

# **Town of Waterford**

Recreation and Parks Commission

**YOUTH SPORTS COUNCIL**

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**Adopted 2005  
Updated 2015  
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## From the Waterford Youth Sports Council

On behalf of all Waterford Recreation and Parks Commission, we would like to extend our sincerest thank you to all athletes, parents and volunteers that participate in youth sports programs at our parks and recreation facilities.

The Youth Sports Council is a committee of Waterford residents and Recreation and Parks Staff dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in youth sports. The Youth Sports Council has developed youth sports policies and procedures. These include:

- ☐ Standardized rules for Waterford Recreation and Parks co-sponsored youth sports program.
- ☐ Requirements for organizations that use the Town of Waterford properties for youth sports.
- ☐ Implementation and monitoring program for volunteers, coaches, certifications, and training.

### **Resolution of the Waterford Recreation and Parks Commission**

The Waterford Recreation and Park Commission hereby resolves to adopt the philosophies set forth in the "National Standards for Youth Sports" for all Town Recreation and Parks co-sponsored sports programs, and hereby resolves to create a structure for ensuring that co-sponsored programs at Town Of Waterford sports facilities adopt and enforce these standards. Therefore, the Commission hereby implements a policy that no co-sponsored group may use Town Of Waterford recreation facilities that does not participate as a member of the Waterford Youth Sports Council as conceptually set forth in the addendum to this Resolution. Each co-sponsored group must consent to the Rules of the Waterford Youth Sports Council for any of its activities which occur on Town recreational sites.

The Waterford Recreation and Parks Commission hereby resolves to be the final authority on appeals of any decisions and recommendations of the Waterford Youth Sports Council affecting co-sponsored Town sports and activities, and reserves the right to sanction, remove or suspend a co-sponsored group from using Town recreation sites and to recommend withdrawal of Town funding for any co-sponsored group which is found in violation of the National Standards for Youth Sports.

### **Organization of the Youth Sports Council**

- A. Election of Officers:
  - ☐ Youth Sport Organization representatives shall be appointed by the Recreation and Parks Commission.
- B. Sub-Committees: Sub-committees shall be appointed by the Sports Council President as are deemed necessary to fulfill the obligations and responsibilities of the Council.
- C. Terms:
  - 1. Terms will expire after a three (3) year period. Members may re-apply to the Recreation and Parks Commission upon the expiration of their term.
  - 2. The Waterford Recreation and Parks Commission has the authority to remove any representative of the Youth Sports Council if the Commission decides the member does not comply with their standards and/or negatively represents the Council in any way.

### **Meetings**

- 1. Regular scheduled meetings shall be held at the Waterford Community Center, following a designated schedule established during the last scheduled meeting of the year. Special meetings shall be held as needed to meet the public interest. Workshop meetings (no official action taken) shall be held as needed.
- 2. Executive sessions shall be held upon the vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and voting.
- 3. The majority of each year's established Council shall constitute a quorum.
- 4. Attendance is mandatory at each of the quarterly meetings.
  - A. Members must notify the Secretary or President at minimum, 24 hours before the next scheduled meeting if they are unable to attend.
  - B. Non-attendance by members at more than three (3) meetings during the calendar year they were appointed, will result in a review of membership by the Sports Council and Recreation and Park Commission and possible removal from the Sports Council.
- 5. ALL minutes, records, reports, correspondence, etc., shall be filed in the office of the Commission and, excluding personnel files, shall be available for public inspection. (In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.)
- 6. Robert's Rules of Order shall be observed at all times.

# **PHILOSOPHY OF WATERFORD YOUTH SPORTS**

Waterford 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. Waterford Youth Sports Council (WYSP) expects all individuals to assist in building a healthy sport environment by using positive reinforcement, no inappropriate displays are allowed.

## **EIGHT ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF WATERFORD YOUTH SPORTS COUNCIL PHILOSOPHY**

1. All children in our community who meet the basic program registration requirements have a right to participate in co-sponsored youth sports programs.
2. Programs focus on the enjoyment of the sport - **Not** the score.
3. Co-Sponsored organizations will offer programs at a reasonable cost, while providing quality facilities, and quality equipment.
4. Co-Sponsored organizations will recruit volunteers who have the ability to act as role models, mentors and facilitators.
5. All participants in co-sponsored youth sport programs shall be treated fairly, without regard to race, color, disability, religion, sex or national origin.
6. Co-Sponsored youth sport program practices and games should be an enjoyable, challenging, and learning experience for all participants.
7. People in coaching and leadership positions in co-sponsored youth sport programs shall lead by example through the promotion of fair play and sportsmanship.
8. Leagues and coaches are not permitted to require sport specialization.

# **OVERALL YOUTH SPORTS STANDARDS**

Waterford Youth Sports Council (WYSC) embraces the philosophies set forth in the "National Standards for Youth Sports," compiled by the National Alliance for Youth Sports based on an assembly of 48 of the nation's leading experts representing a vast variety of disciplines affecting youth sports, (standards). Our position is that all programs playing on Town of Waterford property must consider the safety and well being of the youth participant as a priority.

These Standards have been initiated as resolutions and ordinances in hundreds of communities nationwide. They are the recognized method to best ensure that communities are providing quality opportunities for young athletes. Abiding by these Standards ensures that the philosophy of the program is based on the children's needs, not the adult's needs. With leagues initiating the implementation of these Standards, parents can feel confident that youth sports with WYSC will truly be a positive experience for their child.

WYSC's "core service" is to provide developmental programs for youth and families being introduced to the fun, excitement and challenges of recreation. The department does however recognize that there are youth and families that wish to experience competitive sports programs and will also attempt to provide a competitive experience within the scope of the standards.

## **Standard #1 Quality Sports Environment**

Youth sports programs must be developed and organized to ensure, as well as to enhance, the emotional, physical, social and educational well-being of children.

### **Background**

A wide variety of youth sports experiences are available today. Historically, many programs have been modeled after adult-oriented programs using rules, skill expectations and competitive requirements replicated from high school, college and professional levels. Today, programs must be designed and administered so that every child, regardless of their abilities, has an opportunity to positively benefit from participation.

### **Rationale**

Youth sports programs should be based on meaningful participation. All children physically and emotionally mature at different rates. In order to have a quality youth sports environment consider the appropriate age range of the participants, the rules of the sport and the proper level of physical and emotional stress.

