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OFFICE FOR YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY CYO ATHLETICS 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).

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

The Associate Director of CYO Athletics will oversee all Athletic Programs that participate in OYYAM leagues. The Associate Director for CYO Athletics will be the one to make any final decisions on any grievances or issues that might arise due to eligibility, suspensions, etc. The Associate Director of CYO Athletics will report directly to the Director of the OYYAM. This person will work in conjunction with two Coordinators of CYO Athletics that will be staff of the OYYAM as well to carry out the Athletic Ministry in the Archdiocese. In addition the Associate Director for CYO Athletics, along with the two Coordinators of CYO there will be the creation of in each of the four counties a CYO county specific committees that will help advise the OYYAM in regards to the needs of Athletics in that individual county.

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 for CYO Athletics, or one of the two Coordinators of CYO Athletics can in fact be that Sport Specific Coordinator for that league or sport. In conjunction with the OYYAM CYO Staff, the Sport Specific Coordinator will be responsible for overseeing the creation of the leagues schedule, securing an assigner of officials, collecting paperwork, and conducting meetings as needed for that sport.

Section 1: Composition of Teams

OYYAM CYO programs are ONLY open to youth who meet one of the following criteria:

Catholic School: All youth (Catholic or Non-Catholic) who attend the Archdiocesan Grammar School that is sponsoring the team (if a school only team) OR all youth attending the Archdiocesan Grammar School that is located within the geographic boundaries of a parish as determined by the Archdiocese of Newark that is that is sponsoring the team.

Religious Education: All youth who are currently enrolled in and regularly attending the parish's religious education program that is sponsoring the team. 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 youth that attend that particular Archdiocesan Grammar School may play for it.

If a team declares itself a "Parish" team than students that attend that parishes Religious Education OR the Archdiocesan Grammar School located within the parish geographic boundary may play for it.

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

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/school too small to host a OYYAM CYO program, providing they meet the required criteria . The OYYAM will try its best to have them placed in the geographically closest parish/ school that does in fact offer an OYYAM CYO program and that can accommodate them in relation to where the child attends religious education or catholic school.

In the spirit of helping children find a place to play we need to make sure that this is not used as a recruiting tool. When accepting children from a parish or school that does not have its own program an Athletic Director must ensure that the program accepting the students maintains a base of at least 85% of the children for that sport come from the religious education program or school that is in fact hosting the program. To clarify this no more than 15% of your overall program for a particular sport may come from a geographically closest program that does not offer an OYYAM CYO program.

Any and all programs that might take on players that come from a program that cannot in fact host their own athletics must complete a CYO Parish/School Athletics Release Form and attach it to the Roster that is submitted for that sport.

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

All OYYAM Sports will have separate divisions for boys and girls which will be constituted as single sex programs. Further clarification of this is that no girls shall be permitted to play on a boys team and no boys shall be permitted to 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. This decision is made by an individual program (school or parish) and not the OYYAM. However if a participant is placed on 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 any 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 be when rosters are submitted to the Sport Specific Coordinator at a date chosen by the OYYAM. This date will be announced in writing at the specific Sports Start Up meeting or by the OYYAM Staff..

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, per season. 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 team’s bench at a game is guaranteed a **minimum** amount of playing time for the entire season. The season is defined as Regular Season, Playoffs and Championships. This is for all Grammar and High School CYO Sports.

The **ONLY** exception to the All Play Rule would be if in fact a player has a pre-known medical condition that would reduce the amount of time that a player could in fact possible play. This pre-known medical condition would in fact need to be conveyed to the OYYAM office prior to the start of the first scheduled game of that sport **OR** if in fact the player is injured during the course of the actual game and cannot return to play.

For VOLLEYBALL

In Volleyball the minimum playing time shall be that all players must play within the first two matches of every game in the season and that their time on the court must be at least two (2) serves combined between her and the opponent’s team.

For BASKETBALL

In basketball the minimum playing time for all eligible players on a team’s bench is that they are to play at a minimum the time equal to that of one quarter’s length over the course of a game.

At the ½ point of the 1st and 2nd quarters during the **first half only**, the clock will stop at the first “dead ball” nearest the mark for **MANDATORY SUBSTITUTIONS** to take place. A referee may stop play at an appropriate time to initiate substitutions.

Coaches must have their substitutions already determined for a quick substitution. **This is not a timeout, this is just to sub.** If the official feels that it is taking too much time, he may charge the offending team a time out. Free substitutions are permissible throughout the **ENTIRE GAME**.

