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OFFICE OF YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY CYO ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

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OYYAM CYO Athletics Handbook

INTRODUCTION

Overall Statement Regarding CYO Athletics in the Archdiocese of Newark

The guidelines here are only for the Archdiocese of Newark CYO Athletic Leagues that are governed, run and coordinated by the Archdiocese of Newark Office for Youth & Young Adult Ministry (OYYAM). We do not have any governance over other leagues that parishes and schools might choose to play in.

Philosophical Statement of the OYYM CYO Athletics League

Our purpose is to provide an opportunity for young people to play sports in a structured environment, which works closely with the individual parish teams. We are here to foster the development of the whole child in the sense of a sound mind in a sound body. We emphasize the importance of a Christian atmosphere, one in which the players, coaches and fans should be able to see Christ reflected in each other. We aim to do this in the most pleasant and safe surroundings available and with the complete cooperation and support of those adults who share our aims for our young people.

Overriding Rule of our Athletics Programs

We are all working with young people. Although there are specific and thorough guidelines named herein, we always are within the general rule that all of our actions are to be guided by the common sense rules of fair play. Also, it makes our jobs easier if we constantly keep in mind that we are here for the youth as models of Jesus Christ to be emulated.

Athletic Governance

An Associate Director from the OYYAM will oversee all Athletic Programs that participate in OYYAM leagues. This Archdiocesan Staff member will be the one to make any final decisions on any grievances or issues that might arise due to eligibility, suspensions, etc. This OYYAM person will report directly to the Director of the OYYAM.

Individual Parishes and Schools will be responsible for things such as uniforms colors, decisions on who coaches teams, declaring whether to be a parochial school or parish team, and all aspects of conducting registrations for their individual programs.

Each League will have a Sport Specific coordinator. Should the sport participation be small enough, or at the decision of the OYYAM the Associate Director that oversees Athletics can in fact be that Coordinator for that league or sport. The coordinator will be responsible for making the schedule, securing officials, collecting paperwork, conducting any pre season meetings or meetings as needed.

Section 1: Composition of Teams

OYYAM CYO programs may be open to youth who meet one of the following criteria:

Catholic School: All youth (Catholic or Non-Catholic) who attend the Parish Parochial school.

Religious Education: All youth (Catholic or Non-Catholic) who are currently and regularly attending the parish religious education classes. Such youth may be removed at any time by the Religious Education Coordinator of the parish for lack of attendance.

If a team declares itself a “School” team only than youth that attend that parishes parochial school may play for it.

If a team declares itself a “Parish” team than students that attend Religious Education OR the Parish Parochial School may play for it.

Youth may participate for a OYYAM team only if they meet the residence criteria above. Exceptions or Waivers of any kind may not be granted by a parish or by another league.

Only the OYYAM shall determine criteria for teams that play in its leagues and may grant permission individually for participation of a Catholic child from a parish too small to host a OYYAM CYO program. They will be placed in the geographically closest parish to them that does in fact host a OYYAM CYO program and that can accommodate them.

The residence of a child is the residence of the parent(s) or guardian(s) with legal custody of the child and with whom the child resides. Should the residency of a player be questioned the Athletic Director of that Program shall provide substantial proof of residence upon request of the OYYAM.

The use of ineligible player(s) will result in a forfeit for each game until resolution.

All OYYAM Sports will have separate divisions for boys and girls and will be constituted as single sex programs from the second grade on. Clarification of this is that no girls can play on a boys team and no boys can play on a girls team.

Section 2: Proof of Age

If an age of a player is contested to the OYYAM then that player MUST be verified with proof of age.

The following are valid as proof of age:

- Birth certificate or photo copy
- Baptismal certificate or photo copy
- Legal proof of birth or photo copy
- For Catholic school students **only**, annual certification from official school records by the Catholic school principal.