### **Implementation**

1. Leagues should be required to abide by written policies and procedures.
2. Leagues should be guided by a written mission statement that provides a foundation for the program's purpose and goals.
3. Leagues should maximize play time for all by establishing a minimum play rule/policy.
4. Leagues should organize programs using the following guidelines, although modifications can be made when total participation numbers are low:
  - a. Developmental Programs for children 6 years old and under:
    - \* Informal teams
    - \* Focus on motor skill development
    - \* Scores and/or standings not emphasized
    - \* Roster size, rules, equipment and fields modified
    - \* Limited uniforms
    - \* Post-season tournament or all-star competition highly discouraged
    - \* Encourage boys and girls to participate together whenever possible
    - \* No travel
    - \* Coaches permitted on playing surface

- b. Instructional Sports Programs for 7 to 8 year olds:
    - \* Focus on skill development and rules of the game
    - \* Scores and standings not emphasized
    - \* Roster size, rules, equipment and fields modified
    - \* Limited uniforms
    - \* Encourage a variety of position and situational play
    - \* Post-season tournament or all-star competition discouraged
    - \* Encourage boys and girls to participate together whenever possible
    - \* Travel discouraged
    - \* Coaches permitted on playing surface
  - c. Organizational Programs for 9 to 10 year olds:
    - \* Scores kept but standings de-emphasized
    - \* Roster sizes, rules, equipment and fields modified when necessary
    - \* Encourage a variety of position and situational play
    - \* Out-of-community postseason play only when necessary
    - \* No national tournament participation
  - d. Skill Enhancement and Enrichment Programs for 11 year olds and above:
    - \* Scores and standings de-emphasized
    - \* Proper grouping and selection procedures to ensure fair and equitable teams
    - \* Encourage a variety of position and situational play
5. Leagues should develop skill level assessments to establish teams using methods to ensure teams are balanced by considering weight, skill and special needs when grouping children.
  6. Leagues should establish a no-cut policy so all children can participate in recreational programs.
  7. League standings should be discouraged below the age of nine and de-emphasized below the age of 13.
  8. Leagues and coaches should not require sports specialization or year-around participation.

## **Standard #2 Sports Participation Should Be Fun and a Portion of A Child's Life**

Youth sports are only one portion of a child's life that must be balanced with other social and educational experiences and activities.

### **Background**

The foundation for human development occurs during the early years of life. Individuals that are exposed to many different learning situations increase their potential for successful development. Youth sports participation is a valuable component to a child's overall healthy development.

### **Rationale**

Parents, coaches and league administrators need to encourage children to be involved in a variety of programs and activities to experience positive growth and development, while taking great care to ensure that the child isn't overscheduled or that activities don't detract from their academic learning. Parents must respect a child's decision to play or not play, while keeping in mind that commitment is still important for their growth and development. Parents, coaches and league administrators must also realize that a child's involvement in youth sports affects the entire family.

### **Implementation**

1. Leagues, parents and coaches should encourage participation in a variety of youth activities in addition to sports while not over-scheduling.
2. Leagues should establish rules that limit organized practices and games to no more than one hour a day and three days a week up to age 8; not more than 1.5 hours and four days a week for ages 9 to 12; and not more than two hours and four days a week for ages 13 and above.
3. Leagues should adopt policies that make provisions for excused absences.
4. Everyone involved should understand that positive life skills are learned/gained from participation in youth sports programs.

### **Standard #3 Training and Accountability**

Adults involved with youth sports must receive training and important information about the program and must be held accountable for their behavior.

#### **Background**

Sports participation can lead to physical and emotional harm if those responsible have no training. In many cases, adults involved with youth sports organizations have not received formal training. Adults are an essential component of organized sports programs, whose own motives, morals and beliefs can influence how programs are conducted and their outcomes.

#### **Rationale**

To ensure that everyone involved strives to make the youth sports program safe, positive and fun for all children, all administrators, coaches and parents must receive information about the program's philosophy, policies and procedures, as well as specific knowledge required for each position. By holding everyone accountable for their behaviors, high quality programming can be ensured.

#### **Implementation:**

1. Parents, coaches and volunteers should be provided written information that outlines the program's purpose, as well as policies and procedures.
2. Coaches and staff should be trained in the following areas: the emotional needs of children; safety, injury prevention and first aid; conditioning; hydration and nutrition; teaching proper sport techniques; including all children; child abuse prevention; and drug, alcohol and tobacco prevention.
3. Coaches should be encouraged to continually gain general and sport-specific coaching skills.
4. Leagues are encouraged to provide additional educational resources for coaches and parents to assist them in providing the best possible youth sports experience for each child.
5. Adults involved should be provided information about the types of child abuse, recognizing symptoms of child abuse and neglect and understand reporting procedures.
6. Leagues should adopt a positive coaching recruitment policy that encourages the recruitment and selection of qualified women and men regardless of race, creed, sex or economic status.
7. All volunteers should be required annually to sign a code of conduct pledging their commitment to provide enjoyable, healthful youth sports experiences.
8. Leagues should establish an accountability procedure and disciplinary process to remove anyone who does not abide by its policies and procedures.
9. Coaches and parents should encourage and apply proper principles of conditioning.

### **Standard #4 Screening Process**

To ensure the safety and well being of children in youth sports, individuals with regular, repetitive access or contact with children must complete the screening process.

#### **Background**

Volunteers are crucial to the delivery of youth sports programs. Leagues have a responsibility to protect participants against unsafe individuals by implementing a comprehensive screening system. Screening is a process with many elements that an organization uses to protect participants.

#### **Rationale**

Leagues must be selective when choosing volunteers since parents are entrusting their children to the adults running the youth sports league. Consistent and comprehensive screening strengthens the organization's

protective shield. The time, energy and costs invested in screening are much less than what will be necessary if an incident, abuse or neglect occurs in the organization.

### **Implementation**

1. Leagues must use appropriate and available screening techniques for selecting and assigning individuals to ensure that children are protected.
2. A written screening policy should be included in policies and procedures.
3. A written job description outlining the duties and responsibilities should be available for every position.
4. Job descriptions should be read, signed, dated and kept on file to ensure an understanding of the position and the league's expectations.
5. Volunteers should be required to complete and sign an application form.
6. Leagues should contact references provided by potential volunteers.
7. Leagues are encouraged to interview volunteers.
8. A criminal history background check should be conducted on all volunteers.
9. Leagues are encouraged to develop procedures and disqualifiers to determine what issues make a volunteer undesirable.

### **Standard #5 Parents' Commitment**

Parents/guardians must take an active and positive role in their child's youth sports experiences.

### **Background**

Leagues should encourage parents to be caring and active in their child's youth sports experiences by providing positive support as a spectator, coach and league administrator. Many parents do not get involved at all in their child's youth sports experience, while others become overly involved. All parents should be required to demonstrate their positive commitment by signing a code which outlines the opportunities their child should have through participation, as well as the responsibility the parent has in supporting the youth sports experience.

### **Rationale**

Parents are one of the keys to their child's youth sports experiences. Parents who receive an orientation and who are required to sign a code of conduct are usually more positive and supportive of their children. They need to demonstrate the participation benefits by attending games, practices, or team social events; or by just expressing their positive support. Parents should discuss participation with their child and help in evaluating his/her experiences.

### **Implementation**

1. Parents should be required to complete a league orientation meeting annually. The orientation should cover the following areas: youth sports philosophy, program goals, expected behaviors and responsibilities, as well as sport specific information.
2. Teams should be required to have a minimum of one team/parents' meeting at the beginning of each sports season.
3. Parents must demonstrate their commitment to their child's youth sports experience by annually signing a parental code of conduct.
4. A child should not be allowed to participate if their parent refuses to sign the parental code of conduct.
5. Parents should familiarize themselves with the specific sport, including the rules of the game.
6. Leagues should encourage parent-child communication about their youth sports experiences.
7. Leagues should maintain open communication channels with parents through newsletters, league meetings and email.
8. Leagues should promote parental involvement in roles such as coach, team manager, fund-raiser, league manager, special assistant and fan.



## **Standard #6 Sportsmanship**

Everyone involved in youth sports programs should exhibit positive sportsmanship behavior at all times.

