



Champions Lions clubs

“Champions” Lions clubs — in support of Special Olympics International (Special Olympics) — focus on serving and empowering individuals with intellectual disabilities. Together, Special Olympics and Lions Clubs International are prepared to not only improve the vision of those with intellectual disabilities across the world, but also integrate Lions International’s organizational structures to provide increased service opportunities to persons of all abilities.

The global partnership between Lions International and Special Olympics began in 2001 with the global expansion of the Special Olympics Lions Clubs International Opening Eyes program (Opening Eyes). To date, Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) has awarded US\$27 million to the LCIF-Special Olympics “Mission: Inclusion” partnership, which has provided the following:

- Over 446,656 Special Olympics athletes who have received the quality vision care they deserve
- More than 229,914 athletes who have received prescription eyewear
- Over 22,000 Lions worldwide who have volunteered their time and talents to Special Olympics, demonstrating the Motto, “We Serve”

Champions Lions clubs can not only support Opening Eyes and the Healthy Athletes® initiatives, but they can also further enhance the lives of Special Olympics athletes and their families by:

- Promoting Unified Sports® and providing volunteers for activities including Leos and youth
- Conducting local Special Olympics tournaments and assisting at regional tournaments
- Conducting vision and hearing screenings for athletes at local and regional tournaments
- Participating in Special Olympics fundraising events
- Providing uniforms and equipment
- Assisting or conducting special events for athletes and families

Individuals with intellectual disabilities should also be encouraged to be members of “Champions” Lions clubs.

Organizing and chartering a Champions Lions club

Champions Lions clubs are unique; they require teamwork and communication between two separate organizations. It is essential to incorporate collaboration and communication between the local Lions clubs and the local Special Olympics organization when beginning the process of chartering a Champions Lions club. The chartering process is generally the same as a traditional Lions club.

Begin by contacting your local Special Olympics program and an established Lions club in the location you would like to charter your club to determine local Special Olympics athlete needs and to develop a joint vision for your new Champions Lions club.

While Lions International and Special Olympics have a global partnership, each accredited program of Special Olympics may not be familiar with the Lions club structure and local Lions may not be aware of Champions Lions clubs. It is essential to approach both groups to educate them about the partnership and your interest and the value in establishing a Champions Lions club.

New club development should be a team effort to ensure the success of recruiting efforts and the new club. The Champions Lions club new club development team members should be experienced.

Lions with a passion to support Special Olympics should be knowledgeable about new Lions club organization and chartering. Lions who understand the power of the Lions/Special Olympics partnership will make valuable members of the team. Local area Special Olympics staff and stakeholders can also provide an excellent advisory role to the team.

As your new club development team recruits new members, it is important to remember that Lions recruit Lions. This is not the responsibility of Special Olympics. Special Olympics personnel, volunteers and families may, of course, be asked to join, and it is up to them if they wish to aid in the recruitment of club members.

Visit the **Start a New Club webpage** at lionsclubs.org/en/start-a-new-club to familiarize yourself with new club development resources, including:

- Lions clubs and membership types
- Leo clubs
- Club branch

Explore and learn:

- New Club Development Guide Workshop
- New Club Development Guide
- New Club Development Workshop
- Sponsoring a New Club Guide

Explore workshop tools:

- MyLCI Quick Reference Guide
- New Club Development Community
- Informational Night Meeting PowerPoint
- DIY New Club Development Workshop
- Organization Meeting PowerPoint
- MyLCI Club Branch Submission PowerPoint
- Charter Night Planning Guide

Application Documents:

- Lions Club Charter Application Worksheet
- Charter Member Application
- Charter Application Checklist
- Report of Members worksheet

Recruiting Tools:

- Just Ask!
- New Hello brochure
- New recruiting poster

Chartering your club

To charter your Champions Lions club, you will need:

- 20 or more charter members
- A sponsoring club, district cabinet or district committee, region or zone
 - A co-sponsoring club from any location can also be named
 - Consider asking an established Champions Lions club to co-sponsor you
- The district governor's approval
- Completed charter application
- Select Partnership and describe as Champions Lions club in club specialty selection
- Appropriate charter fees and certification forms





The informational meeting is the first time that prospective members meet to find out more about Lions International and the new club, including membership benefits and dues. During this meeting, present information about the vision for a Champions Lions club in the area including potential projects, activities and examples from other Champions Lions clubs.

