



Special Olympics

Massachusetts

BASKETBALL RULES AND MODIFICATIONS

The complete set of Special Olympic rules, which govern the Special Olympics Massachusetts basketball competition, are in the Official Special Olympics Summer Rules Book and can be found at <http://www.specialolympicsma.org/training/index.htm>. Federation Internationale de Basketball (FIBA) and the rules of each individual country's National Governing Body (NGB) shall be employed except when in conflict with Special Olympics Sports Rules and SOMA modifications. The SOMA modifications, as well as some pertinent general rules are noted below. (The numbers do not correspond with the rules book numbers.) SOMA modifications are noted in *Underlined Italics*.

I. GENERAL RULES NOTES

A. COMPETITION:

1. The referee will handle the ball on all out-of-bounds plays.
2. The ball is dead after a foul or violation is called, a field goal is made, or any other time the referee blows his/her whistle.
3. Teams change possession of the ball after a made field goal. However, if a player is fouled in the act of shooting and makes the basket, the field goal is credited and a foul shot is granted. If the free throw attempt is successful, the opposing team obtains possession of the ball.
4. Substitutions may be made on a dead ball. When one team makes a substitution, the other team must be given an opportunity to substitute as well. Players entering the game must report to the scorer's table and be beckoned into the game by the referee.
5. Timeouts allotted.
 - a. Five (5) 60-second time-outs are allowed per team, and at which time the clock will be stopped.
 - b. The referee may call a player injury time-out.
 - c. The referee may stop the clock at his/her discretion and is advised to do so at any time. For example, allowing the clock to run when the ball bounces well out of play gives one team an unfair advantage. Consequently, the clock should be stopped.
6. Officials will grant a player or a coach's oral or hand signal quest for a time-out.

7. (NFHS Basketball Rules, Section 13. Art.2, pg. 16): **The Coaching Box** shall be outlined outside the side of the court which the scorer's and timer's table and team benches are located. The area shall be bounded by a line 28 feet from the end line, the sideline, a line no more than 14 feet from the 28 foot line toward the end line, and the team bench. Tape will be placed along each bench/sideline outlining the designated Coaching Box.
Reminder: coaches must stay in their boxes during play.
8. Athletes need to be three feet from incoming ball.
9. Teams in the Juniors (8-12, 8-15) division will not be allowed to run a full court press. Half court press is allowed.
10. Three Points – three points will only be awarded when there is a clearly defined/marked three point line.

B. COMPETITION MODIFICATIONS:

Following are adaptations of FIBA and NGB Rules, which may be used when conducting Special Olympics basketball team competitions. These adaptations are optional, and it remains the responsibility of each individual program to determine whether they will be employed during Training. *Please note that these adaptations will be employed at both the SOMA Section Assessment Rounds and the SOMA State Tournament.*

1. *A game may consist of four (4) quarters, each six (6) minutes long or two halves, each twelve (12) minutes long. Games in the Junior Division will have four (5) minute quarters or two (10) minute halves. Halftime will be 3 minutes.* Event Directors at Section Assessment Rounds and State Tournament has the option of shortening game times due to lack of certain resources (volunteers, courts, time) as well as extending games for higher divisions.
2. **A player may take two steps beyond what is allowed. However, if the player scores, 'travels' or escapes the defense as a result of these extra steps, an advantage has been gained. A violation is called immediately.** In some instances this rule modification is unnecessary and games at the State Tournament will be called accordingly.
3. A team may be granted *five (5) time-outs* per game, cumulative.
4. The three-second rule will be enforced.
5. The free throw shooter shall release the ball within ten (10) seconds from the time it is placed at the shooter's disposal by one of the officials.
6. It is a violation for a player to double dribble.
7. The clock will be stopped for foul shots.
8. A team shall consist of five (5) active players on the court and no more than seven (10) bench substitutes. *The composition of a team, including substitutes, may not exceed fifteen (15) active players and 3 coaches; one (1) Head Coach (non-playing) and two (2) Assistant Coaches (may be activated as a Unified Partner prior to or at the Section Assessment Round). This will be the maximum number of players/coaches allowed at BOTH the Section Assessment Rounds and the State Tournament.*

9. A PROTEST can only be filed by the **NON-PLAYING HEAD** coach and he/she must declare the protest immediately. All games shall continue play under protest. **Upon completion of the game**, the respective Basketball Rules Committee shall make the final decision.
10. (NFHS Basketball Rules, Rule 10.4.1 pg. 79): MISCONDUCT: *Any athlete or coach that demonstrates misconduct (i.e. foul language, abusive behavior towards teammates, opponents or officials) will be reprimanded at the discretion of the official or venue director* and may result in expulsion from the game/tournament. Appropriate conduct is expected at all Assessment Rounds as well as at Winter Games.

