

Livingston Recreation Youth Sports Policy Manual



I. PHILOSOPHY OF LIVINGSTON RECREATION DEPARTMENT YOUTH SPORTS

Livingston Recreation youth sports programs are designed to allow all children an opportunity to have fun, participate, and learn fundamental sports skills. We are committed to providing both educational and recreational programs and services. Participants will learn sportsmanship, respect, teamwork, fair play and self-confidence. The sports environment will be safe and well maintained. Prudent behavior by adults is mandatory. Livingston Recreation youth sports policies and procedures have been developed for:

- Livingston Recreation youth sports programs
- Requirements for organizations that use the City of Livingston properties for youth sports
- Implementation and monitoring program for volunteer coach's performance and training.

SEVEN ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF LIVINGSTON RECREATION YOUTH SPORTS PHILOSOPHY

1. All children in our community who meet the basic program registration requirements have a right to participate in Livingston Recreation youth sports programs.
2. Livingston Recreation will offer programs at a reasonable cost, while providing quality facilities, and recognition to both volunteers and participants.
3. Livingston Recreation Staff will recruit volunteers who have the ability to act as role models, mentors and facilitators.
4. All participants in Livingston Recreation youth sport programs shall be treated fairly, and without regard to race, color, disability, religion, sex or national origin.
5. Livingston Recreation youth sport program practices and games should be an enjoyable, challenging, and learning experience for all participants.
6. Those people in coaching and leadership positions in Livingston Recreation youth sport programs shall lead by example through the promotion of fair play and sportsmanship.
7. Livingston Recreation youth sports programs focus on the enjoyment of the sport-NOT the score.

PURPOSE OF THIS MANUAL

The purpose of this manual is to formalize the policies, procedures and philosophies of the Livingston Recreation Youth Sports Programs. This manual is to be used by both youth sport programs organized by Livingston Recreation and youth sports programs organized by partnering organizations that use City of Livingston property.

II. REQUIREMENTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

It is recommended that each team's Head Coach be NYSCA certified. It is also highly recommended that each team have a minimum one coach at all times (practices and games) NYSCA certified.

Any leagues or groups interested in using City of Livingston Recreation for an Organized youth sports program is required to complete a Facility Use Agreement and Field Request Form (See Appendix 1). The Youth

This agreement has the following requirements:

- List with names and addresses of the youth sports organization Board of Directors and/or leadership.
- Documentation of \$1,000,000 liability insurance naming the City of Livingston, its agents, officers, employees and volunteers as an additional insured.
- Verification through the form of an organization resolution or letter acknowledging that the organization will abide by the policies and procedures established in this manual.

Livingston Recreation's facility use will only be granted to those youth sports groups who abide by and enforce the written policies and procedures outlined in this manual.

Screening Procedures – Livingston Recreation will complete background checks on volunteer coaches in the programs supervised by Livingston Recreation. The City of Livingston Police Department works closely with the Recreation Staff to provide volunteer applications filled out by the City Livingston Recreation coaches, which includes a fingerprint analysis completed by the City of Livingston Police Department. Livingston Recreation volunteer coaches may begin coaching once the screening procedures have been completed. It is highly recommended that youth sports organizations complete background checks on their officials, coaches and volunteers.

III. GENERAL POLICIES

Registration

Every participant must complete a program registration form as well as a medical release of Liability and Emergency Form prior to participation in the program. Parents must also sign a parental code of ethics which is listed in the parent section of this manual.

Birth certificates are required for soccer and baseball/softball. These are used to verify the age of the participant. Copies are not kept but shredded after they are logged in the system. If a birth certificate is not presented a child may be denied participation.

Livingston Recreation **Payments-** Payments are due for all programs at time of registration. If a parent is unable to make a payment in full they may make arrangements

with the Livingston Recreation Department to make two payments. All payments must be complete before the child may participate in the program.

Medical Emergencies- For any injury or accident that requires something other than a cleaning and covering with a bandage, staff, coaches and/or parents are required to call

911 to seek professional medical assistance. Parents or guardians must be contacted. Any injury or accident involving professional medical assistance and/or EMS needs to be reported to the Recreation Department.

