

New Mexico Senior Games

General Rules

A. Organization

The New Mexico Senior Olympics, Inc., is a private, non-profit 501(c)3 organization founded in April 1979. The Board of Directors is comprised of private and public sector professionals, some of whom are employed by elderly programs. Several board members are Senior Olympic athletes and represent their various communities on the Board.

Mission

New Mexico Senior Olympics is committed to providing communities across the state, utilizing 31 game sites opportunities of healthy and active lifestyles. New Mexico Senior Olympics promotes year-round programs that encourage athletes to participate in physical activities and senior sports. Athletes participate within their own age category and level of ability in athletic, recreational and social events.

Goals

- Maintain and improve health and wellness for all senior adults 50+.
- Focus attention on the importance of regular exercise and physical activity.
- Network with local Senior Olympic organizations statewide to promote wellness to all seniors.
- Provide competitive athletic and recreational experience at local, state and national levels.
- Provide technical assistance in the planning and implementation of local senior games.
- Plan and implement the Senior Olympics Annual Summer Games.
- Submit qualifying data on participants to the National Senior Games Association.

B. Rules

The Sport Playing Rules described herein have been established for the events in the New Mexico Senior Olympics Annual Summer Games, State Team Tournaments and Local Games. Any modification and official interpretations shall be made only by the Board of Directors. These rules will be the official sport playing rules of New Mexico Senior Olympics, Inc. However, each local game site has the option of including a “Category of Play” for frail participants.

National Senior Game Association rules will apply when applicable. National Governing Body rules will be adhered to unless a deviation has been noted in the Senior Olympic official rulebook.

These rules developed by the New Mexico Senior Olympic Board of Directors represent the Board’s best judgment at this time. Since rules in most sports evolve and change over time, further revisions or modifications may be appropriate prior to future Senior Olympic Annual Summer Games and State Team Tournaments.

General Rules

*To suggest a **rule change** for a sport or event, see appendix. To suggest a **new sport or event** see **appendix** for procedure to change a rule or to add a new sport. For additional information please contact:*

New Mexico Senior Olympics, Inc.
P.O. Box 2690
Roswell, NM 88202-2690
1-888-623-NMSO (6676)
(575) 623-5777
Fax (575) 622-9244
E-mail: nmso@nmseniorolympics.org
Web: www.nmseniorolympics.org

C. Eligibility

In order to compete at Senior Olympic Summer Games, an athlete must reside in New Mexico at least three consecutive months, register in advance of the Games and be 50 years of age by December 31st of game year. Team Tournaments are open to out-of-state participants.

Athletes **MUST** qualify at New Mexico local games sites to register for the Annual Summer Games.

An athlete may only compete **once** in any event, so that no person is competing against him/her self). All partner events must identify partner(s) in advance on registration form. Partner Pools are not permitted. Partner(s) must register and pay the individual registration entry fee. A partner change will be allowed until the Friday before the start of the Summer Games.

For all State Team Tournaments, 3-on-3 Basketball, Softball and Volleyball, athletes are not required to pre-qualify locally for State competition. New Mexico is an "Open State" for out-of-state participants/teams. Athletes may register by requesting a registration form from NMSO or visiting the NMSO website at www.nmseniorolympics.org.

D. Game Results

Summer Game results will be collected from sport coordinators at the conclusion of each sport competition. Results will be posted at Game Headquarters during the week of the games and posted on the NMSO website following the games.

In the event an athlete presents a game results inquiry to the Sport Coordinator, it will be the responsibility of the athlete to resolve any inquiry prior to the conclusion of the event.

Final game results will be audited and reviewed by the NMSO staff prior to presenting to the Board of Directors for final ratification.

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E. Age Categories

Participants are only allowed to compete in their age group in singles. Participants cannot play down in any age division. If an athlete does not have any competition in his/her age category, an athlete must play at least **one** exhibition game/match or be disqualified.

Age categories for Individual and partner events are as follows:

50 to 54 years old	75 to 79 years old
55 to 59 years old	80 to 84 years old
60 to 64 years old	85 to 89 years old
65 to 69 years old	90 to 94 years old
70 to 74 years old	95 to 99 years old
	100+

It is suggested the oldest age group compete first unless game schedule has indicated differently. Game schedule will be posted at Athlete Check-in at the Sports Table prior to scheduled competition.

F. Tournament Structure

Playing format may be either double elimination or round robin based on the numbers of registered entrants. Tournament format will be the responsibility of New Mexico Senior Olympics, established prior to State competition, and posted at Check-in.

G. Partner/Team/Groups

Age categories for all partner/team/group competition will be determined by the age of the youngest team member as of December 31st of the competition year.

Team sports age divisions will be divided in the following categories for men and for women: 50+, 55+, 60+, 65+, 70+ and 75+.

