

New Mexico Senior Olympics

General Rules

Revised 10-2023

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. 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 Game Site 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 division 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 New Mexico Senior Olympics Ernesto Ramos State Summer Games.
- Submit qualifying data on participants to the National Senior Games Association.

B. Rules

Local Coordinators and athletes can download and print individual sport rules from the NMSO website: <https://nmseniorolympics.org/faqs/>

The Sport Playing Rules described herein have been established for the events in the New Mexico Senior Olympics Ernesto Ramos State 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 Games 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 New Mexico Senior Olympics Ernesto Ramos State Summer Games and State Team Tournaments.

*To suggest a **rule change** for a sport or event, fill out appropriate form following **Terms and Definitions**. To suggest a **new sport or event** see form following **Terms and Definitions** for procedure to add a new sport. For additional information please contact:*

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

General Rules (cont.)

C. Eligibility

New Mexico Senior Olympics Ernesto Ramos State Summer Games is open to all 50+ seniors regardless of being from in state or out of state. An athlete must be 50 years of age by December 31st of the game year. Athletes must register in advance before the established deadline and sign a liability waiver in order to compete.

State athletes are no longer required to participate at local games to be eligible to register for Summer Games. NMSO strongly encourages athletes to still compete in any Local Game held at any of the Game Sites throughout New Mexico to be versed on the latest playing rules and the sport playing format prior to state competition. Local Games are open to all regardless of the county you reside in.

OPEN STATE

For Summer Games, out of state athletes can compete in New Mexico at any of the 18+ sports that are offered at National Senior Games. See Event Schedule for notation of sports offered at Nationals. As OPEN State, awards will be presented for overall winners. Game results will reflect overall winners in each age division. State Game records will be maintained for in-state winners only. See registration form for all applicable event fees.

An athlete may only compete **once** in any event, so that no person is competing against him/herself. All partner events must identify partner(s) in advance on entry form. Partner Pools are not permitted. Partner(s) must register and pay the individual registration entry fee.

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 nmseniorolympics.org.

D. Game Results

Summer Game results will be collected from sport coordinators at the conclusion of each sport competition. Results may 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 at the annual board meeting for final ratification.

E. Age Categories

Participants are only allowed to compete in their age group in singles. Participants cannot play down in any age division.

Age categories for Individual and partner events are as follows:

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

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 Sports Table prior to scheduled competition.

General Rules (cont.)

F. Exhibition Game/Match

An Exhibition game will allow athletes with no competition in their age division to play the same tournament format as all other participants to receive medals. Exhibition games will be played as determined by the event format or with a minimum of one game. An Exhibition game/match must be played, or risk being disqualified.

G. 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. NMSO will provide brackets with on-site sheet listings for all double elimination sports/events – Badminton, 8 Ball Pool, Cornhole, Horseshoes, Huachas, Pickleball, Shuffleboard, Table Tennis and Tennis and work with the Sport Coordinators to complete brackets. NMSO will approve and sign off on completed brackets prior to posting.

H. 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+, 75+, (80+ and 85+ for 3 on 3 Basketball). Team Bowling will have an additional age group of 80+, 85+, and 90+. Dance and Talent age categories are 50+ and 70+.

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 division within one team sport.

Change a Partner/Group or Team Member: A partner's name must be indicated on the entry form to be processed. If partner is not listed for the event, athlete will not be entered in that event until partner information is provided. If partner does not register for the event by the final registration deadline athlete will be removed from that event.

How to make Partner Changes: Partner changes can be made until the final deadline. Partner changes can be made on-site provided the reason for change meets the criteria below. New partner can be changed if it does not change the age category and new partner must be registered for the Games. On-site partner change(s) is to be made thirty minutes prior to game time with the Sport Coordinator at the sport venue and confirmed by Game Headquarters with a phone call.

Criteria for an on-site partner change(s) includes:

1. Partner is out due to a medical reason or injury; documentation will be required.
2. Partner did not attend the games.

Athlete is responsible for finding and confirming eligible Partner, must notify Sport Coordinator immediately and must confirm change was made.

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.

General Rules (cont.)

I. Team Tournament Features:

1. State Team Tournaments are held at a different place and time than the Summer Games. Team tournaments will be either two (2) or three (3) day tournaments.
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 adhere to National Senior Games qualifying criteria.
4. Team tournaments have one team registration fee.
5. Team tournaments will indicate a 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 will be limited to 3 changes after schedules are posted and before the team’s first **POOL PLAY** game of the tournament as long as the changes do not affect age division. All registered athletes, coaches and non-playing personnel must check in and sign in onsite prior to their team’s first **POOL PLAY** game and be listed on all team roster/line-up sheets to be considered official and registered.
10. **Registered athletes MUST PLAY IN POOL PLAY to be eligible to play in BRACKET PLAY. All registered athletes must be listed on a roster, check in and sign in on-site prior to the team’s first scheduled POOL PLAY Game.**
11. Tournament format will be determined based on the number of registered teams.
12. Teams must be of all one gender. 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.

