



## City of Easton Bureau of Recreation and Neighborhood Programs Coaches Guide/Manual

(Revised November 2022)

### **Purpose of Youth Sports**

The youth sports program activities are sponsored by the City of Easton Recreation Bureau and are set up on a basis of engagement through activity. It is a wonderful opportunity for placing the classroom out on the athletic field. Competition has its place in the program; however, competition must be under constant supervision and appropriate leadership. Winning the game has its place in the program as well; but must be tempered to the program values.

Attendance to practice and games, attitude, and effort are basics for the privilege of participation. We describe this program as a supervised activity with emphasis on first teaching character, sportsmanship, skill development and social attributes. Competition (a necessary factor in encouraging the best from a person) is placed second to the goals mentioned above.

### **What Can Participants Derive from the Youth Sports Program?**

1. From association with the coach, the children have an opportunity to have interactions incorporating honesty, understanding, and integrity, in an environment other than a classroom.
2. There are opportunities to correct mistakes and achieve a high degree of knowledge of the sport and fundamental skills necessary to the game.
3. With wholesome activity and conversation not only during practices and games, but in their idle moments at school or home, participants keep their minds at work
4. To learn in this life there are certain rules, morals, and laws a good citizen must abide by and they can be conveyed through sport participation.
5. There are both physical and mental health benefits.
6. Participants gain satisfaction of achievements they have made.
7. It is hoped that participants obtain an overall enjoyment of sport.

## **Purpose of This Manual**

The purpose of this manual is to be a guide to the philosophy, procedures, rules, and regulations of coaching for the City of Easton.

## **The Philosophy of all Easton Recreation Youth Programs is:**

1. To allow all youth an opportunity to participate in sport.
2. To provide an environment in which the participant will learn skill development, sportsmanship and camaraderie.
3. To have fun.
4. To promote self-esteem through the education of sports skills and develop understanding of the value of sport.
5. To have participants develop an understanding of rules of the game.
6. To help develop the participants both mentally and physically.
7. To ensure the safety of all team members.

You, as the coach of a team of enthusiastic youngsters, are the direct and most important element in achieving these goals. Many coaches fail to realize the profound influence they can have on the kids who play for them. A coach wears many hats; coaches are a parent, a friend, a counselor, and an educator. You play a very prominent role in your players' lives and your actions and attitudes help to change their view of the work and themselves.

Many times, coaches get caught up in the "winning is everything" syndrome. Coaches should strive to build winning teams, but this must be secondary to promoting feelings of self-worth in the youngsters and developing positive coach- player relationships.

## **Expectations-Demeanor and Behavior**

The City is committed to child safety along with a quality sports and recreation experience.

As coaches and volunteers, you are responsible and accountable for proper supervision.

1. If you are aware of any abuse (sexual or other) you must immediately report to the appropriate authorities (commissioner, Recreation Director and/or police)
2. No coach shall ever use corporal punishment

3. Never be alone with a minor.

Volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that promotes the respect of the general public. The public notices everything every employee engages in, especially if it is something negative. Volunteering in youth sports is comparable to working in a “fishbowl,” in that citizens expect all city volunteers to provide exemplary service.

1. Appearance/Uniforms/Name tags, etc. Volunteers are expected to look their best while working.
2. Sexual Harassment - Based on Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, it is the policy of the City to strictly prohibit any conduct which constitutes sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is any behavior, comments, gestures, jokes, physical contact, written material, etc., that makes another person uncomfortable. **The City has a zero-tolerance policy for any infractions related to sexual abuse.**
3. Smoking is not allowed in any City of Easton buildings and/or parks. Smoking while in contact with players does not convey a positive image and is not allowed.
4. Alcohol and Drugs - Neither alcoholic beverages nor illegal substances are allowed in any activity sponsored by the City of Easton. Possession of drinking or having the odor of alcohol on your breath while coaching/supervising is prohibited.
5. Language - Always be aware of your tone of voice when dealing with participants, or parents. Profane, suggestive, or excessively loud language is not appropriate while coaching in any recreation facility or practice.
6. Absenteeism and tardiness - We are dependent on you to create a positive recreational experience for our participants. Making them wait or not reporting for practice or a game does not lend itself well to that experience.
7. Pick up Policy: Coaches should never leave children alone post practices/games. All coaches are to explain and reinforce with parents that children should be picked up promptly after their games/practices. If a child is not picked up 15 minutes post game/practice, coaches should call the parent/guardian. If unsuccessful the emergency contact should be used. If all attempts are unsuccessful, contact the Recreation staff or the Program Coordinator for instructions on the best course of action. If children are not picked up within a reasonable amount of time/ facility is closing, Recreation staff/ Program Coordinator will contact the police for the children’s safety.

**To Ensure Safety and Prevent Accidents, You Should:**

1. Properly plan your practice.
2. Be sure the environment is safe; the court/field is clear of any objects which could cause accidents.
3. Be sure all players have proper and adequate equipment.

4. Teach the fundamentals of the game, and match athletes by size, maturity, and skill.
5. Do not have practice or drills without supervision.
6. Do not allow crowding, pushing, or “horseplay” before, during, or after practice and games.
7. Be aware, warn of inherent risks and evaluate athletes for injury or incapacity.
8. Each activity should always have a first aid kit accessible and emergency protocol should be well known.
9. Keep adequate records of incident should an injury or accidents occur.

