

Clinton County Youth Bureau

Sports Coordinator

Handbook

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Sports Coordinator Handbook

The Sports Coordinator acts as a liaison between coaches, the Youth Bureau and County Recreation Staff. It is the Coordinator's job to manage all parties involved in youth sports at a town level. By working together, we can ensure that the County Program is a fun and enjoyable experience for the youth and everyone involved. Additional duties and expectations are listed below. Youth Bureau Policies and Protocols are listed on the pages to follow.

Holds sign-ups for area youth who are interested in participating in a sports program.

· Conducts sign-ups soon enough so all information can be submitted to the Youth Bureau to meet scheduled deadlines. The Youth Bureau urges all towns to conclude sign-ups prior to the recommended end date provided for each sport.

· Checks that only youth from that municipality are registered and if not follows proper player release protocols.

· Verifies youth are registered for the proper age group/level of play. Proof of age and grade is required at the time of registration and is required prior to rosters being submitted. *Acceptable forms of proof are: Original or Certified Copy of the Birth Certificate, Sheriffs ID, Baptismal Certificate, School Records, Passport or Vaccination Record*.

· Creates teams for each division that are equal and fair when compared to other teams within the same division.

· Submits the appropriate paperwork, i.e., Coaches Code of Conduct, Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct, Team Rosters; Player Releases and/or Age Waivers, in a timely manner to the Youth Bureau to meet all deadlines.

Forwards all pertinent program information to the Youth Bureau to meet all necessary deadlines.

· Refers to the Program Time Table for all major deadlines.

· **REQUIRED** to attend, or send a representative, to the Mandatory Pre/Post-Season Coordinators Meeting for each sport. If the Coordinator cannot attend it is acceptable to send an individual, that is a seasoned coach or a town employee. It is very important to attend these meetings. This is where we break down the season that just took place and talk about if there is the need for any changes, any issues etc. At the preseason portion we go over any changes to the rule book etc. Preseason is also where you get your paperwork and coaches manuals. It is unacceptable for coaches not to have manuals outing the program rules and expectations. This is how confusion and incidents arise.

· Responsible for verifying **ALL** information on the rosters is accurate (i.e., date of birth, grade level and physical address).

Conduct Meeting/Training with coaches clearly explaining:

• Making sure they understand the philosophy of the County Programs and read the Coach's Manual.

· Program objectives

· Making sure each coach understands the "Code of Conduct Policy", as well as, signs and understands the "Coaches Code of Conduct."

· Making sure coaches understand the Parent/Guardian and Player Conduct Policy and know it is required to meet with parents and players and go over the Policy form and have it signed. Youth are not allowed to participate in the County Games until the Youth Bureau has the signed forms.

· Informs coaches of rule changes, etc.

COACHES MEETINGS ARE A REQUIREMENT, NOT AN OPTION

Distributes the game schedules to coaches

· Adjusts game schedules when facility conflicts occur and follows, as well as makes sure coaches follow, game cancelation/reschedule protocol.

Recruits potential sports officials to attend County Clinics

· Provides information on the time & location of Sports Officials Clinics which are required to become a County Certified Sports Official.

· Assign sports officials from the approved list provided by the Youth Bureau to cover home games.

Other Duties

· Make sure game locations, fields and equipment is properly maintained and safe for play.

· Frequently attends games within their town/area on a regular basis.

·Manages their town and any issues/incidents that may arise. If there are any issues or incidents please report them to the Recreation Director so they are aware of them incase they receive any calls/complaints. If a coach has any issues they should be bring it to their coordinator and the coordinator should relay it over to the County.

· Submits a Recreation Survey at the end of the season stating personal recommendations, observations and participants' suggestions for program modification.

When the Youth Bureau's Board meets regarding funding distribution they take into account if town's Sports Coordinators are attending meetings and adhering to their duties. Failure to do so may affect the amount of funds allocated to your Town.

