

TEWKSBURY ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Name: _____
I have read the below TAA Policy and Procedures: ____ (initial)
Season/Year: _____ / _____ (ie: spring/2011)
Sport: _____
Program Director: _____ (initial)

The Tewksbury Athletic Association is a not-for-profit volunteer based organization that provides athletic opportunity for the residents of the Township of Tewksbury and surrounding communities.

The following policies, rules and regulations are to be strictly enforced. All policies, rules and regulations are subject to amendment and revision at any time by the Tewksbury Athletic Association. Any questions or inconsistencies shall be referred to the Tewksbury Athletic Association Board of Trustees and the majority vote shall be final.

The mission of the Tewksbury Athletic Association is to promote sportsmanship, fair play, team play, proper exercise technique, sports safety, development of skills, discipline, self-esteem, cooperation, commitment and making an effort to be the best to one's ability.

SPIRIT OF PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

The Coach ...

1. Treats own players and opponents with respect.
2. Inspires in the athletes a love for the game and the desire to compete fairly.
3. Acts in a manner consistent with position as "role model" to the athletes.
4. Disciplines those on the team who display unsportsmanlike behavior.
5. Knows he/she is a teacher and understands that sports is a learning experience.
6. Maintains own composure and poise despite pressure situations, and expects the players to conduct themselves the same way.

The Player ...

1. Treats opponents with respect and will not employ or respond to taunting/baiting.
2. Plays hard, but plays within the rules of the game.
3. Exercises self-control at all times, setting the example for others to follow.
4. Respects officials and accepts their decisions without gesture or argument.
5. Wins without boasting, loses without excuses, and NEVER quits.
6. Always remembers that it is a privilege to represent the township/community.
7. Constantly provides positive support for the team and teammates without assigning blame for losses or glory for wins. Win and lose as a team.

The Spectator/Parent ...

1. Provides enthusiastic, POSITIVE support to the child and their team.
2. Appreciates a good play no matter who makes it.
3. Shows compassion for an injured player, applauds positive performances.
4. Does not heckle, jeer, or distract players and avoids profane, obnoxious language and behavior.
5. Respects the judgment and strategy of the coach, and does not criticize players or coaches for loss of a game.
6. Respects officials and accepts their decisions without gesture or argument.
7. Respects the property of others and authority of those who administer the competition.
8. Censures those whose behavior is unbecoming or inappropriate.

GENERAL POLICIES

All participants and teams, regardless of what team or league they are registered to play in, must complete and submit to the TAA, an approved TAA registration duly completed or they are ineligible to play. This is one of the requirements of the TAA's insurance carrier.

All participants and teams shall pay the required fee(s) with the registration form or they are ineligible to play.

All TAA team coaches and assistant coaches, regardless of the sport, shall complete the Rutgers Safety Clinic. This clinic is offered several times throughout the year and sponsored by the TAA. Without this clinic you cannot coach in Tewksbury. This clinic is insightful and provides limited immunity to volunteer coaches. All TAA team coaches, assistant coaches, and trainers shall submit to a criminal background check and complete and sign all of the required coaches forms.

All teams shall have at least two coaches/assistant coaches in attendance at each practice and game. Each coach and assistant coach shall keep with them a copy of the players medical release forms at practices and games. First Aid Kits are provided to each coach. It is the coach's responsibility to ensure that each kit is fully stocked with adhesives and medicated cleansing pads. Each kit should have at least two pair of latex gloves. Ice Packs are also provided and are stocked in the storage sheds at Oldwick and Old Turnpike School. If a coach sees that we are running low on supplies in the shed, they should contact the program head via email.

Coaches are responsible for submitting only approved expenditures to their Program Director. Coaches are to use the approved coach's reimbursement form and attach all supporting invoices and canceled checks to the form. Only pre-approved expenses will be reimbursed. Only the Program Director, TAA President or their delegates can approve an expenditure. There is no carry over policy for obtaining reimbursements. If funds were not expended during a season, a coach will not have that money available to the team for future expenditures.