Team Bowling will have an additional age group of 80+.

Example: If a team consists of eight members 65 or over and one member 60-64, the team will compete in the 60+ age division. Participants may play in only one age category within one team sport.

Partner/Team/Group Member Change: If an athlete cannot participate after registering for Summer Games, for any reason, a change to the partner/team/group may be made to the roster until the Friday before the games.

Doubles Partners: Doubles partners who qualify together are not required to play together. All participants must have qualified for the sport in which they intend to participate.

Team Captain: Each team/group must identify a designated team captain. The team captain is responsible for distributing all necessary game information to the group members, finalizing the group listing, scheduling practices, following all rules pertaining to the sport, and ensuring safety for all athletes.

Exhibition Game/Match: In the event a team/group does not have any competition in their respective age bracket, they must play at least one exhibition game or be disqualified.

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H. Team Tournament Features:

1. State Team Tournaments are held at a different place and time than the Summer Games.
2. New Mexico is an “Open State” for qualifying Team Sports competitions. Open means New Mexico will invite and register teams from outside of New Mexico to compete.
3. During a qualifying year New Mexico will qualify two New Mexico teams in each age category for National Games regardless of the final standing of the team sport tournament.
4. Team tournaments have one team registration fee.
5. Team tournaments will indicate guaranteed number of games on registration.
6. All team sports will be governed by the National Senior Games and National Governing Body for playing rules, except as noted in house rules.
7. Registration forms are available online to include team roster data.
8. Registration Deadline for Team Tournaments will be four (4) weeks prior to tournament date(s).
9. Roster Changes are allowed up until the Friday before the start of the tournament and are limited to three changes.
10. Tournament format will be dictated based on the number of teams registered.
11. A team player may only be on one roster per sport. Exemption will be in Co-ed Volleyball. A player may be on either men’s or women’s team plus one Co-ed Team.

I. Medical

It is the responsibility of each game participant to receive an annual medical checkup and receive authorization from your health provider to participate in all Senior Olympic activities.

J. Liability

A liability waiver must be signed on the registration form to compete in all New Mexico Senior Olympic activities.

K. Scheduling

Due to the large number of sporting events held at Summer Games during the five days of competitions there are many events that overlap in scheduling. **Participants are encouraged to sign up for only one event during a specific time frame.** See EVENT Schedule in Registration Booklet or visit Sports Table for detailed event schedule by age categories. In fairness to all competitors, Sport Coordinators will not be allowed to accommodate athletes to compete prior to or after their scheduled age group competition. Athletes not competing in their scheduled age group will not be considered for medals.

Every effort will be made to schedule initial matches between players from different cities/areas. Sport Coordinators will make every effort to post game brackets in advance of the Games online and at the Sports Tables during athlete check-in.

It is the responsibility of registered participants to confirm, check in and report to their sport venue thirty minutes prior to start time. This is imperative. Failure to check in at the Event may result in disqualification.

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L. Event Limit

Registered athletes may enter up to ten (10) sports.

Reminder: Sports Coordinators will not accommodate individual scheduling for competition.

M. Fun Events

Fun events at Senior Olympic Annual Summer Games are Potato Spoon Relay, Balloon Popping Relay and may include Chair Exercise Activity and require no pre-registration. Fun Events are open to drop-ins.

N. Special Events: Opening Ceremony

A highlight at the Games will consist of the Celebration of Athletes or Opening Ceremony on the first evening of the Games. The Opening consists of Olympics-style team introductions, Parade of Athletes, Torch Run, and Senior Athlete Recognitions. Teams will generally wear matching T-shirts and/or uniforms. Participants are strongly encouraged to join the fun and help the team/community win an award for displaying the most spirit. Check for Parade line-up information at athlete check-in.

O. Professional Athlete

A professional athlete is a person who competes in a sport for money, as a primary source of personal revenue. Professional athletes are not eligible to compete in the New Mexico State Senior Olympics sport in which they are a professional until twenty (20) years after the date they last competed as a professional. A person may compete in another sport(s) in which they have not competed professionally.

P. Protest Policy and Process

Any person wishing to register an official protest on behalf of a registered athlete may obtain the applicable form from the Game Headquarters. A protest may be filed regarding any aspect of the State Games. Game Management will rule on protests based on circumstances. Game Management will consist of Senior Olympics personnel, Rules Committee Chair and Sports Coordinator. Game Management will identify Game Arbitration members before the start of the Games. Game Management will enlist Game Arbitration only when circumstances are warranted.