Clinton County Youth Bureau
Policies and Protocols

AGE/GRADE WAIVER POLICY

It is the County Recreation Department's policy that youth play on teams in their grade appropriate grade bracket. A Grade Waiver may be requested by a parent/guardian should their child have a specific physical, social or emotional impairment that would make it unsafe for the youth to play at their grade appropriate level.

Grade Waivers to move down a grade bracket are granted on a case-by-case basis. To request a Grade Waiver, (a) parent(s)/guardian(s) must submit a Grade Waiver Request Form to the Youth Bureau prior to the established deadline. **No** grade waivers will be accepted after the determined deadline even if practices have not started. (Grade Waiver Request Forms can be found by logging on to www.clintoncountygov.com)

Evaluation Criteria

A Grade Waiver is ONLY appropriate when it is determined that it is **unsafe** for a player to participate in their grade appropriate grade bracket, **AND** it is determined that allowing that player to **"play down"** in a younger grade group will not pose safety concerns for their fellow players at that level.

A Grade Waiver is NOT appropriate when requested for the following reasons:

- Youth wants to play with friends
- Town does not have a team at the appropriate grade level. (Player may be released to play in another town.)

Youth **CANNOT** be placed on a team, practice or play at a lower grade level until the County Recreation Department completes the Grade Waiver evaluation.

- Players can **move up** ONE grade bracket. This must be requested by the parent and is the decision of the local Youth Commission for which the youth plays. The Youth must first be eligible for the program to do so. There is no mechanism for moving a player up who does not meet the minimum grade requirements.
- Once a player moves up to an upper grade bracket that player cannot move down to a lower grade bracket for the remainder of that season.
- Players can only **move down** a grade bracket if a waiver is approved by the County Youth Bureau.

GRADE VERIFICATION POLICY

Effective, January 8, 2013 the Youth Bureau and Youth Board have finalized the **Age/Grade Verification Policy.** Proof of Birth and Grade is required at the time of registration for sports and required prior to rosters being submitted. Primary proof is Original or Certified Copy of Birth Certificate, Sherriff's ID, Baptismal Certificate, School Record, Passport or Vaccination Record.

It is the expectation of the Youth Bureau that municipalities will require Grade Verification Documentation from all participants.

- If a player is discovered to be on a grade-inappropriate team, at that time they will be moved to the grade-appropriate team for the remainder of the season. A letter will be sent to the Sports Coordinator asking, "How did this happen?" and "What steps will be taken to ensure this does not happen again?"
- In the event of a second offense within a town, a letter or meeting between the Town Supervisor, Sports Coordinator and Youth Bureau will occur to ensure no further incidents will arise and discuss what the Youth Bureau can do to aid the town with the Grade Verification Process.
- Should further incidents within a municipality arise the situation will be brought to the Youth Board and dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

PLAYER RELEASE POLICY

It is the County Recreation Department's policy that youth play on teams in their hometown. A Player Release Form must be submitted to the Youth Bureau for approval, if a youth wishes to play outside of their hometown's program. A Player Release may be approved under the following five circumstances.

1. The youth requesting the Player Release lives in Town A but Town A does not have an age/gender appropriate team for them to play on. The youth may be released to play in a neighboring town that does field an age/gender appropriate team for them to participate on.

2. Two towns may "share" athletes to form teams where neither town had enough players on its own to field a team. Athletes playing outside their hometown must still submit a Player Release Form.

3. A team from Town A has reached a pre-determined "roster limit" and will accept no further roster additions while a team in neighboring Town B is still in need of players. A youth may be released from Town A to play in Town B, as long as their addition does not pose a hardship on the team from Town B.

4. A youth who resides in Town A but lives very close to the Town Line with Town B, is closer to Town B facilities than their Town A facilities. The play may be released to play in Town B for the sake of convenience of travel, if that poses no hardship on Town A's ability to field a team nor the Town B team by adding another player to their roster.

5. If a parent coaches in a town other than their town of residence, their children may request a Player Release to play in the town where their parent coaches, as long as their absence does not pose a hardship on their hometown fielding a team nor on the team they are being released to play on.