Coaches are expected to abide by and follow any and all rules established by the TAA, specific sport program, or Township Committee, or Township department, or School staff, or private property/facility owner as to the use of township, school, private, or rented facilities. (Ie: playing field, gym or court facilities).

No coach/assistant coach is permitted to be an intermediary for registration fees. All registration fees must be made payable to the TAA and deposited in the TAA checking account. Likewise, all expenditures must be reported to the TAA via an expense reimbursement form and recorded as part of the activity of the TAA.

Failure to adhere to any of the above policies may result in a forfeiture of membership in the TAA and coaching privileges or both.

PARENT'S CODE OF CONDUCT

There is more to life than any one sport. Encourage your child to participate in other activities. Tewksbury Athletic Association requires all parents to observe the following Parents Code of Conduct:

- Respect the coach's decisions and abilities. Don't force your kid to decide whether to listen to you or the coach.
- Stress fair and sensible play. Nobody needs to get hurt because someone is not playing by the rules.
- Stress the long-term importance of practice over the short-term excitement of games.
- Stress the importance of the team. Never lose sight of the fact that you are a role model.
- Winning probably means more to you than it does to your kid. Don't yell if your kid makes a mistake.
- Point out what they do well. Positive reinforcement goes a long way.
- Take time to learn the rules of the game. That way, if you insist on shouting at the coach or official, at least you'll know what you are talking about.
- Remember that coaches and league administrators are volunteers. A "thank you" every once in a while is often reward enough.

PARENT'S SPORTSMANSHIP PLEDGE

As a condition of your child's participation in any of our sports programs please read the following Parent Sportsmanship Pledge.

1. It is often difficult for parents to see their children in situations where they are being evaluated, especially at a very young age. But if we spend our time worrying too much about how they're doing, we are missing what should be a wonderful experience for us as well as them. If they're not great players, we will love them anyway for who they are, find reasons to praise them for their accomplishments on the field, big or small, and know that they will be great at other things.

2. The game is for the kids. We shouldn't let our natural competitive spirit and normal desire for glory turn into angry yelling at the kids when they don't fulfill our expectations. Sometimes our expectations may be unrealistic. If they're having fun as well as gaining confidence by learning skills, and being coached by a person who is teaching and mentoring without anger, that should satisfy us.

3. Winning is one goal, but only one of many goals. Fewer than half the teams competing win their games on any given day (counting ties) and as studies have consistently indicated, children play mainly for the fun of it. Kids almost unanimously rate the FUN they have during the match much higher than the score at that single moment when the game is over.

4. We need to also remember that it is okay to lose because life is not just about winning. We suffer setbacks at times. Learning to accept defeat gracefully and come back enthusiastically next time is an important lesson to teach. As long as children try their best, they are winners on another level even when they lose the game.

5. Coaches and referees deserve RESPECT. They make mistakes as we all do, but whether they're great at what they're doing or not, we have a responsibility to set a good example to help teach RESPECT to our children. Yelling criticism at referees, coaches or players is inappropriate and that behavior must be subject to penalties from the club, including the last thing the club wants to consider, possible suspension from attending matches. Children often reveal that they are embarrassed when their parents shout out criticism. Referees do not change their calls but many do decide to quit because of the abuse they take from parents, coaches and players. Yet we wonder why we don't have enough referees. Coaches are giving time and effort and if they are making it a positive FUN experience, we should RESPECT them for that.

6. Some of us are more emotional, which is good in some ways. Some of us are calmer, which also is good in some ways. When we are emotional, perhaps sometimes because of frustrations in other parts of our lives, it is harder to keep ourselves under control. It can become a problem in this setting when we yell at the kids. When they think we're angry, it can make them nervous and lower their self-esteem. As a result, they may not perform as well as they can. Sometimes we don't even realize how angry we sound because, for one thing, our children don't always talk about their feelings. They may tell someone else.

7. When someone makes unsportsmanlike comments to other spectators, children, coaches, or referees, it is often best to ignore them unless they're good friends. In general, when someone is excited and negative, that is NOT the time to talk about sportsmanship. We should avoid confrontations at all costs.