Section 3: Grade

A young person may participate in a (grade classification) higher than the actual grade in which he/she is enrolled in if decided by that program due to lack of players at a higher level or due to athletic ability. However if a participant moves up to a higher-grade classification he/she will be guided by all provisions for that grade classification and cannot be moved down once the rosters for a league have been submitted to the league coordinator.

Section 4: Age Limitations (For Grammar Leagues)

Any participant who is 15 years of age prior to September 1st of the current school year is not eligible to compete in 7th and 8th grade sports.

Any participant who is 13 years of age prior to September 1 of the current school year is not eligible to compete in 5th and 6th grade sports.

Any participant who is 11 years of age prior to September 1 of the current school year is not eligible to compete in 3rd and 4th grade sports.

Eligibility for leagues below the 3rd grade classification will be governed by grade requirements and not by age.

No young person may play in a grade classification lower than the one they are eligible for.

Section 5: Roster

The deadline for adding any additional players to the roster shall when rosters are submitted to the League Coordinator at a date chosen by them. This date will be announced at the Specific League Start Up meeting.

Once a player commits himself/herself to a specific team in a specific sport he/she must remain on that team until the end of the season. A player may play on only one specific CYO team per sport. Players cannot be moved up and down during a season to help serve as “substitutes” or “bump ups” to help prevent a forfeit, etc.

Section 6: “All Play Rule”

The “**all play rule**” guarantees each young person that sits on a teams bench is guaranteed a **minimum** amount of playing time for the entire season. . The season is defined as Regular Season, Playoffs and Championships.

In basketball this shall be the time equal to that of one quarter.

In Volleyball it shall be that all players must play within the first two games and that their time on the court must be at least two (2) serves combined between her and the opponents team.

Athletic Directors, Pastors or Principals shall monitor their program’s coaches for compliance. Repeated violation shall be a breach of the spirit of CYO Sportsmanship and the following penalties shall be imposed;

2a) this rule is serves as your warning.

2b) 1st offense results in a one (1)-match/game suspension.

2c) 2nd offense, suspended for the remaining season. If the offense should occur on the last day of the season, the suspension will carry over to the next season.

Coaches, under the supervision of their Athletic Directors should be certain that all players receive playing time beyond the minimum.

Section 7: Schedules

Schedules are prepared by the specific sport league coordinators. It is the responsibility of each coach or athletic director to provide their coordinator with a list of dates that a team is unable to play. This list must be submitted by the deadline indicated for each sport. Dates submitted after that time will not be accepted.

Regular Season

Games will be scheduled within the leagues by the specific league coordinators and sent to the Archdiocesan Office for further review and final publication.

All-Star Game (if applicable)

Please consult with your league coordinator if a game is planned.

Post Season

The Post Season will begin as soon as possible following the last scheduled game of the season in the league. Each sport will have individual playoffs in which every team will qualify for the playoffs – unless that team opts to not move onto the playoffs. Each sport may be broken up into divisions, depending on the number of teams participating. The playoff format is done in single elimination.

The higher seed will host playoff game and will work with the specific league coordinator to set the schedule for the games. The visiting or away team can have input, but not the final say. If the higher seed does not have a facility or the means to host the game elsewhere then the lower seed would be invited to host the game.

Timeframes for the season

Fall Sports will run from September until the weekend before Thanksgiving.

Winter will run the first weekend before Thanksgiving until the end of March. All playoffs will be completed by the last day in March.

Spring sports will run from the beginning of April until June with all playoffs ending by 2nd Friday of June.

Section 8: Coaching Eligibility

All coaches must be at least 21 years of age. Anyone between the ages of 18-20 may help a coach—but SHOULD NOT be given the title of Assistant Coach and cannot sit on a team's bench. This means no one under the age of 21 may sit on a team's bench unless they are a player on that specific team's roster.

In order to transport players drivers must be 24 years of age and possess a valid driver's license. Coaches who are under 24 years of age MAY NOT transport players as per the Archdiocesan Conduct and Norms manual.

