



# COACHES HANDBOOK



**Hancock Recreation Committee**  
2023 – 2024 SPORTS SEASON

## Introduction

This handbook is the governing document for all Hancock Recreation Committee sports programming. It has been created by the Recreation Committee and will be reviewed and revised annually. Revisions are based largely on recommendations made by coaches and the Committee upon review of the effectiveness of current procedures. Input from all stakeholders in Hancock Recreation is encouraged and welcome.

All coaches in any Hancock Recreation Committee program are to required read this handbook carefully and abide by the contents including annual revisions.

## Philosophy

Hancock Recreation programs are meant to be an introduction to sports for our participants. The emphasis in our programming should be education, sportsmanship and above all fun. Participants should be empowered to do their best while learning.

## Inclement Weather/Cancellations

Hancock Recreation Sports Coordinator will make the determination of canceling practices and/or games due to inclement weather. In the event of cancellation the Sports Coordinator will make contact with the Coach, who will initiate contact to parents/guardians. As soon as determined, cancellations will also be posted on the Hancock Recreation Committee Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Hancock-Recreation-Committee-113674148692431/>

## Coach Expectations

The Hancock Recreation Committee has set forth the following Expectations and Responsibilities for our Coaches to follow:

### *Coach Expectation*

- Every Coach is required to fill out a Coaching Application and return it to the Sports Coordinator before the start date of the program they wish to Coach in.
- Every Coach is required to have a criminal background check done through Town of Hancock to ensure they have not been convicted of a crime against a minor child. By signing the Coaching Application, you approve the background check will be performed.
- **Two and two rule:** Two adults and two kids. NEVER be alone with a child. If a child's parent is late picking them up, ask another parent to stay with you until they arrive.
- Appropriate coach/instructor attire must be worn for the activity. Dress like the professional you are. Hancock Recreation will provide you with a coach or volunteer shirt.
- It is expected that all Coaches will be free from drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, and will refrain from their use at all youth events and programs.

- All coaches are encouraged to become certified by a nationally accepted coaching program (NYSCA - National Youth Sports Coaches Association, PCA – Positive Coaching Alliance, AYSO – American Youth Soccer Organization, etc.).
- Coaches are allowed to coach their own child.
- Coaches must be 18 years of age to be a head coach.

### *Coach Duties and Responsibilities*

Coaches must understand they have incredible influence, both good or bad, on kids. The emphasis of the Hancock Recreation program is fun, skill development, and good sportsmanship. The Coach is expected to provide an atmosphere in which everyone is treated in a fair and equitable manner. The Coach must be aware of all safety issues and hazards associated with the program and devote full effort in providing an atmosphere where participants are physically and emotionally safe.

## Coach Code of Ethics

I hereby pledge to live up to the National Youth Sports Coaches Association – Codes of Ethics:

- I hereby pledge to live up to my certification as a NYSCA Coach by following the NYSCA Coaches' Code of Ethics.
- 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.

### **Coach/Instructor/Volunteer/Parent Communication**

Coaches shall not communicate with players/participants under 18 by social media, text messages, or other forms of electronic communications. All parent/guardian communication should be done via phone, email, text, Facebook Message or in person.

In an effort to make communication easier - group apps are allowed (Teamsnap, Teamapp, Remind, etc.)

### **Safety/Injury**

The Coach must be cognizant of safety issues and hazards associated with sports and communicate these concerns to participants, and provide an atmosphere where participants are physically and emotionally safe.

**Parents or guardians should notify the Coach of any pre-existing medical conditions that might affect the player during the course of the season (i.e. allergies, medications, physical impairments, etc.).** Coaches should note these conditions and keep with him/her at all times in order to determine the severity of an incident/accident.

The Coach will treat minor injuries if qualified. Any major or life threatening injury or accident that may occur on the playing field or at the facility, during scheduled game/practice/event times will be handled as follows:

911 will be called immediately.

Parent/Guardian will be contacted.

Based on the professional decision of the EMT unit, the participant may be transported to the closest medical facility for immediate care.

If medical transportation is required, the charges incurred (if applicable) will be billed to the parents/guardians and/or parents/guardians' insurance policy. It is prohibited to transport a participant in a personal vehicle (unless a parent is transporting).

### **General Illness**

In an effort to keep everyone as healthy as possible:

- If a child has been sick with a fever please do not let them return to practice/game/program until they have been fever free for 24 hours.
- If a child stayed home from school for the day due to illness, please do not let them attend practice/game/program that day.

### **Facility and Equipment Safety**

Each Coach is responsible for inspection of equipment and facilities to insure they are safe. Kids are not allowed to climb on fences, picnic tables, stage, etc.

Each Coach is responsible for reporting safety hazards to the Sports Coordinator within 24 hours.

### **Hydration**

Coaches are responsible for providing breaks to drink water during practices and games.

### **First Aid**

Each Coach is responsible for reading the Registration forms to check for medical concerns and for keeping the information with them and private.

Each Coach is responsible for knowing basic first aid and safety procedures. Coaches without this knowledge should seek assistance in obtaining a basic manual to read or review.

First aid kits are located in each facility we use. In addition, kits will be provided to all coaches for the season.

Accidents/Injury must be reported within 24 hours to the Sports Coordinator using the Accident/Injury Form available in the Coaches Clipboard.

### **Policy and Procedure on Concussion and Head Injury**

The Hancock Recreation Committee has instituted the following policy with the intent to reduce the potentially serious health risks associated with sports related concussions and head injuries.

**POLICY:** It is policy of Hancock Recreation to educate coaches of the signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with sports induced concussions and the requirement that participants, under the age of 18, suspected of a concussion or head injury are required to be removed from the activity, must seek medical attention and then follow the proper procedures for return to play.