8. Even if our child has outstanding ability, we shouldn't look too far into the future. We need to be realistic about the the question of whether they will get a lot of playing time in high school or college. And considering the rapidly increasing number of good players coming out of high school, we need to be aware there are relatively few college athletic scholarships and competition for spots on the roster will be intense.

9. Know the level of commitment expected and the policy on playing time. If you have any questions, it is often best to ask the coach during a quieter moment, not at a game.

10. If we keep the game in the proper perspective, we can realize that children usually have FUN as long as we support their effort. Putting them under pressure by being overly critical is not a good idea. If

they become anxious about their performance, they may be hesitant to try new skills, they may not reach their potential and their interest in the game may decline.

11. The experience of watching children play youth sports is over all too soon. Why not relax and have fun simply knowing that the kids are having fun and we're having a good time together?

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

Due to occasional physical and verbal abuse against Coaches, Referees, Officials or Umpires, Tewksbury Athletic Association has adopted the following ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY.

1. It is the goal of this policy is to prevent abusive and obscene language, violent play, violent conduct, fighting and other behavior detrimental to the sport.
2. It is the responsibility of ALL Coaches/Managers to maintain the highest standards of conduct for themselves, their players and supporters in all matches. A Coach's responsibility for Referee/Umpire support and spectator control includes the times prior to, during and after the game at the field and surrounding areas.
3. All persons responsible for a team and all the spectators shall support the Referee/Umpire. Failure to do so will undermine the Referee's authority and has the potential of creating a hostile environment for the players, the Referee and other participants and spectators.
4. No Coach or Assistant Coach shall address the Referee/Umpire during the game, with the following exceptions:
 - During a game, Coaches may (1) respond to a Referee initiating communication (2) make substitutions (3) point out emergencies or safety issues.
 - During Half Time or at the end of the game, a Coach or Assistant Coach, using absolutely no sarcasm, harassment or intimidation, may only (1) ask a Referee/Umpire to explain a rule(s) in a polite and constructive way, or (2) give polite and friendly feedback to the Referee.
5. No Spectator shall address the Referee/Umpire at any time, except to point out emergencies or safety issues.
6. Spectator Penalties:
 - Coach and/or Referee/Umpire shall take appropriate action to quiet the offending spectator; or
 - A verbal warning. Coach or Referee, shall warn the spectator that the next infraction will be a removal of the spectator or the Coach or Referee may abandon the game.
 - The Coach or Referee/Umpire, shall instruct the spectator to leave the field. If the spectator does not leave the field, the Coach or Referee shall abandon the game and file a report to the Tewksbury Athletic Association, who may impose a forfeit on the spectator's team.

COACH'S CODE OF CONDUCT

Coaching is a privilege, not a right. The Program Director of each sport shall have the sole discretion to choose and/or accept an individual to be a coach or assistant coach.

This Pledge summarizes important elements of the youth sports experience and sets out your commitment to Sportsmanship and Fair Play. Adhering to it is a condition of your participation in the Tewksbury Athletic Association.

Important Information about youth and sports

Kids participate in sports primarily because it's fun. Adults need to keep it fun. Some adults get too emotional about youth sports because they are too concerned about how their kids are doing, have the mistaken belief that winning is very important, or have a desire for glory through their kids' success. That last one is part of the concept of living through your kids.

Kids need to know that if they're trying their best, they are winners. Parents need to remember that their kids will not be great at everything. Recognizing that, parents can help most by relaxing and enjoying these fleeting years.

Placing too much pressure on kids to perform well creates stress that can detract from their fun and can affect their self-esteem. Instructions shouted to players are distracting, usually too late, and sometimes inaccurate or in conflict with what the coach is teaching.

My Pledge to Set A Good Example

I will not be loud or negative towards players, referees, coaches or spectators. I acknowledge that failing to show respect for people who are doing the best they can sets a bad example for our children and can result in my expulsion from the field. If someone else makes an inappropriate comment, I will not make a negative response that could lead to a confrontation.