Note- If medical transportation is required, the charges incurred will be billed to the parents and/or the parent's insurance policy.

Please notify the league if your child has a pre-existing medical condition (i.e. allergies, medications, physical impairments, etc.) on the registration form. The league will then inform the coach of the situation. This is essential in order to determine the severity of an accident and to assist the medical personnel who respond to the scene.

Coaches must walk the playing area prior to the beginning of any game or practice to look for dangerous materials or hazards and report and/or remedy the hazard prior to the start of any play.

Any and all accidents in an Livingston Recreation program should be reported to the Recreation Department using a City of Livingston Recreation incident/accident report form.

Weather- The safety of the participants, officials, and spectators is the primary concern in cases of inclement weather. League Administrators, Game Officials or Coaches, will have the responsibility to remove the players from the field if the conditions become extreme. If ordered to do so, please find shelter until instructed to return to the playing field or told that the game has been canceled.

Game Cancellations and Rescheduling- If a game is canceled due to weather or other unforeseeable circumstances, efforts will be made to reschedule that game. However due to time restraints and/or field usage conflicts, some games may not be made up. It will be the decision of the Livingston Recreation Department when and if the games are made up. Special circumstances may be taken into consideration.

League schedulers must contact and inform the Recreation Superintendent or designee of updates or changes to the league schedules.

IV. COACHES SECTION

Livingston Recreation requires that all volunteers who want to coach be cleared through the Livingston Police Department and attend all scheduled coach meetings and trainings. Every effort is made by Livingston Recreation to provide training materials to assist coaches in providing fundamental coaching techniques for each sport.

Coaches' Code of Conduct

I will place the emotional and physical well being of my players ahead of a personal desire to win.

Expected Behavior:

- Using appropriate language in appropriate tones when interacting with players, league officials, game officials, parents and spectators.
- Including all players in team activities without regard to race, religion, color, sex, national origin, ancestry, disability, ability, or any other legally protected classification.
- Treating all players, league officials, game officials, parents and spectators with dignity and respect.
- Playing all players according to participation rules established by the league and the spirit of those rules.
- Encouraging youth to participate in other sports and activities to promote all aspects of their development.
- Allowing reasonable absences from practice.

I will treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development for the same age group.

Expected Behavior:

- Recognizing the differences of each child and treating each player as an individual while demonstrating concern for their individual needs and well-being.
- Encouraging all players, regardless of skill level, to be included as a member of the team and to remain involved in physical activity.
- Recognizing that some physical tasks, drills and demands are not appropriate for All youth.
- Recognizing that youth may vary greatly in physical, social and emotional maturation and considering these factors when setting up competitions and when interacting with youth.

I will do my best to provide a safe playing situation for my players.**Expected Behavior:**

- Maintaining a high level of awareness of potentially unsafe conditions.
- Protecting players from sexual molestation, assault and physical or emotional abuse.
- Correcting or avoiding unsafe practice or playing conditions.
- Using appropriate safety equipment necessary to protect all players.
- Seeing that the players are provided with adequate adult supervision while under the coach's care.

I will promise to review and practice the basic first aid principles needed to treat injuries of my players.**Expected Behavior:**

- Keeping basic first aid supplies available in all practice and game situations.
- Recognizing and administering proper first aid to an injured player.
- Demonstrating concern for an injured player, notifying parents and cooperating with medical authorities.
- Protecting the players' well being by removing them from activity when injured and not returning them to activity if they are compromised by injury.

I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all my players.**Expected Behavior:**

- Establishing practice plans that are interesting, varied, productive and aimed at improving all players' skills and individual abilities.
- Devoting appropriate time to the individual improvement of each player.
- Conducting practices of reasonable length and intensity appropriate for the age and conditioning of the players.

I will lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all my players.**Expected Behavior:**

- Adopting the position, teaching and demonstrating that it is our basic moral code to treat others, as we would like to be treated.
- Abiding by and supporting the rules of the game as well as the spirit of the rules.
- Providing an environment conducive to fair and equitable competition.
- Using the influential position of youth coach as an opportunity to promote, teach and expect sportsmanship and fair play.