Following is the process to file a protest:

1. File the complaint orally or written with Sport Coordinator immediately following the incident or greater than twenty four (24) hours from the conclusion of the event. Consider an appropriate time, face to face, that all parties can be active listener(s) to the situation to be discussed.
2. If athlete(s) does not accept the ruling provided by Sport Coordinator, a written protest may be filed with Game Management within twenty four (24) hours from the conclusion of the event. Ensure the athlete retains a copy for his/her records. Game Management will be located at the Game Headquarters on Campus.
3. Game Management will review the written protest details with applicable Sport Coordinator and game personnel as warranted and in a timely manner. Any incomplete form will not be considered. Game Management rulings are final and not subject to further appeal. Game Management will provide athlete/author a written response.

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4. In extenuating circumstances Game Management will refer protest to Game Arbitration Committee for a further hearing.
5. In the event a Protest is referred to the Game Arbitration Committee, additional time may be necessary for a hearing. Arbitration rulings are final and not subject to further appeal. Documentation will be on file at the Senior Olympic Games Office and available upon request. Athlete/author will be notified in writing of all final rulings.

Q. Appeal Process/Arbitration

In the event of a Game appeal or Sport inquiry, the athlete is required to address all questions/complaints with the individual Sport Coordinator running the Event before the competition has concluded. Only when a dispute cannot be resolved with the Sport Coordinator, can the Game Management and Arbitration Committee be retained for an appeal. Games Management will identify Arbitration Committee prior to the start of the Senior Olympic Summer Games.

At no time will an appeal be permitted on situations relying on human judgment. Only **misinterpretations of rules** will justify an appeal. All appeals will be ruled in writing and filed at Game Headquarters.

R. Code of Conduct

New Mexico Senior Olympics activities are organized to promote healthy lifestyles, fellowship, camaraderie and good sportsmanship. New Mexico Senior Olympics will not tolerate any abusive language or unsportsmanlike behavior. Any abusive behavior that involves alcohol, smoking, fighting, unsportsmanlike conduct, weapons or verbal abuse or telephone abuse of staff, board members, volunteers, sponsors, or other participants will be addressed immediately by Game Management. Violators may be subject to suspension.

Abusive behavior will be documented in writing by the New Mexico Senior Olympic Game Headquarters Office within 24 hours of occurrence. The **first incident** will result in a letter to the athlete(s) involved stating the violation with a copy available to Local Coordinator and the Senior Olympics Event Coordinator.

In the event a **second incident** should occur, a letter will be written suspending the involved athletes(s) from participating in Senior Olympics for one (1) year. Should further violations occur the athletes(s) may be banned from participating in Senior Olympics for life.

S. Awards & Results

1. All medals or ribbons will be awarded at the conclusion of each event.
2. No medals will be awarded for Exhibition Events
3. Results are not reported as official until verified by NMSO Staff and Game Management.
4. Medals are awarded for first, second, and third place, ribbons for fourth and fifth. Fifth place ribbons may be awarded for single or double elimination tournament(s) at the discretion of the Sport Coordinator.
5. Awards will be presented to the registered game athlete or local game coordinator only. Exceptions are to be discussed with sport coordinator.

General Rules

6. Tie-breakers will be used for all events, except where noted in specific sports.
7. Tie-breakers will be held at the conclusion of the age category.
8. All athletes involved in a tie-breaker must be present at the conclusion of the tied event to participate in the play-off, or athlete will concede and accept the lower place award.
9. For sports that do not utilize a tie-breaker, distribution of medals and ribbons will be as follows in the event of a tie:
 - a) If there is a tie for first place, two first places, one third place, one fourth place and one fifth place will be awarded.
 - b) If there is a tie for second place, one first place, two second places, one fourth place and one fifth place will be awarded.
 - c) If there is a tie for third place, one first place, one second place, two third places and one fifth place will be awarded.
 - d) If there is a tie for 4th place, one first place, one second place, one third place and two fourth places will be awarded. No fifth place.
 - e) If there is a tie for 5th place, one first place, one second place, one third place, one fourth place and two fifth places will be awarded.
10. The Polly Baker Traveling Trophy will be awarded to the 400 meter Co-ed Relay track event first place winner only. Medals will be awarded to individuals who placed first only. The trophy is the responsibility of the local community or coordinator of the winning relay team. The local coordinator will surrender the trophy to the Senior Olympic State Games Office before the first day of Senior Olympic Annual Summer Games the following year.

The Polly Baker Traveling Trophy is given in honor of Polly Baker, who was an original New Mexico Senior Olympic board member and a participating athlete from 1979 to 1985. She contributed greatly to the formation and growth of New Mexico Senior Olympics as a founding member.

T. Refunds

- New Mexico Senior Olympic understands an athlete may become ill or have an emergency arise after registering for Senior Olympic Summer Games..
- Pre-sold souvenir merchandise purchases are not refundable and will be mailed following the games.
- **NMSO shall have the final authority on all eligible refunds.** All eligible refunds will be mailed following the Games.