### **Background**

Children will follow the example of adult role models, positively or negatively. Children will copy or imitate sports behaviors witnessed, including the development of values based on that behavior. Adults must be a positive role model exhibiting sportsmanlike behavior at games, practices, and at all times while giving positive reinforcement to the children and supporting their coaches, staff and other volunteers.

### **Rationale**

If the youth sports experience is to be a positive one for each child, adults must demonstrate sportsmanlike behavior as a fan, coach, and/or league administrator. They need to encourage fun, guide with positive reinforcement and give praise for successes along the way. When a child makes a mistake, separate the mistake from the child. Adults need to encourage peer support and give positive verbal support to team members, opponents and coaches of their child.

### **Implementation**

1. Leagues will develop a sportsmanship/conduct code that includes positive expectations and describes unacceptable behaviors (for example berating players, coaches, officials; use of vulgar language; and intoxication).
2. Leagues will promote fair play, respect for the game and graciousness in losing or winning.
3. Leagues will communicate conduct requirements to administrators, coaches, parents, players and spectators through policies and procedures, newsletters, email, website, telephone calls and announcements.
4. Leagues will develop an enforcement plan for implementing a sportsmanship/conduct code, including disciplinary procedures.

## **Standard #7 Safe Playing Environment**

Youth sports programs must provide safe playing facilities and equipment, healthful playing situations and proper first aid applications, should the need arise.

### **Background**

Coaches and league administrators have the responsibility to inspect and ensure proper maintenance of facilities; to have knowledge of proper equipment selection and appropriate use; to understand the physical consequence of improper skill techniques; have the ability to modify rules for safe-playing situations; understand the physical need for a proper child-oriented conditioning program; and have knowledge of prevention and first aid for athletic injuries, including the ability to implement emergency procedures.

### **Rationale**

Children participating in youth sports are exposed to a variety of organized risk-taking opportunities. It is important for programs to take every precaution to protect participants from dangerous situations and in the event of an accident or emergency, everyone must be prepared to respond appropriately.

### **Implementation**

1. Leagues must implement procedures for inspecting playing facilities for safety hazards before every youth sports activity.
2. Leagues should develop procedures for continual safety inspections of all playing equipment.
3. Leagues must not allow participation during unsafe conditions, such as lightning storms, darkness, playing sites in disrepair, etc.
4. Leagues should develop emergency action plans and these should be communicated to everyone involved at the beginning of the season or program.

5. Leagues should establish procedures to ensure that all teams and events have an emergency first aid plan for administering to injuries, as well as policies in place for dealing with dangerous weather conditions and hazards that pose injury risks. .
6. Leagues should require basic medical and injury treatment forms to be properly completed and signed by parents.
7. Leagues should require that at least one adult trained in CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and basic first aid is always on site at any practice or game.
8. Leagues should require coaches to carry each player's emergency contact and health information at all practices and games.
9. Leagues should demand that teams have a fully equipped first aid kit at all youth sports activities.
10. An AED (automated external defibrillator) should be located in proximity to all fields, courts and rinks.
11. Leagues should remove coaches that knowingly allow a player to play while having a serious injury or knowingly create unsafe play situations.
12. Leagues should enforce a policy that requires written permission from a doctor prior to allowing a child to participate following an injury.
13. Leagues should provide information to everyone regarding proper hydration techniques.
14. Children below the age of 11 should participate in activities that contain limited collision potential and feature modified rules that will significantly reduce the chances of injury.
15. Leagues should mandate that at least two adults are always present during practices, games and any other related activity.
16. Leagues must adopt rules/policies banning rapid weight loss/gain procedures used solely for participation in youth sports.
17. Leagues must select equipment designed to ensure injury reduction for participants, (i.e. baseballs designed to reduce injuries, soccer shin guards, approved protective equipment in contact sports).

### **Standard #8 Equal Play Opportunity**

Parents, coaches and league administrators must provide equal play opportunity for all youth regardless of race, creed, sex, economic status or ability.

### **Background**

The cost of participation in youth sports is financially out of reach for some kids. Sports opportunities for girls, minorities and children with disabilities have improved but are still not equal.

### **Rationale**

All children deserve the opportunity to play regardless of race, creed, sex, economic status or ability. Coaches, parents and league administrators should recognize stereotyping and demand that prejudice of any type be prohibited. Every effort should be made to provide financial assistance to those unable to afford participation, including the cost of safe equipment. Adult youth sports leaders must teach acceptance, tolerance and respect for people of all abilities, sizes, shapes, colors and cultural and economic backgrounds.

### **Implementation**

1. Leagues must adopt a non-discrimination policy that ensures participation for all children regardless of race, creed, sex, economic status or ability.
2. Leagues should make provisions whenever possible to allow all children to participate regardless of their financial ability to pay.
3. Leagues are encouraged to provide programs that allow boys and girls to participate together whenever possible.
4. Leagues must encourage equal play time for all participants.
5. Leagues must make reasonable accommodations to encourage children with disabilities to participate.

## **Standard #9 Drug, Tobacco, Alcohol and Performance Enhancer-Free Environment**

Parents, coaches, officials, fans, players and administrators must be drug, tobacco, alcohol, and performance enhancer free at youth sports activities.

### **Background**

Sports participation has long been characterized as a means of developing character and positive values. Information indicates that peer pressure, negative peer group associations and unhealthy adult role models may actually increase the use of drug, tobacco and alcohol use among youth participants as well as lead to the use of performance-enhancing drugs.

### **Rationale**

Adults involved in youth sports must be educated about all drugs, including performance enhancing drugs. Leagues should have policies to deal with the use of drugs, tobacco and alcohol, emphasizing prevention through education. Parents, league administrators and coaches should be trained to identify signs of usage and know how to access community resources. Healthful role modeling should lead the way for influencing youth participants to avoid drug, tobacco and alcohol use and to promote seeking safe and healthy improvements through proper training methods that don't involve the use of performance-enhancing drugs to gain an unfair advantage.

### **Implementation**

1. Leagues should adopt rules prohibiting the use of performance enhancing drugs, alcohol, illegal substances and/or tobacco at all youth sports events.
2. Leagues should provide coaches and parents educational information on identifying signs and symptoms of substance use.
3. Leagues should establish written policies and implementation procedures for immediately dealing with substance use by coaches and players and communicate this information to coaches, players, and parents.
4. Leagues should continually encourage dialogue between coaches, players and parents about the need for an alcohol, tobacco and drug-free environment for children.
5. Leagues must ban all forms of tobacco use during any youth sports related activity.
6. Leagues should discourage participants from using caffeine products (pills, gum and drinks).
7. Leagues must not allow alcohol to be sold or allowed to be brought into youth sports games, practices or related events.
8. Leagues should develop an enforcement plan for removing adults and players who appear to be under the influence of drugs, alcohol or any illegal substances.

## **What the Standards Mean To the People Involved**

### **Parents – What the National Standards for Youth Sports Mean to YOU**

Participation in youth sports provides children with an opportunity to gain many valuable life skills and develop an appreciation for physical fitness, all of which can lead to a lifetime of healthy activity.

This can only occur, though, when organized sports programs are designed and administered to ensure a safe, positive and fun environment for everyone.

The National Standards for Youth Sports place in motion a national policy for children's sports.

These Standards serve as a blueprint for all youth sports programs and must be incorporated into the delivery of every youth sports experience to best ensure that the needs of every child are met.