When I coach I will remember that encouragement and praise for every child, not just the best athletes, are critically important to their self-esteem and their ability to achieve the most they can.

I recognize that striving to win, rather than winning itself, is what is important in sports and in life. Striving to win means doing the best you can.

I recognize that players must get adequate playing time to improve and gain the confidence that helps them do the best they can. I acknowledge that this is more important than winning games. If I feel that my team lost simply because a player of lesser ability received appropriate playing time, I did the right thing.

I acknowledge that making mistakes and losing are part of life. I pledge that I will be tolerant of the mistakes of players, coaches, referees, and others. I recognize that mistakes are opportunities for learning.

I recognize that within the parameters of competition, sportsmanship and fair play remain paramount. I pledge that I will commit to promoting an atmosphere of healthy competition to ensure fun for all participants.

KEYS TO PARENTAL PERFORMANCE

We want your participation. Please read this page and let us know your thoughts. Here is a clear, concise set of standards addressing parent participation without dissipating the enthusiasm.

A. LET THE COACHES COACH

This includes goal setting and psyching up your child for practice and post game critiques. Having more than one "coach" confuses children.

B. DO NOT BRIBE OR OFFER INCENTIVES

Leave motivation to the coach. Offering money for scoring goals, for example, distracts your child from concentrating properly in practices and games. Support your child unconditionally. Do not withdraw love when your child performs poorly.

C. SUPPORT ALL PLAYERS ON THE TEAM

Your child's teammates are not the enemy. When they are playing better than your child, she has a wonderful opportunity to learn.

D. SUPPORT THE PROGRAM

Get involved by volunteering, helping with fundraisers, car-pooling, or however else you can.

E. ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO TALK WITH THE COACHES

"Taking responsibility" - whether about playing difficulties or missing an upcoming match - is a big part of the game.

F. UNDERSTAND AND DISPLAY APPROPRIATE GAME BEHAVIOR

When you cheer appropriately, you help your child focus on the parts of the game he can control (positioning, decision-making, skills, etc.). If he begins focusing on elements he can't control (field conditions, the referee, the weather, etc.), he will not play up to his ability.

G. MONITOR YOUR CHILD AT HOME

Be sure she is eating and sleeping properly. Help your child keep priorities straight. A youngster needs help balancing schoolwork, friendships, and other commitments besides sports. But having made a commitment to sports, she also needs help fulfilling her obligation to her team.

H. PASS THE REALITY TEST

If your child's team loses but he played his best, help him see this as a "win." Remind him to focus on the process, not the end result. Fun and satisfaction should come from "striving to win." Conversely, do not let him be satisfied with "winning" if it comes from inadequate preparation and performance.

VIOLATIONS/UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

A violation or unsportsmanlike conduct is any act prejudicial to the best interest of the Tewksbury Athletic Association, including, but not limited to the following:

1. Violation of the policies and rules of the Tewksbury Athletic Association including, but not limited to, any rules of its authorized programs.
2. Penalization by an administrative agency or court of law for violation of any local, municipal, state or federal law or regulation which impacts upon the Tewksbury Athletic Association.
3. Acting or inciting or permitting any other person to act in a manner contrary to the rules of the Tewksbury Athletic Association, or in a manner deemed improper, unethical, dishonest, unsportsmanlike or intemperate, or prejudicial to the best interest of the Tewksbury Athletic Association including any of its authorized programs.
4. Any act committed or remark made in connection with a game or practice considered offensive and/or made with the intent to influence or cast aspersions on the character or integrity of the coach, assistant coach, officials, approaching a coach or an official before or after a decision at an inappropriate time during or after a game, or public verbal abuse of a coach or official.
5. Physical assault upon a person.
6. Failure to obey any penalty imposed by the Tewksbury Athletic Association.
7. Competing while suspended or expelled by the Tewksbury Athletic Association.
8. Failure to pay any indebtedness to the Tewksbury Athletic Association.
9. Failure to conduct one's self in accordance with the Competitor's, Parent's or Coach's Code of Conduct.

