

Coaches Handbook

Introduction

This handbook is being provided to those who desire to help improve our community by volunteering their time and talents to help our young people. In volunteering, you will be helping our young people to actually learn more about how to become better citizens. A major goal is for our youth to have fun, while at the same time they are establishing healthy relationships and lifestyles.

Anyone considering serving as a Head or Assistant coach for the first time or even if you are a returning coach, you will need to complete an application and consent to the department's screening process

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APPLICATION for VOLUNTEER POSITION

Coaches Application

PLEASE PRINT. Complete all information please.

Applicant Last Name	First Name	Middle Initial
Applicant Home Phone	Work Phone	Cell phone
Applicant Street Address	Street Address line 2	City/State/zip
Applicant Email Address	Ok to publish contact info <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
IN CASE OF EMERGENCY PLEASE NOTIFY:	RELATIONSHIP	Emergency Contact #
HAVE YOU EVER BEEN CONVICTED OF A FELONY OR RELEASED FROM PRISON WITHIN THE LAST SEVEN (7) YEARS, OR CONVICTED OF A MISDEMEANOR OTHER THAN TRAFFIC OFFENSES WITHIN THE PAST THREE (3) YEARS? A conviction record is not an absolute bar to acceptance. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, please explain: You cannot bypass this question		
HAVE YOU VOLUNTEERED PREVIOUSLY WITH AMHERST COUNTY? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No IF YES, INDICATE LOCATION/SUPERVISOR/DATES.	Date	Supervisor

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IV. Related Volunteer Experience List present or most recent organization. Attach additional sheet if necessary. AGENCY: SUPERVISOR'S NAME: MAY WE CONTACT?		
PLEASE LIST PERSONAL REFERENCES (NOT RELATIVES): NAME	Phone #	
#1	#1	#1 May we contact _ Yes _ No
#2	#2	#2 May we contact _ Yes _ No

Coaches are responsible for the general wellbeing of their assigned players during practices and games that are scheduled and supervised by the Recreation Department. Therefore, players should never be left in the supervision of someone who has not been screened by the Recreation Department. Coaches are not required nor authorized to provide transportation for players.

I acknowledge that I have carefully read this **WAIVER OF LIABILITY AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK** and fully understand that I am waiving any right that I may now or hereafter have to bring a legal action to assert any claim against the Amherst County in connection with my participation in this volunteer activity.

I accept the conditions printed above:

 Participant Signature Date

 Print Participant Name

A parent or guardian signature is required if the participant is under 18 years of age. By signing this **WAIVER OF LIABILITY AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK** on behalf of a minor, the undersigned parent or guardian is agreeing to be bound by the above conditions on behalf of him or herself and on behalf of the participant.

 Parent or Guardian Signature Date

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Amherst County's Job Description for Volunteers

Division/Department	Recreation Department
Location	Various parks and schools
Job Title	Volunteer Head or Assistant Coach
Reports	Recreation Specialist

	Type of position: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Part-time	Hours: Usually 4-6 hours weekly, depending on practice and game schedules. As a general rule, practices are held on weekdays after school. Games are held on weekends
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General Description

Purpose Provide instruction, leadership and supervision to children ages 4-18 in a variety of sports, including soccer and basketball.

Duties Plan, organize and supervise practice sessions; organize and supervise game situations; communicate with parents information regarding their child's athletic experience; work closely with Recreation Department staff to ensure all department rules and policies are being observed.

Work experience requirements

Ability to work well with children of various age; basic knowledge of the sport or activity to which they are assigned; willingness to learn and follow department rules and guidelines regarding youth sports; prior coaching experience helpful but not required.

Responsibilities – Coaches are responsible for the general wellbeing of their assigned players during practices and games that are scheduled and supervised by the Recreation Department. Therefore, players should never be left in the supervision of someone who has not been screened by the Recreation Department. Coaches are not required nor authorized to provide transportation for players.

Amherst County Recreation Department's Screening Policy

PURPOSE

It is the intent of this policy to establish certain guidelines wherein the Amherst County Department of Parks and Recreation (hereinafter referred to as "Parks and Recreation Department") can seek to protect our children by investigating the background of volunteers who will be coaching and instructing children involved in athletic and cultural arts programs approved by the Parks and Recreation Department.

GENERAL

A. The Amherst County Recreation Department shall ensure that all participants 18 years of age or younger shall have at least one (1) approved coach, assistant coach, or instructor (hereinafter collectively referred to as "Coach") present at each athletic or cultural arts activity, including practices and games. A Coach becomes approved once the process described in this policy is completed.