### **In Case of Emergency**

1. Maintain the phone numbers and ensure the availability of nearby emergency care units.
2. Assign an assistant coach or another adult the responsibility of contacting emergency medical help upon your request.
3. Do not move an injured athlete.
4. Calm the injured athlete and keep others away from him or her.
5. Evaluate whether the athlete’s breathing is stopped or irregular, and if necessary, clear the airway with your fingers.
6. If the athlete’s circulation or breathing has stopped, administer cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), or have a trained individual administer it and call 911.
7. Remain with the athlete until medical personnel arrive.

### **Concussion Awareness and Protocols**

---

Concussions, suspected concussions, and head injuries are very serious issues that can arise during athletics. The following resources are available and provide information pertaining to concussions and protocols put in place by the CIF and PVHS.

- Every team must have a cell phone at all games and practices
- A list of medical conditions for each player must be on hand (such as asthma or allergies to nuts or bee stings)
- medical release/treatment authorization forms for all participants must be completed and remain easily accessible

- Contact information including cell phone numbers of parent/guardian should always be available
- Any emergency equipment, if available such as an AED, must be checked or tested to confirm it is in working order and ready for use (define location of AED)

#### RESPONSE PROCEDURES:

**If an athlete develops a headache, indicates dizziness and/or nausea, or has memory or coordination issues due to head bump or collision, he/she is to be immediately removed from the practice or the game. The presence of such symptoms could indicate a concussion.**

For athletes who have sustained a head impact but can make their own way off the field, the following protocol is recommended:

##### **1. Immediately Remove from Play:**

A concussed brain is particularly vulnerable at this time because if a person sustains a second concussion within a short amount of time they are susceptible to further injury, prolonged recovery, and in some cases Second-Impact Syndrome which can result in long-term brain damage or even death. It is recommended that if you suspect a concussion in one of your athletes, do not return the athlete to play until they are cleared by a healthcare professional trained in concussion management.

##### **2. Perform a Sideline Assessment:**

If an athlete is suspected of receiving a concussion, the proper first-aid assessment should be performed and if necessary, your organization's Emergency Procedures should be followed. The next step is to observe the athlete's signs and condition and also have the athlete explain to you how they feel immediately after the suspected injury. Further assessing an athlete's cognitive status, coordination and balance, and physical signs of injury is recommended. If an athletic trainer is present, they will be sole determiner for readiness to return to play.

##### **1. Prior to return to play (practice) must be symptom free.**

For athletes who are unable to stand up after a head impact, the following **Protocol** must be followed:

- Call 911
- Do not move athlete
- Keep the scene safe
- If the athlete is not breathing and/or has no pulse, begin CPR procedures as trained. If an AED is available, it should be activated immediately.

**Parents must provide medical release prior to the athlete's return to play.**

**Coaches Responsibilities:**

1. Be present at all scheduled practices and games; be early and stay until after the last team member has gone. Never stay alone with a minor, have at least one other person always present. (Three-person rule)
2. Inform players of the time and location of all practices and games.
3. Establish and maintain a telephone and email list of all players, coaches, and emergency numbers
4. Make sure every team member is fully and properly equipped.
5. All equipment issued should be treated with utmost care and returned to the Commissioner in a timely manner so that it can be inventoried.
6. Instruct participants on the rules of the game; teach participants the techniques, fundamentals, and skills of the game.
7. Use understanding and appropriate language when coaching. Use a good deal of positive reinforcement.
8. Ensure participation of all team members.
9. Provide a safe environment for practice and impress upon the team the importance of safety.
10. Be responsible for your team members' conduct, including parents.
11. Your own conduct should be professional. Remember, you are representing the City and should act accordingly.
12. Be an example, and carry through with your responsibilities, and keep in mind that you easily influence the youth as a coach.
13. Maintain a neat, orderly appearance always while coaching.
14. All coaches must have a background check prior to the start of the season. Once clearance is provided the volunteer may participate in the program. See links below for additional information:

<https://epatch.pa.gov/TandCVolunteer>

<https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home>

**Game Responsibilities of the Coach**

1. Encourage all the team members to be at the game site 15 minutes before game time.
2. Keep all team members together and away from the field of play during other games.
3. Play all players fairly and equally regardless of ability and knowledge of the game (as long as they attend practices and display a good attitude). All players need to be substituted unless you only have enough players to play at a time.
4. A good coach uses opportune times during the game to provide instructional tips and encouragement.
5. Most of a coach's teaching should be done in practice. Remember during games you should be positive and don't take your embarrassment out on the players.
6. Promote good sportsmanship with the parents and players for games and practices. Explain to parents that it is your responsibility to talk to the officials and they should refrain from contact with the officials.
7. Adhere to the officials and other City staff during games and not argue with the officials/staff.



## **Coaches Manual Agreement**

I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed a copy of the City of Easton's Youth Sports Manual.

I further agree with the philosophies and guidelines set forth in the manual.

I understand that as a coach I am willing to accept the terms and conditions laid out in the coaches' manual.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_