II. UNIFIED SPORTS TEAM COMPETITION RULES:

A. UNIFIED SPORTS

1. The roster shall contain a proportionate number of Athletes and Partners. **An athlete to partner ration of 50:50 or 60:40 is preferred. However, under no circumstance will a team be allowed to play whereas the number of unified partners exceeds the number of athletes. A team roster must make allowances for injuries and absenteeism. Example: A coach can opt to play any number of Athletes at any given time but under no circumstance will he/she be allowed to play more than two (2) Unified Partners at any given time during Section Assessment Rounds or State competition. All teams must be ready to play at the scheduled start time of their game.**

B. UNIFIED MENTORING TEAM COMPETITION

1. Special Olympics Unified Sports© and SOMA Basketball rules apply except:
 - a. Partners may not shoot or score.
 - b. Partners may not steal the ball from athletes.
 - c. Partners may not block shots.
 - d. Partners must wear odd numbered uniforms
 - e. Partners must be identified to the opposing coach, official and scorekeeper prior to the game and to the officials upon entering the game.
 - f. A three second rule for partners will be enforced at all times and will not be reset even after the ball has been shot
2. Penalty for breaking any of the above rules are as follows:
 - a. A Technical Foul will be assessed to the offending partner (2 Technical Fouls and the partner will be ejected from the game).
 - b. One foul shot will be awarded to an athlete on the team the infraction is committed against. Only athletes on the court at the time of infraction are eligible to shoot this foul shot.
 - c. The ball will be awarded to the team whom the infraction is committed against.

III. EQUIPMENT

1. A smaller basketball (72.4 centimeters [28.5 inches] in circumference and between 510-567 grams [18-20 ounces] in weight) may be used for women's and junior division competition.

IV. Miscellaneous

- A. Team NAME must be the SAME name used on the Training, Assessment AND on Final registration.
- B. ONLY teams that have attended a SOMA Section Assessment Round, therefore recording an assessment score, may advance to the State Tournament in March. NO EXCEPTIONS.
- C. Teams within the same Local Program may NOT share the same team name even with designated numbers or head coach name attached. Local Programs with several teams competing MUST assign a DIFFERENT NAME to each of their respective teams. FINAL registrations (team rosters) from a Local Program with two or more of those teams having the same name will be considered as a single, combined roster.
- D. Each Team **MUST HAVE** a certified head coach. If a team does not it will not be allowed to advance on to the State Tournament
- E. **ALL Unified teams MUST** fill out and return the Unified checklist with their registration form. FAILURE to do so will scratch team for the State Tournament.

F. Event Codes

BBSKIL	Basketball Skills
BBTEAM	Basketball Traditional Team
BBTMUNM	Basketball Unified Mentor Team
BBTMUNC	Basketball Unified Competitive Team

V. ROUND ROBIN FORMAT

- A. Competition format at both the Assessment Rounds and State Tournament will be ROUND ROBIN.
 - 1. Each team will play all other teams in their division at least once (subject to modification at Assessment Rounds due to time/space restrictions).
 - 2. **At Assessment Rounds, Specially designed pins will be awarded to all teams**
 - 3. **State Games:**
 - 1. Medals will be awarded based on points. The team with the most points at the conclusion of the tournament receives the gold medal and so on.
 - a. 3 points will be awarded to a team for a win
 - b. 1 point will be awarded to a team for a tie
 - c. 0 points will be awarded to a team for a loss

Note: Overtime periods at both the Section Assessment Rounds or at the State Tournament is at the discretion of the Basketball Directors; In the event of a tie, one (1) point will be used as noted in the above point system.

**** Competition modifications are subject to change due to circumstances present during the tournament. ****

VI. TIEBREAKER FOR AWARDS – STATE GAMES ONLY

If a team that has a forfeit in their record is tied with another team, the team with the forfeit will automatically lose the tiebreaker. A winning score of 15-0 will be awarded for a forfeit win

In the case that two or more teams end up with the same amount of points (same record) at the end of the tournament:

- A) The team that won in the head-to-head match-up wins the tiebreaker.
- B) In the event the two teams tied in head to head match-up or if two or more teams are tied, then the team with the greatest differential between points scored and points allowed wins the tiebreaker. A cap differential of 15 points scored more than the opponent will be used. Example...A 40-23 win will be adjusted to a 38-23 win using the 15 point cap. Therefore the difference between points scored and points allowed is 15. *See Example 1 below.*
- C) If the teams are still tied then the team that allowed the least amount of points during the tournament wins the tiebreaker. *See Example 2 below.*
- D) If teams are still tied, both teams will be awarded the same medal.

Example 1:

4 team division with Teams A, B, C and D. Team A and Team B both finish tied with identical 2-0-1 records.

- A) Team A and Team B tied 30-30
 - B) Team A
 - Wins 36-32 Adjusted Score 36-32 = +4
 - Wins 31-10 Adjusted Score 25-10 = +15
 - Tied 30-30 Adjusted Score 30-30 = 0
 - Team B
 - Wins 21-18 Adjusted Score 21-18 = +3
 - Wins 36-20 Adjusted Score 35-20 = +15
 - Tied 30-30 Adjusted Score 30-30 = 0
- Therefore: Team A's point differential is +19 points.
Team B's point differential is +18 points.
Team A wins the tiebreak by virtue of having a greater point differential.

Example 2:

4 team division with Teams A, B, C and D. Team A and Team B both finish tied with identical 2-0-1 records.

- A) Team A and Team B tied 36-36
 - B) Team A
 - Wins 19-14 Adjusted Score 19-14 = +5
 - Wins 28-10 Adjusted Score 25-10 = +15
 - Tied 36-36 Adjusted Score 36-36 = 0
 - Team B
 - Wins 35-25 Adjusted Score 35-25 = +10
 - Wins 29-19 Adjusted Score 29-19 = +10
 - Tied 36-36 Adjusted Score 36-36 = 0
- Therefore: Team A's point differential is +20 points.
Team B's point differential is +20 points.
Teams A and B are still tied...Move to tiebreaker part C.

- C) Team A allowed 14, 10 and 36 points for a total of 60 points.
Team B allowed 25, 19 and 36 points for a total of 80 points.
Team A wins the tiebreak by virtue of allowing fewer points.