

**Guidance:** Concussion Policy – Return to Play Procedure  
**Date:** January 1, 2020

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## Objective

It is always Special Olympics Wisconsin's intent to take steps to ensure the health and safety of all Special Olympics Wisconsin participants. Special Olympics Wisconsin participants should always remember that safety comes first and should take reasonable steps to help minimize the risks for concussions and other serious brain injuries.

## Defining a Concussion

A concussion is defined by the Centers for Disease Control as a type of traumatic brain injury caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head as well as serial, cumulative hits to the head. Concussions can also occur from a blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth—causing the brain to bounce around or twist within the skull. Although concussions are usually not life threatening, their effects can be serious and therefore proper attention must be paid to individuals suspected of sustaining a concussion.

## Suspected or Confirmed Concussion

A participant who is suspected of sustaining a concussion in a practice, game or competition shall be removed from practice, play or competition at that time. If a qualified medical professional is available on-site to render an evaluation, that person shall have final authority as to the removal or return to play of the participant. If a concussion is suspected, an Incident Report Form should be filled out and turned into SOWI. If applicable, the participant's parent or guardian should be made aware that the participant is suspected of sustaining a concussion.

## Return to Play

A participant who has been removed from practice, play or competition due to a suspected concussion may not participate in Special Olympics Wisconsin sports activities until either of the following occurs:

- (1) at least seven (7) consecutive days have passed since the participant was removed from play and a currently licensed, qualified medical professional provides written clearance for the participant to return to practice, play and competition or
- (2) a currently licensed, qualified medical professional determines that the participant did not suffer a concussion and provides written clearance for the participant to return to practice play immediately.

Written clearance in either of the scenarios above shall become part of the participant's permanent record.

\*Qualified medical professionals may include physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nurses, and athletic trainers.

## Special Olympics Wisconsin

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