   *If there are other circumstances that you believe warrants a player release, please contact the Recreation Director for further discussion.

If Town A is requesting a player to be released to play for them from Town B and Town B denies the request that player may not play for town A.

In Lieu of a Player Release form, Towns Coordinators may email one another requesting player(s) to be released. Please include the Recreation Director on all emails as proof of approval. The email transcripts will be printed off and filed as would a "Player Release Form."

Game Cancelation and Reschedule Protocol

Coaches and Coordinators are reminded that regularly scheduled County games should not be cancelled for any reason other than inclement weather.

Games should not be rescheduled due to lack of players. If a team shows up 'short' of players and the opposing team has enough extra players, players should be shared and the game should be played. Since the County does not keep standings, this is perfectly acceptable.

*****Rescheduling Games increases the likelihood that County Referees will not be available*****

If a game needs to be canceled/rescheduled, please follow the procedures below.

It is the HOME coach's responsibility to contact the following people to notify them of any game cancelations/reschedules, even if it is the away team that cancels.

- **The opposing team**
- **The Town Coordinator**
- **The Youth Bureau**
- **The Recreation Assistant for their area – Do not assume that because the Youth Bureau is notified, they will contact the Rec Assistant. Often emails or phone calls are sent to the Youth Bureau after-hours or on weekends when no one is in the office so there is no one to reiterate the cancelation/reschedule. (Recreation Assistant's contact info and their area assignments are on the first page of the Schedule/Directory).**
- **The officials that are scheduled for that game**

If any games are rescheduled it is the responsibility of the Coach or the Town Coordinator to figure out the reschedule date, time, location and as always Officials for the game. The Youth Bureau must be notified of the reschedule.

***** The Youth Bureau allows any rescheduled games to take place ONE week past the end of the scheduled season. No games should take place past that week. *****

PARTICIPATION/OVERLOADING OF

TEAMS/ PLAYERS/ROSTER GUIDELINES:

- **Every player who attends practice MUST receive EQUAL playing time every game.** Starting line-ups should be changed from game to game ***The only reasonable exceptions to this rule would be unusually large rosters, or players not participating for disciplinary reasons*.
- **"All Star" or "Elite" Teams are not permitted within the County Program.** Towns with multiple teams within the same Division must ensure teams are evenly split by skill level. In a program of our size, mismatches are bound to happen from town to town – however there should **NEVER** be a mismatch within the same Municipality. This is unacceptable.

The Coordinators are to split teams evenly and fairly among coaches with equal skill and age/grade levels. If Coordinators will be allowing coaches to select players for their own teams ALL COACHES should be represented at the same meeting.

To help towns ensure each team is selected fairly, the following procedures have been used successfully in the past:

Once signups are completed and multiple teams are determined to be necessary for a Division all players and coaches should be present for the first practice to assess skill level prior to the breaking up of teams.

Option 1: Break players up by Age. Coaches then take turns selecting from players in the highest age group. Then take turns selecting from players in the middle age group and finally from the lowest age group.

Option 2: Break players up by Age: Each coach then each selects one player from the highest age group, then one player from the middle age group and then one from the age group.

Option 3: Break players up by skill. Each coach then takes turn selecting players based on their skill level.

SUSPENSION OF PLAY/WEATHER POLICY:

Once a game has been started the paid referee shall have the responsibility as to whether and when play should be stopped due to weather conditions, unfit field conditions, or darkness. That Official also decides whether or when to resume play after a rain suspension. No game shall be called until at least 20 minutes after play has been suspended. The referee may continue the suspension as long as there is a reasonable chance to resume play.

****It is imperative that coaches and officials cooperate and all involved use common sense****

If darkness, rain or other causes interfere with play so that the game is called (ended) by the official, it becomes a regulation game if 1 complete half or more of the game has been played. If less than 1 half of the game has been played, the game shall be rescheduled.