I will provide a sports environment for my team that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, and I will refrain from their use at all Livingston Recreation youth sports events.

Expected Behavior:

- Being alcohol and drug free at all team activities or in the presence of players at games and practices.
- Refraining from the use of any type of tobacco products at all team activities or in the presence of players at games and practices.
- Refraining from providing any type of alcohol, drug or tobacco products to any of your players
- Encouraging parents to refrain from the public use of tobacco products or alcohol at team activities.

I will be knowledgeable in the rules of each sport that I coach, and I will teach these rules to my players.

Expected Behavior:

- Becoming knowledgeable, understanding and supportive of all applicable game rules, league rules, regulations and policies.
- Teaching and requiring compliance of these rules among players.

I will use those coaching techniques for each of the skills that I teach.

Expected Behavior:

- Teaching techniques that reduce the risk of injury to both the coach's own players and their opponents.
- Discouraging illegal contact or intentional dangerous play and administering swift and equitable discipline to players involved in such activity.

I will remember that I am a youth sports coach, and that the game is for children and not adults.

Expected Behavior:

- Maintaining a positive, helpful and supportive attitude.
- Exercising your authority/influence to control the behavior of the fans and spectators.
- Exhibiting gracious acceptance of defeat or victory.
- Accepting and adhering to all league rules and policies related to the participation of adults and youth.
- Fulfilling the expected rule of a youth coach to adopt a "children first" philosophy.
- Allowing and encouraging the players to listen, learn and play hard within the rules.
- Placing the emphasis on fun and participation.

Enforcement of the Code Of Conduct

Livingston Recreation is dedicated to raising the standard of service to youth in sports through the enforcement of this Code of Conduct in youth sport programs.

This Code of Conduct defines the expectations for individuals serving as coaches in youth sports and provides the tools to be used by Livingston Recreation, when necessary, to check behavior and to protect all children from the psychological, emotional, physical or social abuses that can be perpetrated against them by youth sport coaches.

Livingston Recreation firmly believes that for the sports experience to be positive, safe and a learning experience for youth, volunteer coaches must be trained and held accountable for their behavior when working with and around children. Every Livingston Recreation coach is required to sign and adhere to a Coaches' Code of Ethics Pledge. It is the duty of Livingston Recreation, to be responsible for seeing to it that all coaches involved with City of Livingston facilities are knowledgeable and unified with the department to implement the philosophy and goals of the department. It is also the duty of the Livingston Recreation Department to respond to complaints against a coach in a Livingston Recreation youth sports program.

This is accomplished by initiating the "Complaint Against a Coach Procedure" detailed in the next section. The purpose of this procedure is to hear the complaints and to determine what, if any, action should be taken towards correcting the Livingston Recreation coach's behavior.

It is highly recommended that youth sports organizations adopt similar "Complaint Against a Coach Procedure". It is expected that all youth sports organizations respond to complaints against a coach within their organization.

In order to provide Livingston Recreation the flexibility to take appropriate action when an coach is found to have violated the Coaches' Code of Ethics, a range of possible actions have been developed to accompany the Code of Conduct.

Possible actions include:

- Warning to and/or Apology from the coach
- Probation
- One Game Suspension
- Multiple Game Suspension
- Season Suspension
- Permanent Suspension

Factors that might suggest a more lenient sanction include:

- First Offense
- Remorse
- Apparent Desire to Reform
- Other Good Coaching Attributes
- Dedication to Youth Sports

Factors that might suggest a harsher sanction include:

- Child Endangerment
- Violation of Law
- Prior Complaints/Review Action
- Lack of Remorse

- Number of Ethics Canons Violated
 - Number of Expected Behaviors Violated
 - Breach of Duties as a Role Model
 - Extraordinarily Poor Judgment Around Children
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Regardless of the offense, a coach that has been removed from a game by an official or staff member may not return to a practice or game until they have met with the Recreation Superintendent and or the Discipline Review Board.

All the above actions and factors are highly recommended for all youth sports organizations using City of Livingston properties.