As a parent of a youngster involved in youth sports, you have a responsibility to make sure that your Child is enrolled in a program that adheres to the Standards. Prior to signing your child up for a sport it's important that you review the Standards so when you're taking a look at how the program operates you can be sure that it is a good fit for your child.

Remember, you have the right to expect and demand that the recreation agency and/or youth sports program understands the Standards. You also have the right to ask that these Standards are incorporated into their programs so that all children are given the best opportunity for a memorable season that they'll look back on for years to come for all the right reasons.

### **Coaches – What the National Standards for Youth Sports Mean to YOU**

As a volunteer coach you are commended for stepping forward to work with a group of children because there are few endeavors in life more worthwhile. You may be aware that as a coach you are in a special position to impact the lives of children in so many areas. Your influence extends far beyond simply helping them learn and progress in their respective sport, so it's of paramount importance that you take great care to approach your role with diligence.

One of the best ways you can prepare yourself for the season is to review the National Standards for Youth Sports. The Standards place in motion a national policy for children's sports. They serve as a blueprint for all youth sports programs and must be incorporated into the delivery of every youth sports experience to best ensure that the needs of every child are met.

When you volunteer to coach a youth sports team you take on the responsibility to meet the needs of every child under your care. As you review the Standards – which should be customary operating procedure before you gather the children for your first practice of the season – keep in mind that these represent what being involved in youth sports is all about.

By making a commitment to abide by these Standards you'll greatly increase your chances of making special connections with your players. This will translate into happy and productive children who will learn and develop skills and likely continue their involvement in the sport for years to come.

Equally important, they'll reflect back on their experiences with you favorably and if they choose to coach someday they'll be more likely to pass along many of the same positive attributes to their players that they gained from their interactions with you.

### **Kids – What the National Standards for Youth Sports Mean to YOU**

Participating in organized sports programs is a truly special time in your young life. It's important that you – along with your parents or guardians – are aware that with your involvement in these programs you have rights. Among those are the right to a safe and fun experience and the opportunity to receive the same amount of playing time as your teammates, among many others.

The National Standards for Youth Sports are a great resource to help you gain a good understanding of what your youth sports experience is all about and how you should expect to be treated throughout the season. You should know that the Standards were created with your best interests in mind. They represent what respected professionals around the country believe is the best way to provide top-quality sports programs for children.

Along with your rights comes the responsibility for you to abide by team rules, follow your coach's instructions and, with the help of your parent or guardian, put forth every effort to get to practices and games on time. When coaches, parents and players work together – and do their best to follow the Standards – you'll enjoy participating in a positive environment that will increase the likelihood of you learning new skills, enhancing others and having a safe and fun-filled experience.

## **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, sexual orientation, body type, 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 the equal 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 sports.
- 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 Waterford youth sports events.**

**Expected Behavior:**

- Being alcohol and drug free at all team activities or in the presence of players.
- Refraining from the use of any type of tobacco products at all team activities or in the presence of your players.
- 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 appropriate 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 role 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.

## **WATERFORD YOUTH SPORT COACHES' CODE OF CONDUCT PLEDGE**

- I will place the emotional and physical well being 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 the 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 each of the skills that I teach.
- I will remember that I am a youth sports coach, and that the game is for children and not adults.
- 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 should be reported to the WRP designee by the coach, no matter how minor. Use the accident report form, which is provided to you.
- I hereby pledge to live up to the Coaches' Code of Conduct.

**Printed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Enforcement of the Code Of Conduct**

Waterford Youth Sports Council (WYSC), 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 Waterford co-sponsored 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 WYSC, 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.

WYSC 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 coach is required to sign and adhere to a Coaches' Code of Ethics Pledge. It is the duty of the WYSC to respond to complaints lodged against a coach that has allegedly violated the Code of Ethics.

This is accomplished by initiating the "Complaint Against a Coach Procedure" which is detailed on the following page. 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. In order to provide the WYSC the flexibility to take appropriate action when a coach is found to have violated the Coaches' Code of Ethics, a range of possible review committee actions have been developed to accompany the Code of Conduct.

Possible actions include:

1. Warning to and/or Apology from the coach
2. Probation
3. One Game Suspension
4. Multiple Game Suspensions
5. Season Suspension
6. Permanent Revocation of Certification (if attained)

The specific response of the review committee may include terms and conditions supplementing one or more of the listed sanctions. When reviewing a complaint and deciding what action is the most appropriate in a given situation, the committee must take into consideration 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 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



### **Complaint Against a Coach Procedures**

When the WYSC receives a complaint about a member coach, within seven (7) days the WYSC will initiate a review process that includes:

1. Gather information and document eyewitness accounts of the event(s) that took place from everyone 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 WYSC 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 Waterford Recreation and Parks Commission will act as an appeal board/upper authority when dealing with situations outside of the WYSC responsibilities.

## **PARTICIPANTS SECTION**

Participation in youth sports programs can have a lasting and meaningful effect on children's lives. Therefore, it is the goal of the WYSC to provide the highest quality of athletic programs to ensure that a child's experience with sports is a positive one. It takes the cooperation of everyone involved, including the participant, to make this happen. Therefore, WYSC has established the following responsibilities for participants to adhere to:

- ❑ Players will listen to their coaches and be respectful of others.
- ❑ Players will take care of the facilities, equipment, and uniforms.
- ❑ Players are encouraged to eat the right foods and drink plenty of water before and after practices and games.
- ❑ Players will avoid all types of taunting and belittling remarks to their teammates or opponents.
- ❑ Players will show good sportsmanship at all times, win or lose.
- ❑ Players will not make sports a priority over schoolwork or family.
- ❑ Players will refrain from horseplay and all other dangerous activities.
- ❑ Players will participate for the love of the game and competition and not to win at all costs.

## **Waterford Youth Sport Players Code of Conduct**

**I hereby pledge to be positive about my youth sports experience and accept responsibility for my participation by following this Players' Code of Conduct Pledge:**

- I will encourage good sportsmanship from fellow players, coaches, officials and parents at every game and practice by demonstrating good sportsmanship.
- I will attend every practice and game that I can, and will notify my coach if I cannot.
- I will expect to receive a fair and equal amount of playing time.
- I will do my very best to listen and learn from my coaches.
- I will treat my coaches, other players, officials and fans with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or abilities and I will expect to be treated accordingly.
- I deserve to have fun during my sports experience and will alert parents or coaches if it stops being fun!
- I deserve to play in an environment that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and expect adults to refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
- I will encourage my parents to be involved with my team in some capacity because it is important to me.
- I will do my very best in school.
- I will remember that sports are an opportunity to learn and have fun.

**Participant Name (printed):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Participant Name (signed):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Corrective Action Policy**

Players who fail to adhere to the Code of Conduct or do not live up to their responsibilities or expectations will be subject to disciplinary action. WYSC does not want a disciplinary action to spoil the experience of youth sports for the other children in the program. Therefore, WYSC has instituted a Corrective Action Policy to establish appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

The Corrective Action Policy is a guide to assist coaches and WYSC to conduct a quality program. The Corrective Action Policy is a 4-step system designed to forgive a mistake, but to firmly address chronic misbehavior.