PENALTIES

If found guilty of a violation or act of unsportsmanlike conduct, the accused will be subject to such penalties as the Hearing Committee may determine, including, but not limited to:

- A. Censure. A vote of censure will be listed under the accused's name in the Secretary's Record of Penalties. If found guilty of a further violation, the accused will be subject to a heavier penalty than for a first offense.
- B. Suspension of such person for any period of time from competing in one or all sports authorized to be conducted under the auspices of the Tewksbury Athletic Association. A suspended person is forbidden for the time specified in the decision to hold or exercise an official position within the Tewksbury Athletic Association, from the privilege of taking any part whatsoever in any Tewksbury Athletic Association program and is excluded from all grounds upon which the Tewksbury Athletic Association conducts their authorized programs as a participant, coach or spectator.
- C. Expulsion from one or all authorized programs of the Tewksbury Athletic Association.
- D. Monetary Fine.
- E. Any other penalty deemed appropriate under the circumstances.

VIOLATIONS, PROTESTS AND CHARGES

A Head Coach or his delegate shall have the authority to address any violation which occurs during a practice or game. In the event an incident occurs, the coach, in his/her sole discretion, shall have the authority to penalize the person who has committed a violation. The coach's authority shall include requiring the violator to sit out all or part of the practice or game; and/or remove the violator from the field for the practice or game.

The Program Director shall have the authority to address any violation which occurs during a practice or game and impose a penalty deemed appropriate under the circumstances.

It is recommended that the coach or program director address any violation or incident and, if appropriate, take any of the following action:

1. Issue warning;
2. Issue reprimand;
3. Impose skill/exercise penalty;
4. Impose suspension for entire current practice or game;
5. Impose one day suspension for the following practice or game. The Program Director may impose multi-day suspensions.

In the event that a coach imposes a partial or full suspension in accordance with bullet 4 or 5 above, then the coach shall file an Incident Report with the president of the Tewksbury Athletic Association in the form annexed hereto.

A protest or charge may be filed by any person and said protest or charge must be in writing and contain the full name and address of the accused, a complete and definite statement of acts which constitute the alleged violation or unsportsmanlike conduct. Precise details regarding an alleged violation are necessary. The maker of the protest or charge is encouraged to list each separate violation and specify if said violation is set forth in the Tewksbury Athletic Association policies or Code of Conduct.

The maker of the protest or charge must be prepared to substantiate the protest or charge by his or her own personal testimony at a hearing of at least one other witness with personal knowledge. The maker and witness(es) will be subject to cross-examination.

The Tewksbury Athletic Association may investigate any protest or charge, may intervene in any protest or charge at its discretion. The Tewksbury Athletic Association may also attempt to arrange a plea agreement or dismissal of a protest or charge in lieu of a hearing by reviewing all of the evidence and/or conducting interviews with the maker and the accused to the protest or charge.

The Chair of the Hearing Committee may designate one or more members of the Hearing Committee, or any other individual to investigate any protest or charge, to conduct any necessary fact finding, to hear evidence, to review documents submitted by the parties and to make proposed factual findings to the Hearing Committee.

A protest or charge must be in writing, signed by the person making the charge, addressed to the President of the Tewksbury Athletic Association and submitted within a reasonable time of the alleged violation.

Any person against whom a protest or charge is filed is entitled to a hearing. The hearing shall take place no earlier than ten (10) days after written notice to the accused except if the accused waives the ten (10) day requirement and requests an expedited hearing, in which event, the Hearing Committee shall schedule the same as soon as practically possible taking into consideration availability of the maker, accused witnesses and members of the Hearing Committee.

The written notice of protest or charge shall be provided to the accused with the proposed hearing date within a reasonable time after it is received by the President of Tewksbury Athletic Association. The notice shall specify the time and place at which the hearing is to be held or state that the hearing will be held at a date to be determined.

The hearing date may be adjourned, postponed or continued upon receiving a written request by either the maker or the accused based upon good cause shown.