B. Any person who has been convicted of, or has a pending charge pertaining to, any of the disqualifying offenses listed in this policy, which are standards set by the National Recreation and Park Association will be immediately disqualified from coaching (either as a head coach, an assistant coach or instructor) in any program approved by the Parks and Recreation Department. A Coach who willfully fails to comply with this background screening policy shall be automatically disqualified.

C. All sports and cultural arts programs will have one head coach or instructor and up to one assistant coach processed for approval. Each Coach will have his or her background checked every 24-36 months for as long as he or she continues coaching, unless reasonable suspicion is raised.

SCREENING PROCESS

1. The Parks and Recreation Department will provide each potential coach with the online registration website or a Volunteer in Youth Sports Consent/Release Form. All coaches, assistant coaches, and instructors must complete the forms fully and legibly and return them to the Recreation Specialist or Director or register online.
2. The Parks and Recreation Department Staff will establish deadlines by which the Volunteer in Youth Sports Consent/Release Forms are due back to the Parks and Recreation Department and the date they need to be registered through the online website. These deadlines will try to be at least one week prior to the start of practices or events for each sport or program. This will give the Parks and Recreation Department time to compile the forms, process the forms, and insure background checks have been conducted. After the background check, the results of the background check will be forwarded to the Amherst County Parks and Recreation Department. The Department Director and the Recreation Specialist will determine based on the standards in these policies of any coaches who are disqualified. All information pertaining to the background check will remain with the Amherst County Parks and Recreation Department, subject to the applicable laws requiring disclosure. The Parks and Recreation Department Director and Recreation Specialist will be the only ones informed of the results of any background check.

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3. If any disqualifying entries are reported in the criminal background check, the Parks and Recreation Department shall notify the Coach that he is disqualified. The disqualified coach can request a copy of the background check from the Department of Parks and Recreation.

GUIDELINES

It is the recommendation of the National Recreation and Park Association that park and recreation jurisdictions implement the following volunteer management guidelines for credentialing volunteers through comprehensive background screening. The guideline for comprehensive background screening or background checks is defined to include:

- **Social Security Verification** – Verify the name of every volunteer against the Social Security Number provided. This helps to eliminate the possibility of false names and/or information.
- **Address Trace** – Verify the current address and identify any previous address of every volunteer. This information is utilized to determine the jurisdiction in which the background screening is conducted.
- **State or County Criminal Record Check** – A Statewide or Countywide (depending on the jurisdiction) criminal record check is performed to capture all misdemeanor and felony convictions in that jurisdiction. The search should be conducted in the jurisdiction with the longest and most current residency.
- **National Criminal History Data Base search** – there is no one national record check whether through the government or private sector that identifies every crime ever committed. However, there are now criminal history data bases available that contain millions of criminal records and cover much of the United States. These data bases can be accessed and used to supplement the local criminal history search. This is beneficial in expanding the search across the country but should not be used as a stand alone source for your background screening.
- **Sex Offender Registry** – Search of the appropriate state sex offender registries based on the address history. This is an important supplement to criminal history searches but should not be used as a stand alone source for your background screening.
- **Timely Results** - A background screening process should be timely and results should be returned within 10 business days on average to allow for proper planning and assignment of volunteers.
- **Complimentary Consultation** – Seek a provider committed to provide consultation to clarify screening results and provide technical assistance and guidance regarding updating practices.

Clarification of Guidelines

About Social Security Verification

Social Security verifications are a critical first step in the process as it helps to insure that the name and other personal data given by the applicant is accurate. The verification will generally reveal the state and year the SSN was issued, names, addresses and sometimes the date of birth that is associated with this Social Security number.

Although it is possible to run background checks without the SSN, this will reduce the effectiveness and limit the number of personal identifiers that can be found in public records. To report someone's criminal history the reporting agency must have at least 2 matching identifiers.

Non US Citizen – In handling background checks on individuals without Social Security numbers, it is suggested that in place of the SSN the volunteer applicant state "No SSN". Each local organization should take appropriate measures to insure that the name, date of birth and addresses are all valid for individuals without Social Security numbers.

About Address History

This is part of the screening process that will help to confirm the current address and any previous addresses of the applicant. The main purpose in collecting address information is to determine where the local search will be performed.

Local Search

Depending upon the state, data sources can either be a statewide repository or a county court house system search. Some states have state repositories that include criminal histories from the counties or other jurisdictions in the state. If these repositories are available, reliable and timely the state check should be used in the local search. When a state repository is not available or not reliable then the county court house should be used for the local search. The goal of a local search is to uncover all misdemeanor and felony arrests and/or convictions on the applicant.

