsyth will provide equipment for all approved sports whenever needed. If you feel additional equipment is needed, please contact Jim Brennan. Coaches who often remain with the same sport from year to year may choose to keep their equipment (until they choose not to coach the sport) or can return the equipment at the end of each season to Jim Brennan and FC Parks and Recreation.

### ***Coaches Certification and Assistant Coaches Paperwork:***

Head coaches are required to be certified through Special Olympics GA (SOGA) which is a 3 hour training and then 10 hours of coaching in the sport. The certification form must be faxed to Michelle Padgett who then faxes it to the state. Anyone attending the state games as a coach or assistant coach in this manner must complete the following forms and turn in to James Parks (jparks@forsythco.com) by the paperwork deadline on the coaches' calendar: All forms can be found at <http://www.specialolympicsga.org/become-an-athlete/resource-library/coach/> and click on "coaches" or go to [www.soforsyth.com/our-volunteers/coaches](http://www.soforsyth.com/our-volunteers/coaches).

- Volunteer profile : sign and turn in to James Parks
- Behavioral Assessment: a brief on-line video and assessment (email James when completed)
- Code of Conduct – sign and turn in to James Parks

### ***Travel to and from State Games***

Coaches are provided a travel stipend set by the board. These stipends may be dispersed during the State Games or mailed after the games. Feel free to contact Susan Darlington if you did not receive your stipend.