U. Change of Partner/Substitute

A change of partner or substitute may be made for group, partner(s) events and teams prior to the established registration deadlines. Substitutes must register for Summer Games in order to be eligible to participate at the Games.

V. Gender Determination

When an athlete gender is called into question, a valid photo identification card such as a driver's license, passport, or green card that states the athlete's gender OR a copy of a valid in force medical or health insurance policy that unequivocally states the athlete's gender must be presented. Birth certificates shall not be acceptable. Source: NSGA Board of Directors adopted January 21, 2007.

New Mexico Senior Olympics

Terms and Definitions

1. **Arbitrators:** ultimate decision makers on rulings and policies. Named by the Senior Olympics Summer Games Game Management. Membership may include but not be limited to NMSO Board of Director Chairman, Executive Director, and Local Planning Committee Events Coordinator.
2. **Athlete/participant:** registered game entrant age 50+.
3. **Closed State:** Senior Olympics Summer Games are open to New Mexico residents of at least three consecutive months.
4. **Event:** An event is a component within a Sport. Example – Bowling Singles is an event within the sport of Bowling.
5. **Events Coordinator:** NMSO has two staff members to assist Sport Coordinators with the event planning of each tournament at Summer Games. Event Coordinators will answer to the Executive Director of NMSO and make periodic report(s) to the Local Planning Steering Committee regarding events.
6. **Event Limit:** An athlete may register for up to ten (10) Sports.
7. **Executive Director:** the full-time staff member employed by the New Mexico Senior Olympic Board of Directors. The Executive Director will serve at the discretion of the NMSO State Board of Directors.
8. **Fun Events:** Potato Spoon Relay, Balloon Popping Relay and Chair Exercise Activity. No pre-registration is required and drop-ins are welcome.
9. **Local Game Coordinators:** Volunteer advocates associated with Local Games in each city/county or pueblo. Local Coordinators answer to the local advisory senior program directors in their area. Local Coordinators assist with Summer Game registrations and many attend the Games as game volunteers to support the Events.
10. **Local Games:** NMSO has established one designated organization per county or locality to be the sanctioned entity to promote established objectives and philosophies to involve senior adults 50+ in physical activity and senior games. Local Games are required to have established a local governing advisory board of directors.
11. **Local Planning or Steering Committee:** Invited Senior Agencies are asked to provide local input from the host city to plan and implement the Senior Olympics Annual Summer Games under the direction of the NMSO Executive Director.

Terms and Definitions

12. **National Senior Game Association (NSGA):** the sanctioning organization which conducts national games on a biennial basis. Qualifying years will be the even numbered years (2010, 2012, etc.).
For further information please contact:
National Senior Game Association
PO Box 82059
Baton Rouge, LA 70884-2059
Email: nsga@ids.mail.com
Web: www.nsga.com
(225) 766-6800
Fax: (225) 766-9115
13. **Official:** an individual with decision making authority related to the running of the Games, such as a NMSO Board of Directors Member, Sport Coordinator, game referee, or NMSO Game Management Staff.
14. **Open State:** a state that allows competitors from outside of their state to register and compete at the State Competition. New Mexico is an “Open State” for team tournaments competitions.
15. **Registrar:** NMSO staff member who registers game entrants. Registrar will mail event confirmation to registered athletes, provide event listings to all Sport Coordinators and provide game results to local game sites.
16. **Residency:** An athlete must have resided in New Mexico at least three consecutive months to be eligible to compete at the Senior Olympics Summer Games.
17. **Sanctioned Game Site:** designated game site to partner with NMSO Board of Directors for game competition in their area. Currently NMSO has identified thirty two (32) local associated games.
18. **Spectator or Guest:** An individual who is registered as a non-competitor and attending the Games for game privileges such as game shirt, meal and housing accommodations and socials. Spectators/Guests who require campus housing plans must register in advance to include a signed liability waiver. Non-competitors may pre-order souvenir merchandise.
19. **Sport Coordinator:** Game volunteer recruited to implement and manage an individual sporting event at the Summer Games. The role of Sports Coordinator includes recruiting and supervising volunteers, overseeing playing rules and running a quality event. Sport Coordinators are trained by NMSO.
20. **Sport:** an activity undertaken for amusement, and competition identified by the NMSO Board of Directors for the Summer Games. The Senior Olympic Summer Games offer twenty six (26) individual sports.
21. **Staff:** trained game personnel identified by NMSO Game Management.
22. **Team Captain:** an individual identified by a team or group to serve as the leader or spokesperson. Team tournament sports identify a coach or captain to be the lead and in charge of all game communications for the entire team. Captains are identified on team information form or team roster.