At all League games only those adult individuals listed on the Team Form and Roster, or the Teams Athletic Director, Parish Clergy, or School Administrators are permitted on the playing field and the bench. All other parents and participants are to remain off the playing field and benches and remain in the stands.

To be an eligible coach in the Archdiocese of Newark the coach MUST have completed the following:

- Attended and completed a Protecting God's Children Class and be up to date
- Have a volunteer application on file at the Parish or School they are coaching at
- Had a Background Screen done on them at the Parish or School they are coaching at
- Attended and completed the Rutgers S.A.F.E.T.Y Clinic.

Failure of any of these four could possibly result in automatic suspension of coaching and possible loss of a teams eligibility to compete in the season.

Section 9: Officials

Officials have been trained by their respective associations and have been given a copy of the OYYAM CYO rules and standards. Coaches, players and parents are expected to show proper courtesy and respect to all officials. Individuals who show disrespect to the officials will be ejected from the game and face possible exclusion from all future OYYAM CYO sports events.

Officials Fees:

NO Referees/ Umpires are paid by a team at game or match. The Referee Assigner for each league will bill each program a bill for any services rendered to that program for Refereeing. Payment is to be made through the AD or Parish/ School Finance Person. The OYYAM will make available the Assigners W9 so that each institution can create the Assigner as a Vendor. Payment is expected to the Assigner in a timely fashion. Failure to pay in a timely fashion could in fact result in sanctions being leveled upon the program for the following season. The fee for each specific sport will be announced prior to the season at that specific sports start up meeting.

Section 10: Cheerleaders

Cheerleaders are invited to cheer for their teams. All cheerleading coaches must have attended Protecting God's Children Seminar prior to the start of the season. The cheerleading coach must check in at the scorer's table before the game starts. Cheering squads are responsible for providing their own sound system and music. Cheerleaders may sit on the sidelines or in a neutral spot (ends of court, stage, etc.). Cheerleaders may NOT sit on the team bench. Cheering squads may not go onto the court except during halftime at basketball games. Each squad will have a maximum of two minutes for a halftime routine.

Section 11: Uniforms

All players are required to wear the proper uniform for their sport. Each uniform must have a number on the back. Numbers may not be duplicated on one team. Player names are optional on the uniform. Proper uniforms include:

- Basketball: Jersey or teeshirt, shorts
- Baseball: Jersey or teeshirt, longpants, cap
- Softball: Jersey or teeshirt, shorts or longpants, cap or visor
- Volleyball: Jersey or teeshirt, shorts, knee-pads.

All players are to wear socks and the appropriate footwear for their sport. Coaches are not required to wear uniforms but may do so if they wish.

Section 12: First Aid Kits

Each team is expected to have a first aid kit with them at all games. It is strongly suggested that all coaches be trained in CPR and Basic First Aid.

Section 13: League Fees

Entrance fee for each team is a **\$175.00 per team**. Failure to provide entry fee will result in elimination from league play. Checks should be made payable to "Archdiocese of Newark" and have the parish/ school name on the check or in the memo line.

Section 14: Protesting a Game

Coaches may protest a game for a rules violation only. A game may not be protested because of a disagreement with the officials' judgment on a play.

When protesting a game, the following procedure must be adhered to...

- The coach must inform the official.
- The protest must be lodged at the time of the issue – not when the game is concluded.
- The official will indicate the protest in the scorebook or on the score sheet.
- The official must then inform the opposing coach.

**** If the protest is withdrawn, this must be noted in the same fashion as above. ****

- After a game is in protest, the coach making the protest **MUST** contact their League Coordinator **AND** must call the Associate Director, Rich Donovan (201-998-0088 ext. 4150) within 24 hours of the protest.
- A formal letter explaining the grievance and a fee of \$50 must be sent to the **Youth Ministry Office**, 499 Belgrove Drive, Kearny, 07032 before any decision is made.
- After receiving the letter a decision will be made within two days of the director receiving the protest.
- Once a decision has been reached, the director will notify both coaches and the official.
- If a team wins the protest, the game will be played from the point of the protest being made.