Thunder or Lightning

Under no circumstances will a game start, played or resume once **Thunder** or **Lightning** is evident. If **Thunder** or **Lightning** is present within 2 (two) hours before the scheduled Game Time the game shall be cancelled. Officials have been instructed to instantly discontinue all games**. NO EXCEPTIONS!!**

Heat Index Procedures

Temperature should be monitored before a scheduled game using the HEAT INDEX (feels like) or WET BULB INDICATOR. The Youth Board has adopted NYSPHSAA Heat Index procedures. These following instructions should be followed by all coaches.

Feels Like Temp. (Heat Index) or Wet Bulb indicator 79 or under	No restrictions on activity
Heat Index Caution: Feels Like Temp. (Heat Index) or Wet Bulb indicator 80 to 85 degrees	Provide ample water and multiple breaks. Monitor athletes for heat illness. Consider reducing time allotted for practice.
Heat Index Watch: Feels Like Temp. (Heat Index) or Wet Bulb indicator 86 to 90 degrees	Provide ample water and multiple breaks. Monitor athletes for heat illness. Consider changing practice time to when Feels Like Temp. is lower. Consider reducing time allotted for practice. 1 hour of recovery time for every hour of practice.
Heat Index Warning: Feels Like Temp. (Heat Index) or Wet Bulb indicator 91 to 95 degrees	Provide ample water and water breaks every 15 minutes. Monitor athletes for heat illness. Consider changing practice time to when Feels Like Temp. is lower. Consider reducing time allotted for practice. 1 hour of recovery time for every hour of practice. Light weight loose fitting clothes should be worn.
Heat Index Alert: Feels Like Temp. (Heat Index) or Wet Bulb indicator 96 degrees or greater	**No outside activity, practice or game**. Inside activity should only be held in an air-conditioned environment

Clinton County Youth Bureau
Coaches Code of Conduct Policy

Anyone coaching in any compacity must have a signed code of conduct on file with the County

The Clinton County Youth Bureau and Clinton County Youth Board have developed a Code of Conduct Policy in the case that a severe issue of unsportsmanlike conduct takes place (i.e. physical contact, foul language, etc.)

Step One: (*1st offense)* The Youth Bureau sends a letter to the Youth Commissioner and the Town Supervisor to let the municipality know what occurred with a request for a written response as to what steps they are taking to ensure this does not occur again.

Step Two: *(2nd offense)* If no written response is received or a second offense occurs the Youth Bureau Recreation Director will request a meeting with both the coach and the coordinator. The Town Supervisor may also be invited to attend.

Subpart Step Two:

The specific response may include terms and conditions supplementing one or more sanctions. When reviewing a complaint and deciding what action is the most appropriate in a given situation, the Recreation Director will give consideration to various extenuating circumstances.

Factors that might suggest a more lenient sanction include:

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

Factors that might suggest a harsher sanction include:

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

Step Three: *(3rd offense)* If the coordinator and coach do not attend the meeting for a 2nd offense or if this is a 3rd offense, a letter is sent to the Town Supervisor giving a sanction(s) depending on the severity of the problem(s). The sanction(s) must be followed if the municipality is to continue to participate in the Youth Bureau Sports Program

Coaches Code of Conduct

1. I will remember that the goals of the program are to have fun, improve skills, and feel good about oneself.

2. I will be reasonable in my demands on young players' time, energy, enthusiasm and performance.

3. I will read the Coach's Manual and be knowledgeable of the rules. I will abide by the rules of each sport that I coach and I will teach these rules to my players. I will ensure anyone acting as an Assistant Coach for my team will sign a Code of Conduct.

4. I will read the Sports Safety Tips and the Concussion Recognition Tool located in the Coaches Manual

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

6. I will maintain my composure in both victory and defeat. Furthermore, I will <u>not</u> criticize the officials' calls.

7. I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game and practice.

8. I will not harass, disrespect or cause a disturbance against a player, official, coach or fan.

9. I understand it is my responsibility to manage any disrespectful behavior by my team players, parents and assistant coaches.