For violations of the Code of Conduct or Expectations, the following steps will be followed:

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Step 1 – Verbal Warning    | Coach will discuss undesirable conduct with player and parents and stress that this behavior will not be tolerated.   |
| Step 2 – Period Suspension | Coach will discuss the issue of the repeated undesirable conduct or the occurrence of a second undesirable conduct of with the League Administrator. If the behavior violates the Code of Conduct, the offending player will be benched for 1 period of time during a game when he/she should be playing.   |
| Step 3 – Game Suspension   | Coach will discuss the issue of the repeated undesirable conduct or the occurrence of a third undesirable conduct of with the League Administrator. If the conduct violates the Code of Conduct, the offending player will be benched for 1 game when he/she should be playing.<br>Parent(s) and the player must attend a meeting with the Coach and League Administrator before the player is allowed to resume playing. The player will be warned that the next offense will result in his/her expulsion from the league.   |
| Step 4 – League Expulsion  | Coach will discuss the issue of the repeated undesirable conduct or the occurrence of a fourth undesirable conduct of with the League Administrator. The participant on the 4 <sup>th</sup> offense will be expelled from the league and no refund will be given. The parent will then have to make a formal request to be re-instated into this league. The child and parent(s) will then have to meet with the League Administrator and the WYSC prior to the start of the season to determine if the child is capable of playing within the guidelines of this program. The Waterford Recreation and Parks Commission will act as an appeal board/upper authority when dealing with situations outside of the WYSC responsibilities. |

These guidelines are not absolute in dealing with behavioral problems. Severe situations could merit harsher sanctions against the participant.

## **PARENTS SECTION**

In order for a program to be truly successful, it takes the cooperation of everyone involved: players, coaches, officials, league administrators, and especially parents. “It is the philosophy of Waterford Youth Sports Council that parents shall not physically threaten or endanger another individual, whether child, spectator or coach, or to otherwise spoil the experience of participation in youth sports for the children. Parents have the following responsibilities and expectations when participating in Waterford Youth Sport programs:

**Parents have a responsibility to their children:** To make sure that your child gets the most out of his or her playing experience, parents should show their unwavering support, including positive reinforcement of your child’s performance and effort. This is absolutely essential, especially at an early age, to ensure their healthy development. Parents should also be positive role models, including, but not limited to, showing proper sportsmanship at all times and refraining from negativity of any kind.

**Parents have a responsibility to the coaches:** Coaches volunteer their personal time to spend it with your child. They need you to be supportive of their decisions and not undermine their efforts. If you wish to address an issue with a coach, do so in a respectful manner. Make certain it is done at the right time and place and not in front of the children. Parents are expected to be respectful of the coaches and staff’s time by being punctual for game and practice start and end times. It is highly recommended for parents to stay and support their children and assist the coach if requested.

**Parents have a responsibility for safety and security of the league:** In order to maintain the safety and security of all league participants, it is essential for parents to report abusive behavior or dangerous situations that need to be addressed to the league administrator. This is the only way that these programs can achieve their intended goals.

**Parents have a responsibility to other parents:** Personal gain should not be derived from your child’s performance. Competition and taunting between parents is never acceptable, and no parent should ever feel embarrassed or disappointed by their team or child’s performance. Good plays should always be cheered, and disappointments should always be consoled, no matter whose team it affects.

**Parents have a responsibility to themselves:** It is your responsibility to enjoy watching your child and other children participate and learn. The joy and pride associated with watching children participate in sports should be experienced to the fullest, because lifetimes of memories are being created before your very eyes.

## **Parents Code of Conduct**

**I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for my child participating in youth sports by following this Parents' Code of Conduct 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 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 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 NYSCA National Standards for Youth Sports and do what I can to help all youth sports organizations implement and enforce them.

**Parent Name (Printed):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Name (Signed):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Corrective Action Policy**

Parents who do not follow the Code of Conduct will be subject to this Corrective Action Policy. It is the philosophy of WYSC that parents should not spoil the experience of participation in youth sports for the children. Furthermore, the Department will never punish a child for the actions of his or her parent(s). “Waterford Youth Sport Council reserves the right to take whatever remedial measure it believes is appropriate under the circumstances. Although not required, Waterford Youth Sport Council may use progressive corrective actions when a parent violates the Code of Conduct. In doing so, it may use the following verbal warnings, written warnings, and game or season suspensions as a means of correcting the problem. In determining an appropriate sanction, Waterford Youth Sport Council will consider the severity of the conduct at issue and the frequency of similar inappropriate conduct by the parent.”

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Step 1 – Verbal Warning    | League Representative will discuss undesirable conduct with parents and stress that this behavior will not be tolerated. League Representative will document this conversation and give to league administrator. A copy of the Parent Manual is given to the parent.  |
| Step 2 – Written Warning   | League Representative will notify the League Administrator of continued breach of Code of Conduct and League Administrator will bring parent(s) in for a meeting to discuss actions. Furthermore, there will be a formal letter of reprimand given to parent(s) stating that the next offense could lead to the parent’s being banned from the sporting event venue for a period of 1 or more game(s). A copy of the Parent Manual is to be given to the parent.  |
| Step 3 – Game Suspension   | League Administrator will ban the parent from attending the next scheduled contest. Another letter will be given to parent(s) stating that the next offense will lead to the parents being banned for the minimum of that sport’s season up to an additional season. A copy of the Parent’s Manual is given to the parent.  |
| Step 4 – Season Suspension | The parent(s) will be banned from attending a minimum of the remainder of that sports season to a maximum of the next season for the sport in which the incident took place. The parent(s) will then have to make a formal request to be re-instated into this league. The parent(s) will then have to meet with the League Administrator and Waterford Youth Sports Council prior to the start of the season to determine if the parent(s) is capable of behaving within the spirit and letter of the guidelines of this program. The Waterford Recreation and Parks Commission will act as an appeal board/upper authority when dealing with situations outside of the WYSC responsibilities. |

These guidelines are not absolute in dealing with behavioral problems. Severe situations could merit harsher sanctions against the parent(s).

## **OFFICIALS SECTION**

WYSC recommends that an official shall be a certified through a Department approved governing body that provides general liability insurance coverage.

## **VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS**

WYSC's success with programs is directly contributed to the support of the many volunteers that give of their time, energy and expertise. WYSC's leagues could not exist without the coaches, scorekeepers, officials, and parents that go through training and commit time to practice and games during the season.

In an effort to ensure the safety of children in WYSC co-sponsored youth sports programs, any individual with regular, repetitive access or contact with children through assigned duties WYSC leagues must complete a volunteer enrollment form and agree to a background check.

The Volunteer Coordinator for each Youth Sport Organization coordinates applications and screening of all volunteers that work with programs organized by the Organization.

Organizations that partner or contract to use Town Of Waterford property for sports programs is required to meet the same standards for the training, and screening of their volunteers.



## **Scope of the Criminal Background Checks**

The scope of the background check should cover each county in which the volunteer has resided in the last 20 years or since the age of eighteen. WYSC reserves the right to deny background check procedures that do not meet this minimum requirement.

### **PURPOSE**

The Waterford Recreation and Parks Commission values the safety and well being of the children that participate in our co-sponsored youth sport programs.

Participation in extracurricular activities can put children at risk unless safety measures are in place to prevent physical or mental abuse by volunteer youth sports workers and volunteers. It is every youth sports organization's responsibility to protect its young athletes and itself against unsafe individuals.

The Waterford Recreation and Parks Commission requires all volunteers who have the potential for regular or intermittent contact with children complete a background check

### **OVERVIEW**

The background check information will be collected for each volunteer by the individual co-sponsored organization authorized to operate or manage the youth sport program.

