

# City of Mason



CITY OF **MASON** OHIO  
*more than you imagine.*

## **YOUTH SPORTS POLICY MANUAL**

## **PURPOSE OF THIS MANUAL**

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

### **I. PHILOSOPHY OF CITY OF MASON YOUTH SPORTS**

The City of Mason 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. The City of Mason youth sports policies and procedures have been developed for:

- City of Mason youth sports programs.
- Requirements for organizations that use City of Mason facilities for youth sports.
- Implementation and monitoring program for volunteer coach's certifications and training.

### **SEVEN ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF YOUTH SPORTS PHILOSOPHY**

1. All children in our community who meet the basic program registration requirements have a right to participate in youth sports programs.
2. Programs should be offered at a reasonable cost, while providing quality facilities and recognition to both volunteers and participants.
3. Volunteers will be recruited who have the ability to act as role models, mentors and facilitators.
4. All participants in youth sport programs shall be treated fairly, and without regard to race, color, disability, religion, sex or national origin.
5. 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 youth sport programs shall lead by example through the promotion of fair play and sportsmanship.
7. Youth sports programs focus on the enjoyment of the sport-NOT the score.

## **II. REQUIREMENTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

It is required that each team's Head Coach be National Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSCA) certified. It is also highly recommended that each team have a minimum one coach at all events (practices and games) NYSCA certified.

Any leagues or groups interested in using City of Mason facilities for an organized youth sports program is required to complete an Athletic Complex Request Form (See Appendix 1). The Request Form 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 Mason, 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.
- Verification of NYSCA certification for Board of Directors and Head Coaches.

City of Mason 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** – The City will complete background checks on volunteer coaches in the programs supervised by the City of Mason. Volunteer applications filled out by the City of Mason coaches include a fingerprint analysis completed by the City of Mason Police Department. City 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**

**Orientation Meeting-** Prior to the start of each season, orientation meetings will be held as needed.

**Program Payments-** Payments are due for all programs at the time of registration.

**Medical Emergencies-** Parents or guardians must be contacted for any injury or accident.

Any and all accidents in a City of Mason program should be reported to City staff using an official City of Mason incident report form.

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.

**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 cancelled.

**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 league administration when and if the games are made up. Special circumstances may be taken into consideration.

## **V. COACHES SECTION**

The City of Mason requires that all volunteers who want to coach youth sports complete the National Youth Sport Coaches Association (NYSCA) certification course. This is done in an effort to properly prepare volunteers for the responsibility of coaching as well as to protect the child, the coach and the City. This program costs the coach \$20.00 per year for one sport certification and it can be completed online. Each additional sport costs \$5.00. NAYS Select Coach training costs \$40 per year. Please visit [www.nays.org](http://www.nays.org) for additional information.

### **Program Description**

The mission of the National Alliance for Youth Sports (NAYS) is to provide educational programs and resources to improve youth sports programs worldwide.

NAYS is a non-profit organization that promotes the value and importance of sports and physical activity in the emotional, physical, social and mental development of children. Participation in sports develops important character traits and life-long values which can positively affect children if the adults involved have proper training and information.

NAYS programs are provided at the local level through dynamic partnerships with more than 3,000 community-based organizations, which include parks and recreation departments, Boys and Girls Clubs, Police Athletic Leagues, YMCAs/YWCAs, Catholic Youth Organizations and other independent youth service groups throughout the country. NAYS also has a strong presence on U.S. military installations worldwide.

Coaches who complete the program receive a variety of benefits.

## **MEMBER BENEFITS**

### **Stage 1: NAYS Coach Training**

#### **Benefits include:**

- \$1,000,000 Excess Liability Insurance
- Interactive Clinic
- Access to a members-only section of the NAYS website with coaching resources
- Membership Card
- Discounts for selected corporate partners

### **Stage 2: NAYS Select Coach Training**

#### **Benefits include:**

- \$2,000,000 Excess Liability Insurance
- \$250,000 Excess Accident/Medical Insurance
- Advanced coaching certification
- Access to a members-only section of the NAYS website with coaching resources
- Membership Card
- Discounts for selected corporate partners
- SportingKid Live!
- Self-paced learning

## 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 City of Mason facilities and 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
- The use of tobacco products or alcohol at team activities is strictly prohibited.

**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**

The City of Mason, along with the NYSCA, 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 the City of Mason and local youth athletic organizations, 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.

The City of Mason and NYSCA firmly believe 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 NYSCA coach is required to sign and adhere to a Coaches’ Code of Ethics Pledge. It is the duty of the City of Mason, as a NYSCA Chapter, to be responsible for certifying all coaches involved with City of Mason facilities. It is also the duty of the City to respond to complaints against a NYSCA coach in a City of Mason 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 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 an NYSCA coach within their organization.

In order to provide the City the flexibility to take appropriate action when an NYSCA 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 Revocation of Certification

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 Policies Violated
- Number of Expected Behaviors Violated
- Breach of Duties as a Role Model
- Extraordinarily Poor Judgment Around Children

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

**City of Mason**  
**Complaint against a Coach Procedures**

This section outlines the procedures the City of Mason will use when the receiving a complaint against a coach in a City program. A complaint against a coach in a partnering, local organization should be directed to the appropriate organization's board of directors.

When the City of Mason receives a complaint about an NYSCA coach, the City will initiate a review process and the organization will be contacted within seven (7) days.

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 league supervisor to address the complaint and to offer his/her side of the incident. This meeting will be documented.
3. The City 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 NYSCA Code of Conduct.
4. The Chapter Director, after approval from the City of Mason, has the authority to enforce the appropriate range of disciplinary actions outlined in the NYSCA Coaches' Code of Conduct. If disciplinary action is taken then the Chapter Director will report to the NYSCA in brief, the nature of the complaint, the findings of the investigation, and the sanction applied to the member coach. This information will be logged in the member's file.
5. If the City of Mason decides to revoke a coach's certification, NYSCA Headquarters will notify the coach of both the revocation and the procedures to appeal to the National Executive Board. The Chapter Director will be sent a copy of the correspondence. This information will also be logged in the coach's file.

**Youth Sports Organizations**  
**Complaint against a Coach Procedures**

This section outlines the procedures youth sports organizations will use when they receive a complaint against a coach.

When any organization receives a complaint about an NYSCA coach or board member that violates the expected behaviors outlined in the Code of Ethics Pledge, they need to communicate the issue within twenty-four (24) hours to the NYSCA Chapter Director.

It is required that the youth sports organizations initiate a review process within their own organization adopting similar procedures listed on the previous page eleven.

It is also expected that youth sports organizations 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.

If the youth sports organizations determine that the severity of the situation violated the expected behaviors outlined under the Code of Ethics Pledge that compromise the NYSCA Code of Conduct, they will contact the NYSCA Chapter Director with the recommended course of disciplinary action.

The Chapter Director will report to the NYSCA in brief, the nature of the complaint, the finding of the organization's investigation, and the sanction applied to the NYSCA coach, if any.

If the youth sports organization decides to revoke a coach's certification, NYSCA Headquarters will notify the coach of both the revocation and the procedures to appeal to the National Executive Board. The Chapter Director will be sent a copy of the correspondence. This information will be logged in the coach's file.