Section 15: Expected Behaviors

The OYYAM CYO programs are programs that, through the vehicle of sports, aid youth to become better Christians and to become friends with other catholic young people throughout the Archdiocese. CYO Athletic activities should be examples of the meaning of Christian sportsmanship. The guiding principle behind the enforcement of this code is that the behavior of everyone involved in CYO Athletics should not detract from the youth's enjoyment of the sport.

Acceptable Standards of Coaching Behavior

- Set a good example for participants and fans to follow, exemplifying the highest moral and ethical behavior.
- Respect the judgment of officials and abide by the rules of the event.
- Treat opposing coaches, participants, and fans with respect.
- Instruct participants in sportsmanship and demand they display good sportsmanship; Coach in a positive manner, reflecting Christian values.
- In basketball and volleyball remain seated on the bench at all times during a game they are coaching in unless during a timeout or instructed by the officials.

Penalties for Coaches

- Any coach ejected from a game because of unsportsmanlike conduct (technical, ejected, conduct on or off the court while representing their team) will be suspended for the next two games and may be subject to additional penalties as deemed appropriate by the OYYAM.
- Any coach who physically or verbally abuses another person may be suspended for the remainder of the season and may be disqualified from all further OYYAM CYO Athletic Programs.
- Any coach who physically or verbally abuses an official during or after a game is suspended for the remainder of the season and is disqualified from all further OYYAM CYO Athletic Programs.

Acceptable Standards of Youth Participant Behavior

- Treat opponents with respect; shake hands prior to and after contest.
- Respect the judgment of officials and abide by the rules of the contest.
- Accept seriously the responsibility of representing the school and parish by displaying positive behavior at all times.
- Play in a positive manner, reflecting Christian values. Do not bait or taunt opponents.

Penalties for Participants

- Any player ejected from a game because of unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended from the next 2 games and may be subject to additional penalties as deemed appropriate by the OYYAM.
- Any player who physically abuses another player, participant, or official is suspended from playing for the remainder of the season and is disqualified from all further OYYAM CYO athletic competition.

Acceptable Standards of Spectator Behavior

- Remember that the players are youth and are playing for their enjoyment, not yours. Remain seated in the spectator area during the games.
- Respect decisions made by contest officials.
- Be a role model by positively supporting teams and not shouting instructions or criticism to the players, coaches or officials. Do not coach from the stands; Make no derogatory comments or gestures to players, coaches, parents of the opposing team, officials or league administrators.

Penalties for Spectators

- Participating teams and their coaches are responsible for the conduct of their spectators.
- An official, their team coach, a league administrator or the host gym supervisor can remove any spectator who displays poor sportsmanship from the facility.
- Any spectator who interferes with the conduct of a OYYAM CYO activity may at the discretion of the spectator's parish, league, or the OYYAM be barred from attendance at subsequent CYO/Youth Ministry athletic events.

Enforcement of Expected Behaviors

The parishes and schools participating in the OYYAM CYO leagues shall enforce this code.

Complaints regarding violations of this code shall first be brought to the attention of the Athletic Directors of the parishes/schools involved. Coaches, participants or spectators may be placed on

probation or suspended from all further OYYAM CYO athletic competitions for their actions if the Parish/ School AD or the OYYAM deems it necessary.

Technical Fouls and Warning

A warning MAY now be given to a coach/team for inappropriate conduct PRIOR to calling a technical foul in Basketball. The official will stop the clock, give a verbal warning to the head coach and then advise the scorekeeper to record the warning in the scorebook. **A warning IS NOT required prior to calling a technical. Any offense judged to be major will be issued a technical foul without prior warning.**

Section 16: Specific Leagues and Sport Meetings

Prior to the start of a season the specific sport league coordinator will host a meeting inviting all eligible parishes and schools that might be interested in participating in that sports upcoming season.