After the meeting, contact participants to thank them for attending and encourage them to attend an organizational meeting. You should also contact prospective members who did not attend to update them on the meeting's accomplishments and inform them of upcoming informational sessions and organizational meetings. Review *Informational Night Meeting PowerPoint* on the Lions International website for more information.

During the organizational meeting, prospective club members will identify officers and explore opportunities for service projects. Before the group can move forward, a new club charter application or club branch application is needed so that members are covered by liability insurance and can serve their community with the Lions logo behind them.

New Champions Lions clubs will have the distinguishing designation of "Champions" affixed after the governmental municipality of their club's name. Due to trademark policy, Champions Lions clubs cannot use the term Special Olympics in their name. Review *Special Olympics' General Rules* on page 4 for further details on Special Olympics' trademark policy for more information.

Charter night is an opportunity to celebrate the formation of the Champions Lions club and the Special Olympics athletes and families the club will be serving. Invite athletes, family members and Special Olympics staff representatives. Consider asking each group to speak at the event. Consider opportunities for athletes to participate in the program. You can review Charter Night Planning Guide on the Lions International website for more information.

Best practices

- Work closely with Special Olympics
 - Collaborate to ensure events and meeting times are on Special Olympics calendar
 - Conduct annual planning meeting between club leadership and Special Olympics regional leadership team
 - Invite Special Olympics staff members to meetings regularly for program updates
- Build relationships with the Special Olympics family/ community
- Promote Special Olympics programs and Special Olympics leadership and ambassador speakers within local Lions community
- Enhance or develop Special Olympics events and tournaments
- Share successes via news/social media
- Engage strong Guiding Lions





Special Olympics general rules

Just as Lions International has a trademark policy as a matter of legal protection to our clubs, districts and international association, Special Olympics has their own set of policies and rules. Below is information for Lions clubs in accordance with the Special Olympics Official General Rules:

1. Lions clubs shall not use the Special Olympics name or logo in their official charter documents (i.e., Lions clubs may not use "Special Olympics," or an abbreviation, in its club name).
2. Lions clubs may, however, acknowledge through marketing events, fundraising and Lions clubs' activities that they support Special Olympics Programs and the Special Olympics Movement's mission, goals and objectives.
3. Lions clubs that do acknowledge and identify their support of Special Olympics need not do so on an exclusive basis but may support other charities.
4. In circumstances where a Lions club wishes to support Special Olympics Programs exclusively, it may use the following terms for marketing and communications purposes, under license from Special Olympics International:
 - X Lions Club for the support of Special Olympics [program name and logo]
 - X Lions Club in collaboration with Special Olympics [program name and logo]
 - o Licenses may be requested from Special Olympics by contacting the Membership Department at membership@lionsclubs.org
5. Use of Special Olympics' logo under these circumstances should be in accordance with Special Olympics' Brand Guidelines.
6. Special Olympics will not exercise oversight of funds raised by Lions clubs, either partially or totally, in support of Special Olympics activities.
7. Whenever a Lions club raises money wholly in support of Special Olympics, it should work with the Special Olympics Program it supports to ensure coordination of efforts and cooperation between them.

Lions Clubs International is a proud partner of Special Olympics. All Lions clubs are asked to adhere to the rules stated above.



Membership Development Division
 Lions Clubs International
 300 W. 22nd Street Oak Brook, IL 60523-8842 USA
 E-mail: membership@lionsclubs.org • www.lionsclubs.org