



COLD-WEATHER PROCEDURE For Weekly Programs

The safety and health of athletes and coaches are of paramount importance; therefore, each volunteer should follow these guidelines while conducting programs, events, or competitions for Special Olympics British Columbia.

Check the Environment and Climate Change Canada weather forecast prior to programs during winter season. Watch for wind chill or extremely cold temperatures. Wind chill can create dangerously cold conditions, but extremely cold temperatures can still be hazardous with little or no wind.

Locals can monitor weather forecasts daily. If the temperature is expected to be -25 Celsius or below (with the wind chill) or if severe snow/ice storms are expected, Locals can determine if any cancellations should occur. Cancellations must be communicated to all participants.

Programs will be cancelled when temperatures fall below -25 when there is no accommodation available to address the increased safety risk(s).

Step 1 – Determine location: Go to https://weather.gc.ca/canada_e.html and find your specific location.

Step 2 – Determine temperature: Check the current temperature with specific focus on the “feels like” temperature which accounts for the wind chill in measuring temperature.

Step 3 – Notifications: All program participants **MUST** be contacted and acknowledge the cancellation notice to ensure no one will be showing up and left outside in the cold.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

There are several steps we can take to prevent injury and stay safe all winter!

- **Be weather aware.** Check the weather forecast before heading out, and know when to call it a day if conditions become unsafe.
- **Know your limits.** Whether you’re a beginner or an experienced winter athlete, it’s essential to know your skill level and stick to terrain and activities that match your abilities. If you’re new to a winter sport or looking to improve your skills, consider taking lessons from a qualified instructor. They can teach you proper techniques and safety measures.
- **Mix it up.** Consider cross-training to reduce the risk of overuse injuries. If you’re just starting your winter sports season or trying a new sports activity, gradually increase the intensity and duration of your workouts.



- **Stay hydrated.** It's easy to forget about [hydration](#) in cold weather, but staying hydrated is just as important in the winter as it is in warmer conditions. Drink plenty of water, whatever the activity.
- **Take breaks.** Go inside and get out of the cold when you can. Be aware of hypothermia and frostbite symptoms, such as shivering, numbness or pale skin, and seek medical attention if necessary.
- **Warm up.** Cold muscles are more prone to strains and tears, so spend at least 10 to 15 minutes stretching and getting the blood flowing before you head outside.

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