At this meeting the specific league coordinator will review/ hand out

- The Archdiocesan OYYAM CYO Sports Handbook
- All OYYAM CYO League paperwork
- Set the appropriate deadline for all rosters, paperwork and league fees to be turned in
- Review Officiating fees
- Distribute and review any league specific rules that govern on playing field guidelines
- Any other items deemed necessary by the OYYAM and specific league coordinator

Section 17 : Score Keeping & Reporting Scores

At all OYYAM CYO Games each team is to have a scorekeeper that will keep track of scores, fouls, technical and rosters during a game. The Home team will be the Official book. The Visiting team is highly encourage to check and verify scores and records during and after a game. This person is to be based at a scorer table in the center of the gymnasium or other place designated by the referee. They may not coach, yell at or participate with the players on the playing field. They serve as an extension of the referees and must remain neutral at all times. Should a program have a scoreboard operator sitting at the Scorers Table that person as well is an extension of the referees and must remain neutral as well.

The winning coach or AD is to report the score of a game to the specific sports league coordinator within 24 hours of game. The AD is to inform the league coordinator the date of the game, the two teams playing and the final score. This will be done for all sports unless different arrangements have been made – which will be discussed at the Pre Season meeting.

Section 18: Athletic Directors

Each Parish or School is required to have a designated Athletic Director that is the point of contact for that particular school/ parish to the OYYAM. This is the point of contact that OYYAM will use for any issues, clarifications that might arise and for all communications during the sports season.

This person(s) will also be responsible for:

- Attending League Meetings
- Conducting a Pre Season meeting with all coaches and ensure coaches get all league materials
- Make sure coaches have understood league rules and philosophies
- Make sure coaches FULLY understand All Play Rule
- Work with Coaches to help create teams league schedules
- Help secure practice space and times for teams
- Collect and turn in all league paperwork and fees
- Be responsible for parents at games
- Be the SINGLE point of contact for your teams to the League and the OYYAM
- Ensuring that if you are hosting CYO Games at your facilities that there is Facility/ Site Manager there that will oversee all games/ contests and work with CYO officials.

Section 19: Jewelry

No jewelry is to be worn by any participants. Wearing Band-Aids applied over earrings is not acceptable. This includes any type of hair clips or beads in the hair.

Section 20: High School Divisions

The OYYAM CYO High School Sports are offered to those high school aged youth that are currently not on a NJSIAA team for the specific sport during that CYO season. All players are to be Catholic and have received their Confirmation or presently be enrolled in Religious Education to obtain their Confirmation. Non Catholics are not allowed on High School Teams UNLESS they attend a Catholic High School within our Archdiocese.

Definition of High School player: A freshman, junior varsity, varsity or NJSIAA player is one who is a member of a freshman, JV, Varsity team on or after September 1 (Fall Sports) December 1 (Winter Sports) and March 1 (Spring Sports) of the season in which he/she is competing.

Boys/Girls (Freshman-Sophomores) All participants are to be 9th or 10th grade students and not have reached their 17th birthday by September 1st of the current school year.

Boys/Girls (Juniors-Seniors) All participants are to be 11th or 12th grade students and not to have reached their 19th birthday by September 1st of the current school year.

Players are not to be Freshman, Junior Varsity, Varsity players on a current High School NJSIAA Team of the current season for that sport.

All High School teams are to follow the same guidelines of “Composition of Teams” as laid out in Section 2.

If a dispute arises as to players’ Freshman, JV, Varsity or NJSIAA Status, it is to be resolved by the League Coordinator in consultation with the AD and/or coach of the Freshman, JV, Varsity Team in question and the OYYAM.

Tryouts of High School teams: Prior to September 1 (Fall Sports), December 1 (Winter Sports) or March 1(Spring Sports) , no person who is either a member of or trying out for a Freshman, JV or Varsity team is to compete in a CYO/ Youth Ministry league game. Such a person is ineligible and the team is subject to forfeiture of any game in which those players’ name is listed in the official scorebook.