### **PROGRAM OUTLINE**

All volunteers who have contact with children (persons under the age of 16 years old) on a regular or an intermittent basis with titles such as, but not limited to, the list provided below will be required to complete a background check:

- a. Organizational Board Members
- b. Organizational Officers
- c. Youth Sports Commissioners
- d. Youth Sports Committees
- e. Coach
- f. Assistant-Coach
- g. Program Instructor or Director
- h. Maintenance Worker
- i. Any paid staff (custodians, food service workers, etc.)
- j. Referee
- k. Umpire
- l. Team Parent

The volunteer cannot start until the background check has been completed and accepted by the organizations approved background check administrator or the Waterford Police Department.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

Each organization will be required to submit background checks for all coaches and volunteers who are in direct contact and supervision of children.

If the organization has a background check program in place from their respective state or national organizational body, they may submit their background check program for approval. If approved, the organization will receive a waiver, however, the organization is still responsible for submitting a list of those volunteers processed to the Waterford Police Department.

#### **A. CRITERIA**

- Nationwide Sex Offender
- Department of Motor Vehicle record
- Nationwide Criminal-Arrest record
- Background checks will be performed every two (2) years

- Co-sponsored organizations are required to perform background checks on one hundred (100%) percent of the volunteers each year unless the volunteer has had one completed within the renewal time frame. The background check renewal time frame on each volunteer is one (1) year

**B. DUE PROCESS**

If a record of criminal convictions is found, the volunteer will be notified that something was found on their record. If the volunteer disagrees with the accuracy of the report, the volunteer will be asked to wait until the information on the criminal report can be verified. The final decision about the volunteers' eligibility lies with the Waterford Police Department. Further, when volunteers are denied they will receive a letter stating the decision and the reasons why they were denied.

**C. PRIVACY**

The privacy of the information obtained through the background check will be respected and not distributed or posted in public forums except as may be required by law.

**D. COST**

The cost for the Background Check, and all related information, will be the responsibility of the co-sponsored organization or volunteer.

The cost may vary depending on the amount of information checked.

## **YOUTH SPORTS PROGRAM CHECKLIST**

- ❑ **Mission Statement** - Defines in brief the purpose of the program and what are the desired outcomes for the program participants.
- ❑ **Policy and Procedures Manual** - Outlines specific methods to guide the implementation of the program towards the desired outcomes defined in the Mission Statement including but not limited to discipline of volunteers, participants and spectators.
- ❑ **Parent Orientation Meeting** – Prior to the start of each season, each co-sponsored youth sport will offer a Parent Orientation Meeting. In order for the child to play in the league, it is **mandatory that one or both of the parents/guardians attend one of the meetings.** The Policies and Procedures will be passed out and discussed, and other important information will be distributed. The meeting should last no longer than 1 hour.
- ❑ **Insurance** - Review of the policy (Liability and Accident/Medical) obtained for the protection of the program, its volunteers and participants.
- ❑ **Determine League/Program Dates** - When the program will begin and end. How many regular season games. Will there be an end of season tournament, and if so, how will that be planned and implemented. Consider the impact on participation in other activities occurring during the same time period Determine facilities to be used and secure facility use permit/ reservation.
- ❑ **Determine Equipment/Uniform Needs** - Know what is required, what was planned to purchase in the program budget, how long it takes to procure the items required and the bid process if bids will be solicited from a number of companies. Determine how inventory of equipment is to be kept, who is responsible, how tracked, replacement policies.
- ❑ **Budget** - Projected income and expense statement specific to the operational needs of the league/program.
- ❑ **Fund Raising** - Project(s) required to supplement the projected income needs of the league/program budget.
- ❑ **Game Officials** - Determine who will serve as Game Officials. For budgeting purposes, determine compensation requirements if using an Officials Association, or if using volunteers, the recruitment and training strategy you plan to use.
- ❑ **Recruitment of Volunteers** - Know how many volunteer positions are required for the league/program and determine a strategy to recruit willing and capable volunteers to fill the positions.

- ❑ **Conduct Background Checks:** This is optional but the issue should be visited by your organization and if the decision is made to not conduct checks reasons must be sound in case your decision is challenged.
- ❑ **Participant Registration Forms** - Designed to gather pertinent information about the participant including but not limited to participant injury disclaimer, injury waiver, and medical treatment authorization.
- ❑ **Emergency Plan** - Generally included in procedural manual outlining the course of action to be taken to prevent injuries and to respond to a range of injuries from basic first-aid to true medical emergencies.
- ❑ **Registration Procedure** - A systematic approach to accomplish a smooth, efficient registration process designed to maximize the opportunity for volunteer recruitment and provide for the clear communication of information essential for all players and parents to understand.
- ❑ **Drafting Procedures** - Plan on how teams will be selected making sure that the method is consistent with the mission statement.
- ❑ **Evaluation Procedures** - Determine how the program is to be evaluated, who will be involved in the process and how the evaluation will be used. (I.E. financial, participants' opinion, parents' opinion, volunteers' opinion.)

## **WATERFORD YOUTH SPORT ORGANIZATION GUIDELINES**

In order to incorporate and establish National Youth Sport Standards within Town Youth Sport Organizations, the Waterford Recreation and Park Commission has developed the following guidelines. The success of this process will depend upon the ability to create a working relationship between all Waterford Youth Sport Organizations and the Recreation and Park Commission. The intent is to establish these guidelines to provide a format for positive youth sport involvement.

-These Guidelines have been developed using the “National Standards for Youth Sports”, Guidelines and Code of Ethics put forward by the National Alliance for Youth Sports.

### **1. Statement of Principles for Recreational Programs and Town Youth Sports Organizations.**

The Town’s Recreational Programs and Youth Sports Organizations shall be guided by the following principles:

- a) A player philosophy that promotes and protects the interests and welfare of children and youth. The philosophy must promote enjoyable, fair and safe participation for youth of all levels of ability.
- b) Clearly stated goals. The goals must be realistic and reflect the values held by the community.
- c) A well-defined organizational structure. The organization must be guided by written by-laws and clearly defined lines of responsibility for all volunteers.
- d) A clearly defined program. The program must be directly linked to the philosophy and program goals so that proper growth and development of the participants is ensured.
- e) Effective procedures for implementing the program. Written procedures include policies, expected outcomes, responding to emergencies, recruitment of volunteers and implementation of all programs.
- f) Evaluation of all phases of the program. An annual review of the goals, procedures of implementation, outcomes, expenditure of funds and program responsibilities are essential if the program is to improve from year to year.
- g) Well-defined expectations of success. Indicators of success include participant satisfaction, mastery of program content, involvement by the community and financial security.