CONFIDENTIALITY

To help ensure confidentiality, the Parks and Recreation Department Director and the Recreation Specialist will be the only persons notified of a Coach's criminal history. The criminal background reports shall be kept in a secure location for a period as required by applicable law or until a person is no longer a volunteer Coach.

APPEALS PROCESS

If a Coach's background check includes a charge set forth on the list of disqualifiers below, the Parks and Recreation Department will make a determination of the nature of the offense and if it disqualifies a Coach; There shall be no appeal of a decision to disqualify a coach, if the Coach's relevant criminal history is accurate; all decisions are final.

If a Coach wishes to dispute the content of the profile report, the Coach shall contact the third party responsible for conducting the background check by calling the telephone number listed on the report. The Coach is responsible for providing any or all documentation to support his or her claim.

CRITERIA FOR EXCLUSION

A person will be disqualified and prohibited from serving as a volunteer if the person has been found guilty of the following crimes:

Guilty means that a person was found guilty following a trial, entered a guilty plea, entered a no contest plea accompanied by a court finding of guilty, regardless of whether there was an adjudication of guilt (conviction) or a withholding of guilt. This does not apply if criminal charges resulted in acquittal, Nolle Prose, or dismissal.

SEX OFFENSES

- All Sex Offenses – Regardless of the amount of time since offense.

Examples include: child molestation, rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sodomy, prostitution, solicitation, indecent exposure, etc.

FELONIES

- **All Felony Violence** – Regardless of the amount of time since offense.

Examples include: murder, manslaughter, aggravated assault, kidnapping, robbery, aggravated burglary, etc.

- **All Felony offenses** other than **violence** or **sex** within the past 8 years.

Examples include: drug offenses, theft, embezzlement, fraud, child endangerment, etc.

MISDEMEANORS

- **All misdemeanor violence** offenses within the past 5 years.

Examples include: simple assault, battery, domestic violence, hit and run, etc.

- **All misdemeanor drug & alcohol offenses** within the past 3 years or multiple offenses in the past 8 years.

Examples include: *driving under the influence, simple drug possession, drunk and disorderly, public intoxication, possession of drug paraphernalia, etc.*

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- **Any other misdemeanor** within the past 3 years that would be considered a potential danger to children or is directly related to the functions of that volunteer.

Example include: contributing to the delinquency of a minor, providing alcohol to a minor, theft – if person is handling monies, etc.

PENDING CASES

Anyone who has been charged for any of the disqualifying offenses or for cases pending in court will not be permitted to volunteer until the official adjudication of the case.

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Coaches Code of Ethics

I hereby pledge that:

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

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

I will do my best to provide a safe playing situation for my players.

I will promise to review and practice basic first aid principles needed to treat injuries of my players.

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

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

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 youth sports events.

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

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

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

Why Coach Youth Sports

Things to consider:

Most coaches volunteer because no one else would do it.

And/or They have a child that's playing

and/or They feel that they can contribute and make a difference

There are many more reasons why people coach, most are good and some not so good

20 years from now the kids that you coached won't remember who won a particular game, but they will remember how you treated them, whether you helped or hurt them. Whether you taught them something or whether you wasted their time. They will either not remember you at all or they will remember that you had a positive impact on their lives.

Coaching is a people business and the most important skills are not technical, but interpersonal. If a coach cannot communicate with the players or fails to understand their learning styles, how then can the coach be successful? Using the best drills in the world does not make a great coach. You can watch thousands of games a year on television and buy thousands of DVDs or books, so there is plenty of knowledge to be had. Knowledge alone however, does not make for a great coach. It's how a coach uses the information, relates to the players, motivates, challenges, and inspires that makes the difference.

Who needs good coaching?

Duh, doesn't everybody? The players of course need good coaching, but the parents need coaching and of course the coaches need coaching. Only dead people don't need good coaching.

Studies have revealed that 70% of the children drop out of sports by the age of 13.

Did you know?

Why do kids stop playing a sport?

- 48% - Didn't like their coach
- 27% - other reasons
- 17% - simply didn't like the sport
- 6% - suffered an injury

Have you ever witnessed a coach arguing with another coach, official or parent at a game or at practice?

- 53% - Occasionally
- 24% - Never
- 16% - Once
- 7% - Often

No player or coach should be here because of the potential for money. If it's money (scholarships etc) that you're after, then you would have a much better chance at winning the lottery;

With your help and continued commitment many kids will have a chance at more and greater opportunities than they would have had, had **you** not been their coach.

Thanks for taking on this wonderful and worthy challenge!