J. 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.

K. Liability

A liability waiver must be signed on the registration entry form to compete in all New Mexico Senior Olympic activities. The Sport Coordinator has the authority to disqualify or suspend any participant per the liability waiver that states: Athletes attest and verify that they have full knowledge of the risks involved in this event and that they are physically fit and sufficiently trained to participate in this event. Athletes agree to abide by Rules and Regulations of the New Mexico Senior Olympics Ernesto Ramos State Summer Games, to observe all rules of play, to exercise good sportsmanship and follow all written or oral instructions given by authorized personnel of the Games.

L. 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. GAME TIME IS FORFEIT TIME.** See SPORTS DESCRIPTIONS in Registration Booklet or visit Sports Table for detailed event schedule by age divisions. Athletes must check in for their event at the scheduled time per age division or risk being disqualified from competing. 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. In the event an athlete competes out of scheduled times or fails to check in at the Event, athlete risks being disqualified.

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 for their age division.

General Rules (cont.)

M. Sport Limit

Athletes can register for a maximum of **five (5) Sports** with unlimited number of Events in each Sport. Example: Swimming is one SPORT that has multiple EVENTS under the sport. Athletes may register for any/all EVENTS in Swimming, and this only counts as one SPORT. NMSO may place a cap on the total number of entries for the following Sports: Bowling, Pickleball and Shuffleboard.

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

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 other sport(s) in which they have not competed professionally.

P. Protest and Appeal Policy

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.

Process to file a protest:

1. File the complaint orally or written with Sport Coordinator immediately following the incident or not more 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.
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.
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.

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

General Rules (cont.)

Q. 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 athlete(s) from participating in Senior Olympics for one (1) year. Should further violations occur the athlete(s) may be banned from participating in Senior Olympics for life.

Ejection of Player: If player is ejected, he/she shall not return to the game ejected from and the team's next game. If ejected a 2nd time, player cannot play in the rest of the tournament.

R. Awards & Results

1. All medals will be awarded at the conclusion of each event.
2. Medals will be awarded for Exhibition Events (see general rules, Section F)
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.
5. Awards will be presented to the registered game athlete or Local Game Coordinator only. Exceptions are to be discussed with Sport Coordinator.
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 division.
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 cannot be resolved after a tie-breaker, distribution of medals will be as follows.
 - First place tie:** award two first place medals and one third place medal.
 - Second place tie:** award one first place medal and two second place medals.
 - Third place tie:** award one first place, one second place and two third place medals.
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.

S. Refunds

Registration fees will be non-refundable with the exception of housing and meals which will have a deadline prior to the Games.

General Rules (cont.)

T. Substitutes – Bowling Only

Substitutes may be made for teams prior to the established registration deadlines. Substitutes must register for Summer Games in order to be eligible to participate at the Games.

U. 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.

V. Required Credentials

Athletes must check-in with a valid photo ID that includes birth date and gender to receive required credentials in order to participate in the Games. Exceptions will be referred to Arbitration Committee. Athlete unable to provide the required credentials shall be declared ineligible to compete until he/she can produce them. For Team Sports, all non-playing coaches, non-playing captains and non-playing bench personnel must be credentialed for access to the field of play. Medals will only be issued to properly credentialed personnel. NMSO reserves the right to revoke any credential at any time.

W. Able Bodied Athlete Policy

NMSO is comprised of various sports for "able-bodied" athletes. At the discretion of the NMSO, athletes with physical disabilities may be allowed to compete insofar as any and all handicap devices used by the athlete falls within certain rules and regulations to ensure fairness in competition. NMSO will abide by the rules of the National Governing Body of the athlete's sport to govern circumstances regarding athletes with disabilities in able-bodied competition for specific sport instances. The use of any technical device that incorporates springs, wheels or any other element that provides the user with an advantage over another athlete not using such a device will be prohibited in athletic competition.

X. Non-Ambulatory Athlete Policy

NMSO is comprised of three "limited" non-ambulatory sports – bowling, horseshoes and shuffleboard. Non-ambulatory will compete as a separate division per age division. NMSO will abide by the rules of the National Governing Body of the athlete's sport to govern circumstances regarding athletes with disabilities. NMSO has the right to modify the rules depending on the abilities of the participants.

Y. Default During Competition

Athletes in individual sports or teams that forfeit ALL pool play rounds (as applicable) shall not be permitted to advance to bracket play, NO EXCEPTIONS. Verification by a member of medical staff designated by NMSO of an athlete's injury and capability to continue must be submitted to and subsequently approved by the Sport Coordinator and NMSO prior to the athlete being permitted to continue. A good-faith effort to compete will be determined by the Sport Coordinator and NMSO.

Z. National Senior Games Qualifying

Qualifying years will be the even numbered years (2022, 2024, etc.). See Appendix A in the National Senior Games Rule Book at www.nsga.com