### **2. Requirements:**

For purposes of this policy and regulations a “Town Youth Sports Organization” means a non-profit organization run for the benefit of the youth of Waterford, that is co-sponsored as a Town Youth Sports Organization by the Town of Waterford Recreation and Park Commission and that meets all of the following requirements:

- a) Proof that your organization is established as, or affiliated with, a non-profit organization. Non-profit status is defined as an organization that is so defined by the Internal Revenue Service.
- b) Organization must have clearly defined Bylaws.
- c) Organization must have an open enrollment policy accepting all players regardless of skill level.
- d) Organization must employ a “minimum play rule” for participants with each player given equitable and meaningful playtime regardless of skill level
- e) Organization must have a Board of Directors
- f) Provide coaches and volunteers that are educated through a training program acceptable to the Recreation and Park Commission
- g) Youth Sports Organizations must be responsible for screening all personnel and volunteers for prior criminal records or infractions.
- h) WORK TOWARD THE GOAL OF HAVING A FIRST AID TRAINED ADULT AT EACH AND EVERY FUNCTION (GAMES, PRACTICES, MEETINGS, ETC.)
- i) Pre- and Post- Evaluations of coaches and overall program shall be conducted
- j) Any complaints that have been formally submitted to the organization shall be brought to the attention of the Youth Sport Council in writing, within 48 hours from initial investigation.

### 3. Yearly Process for Co-Sponsorship

- A. Organization must submit the following documents:
  - a) Official participant roster listing the total number of participants and teams with breakdown for current season. The Town of Waterford commits to keeping all submitted information confidential and will not publish or distribute in any manner. Roster must include participants name and ages. (If group were a two-season sport, two sets would be required for each registration).
  - b) Youth Sport Program Checklist
  - c) Youth Organization Code of Ethics Agreement Form signed by Board of Directors
  - d) List of coaches with phone number and corresponding team
  - e) Signed Coach's and Volunteer Agreement Form for each coach and volunteer
  - f) Signed Player's Agreement Form for each player
  - g) Signed Parent Agreement Form for each parent
  - h) Amount of fields and times requested on an annual basis. This should include primary and secondary yearly use for:
    - 1. Games
    - 2. Practices
    - 3. Clinics/Camps
    - 4. Special Events
  - i) Any additional needs from the previous year's schedule should be defined and submitted.
  - j) Process for selection of teams.
  - k) Process for training/selection of coaches.
  - l) Capital Improvement Plans and requests (detailed with back up/justification for each project).

#### I. Budget

##### A. Information to submit

- 1. The Board of Finance requires any agency submitting proposals to receive funding from the Town of Waterford to supply an annual audit report of all said agency's financial information prior to that agency being considered for funding.
- 2. Indicate in the justification of the request, how the League/Program plans to expend the Town's contribution to your program.
- 3. In addition, the following information must be submitted:
  - a. An annual Treasurer's report, to include a recent copy of all bank statements such as checking, savings, and certificate accounts.
  - b. Copy of the Insurance Binder
  - c. Officiating costs for males and females
  - d. League fees and National Affiliation fees
  - e. Fund raiser expenses and revenues
    - i. Concession stand expenses and revenues
    - ii. Sponsor fees
  - f. Banquet costs and revenue
  - g. Trophy and award costs
  - j. Tournament costs and revenue
  - k. Capital Improvement Plans
  - l. Completed "Funding Affidavit" form

##### B. Timeline

Annual operating budgets should be submitted to the Recreation and Parks Department by the end of the month of November. You must supply the RPD with two (2) copies of your budget. This budget will be reviewed at the following commission meeting. Any increases will require representation at this meeting in order to justify the budget increase. A decision will be made at this meeting to approve or deny the budgets.

**Reimbursement deadline is the second Friday in the month of June.** Receipts and invoices submitted after the deadline will only be considered on a case by case basis.

## C. Reimbursement availability

1. Frequency: as appropriately submitted (there is typically a two week turnover)
2. Accounts which are reimbursable:
  - 4001 – Field Supplies
  - 4002 – Field Maintenance
  - 4003 – Field Equipment
  - 4004 – League Insurance
  - 4005 – League Entrance Fees
  - 4006 – Referee Fees
  - 4007 – Sanitation
  - 4008 – Soccer Uniforms and Equipment
  - 4009 – Football Uniforms and Equipment
  - 4010 – Baseball Uniforms and Equipment
  - 4011 – Softball Uniforms and Equipment
  - 4012 – Basketball Uniforms and Equipment
  - 4013 – Community Band Expenses
3. **The original receipts must be supplied as part of the package for reimbursement.**
4. Waterford Recreation and Parks will not pay for:
  - a. Events that use players outside of Waterford
  - b. Events which are not open to all players such as: select teams or All-Star teams.
  - c. Banquets
  - d. Trophies, photos, awards, etc.
  - e. Concession food

## II. Capital Improvement Plans

Facility improvements are improvements to existing facilities or the creation of new facilities including but not limited to: buildings, fields, parking lots, drainage, utilities, land grading, landscaping, and fencing. Maintenance would not be subject to these standards. Maintenance includes such things as paintings, repairs (not relocation) of existing fences, and work incidental to maintenance of the fields such as installing turf, grading and dragging the infield, mowing, etc.

The Town of Waterford is not exempt from the requirements of the Zoning Regulations or the Building and related codes. Therefore, the Co-Sponsored organizations are not either.

Dominion licenses land to the Town of Waterford, Board of Selectmen. The Town cannot transfer this license to the Co-Sponsored programs. Therefore, the Town is fully responsible for any actions taken by any party in conjunction with the recreational use of the property. All facility improvements made to these properties must have prior written approval from Dominion and permits from the Town of Waterford. The following process, if followed, is intended to insure that those approvals are secured before any improvements can start:

- **Present the Waterford Youth Sport Council with a proposal of the project for approval.**
- **Notify, in writing, the Director of Recreation and Parks-or his/her designee-of the improvements that the league would like to see undertaken, with copies to the First Selectman and Planning Director.**
- **The notice will include a detailed description and sketch map (Town will provide maps to draw on) of the improvements.**
- **List any resources that the league is prepared to supply.**
- **List the league name, contact person, position with the league and phone number.**
- **Recreation and Parks Director-or his/her designee-will coordinate all Town approvals (i.e. agendas for BOF and RTM and assistance with other Town offices).**
- **A public meeting will take place to address questions and concerns regarding the proposed project., if necessary.**
- **Final written approval by the First Selectman is required on all projects.**
- **All permit applications will be signed by the First Selectman, as owner.**

- **Recreation and Park Commission, First Selectman, BOF, and RTM will approve use of Town resources on the project.**
- **Planning Director will advise Recreation and Parks Director of permits required and whether approval from Dominion is required before work can commence.**

This process is to be followed in all cases. The timing of the approvals will depend on the complexity of the project. For this to work, the leagues need to set up a planning process or committee to be responsible for submitting their project lists early and with sufficient time to identify funding sources.

#### A. Information to submit

1. Complete description of project to include:
  - Scope and detail of actual project to include project timelines, detailed phases, and costs associated with each phase.
  - Location
  - Number of participants served
  - Cost (2-3 quotes)
  - Reason for addition/renovation/etc. to include why current situation is deficient
  - Amount of volunteer work (number of hours, funds saved, etc.)
  - Approval from Dominion, Town Planner-if applicable.
2. Arrangements need to be made with the Town Planner on specs of the project as well as acquiring permits.

#### B. Timeline

In order to participate in the development and enhancement of the Town of Waterford's athletic facilities,

1. CIP must be submitted to the Waterford Youth Sport Council by the October meeting (typically the fourth Tuesday of the month).
2. The WYSC will then review the projects and submit a 5 year CIP plan to the RPC.
3. Once approved by the RPC, the plan is sent to the Town First Selectman and Town Planner for finalization. Projects may be moved to different years according to the overall Town CIP Plan.
4. The plan is then submitted to the Board of Finance and the RTM for approval.