Livingston Recreation Complaint Against a Livingston Recreation Coach Procedure

This section outlines the procedures Livingston Recreation will use when the Department receives a complaint against a coach in a Livingston Recreation program. When Livingston Recreation receives a complaint about a coach, Livingston Recreation Department, will initiate a review process that includes:

1. Gather information and document eyewitness accounts of the event(s) that took place from interested parties involved to determine if a violation of the letter or intent of the Coaches' Code of Ethics Pledge has occurred. This may include the site supervisor, game officials, other coaches, parents and children.
2. Require the coach to attend a meeting with the Recreation Superintendent or Discipline Review Board to address the complaint and to offer his/her side of the incident. This meeting will be documented.
3. The Livingston Recreation Department has the authority to determine the severity of the situation and whether or not the affected coach has violated the expected behaviors outlined under each of the canons of the Code of Ethics Pledge that comprise the Coaches Code of Conduct.
4. The Livingston Recreation Discipline Review Board, after approval from Livingston Recreation Department, has the authority to enforce the appropriate range of disciplinary actions outlined in the Coaches' Code of Conduct. If disciplinary action is taken then the information will be logged in the member's file.
5. If the Livingston Recreation Department decides to remove a coach from coaching, the information will also be logged in the coach's file.

V. PARENT SECTION

Each parent or guardian is required to sign a Parent Code of Ethics. This is to insure the Livingston Recreation Parents understand our goals and philosophy. It is also to insure parent know what is expected of them as they support their child in the Livingston Recreation programs. Listed below is the Parent Code of Ethics:

PARENT CODE OF ETHICS

- Hereby pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for my child participating in youth sports by following this Parents' Code of Ethics Pledge.
- I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game, practice, or other youth sports event.
- I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my child ahead of a personal desire to win.
- I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment.
- I will support coaches and officials working with my child, in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
- I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, and will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
- I will remember that the game is for youth-not for adults.
- I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child.
- I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans, and officials, with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or ability.
- I promise to help my child enjoy the youth sports experience by doing whatever I can, such as being a respectable fan, assisting with coaching, or providing transportation.
- I will require that my child's coach be trained in the responsibilities of being a youth sports coach and that the coach upholds the Coaches' Code of Ethics.
- I will read the league rules and philosophy and do what I can to help all youth sports organizations implement and enforce them.

Livingston Recreation Complaint Against a Parent Procedure

This section outlines the procedures Livingston Recreation will use when the Department receives a complaint against a parent in a Livingston Recreation program. When Livingston Recreation receives a complaint in writing on a Incident Form about a parent, the Livingston Recreation Department, will initiate a review process that includes:

1. Gather information and document eyewitness accounts of the event(s) that took place from interested parties involved to determine if a violation of the letter or intent of the Parent Code of Ethics Pledge has occurred. This may include the site supervisor, game officials, other coaches, parents and children.
2. Require the parent to attend a meeting with the Recreation Superintendent or Discipline Review Board to address the complaint and to offer his/her side of the incident. This meeting will be documented.
3. The Livingston Recreation Department has the authority to determine the severity of the situation and whether or not the affected parent has violated the expected behaviors outlined under each of the canons of the Parent Code of Ethics Pledge.
4. The Livingston Recreation Discipline Review Board, after approval from Livingston Recreation Department, has the authority to enforce the appropriate range of disciplinary actions outlined below. If disciplinary action is taken a discipline file will be made on the parent and the details of the violation will be listed in the file as well as the disciplinary measures taken.
5. Multiple infractions may lead up to banning the parent from any Recreation Programming and or facilities.

CONSEQUENCES for Infractions

Possible actions include:

- Warning to and/or Apology from the coach
- Probation
- One Game Suspension
- Multiple Game Suspension
- Season Suspension
- Permanent Suspension

Factors that might suggest a more lenient sanction include:

- First Offense
- Remorse
- Apparent Desire to Reform
- Other Good Coaching Attributes
- Dedication to Youth Sports

Factors that might suggest a harsher sanction include:

- Child Endangerment
- Violation of Law
- Prior Complaints/Review Action
- Lack of Remorse
- Number of Ethics Canons Violated
- Number of Expected Behaviors Violated
- Breach of Duties as a Role Model
- Extraordinarily Poor Judgment Around Children