



LET ME WIN.  
BUT IF I CANNOT WIN,  
LET ME BE BRAVE IN THE ATTEMPT.  
Special Olympics Athlete Oath

April 9, 2020

Dear Special Olympics Kansas Community,

Special Olympics Kansas has made the very difficult decision to cancel the 2020 Summer Games scheduled for June 5-7 in Wichita due to concerns related to the spread of the coronavirus. While this news is incredibly disappointing for all of us, the health and safety of our athletes, volunteers, staff, and partners remains our top priority.

We have been closely monitoring the evolving situation since early March, and we have been coordinating with Special Olympics, Inc. and Special Olympics North America, the Kansas Dept. of Health, and various health professionals. As of 2 p.m. on April 8, there have been 1,046 cases of COVID-19 in Kansas spread throughout 57 counties. In Sedgwick County alone there have been 154 confirmed cases. There have also been 38 deaths statewide. With this information we feel like it is in the best interest of everyone to cancel the Summer Games.

We serve a population where many are at a heightened risk (age, compromised immune systems, and/or medically fragile), and our competitions require people to travel from all parts of the state to convene in venues and engage in sport. With this news about a growing number of confirmed and suspected cases, we no longer believe that we can prudently proceed with the Games and be sure we are providing a safe and healthy environment, regardless of what precautionary steps and/or preventative measures we might implement.

While canceling events is truly disappointing to athletes, volunteers, family, friends and our coaches, staff and board who support them and look forward to cheering for them – we know that our love of sport doesn't compare to the importance of protecting the health and safety of all involved.

While a very difficult message to have to deliver to our athletes and families, we ask that you share our message that this decision was made with their health and safety at the forefront.

In previous communications we mentioned that all Special Olympics Kansas activities, practices and events are on hold through May 15, 2020. That information is still in effect.

We will continue to monitor and evaluate the situation in Kansas and provide updates as we have them in regards to sports training and competition as well as fundraising events.

In the meantime, we will continue to focus on health and wellness and activities athletes can take part in from home during quarantine. We are posting health, nutrition and wellness information on our Facebook page: [facebook.com/specialolympicskansas](https://facebook.com/specialolympicskansas) on a regular basis.

We also encourage athletes, families, volunteers and the entire SOKS community to get involved with the I-70 Challenge. Participants track miles walked/ran and earn prizes along their way (virtually) from Kansas City to Goodland! All information about this program can be found at <https://ksso.org/i70-challenge/>.

We appreciate your support and understanding. Stay well.

Sincerely,

*John Lair*  
President/CEO  
Special Olympics Kansas

Special Olympics Kansas  
[www.kssso.org](http://www.kssso.org)

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