

Special Olympics Howard County Protocol on Participating in Team Sports

If you chose a team sport (i.e., basketball (3x3 and 5x5), cheerleading, flag football, softball, soccer, volleyball, aquatics relays or track relays) and assuming the coach's assessment places the athlete on the team level, you must commit fully to that sport. In these sports, the coaches and teammates count on every member of the team. They must practice and play together to realize their full potential. Therefore, if you choose a team sport, you must be fully committed for the season, including all practice and competition dates. If an athlete can't commit to that, they are welcome to participate in individual skills or choose an individual sport. This will affect athletes participating in sports that overlap seasons. For example, if the athlete is placed on a basketball team and also participates in an individual sport, say bowling, and there is a competition/qualifier in bowling and basketball on the same day, the athlete **MUST** attend the basketball competition **EVEN IF IT MEANS THEY DON'T QUALIFY FOR STATE COMPETITION IN BOWLING**. The basketball team sport would take precedence and the athlete **MUST** attend the basketball competition vice the individual sport competition. If a team sport is chosen and these rules are violated, the athlete will not be eligible to play that team sport next year.