



Special Olympics Lions Clubs International Foundation Opening Eyes® Clinical Director Role

Special Olympics is a global movement of people creating a new world of inclusion and community, where every single person is accepted and welcomed, regardless of ability or disability. Helping to make the world a better, healthier, and more joyful place - one athlete, one volunteer, one family member at a time.

Special Olympics Healthy Athletes® offers free health screenings and education to Special Olympics athletes and aims to change the way health systems interact with people with Intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). The impact of these screenings on the health and wellness of Special Olympics athletes around the world is significant. Healthy Athletes has become the largest health initiative for people with IDD worldwide.

The Lions Clubs International Foundation Opening Eyes® program provides non-dilated vision screenings and prescription eyewear to Special Olympics athletes. Opening Eyes strives to positively impact the attitudes of optometrists, ophthalmologists, opticians, eyecare professionals, along with optometry students and ophthalmology residents who volunteer to care for people with IDD. Opening Eyes volunteers serve to educate Special Olympics athletes, their guardians, and coaches, about the importance of performance in sports, school, and work. Opening Eyes teaches eyecare professionals around the world how to better screen, care for, and communicate with individuals with IDD. These providers return to their communities better equipped to eliminate barriers faced by individuals with IDD.

Opening Eyes Clinical Director Background and Requirements

- **Licensed optometrist, ophthalmologist, or certified eyecare practitioner credentialed according to regional standards and criteria to evaluate vision and eye health**
- **Three years of clinical experience post degree, or one year of residency**
- **A three-year commitment to an active role as an Opening Eyes Clinical Director**
- **Complete the Clinical Director blended learning online training and in-person experience at an Opening Eyes screening with an approved mentor**
- **Comply with the global partnerships, screening & dispensing protocol, and partner engagement requirements**
- **Supervise eyecare professionals to ensure screening protocol is followed at all Opening Eyes stations**

The role of an Opening Eyes Clinical Director includes, but is not limited to:

1. Determining event opportunities

Identifying and scheduling Opening Eyes screenings is a joint effort between the Clinical Director and their local Special Olympic program. Building professional relationships and connecting with the local community will help deliver a successful Opening Eyes event.

2. Recruitment of volunteers

Clinical Directors are best positioned to identify and train eyecare professionals to serve as clinical volunteers in Opening Eyes. Recruit ample amount of clinical and non-clinical volunteers including Lions Clubs members to support the screening.

Potential volunteers may come from:

- Private practices
- Universities/colleges/schools
- Health and professional associations
- Medical facilities
- State and local public health agencies
- Local Lions Clubs

3. *Sourcing Equipment & Supplies*

Needed supplies & equipment may be available to Clinical Directors through donations or loans obtained by networking with local sponsors, private practices, and health services. If local sources are not available specific equipment & supplies can be requested through SOI. Through generous donations from our global sponsors, Special Olympics athletes will receive appropriate eyewear at the completion of the screening. Only SOI approved frames are allowed.

4. *Setting Up and Supervising the Opening Eyes Venue*

The Clinical Director is responsible for supervising the set up and delivery of the Opening Eyes screening, ensuring all protocols are followed and overseeing breakdown.

5. *Collecting and Reporting Screening Data*

Screening data collected at each screening station is used to determine the need for referrals and to assess the vision and eye health of Special Olympics athletes. This data provides Special Olympics Programs and their global stakeholders with information to increase awareness and provide more services. Clinical Directors are supervising quality data entry through the Healthy Athletes System (HAS) during the event to document screening data collected.

6. *Preparing the Healthy Athletes Grant Application*

Clinical Directors will work with their local Special Olympics Program to develop a Healthy Athletes Grant application to submit to Special Olympics International. These grants assist Programs in purchasing interactive educational materials, athlete giveaways, signage, and other supplies and equipment needed to conduct a successful Opening Eyes screening.

7. *Completing the Opening Eyes Event Evaluation*

Post-event evaluation information is critical information needed to continuously improve and adapt the screening to the needs of the athlete. The Clinical Director is responsible for collecting screening numbers, number of eyewear distributed, number of clinical, and general volunteers as well as Lions Clubs members who volunteer, including athlete stories and photos, and submitting this information to Special Olympics International via the Opening Eyes event evaluation.

***NOTE:** The Opening Eyes screening does **NOT** replace a comprehensive eye exam which includes dilation. Athletes and guardians/coaches must be notified of this when present at the screening.