##### Requesting Designated Funds:

1. Upon approval from all boards, if your organization has a project in the upcoming year (plan submitted in October of '24, project slated for '25) the earliest you can request the funding is July (given the previous example- July '25).
2. The project must be presented to the RPC to discuss the quotes and entire scope of the project.
3. Once approved by the RPC, the request is sent to the Town's First Selectman.
4. Upon the First Selectman review and approval, the project is sent to the Board of Finance. The Board of Finance typically meet on the second Wednesday of the month.
5. Upon approval from the BOF, the request is sent to the RTM for final approval. The RTM typically meet on the first Monday of Feb., April, May, June, August, October, and December.
6. Upon approval from the RTM, the funds are then transferred to a designated line item by the finance Office.
7. Receipts and invoices must be submitted to be reimbursed/draw from the project line item to the R&P Office.
8. As you can tell, the timing of the request is important in regards to the approval process and meeting dates.

For a complete listing of meetings, please visit the Town of Waterford website at [www.waterfordct.org](http://www.waterfordct.org) then click on Town Government.



### C. Changes and Alterations

Each year the process for CIPs begins with the organization before it is submitted to the WYSC. If there are any changes to the previous year's plan, these changes need to be discussed and approved. Regardless, each year of the plan has to go through the entire process outlined above. Changes during the year for projects set in that year are not advised. In the event of an emergency or health/safety issue, considerations can be made.

## III. Use of Facilities

### A. Recreation and Park Usage Guidelines

1. All ball fields and/or play areas under the jurisdiction of the Waterford Recreation and Parks Commission will be scheduled through the Recreation Office by telephone, mail, or in person.
2. Priorities of applicants:
  - a. Waterford Recreation and Parks Commission sponsored programs
  - b. Waterford Recreation and Parks co-sponsored programs
  - c. Waterford based organizations and residents
3. Unless a regularly schedule Commission sponsored program is planned on the weekend, all applicants will be accepted on a first come, first serve basis, for weekend use. Reservations will be accepted only up to two (2) weeks in advance of weekends.
4. Equal time use by #a and #b in Section 7.7b-2 will be given to applicants for regular schedules use on week days as is deemed necessary.
5. Open dates for ball fields on week days will be reserved no more than one week in advance.
6. All regularly scheduled dates will be marked off in the "Field Schedule Book", for the entire season. All individually scheduled fields will be marked off as application is made.
7. No rain dates will be scheduled.
8. All scheduling will be from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. on week days (unless otherwise stipulated) or for two (2) hours on weekends.
9. The Waterford Recreation and Parks Commission reserves the right to refuse any person, persons, or organizations ball field privileges for just causes.
10. One reservation per team or person will be granted per week (unless part of regular season schedule). However, if application is made on the day of needed use and it has not been scheduled yet, permission may be given more than once per week.
11. One reservation per weekend day or holiday, per team or person, will be granted (one on Saturday and one on Sunday is permissible).
12. This policy attempts to get maximum use of ball fields on fair and equal basis.
13. Requests for use of Veteran's Memorial Field by others is determined by the Commission or the Director on an individual request basis, and could incur a fee. See rate schedule.
14. Requests for the use of the lighting system at Veteran's Memorial Field by groups other than programs sponsored by the Recreation and Parks Commission, could result in a fee charge to that person or persons payable by 4:30p.m. on the last day of that week, that the Recreation Office is open, prior to the event or events taking place.
15. The lights at Veteran's Memorial field must be turned off by 11:00p.m. for all non-sponsored programming.
16. The lights at Veterans' Memorial Field must be turned off by 10:45p.m. for all Recreation and Parks Commission sponsored events or if a game is running longer than expected, no inning (baseball or softball) can begin after 10:45p.m. or 10 minutes after the event has concluded; whichever of the above is appropriate.
17. A property request form and proof of insurance to cover property damage incurred at, around, or adjacent to Veterans' Memorial Field, it's parking lot, playground, gazebo, etc. could be required as a pre-requisite to any person, persons or organizations not sponsored by the Recreation and Parks Commission being granted permission to use the facility. The person, persons, and/or organizations using said facility are totally responsible for the conduct of teams, spectators, and vehicles concerned with the event, to include fines, fees, and costs of any damage, repairs, any costs for Litter Removal, if excessive, that are incurred during the scheduled time.
18. The Recreation and Parks Commission reserves the right to require the police to be assigned the area during any event. The expense for such to be paid by the requesting agency.
19. Any person, persons, or organizations requesting to charge a fee or solicit donations can only do so with the permission of the Recreation and Parks Commission. Each request will be reviewed by the Commission on an individual basis.
20. The Recreation and Parks Commission reserves the right, and will follow Town Ordinances which may require other Town Agencies to review requests.

**B. Dominion Properties – see attached.**

The following information is in response to the inquiry regarding the use of the fields on Gardiners Wood Road/LLS Complex.

- **Field Improvements:** Any type of improvements/work to be performed on the property must go through the following process:
  - A detailed description of the project must be submitted to the Recreation and Parks Office for approval.
  - The request is then forwarded to the First Selectman's Office to be reviewed by the Town Attorney and/or Town Planner depending on the scope of the project.
  - The Town Attorney discusses the project with representatives from Dominion.
  - The decision is relayed back to the First Selectman and Recreation and Parks.
  - Organization submitting the proposal receives direction on status of project.
- **If the organization is requesting any funding from the Town:**
  - Information must be submitted when Capital Improvements Projects are accepted. The only exceptions are emergency repairs or updates to comply with safety standards/mandates.
  - The projects again must contain a detailed description to include: location, labor costs, material costs, volunteer contribution, anticipated maintenance, and any further justification for replacement (if existing) or need for new project.
  - The C.I.P is then presented to the Youth Sport Council and Recreation and Park Commission for approval.
  - The plan is then submitted to the First Selectman, then the Board of Finance, and the RTM for approval.
  - Upon approval from all sources, the funds will be available once the fiscal year begins for the year submitted (July 1). A permit for the project must also be obtained BEFORE any work is started.
  - Once past July 1<sup>st</sup>, the project is then sent before the BOF and RTM for approval to release the funds for the project.

If the organization is using own funds and volunteers:

  - organizations are still required to follow the above process.
- **Use of the Fields:**
  - The Gardiners Wood Road Complex is LEASED land. Dominion owns the land and has a lease agreement with the Town. Therefore, there are to be NO other activities other than those stated in the lease agreement..."use of the property is expressly limited to the use and maintenance of soccer, football, and baseball fields and appurtant facilities for the use and benefit of the general public, without charge, and for any other recreational purpose approved by the Licensor." **This means that any activity/event not sanctioned by the Town is not allowed. This property is not to be rented, used in exchange of services, etc. to any other organization. Any exception must follow the process of contacting the Recreation and Parks Office and submitting a request/s.**
  - Birthday parties are not recognized as a function of the co-sponsored youth sport organizations and are therefore not allowed on the property without approval from the Town and Dominion. There are other facilities in Town which can be rented and secured through the Recreation and Parks Office.
  - Any practices not scheduled through the co-sponsored organization are not allowed. Examples:
    1. Coaches and players/sons practicing outside of their team's practice schedule
    2. Parents and players/children practicing outside of team's practice schedule

Policy:Co-Sponsored:2018