10. I will meet with all Parent/Guardians of the players on my team and go over the Parent/Guardian Conduct Policy. I will have each Parent/Guardian sign the Policy and hand it in to my town Coordinator. I understand that any youth on my team is not eligible to play until the Policy is signed and handed into the Youth Bureau.

11. I will model inclusive behavior and expect all participants to respect each other regardless of race, sex, or ability. Furthermore, I will not participate in or allow others to harass, yell at, or ridicule a participant or sports official for making a mistake.

12. I will provide a safe environment for players that is free of drugs, tobacco, alcohol, and foul language; and I will refrain from their use at all program events/functions.

13. I will strive to make this program a positive and enjoyable experience for ALL participants and others (players, coaches, officials, and parents) around me by treating everyone with respect and dignity, and by teaching participants, parents and assistant coaches to do the same.

14. I will remember that I am a YOUTH sports coach, and that the game is for the CHILDREN and <u>NOT</u> the ADULTS. **"To play the game is great; to have fun playing is greater!"**

I, the undersigned agree to abide by the above Coaches Code of Conduct and have read and understand the Code of Conduct Policy. I understand that any violation of this code may result in sanctions being taken against either the coach or municipality involved. These sanctions may include the loss of eligibility of the coach, player, team, and/or municipality.

Clinton County Youth Bureau

Athlete & Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct

One of the Clinton County Youth Bureau's most important objectives is that the youth participating in our programs enjoy themselves. By striving to work more closely with parents, coaches and sports officials, we hope to see our youth enjoy their sports experience even more. We are confident that by better acquainting yourselves with the expectations surrounding these "instructional" programs you will more fully enjoy your role as a supporter of your child's youth sports experience. THANK YOU for your cooperation in this endeavor!

1. I will remember that the goals of the program are to have fun, improve skills, and feel good about oneself.
2. I will place the emotional and physical well-being of players ahead of my personal desire to win.
3. I will not engage in unsportsmanlike conduct with any coach, parent, player, participant, official, or any other attendee.
4. I will maintain my composure in both victory and defeat. Furthermore, I will not criticize the officials' calls.
5. I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game and practice.
6. I will treat any coach, parent, player, participant, official, or any other attendee with respect.
7. I will trust that the officials and coaches will handle anything that takes place during a game. I will not enter the area of play unless directly asked to by an official or coach.
8. I will not harass, disrespect or cause a disturbance against a player, official, coach or fan.
9. I will model inclusive behavior and expect all participants to respect each other regardless of race, gender, or ability. Furthermore, I will not participate in or allow others to harass, yell at, or ridicule a participant or sports official for making a mistake.
10. I will not, nor will I encourage my child, or any other person, to engage in any behavior which would endanger the health, safety, or well-being of any coach, parent, player, participant, official, or any other attendee.

11. I will not engage in verbal or physical threats or abuse aimed at any coach, parent, player, participant, official, or other attendee. I will discourage my child, or any other person from said actions/behaviors.
12. I will not, initiate a fight or scuffle with any coach, parent, player, participant, official, or any other attendee.
13. I will refrain from the use of drugs, tobacco, vaping, alcohol, and foul language at any County sporting event.
14. I will make sure my child understands and adheres to the rules listed above.
15. I will make sure any guests that accompany myself to any County sporting events will adhere to the rules listed above.
16. I will remember that I am a spectator, and that the game is for the CHILDREN and NOT the ADULTS. **"To play the game is great; to have fun playing is greater!"**

I also agree that if I or my child fail to abide by the aforementioned rules and guidelines, my child and I will be subject to disciplinary action that could include, but is not limited to the following:

- Game suspension (Youth and/or Parent)
- Season suspension (Youth, Parent and/or Municipality)
- Legal ramifications

By signing below, the Parent/Guardian agrees to abide by and be subject to this Code of Conduct. Additionally, by signing below the Parent/Guardian accepts responsibility for the actions of their child and understands that their child is also subject to the Code of Conduct.

Failure to sign the Athlete & Parent Code of Conduct will result in the child not being allowed to play in the County Sports Leage.