**DEFINITION:** A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that is caused by a blow to the head or body that jars or shakes the brain inside the skull. It is important to note that an athlete does not have to lose consciousness to have suffered a concussion.

#### **PROCEDURE:**

##### 1. Distribution of Policy

Coaches and assistant coaches associated with the sport/activity should become familiar with and have access to a copy of the Hancock Recreation Concussion and Head Injury Policy.

Coaches and assistant coaches are required to complete the HEADS UP to Youth Sports training through the CDC prior to holding any practices or games. This online course can be completed at the Coaches convenience and be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/training/index.html>. Certification must be provided on an annual basis to the Hancock Recreation Committee.

##### 2. Suspected Concussion Procedures

Any participant exhibiting the signs, symptoms or behaviors associated with a concussion or head injury: (1) must be immediately removed from the activity and (2) may not again participate in any activity until cleared by an appropriate health care professional. REMEMBER: WHEN IN DOUBT SIT THEM OUT!

Coaches must be aware any athlete who experience one or more of the signs or symptoms listed below after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body may have a concussion.

#### *SIGNS OBSERVED BY COACHING STAFF*

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to hit or fall
- Can't recall events after hit or fall

#### *SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE*

- Headache or "pressure" in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Just not "feeling right" or is "feeling down"

The injured participant may not be cleared for practice or competition the same day that the sign, symptom or behavior associated with a concussion or head injury was observed.

The injured participant's' parent or guardian should be immediately notified of the suspected concussion or head injury so that they can be evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional.

An Accident/Injury Report must be completed and submitted to the Hancock Recreation Committee within 24 hours following the incident. Completed forms may be submitted via email to [hancockme.rec@gmail.com](mailto:hancockme.rec@gmail.com)

The parent or guardian of a participant who is suspected of a concussion or head injury must submit written medical clearance from an appropriate health-care professional to their Coach and Hancock Recreation prior to returning to any activity. Players will not be allowed to participate until this document is produced.

## **Youth Abuse Prevention Policy & Procedures**

Hancock Recreation considers the safety and well-being of the youth in our programs a top priority. We prohibit abuse and aim to proactively address reports of this type of conduct. We want to hear about problems or concerns, and we will act on them in a fair way in accordance with our policies. Suspected abuse will be reported to the proper law enforcement agencies.

### **Policy and Procedures:**

Hancock Recreation has adopted the following Policy and Procedures in an effort to provide a safe environment for our coaches, athletes, and their families. 1) The Coach Recruitment process shall include the following:

**Volunteer Application** – Every coach, volunteer and member working with youth must complete our written application that sets forth appropriate background information, requires disclosure of any prior claims or allegations of sexual abuse or other inappropriate conduct regarding minors.

**Screening** – The Sports Coordinator will interview each prospective coach/volunteer.

**Background Check** – All current and potential coaches will be subject to a background check, including appropriate inquiries regarding any previous record of sexual abuse or other unlawful activity. This background check will be updated at least every three (3) years for each coach.

**Abuse Prevention Training** – shall be completed annually by each Coach. Coaches will be enrolled in Ministry Safe training and will be provided a personalized email link to the training. Training can be completed at the Coaches convenience and notification of completion of training must be received by the Recreation Committee prior to the start of the sports season.

**Prohibited Behavior -**

Use of degrading language or behavior. Coaches are also responsible for stopping disrespectful behavior between team members, including sexual harassment.

Threatening or intentionally inflicting physical injury upon anyone, especially a minor. Coaches are also responsible for stopping threatening behavior by players.

Committing any sexual offense against a minor, or engaging in any sexual contact with a minor.

Making any sexual advance, or engaging in other verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature with a minor.

Non-related one-adult/one-child interaction except in an emergency where following this policy would be dangerous to the child. In an emergency situation, the coach or volunteer must contact a representative to inform them of this contact and the reason for it.

**Reporting of Suspected Child Sexual Abuse** – The Recreation Committee Sports Coordinator is the designated contact for all Coaches to receive reports of sexual abuse or other inappropriate conduct. The Sports Coordinator will promptly notify the proper law enforcement agencies.

All coaches, volunteers, parents and program participants are directed to report any incident of abuse or suspected abuse that they witness or that is reported to them to the Sports Coordinator. Note: This does not preclude individuals from reporting abuse or suspected abuse to the proper law enforcement authorities.

Should a suspected incidence of abuse be reported, the Coach/volunteer in question may be temporarily suspended from duties while an investigation takes place. Hancock Recreation, when appropriate, shall communicate reports of child sexual abuse to the Recreation Committee Members. The confidentiality of individuals making reports will be protected.





# Coaches Handbook Acknowledgement

All Volunteer Coaches are required to return this acknowledgement to the Sports Coordinator prior to the start of the sporting season. Additionally, Coaches are required to provide copies of certifications for the following trainings:

CPR/First Aid; completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Concussion Training; completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Child Abuse Prevention; completed: \_\_\_\_\_

By my signature below, I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and agree to the policies and procedures outlined by the Hancock Recreation Committee in this Coaches Handbook. Those policies and procedures include:

- Coach Expectations
- Coach/Instructor/Volunteer/Parent Communication
- Concussion/Safety Policy
- Child Abuse Policy
- NYSCA Coach Code of Ethics

\_\_\_\_\_  
Coaches Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Coaches Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sports Coordinator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*HRC Use Only:*

*Ensure the following documentation is on file and documented appropriately for each Coach*

Volunteer/Coach Application

Concussion

Coach Handbook Acknowledgement

Child Abuse

CPR/First Aid Certification

By (HRC Member): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_