Accused persons may attend their hearing at their option, with or without legal counsel and may bring witnesses, submit sworn statements or other evidence on their behalf.

The proponent of a protest or charge has the burden of proof by a preponderance of the evidence.

In connection with any protest or charge or any other violation of the Tewksbury Athletic Association, and upon a finding that considerations involving the health, safety or welfare of the Tewksbury Athletic Association members, warrant prompt action pending consideration of the matter by the Hearing Committee, the Tewksbury Athletic Association President, may, by giving written notice of such action, temporarily suspend any person from participating in any manner in the affairs of the Tewksbury Athletic Association or participating in or attending all authorized programs until the Hearing Committee is able to hear the protest or charge and take such further temporary or other disciplinary action as it deems appropriate under these rules.

The Hearing Committee shall consist of a chairman, assistant chairman and three additional committee members. The chairman shall preside at each hearing and if unavailable, shall delegate his or her authority to the assistant chairman. The Hearing Committee shall be made up of available members of the Tewksbury Athletic Association Board of Trustees.

Any member of the Hearing Committee or any presiding or participating person may at any time disqualify himself or herself. Upon the request of the accused or the maker of a charge or protest, based upon a sufficient affidavit that personal bias exists or other sufficient grounds for disqualification, the Hearing Committee will decide the request to determine if the person should be disqualified from participating.

The Hearing Committee shall receive evidence and hear testimony presented by the maker and the accused. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Hearing Committee shall prepare a written record of the proceeding which shall include the evidence considered in the proceeding, each finding of fact based upon the evidence, the conclusions and decisions regarding the alleged rule violation and a statement of

penalties, if any imposed and any other relief granted or denied. This written record constitutes the official record and decision of the Hearing Committee.

Whether or not the same are specifically provided for elsewhere in the Tewksbury Athletic Association rules or policies, in all hearings conducted, the parties shall be accorded:

- a. Notice of the specific charges or alleged violations in writing and possible consequences if the charges are found to be true.
- b. Reasonable time between receipt of the notice of charges and the hearing within which to prepare a defense.
- c. The right to have the hearing conducted at such a time and place so as to make it practical for the person charged to attend.
- d. A hearing before a disinterested and impartial body of fact finders wherein the proponent of the charge must substantiate the charge by a preponderance of the evidence.
- e. The right to be assisted in the presentation of one's case at the hearing, including the assistance of legal counsel, if desired.
- f. The right to call witnesses and present oral and written evidence and arguments.
- g. The right to confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses including the right to be provided the identity of witnesses in advance of the hearing.
- h. The right to have a record made of the hearing, if desired.
- i. A written decision with reasons thereof based solely on the evidence of record, handed down in a timely fashion.
- j. Written notice of appeal or review where applicable if the decision is adverse to the person charged and prompt and fair adjudication of the appeal or review.

POST-HEARING PROCEDURES

The decision of the Hearing Committee becomes final without further proceedings unless there is a written appeal to the Hearing Committee for review by a party to the proceeding within fifteen (15) days from the date of the initial decision or receipt of the written decision, whichever is later. On appeal from the initial decision, the Hearing Committee will not review the findings and recommendations, but will determine only whether the rules were properly interpreted and applied.

The Hearing Committee, in its sole discretion and on its own motion, may, after an initial decision, review the entire record of an initial hearing, or any issue or finding and recommendation contained therein, or hold a new hearing, as well as determine whether the rules were properly interpreted and applied. An accused, protestor or charging party who wishes to request such a review, must make such request in writing, setting forth the reasons why a review is sought. Said request must be accompanied by a fee of \$250.00 which fee is not refundable except in the discretion of the Hearing Committee.

Upon discovery of new facts not discoverable by due diligence prior to a hearing, a party may request a hearing before the Hearing Committee. Such requests must be in writing, and must contain a statement of the new facts upon which it is based and must be accompanied by a fee of \$250.00, which fee is not refundable except in the discretion of the Hearing Committee. Rehearings will not be granted as a matter of right, but they are at the discretion of the Hearing Committee.