The coach is not required to substitute **ALL** players during the stoppages in the first half. Nor is the coach required to play **ALL** their players in the first half. This is being implanted to give coaches to opportunity to meet the requirement of having all the players play a minimum of one quarters length per game.

AT LEAST ONE PLAYER MUST BE SUBSTITUTED at each stoppage during the first half.

Regardless of substitutions all players in uniform on a team’s bench must in fact play the minimum of one quarter’s length over the course of a game.

If in fact a team feels the opposing team violated this rule, they must in fact have concrete evidence and be able to validate their claim. It must be brought the attention of the head referee and marked in the score book. The league coordinator must then be contacted.

VIOLATION OF THE ALL PLAY RULE FOR ALL SPORTS

Athletic Directors, Pastors or Principals shall monitor their program's coaches for compliance in regard to the All Play Rule. Violation shall be a breach of the spirit of CYO Sportsmanship and the following penalties shall be imposed;

- 1) This rule serves as your warning.
- 2) 1st offense results in a forfeit of the game.
A one (1)-game suspension of the teams Head Coach for the teams next game. Should the infraction occur on the last day of the season then the suspension will carry over till the next season.
- 3) 2nd offense results in a forfeit of the game.
Head Coach is 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.
The team is disqualified for the playoffs

Section 7: Composition of Team Benches

In regards to Players

Only those players that are listed on a team's roster are in fact allowed to sit on a teams bench. All players that are dressed in uniform and eligible to play are subject to the All Play Rule and must in fact play at a minimum the allotted time as explained in Section 6. Players that are injured, or ineligible to play may still sit on a team's bench, providing their names are on the roster and that they are not in full team uniform.

In regards to Coaches

Only those coaches that meet OYYAM CYO criteria (listed in Section 9) and that are in fact listed and submitted on the Team Form may sit on a team's bench. This number is not to exceed 4 (four) total coaches.

A team's Athletic Director, Parish Clergy, or Schools Principal are in fact permitted to sit on a team's bench and will not be counted as a coach. However, they must remain seated for the duration of the game while on the bench, unless serving as the coach for that game.

Only one coach per team is allowed to be standing at any one point while a game is going on. All other coaches are to remain seated and at the head (closest to center court) of the teams bench, unless attending to an injured player on the bench.

Section 8: Schedules

Schedules are prepared by the OYYAM Office and the Sport Specific 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 Sport Specific 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. Some leagues may chose alternative plans for playoff games, such as host sites – however this will be announced and determined by the OYYAM staff and announced in a timely fashion.

Timeframes for League Play of Seasons

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 9: 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 teams bench unless they are a player on that specific teams 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

Failure of any of these THREE could possibly result in automatic suspension of coaching and possible loss of a team's eligibility to compete in the season.

IN ADDITION it is HIGHLY RECOMMENDED that ALL CYO coaches attend and complete the Rutgers S.A.F.E.T.Y. Clinic. The Rutgers SAFETY Clinic (*Sports Awareness for Educating Today's Youth*™) is a three-hour program that meets the "Minimum Standards for Volunteer Coaches Safety Orientation and Training Skills Programs" (N.J.A.C. 5:52) and provides partial civil immunity protection to volunteer coaches under the "Little League Law"

Section 10: 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 per game fee for officials for each specific sport will be announced prior to the season at that specific sports start up meeting.

Section 11: Cheerleaders

Cheerleaders are invited to cheer for their teams. All Cheerleading Coaches must be up to date in the Safe Environment Requirements of the Archdiocese. Upon arrival to a basketball or volleyball game 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 12: 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 13: First Aid Kits

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

Section 14: 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 15: 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 16: 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 they are the head coach, or 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. **However a warning IS NOT required prior to calling a technical. Any offense judged by the officials to be major will be issued a technical foul without prior warning.**

Section 17: Specific Leagues and Sport Meetings

Prior to the start of a season the Sport Specific League coordinator along with the OYYAM staff 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 playing guidelines
- Any other items deemed necessary by the OYYAM and Sports Specific League Coordinator

Section 18 : 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 encouraged 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 Scorer's 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 19: Athletic Directors

Each Parish or School program that enter an OYYAM league 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 the 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 parent's behaviors 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 20: 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 21: 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.

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 on a current High School NJSIAA Team of the current season for that sport. If a player starts a Sport Season on a NJSIAA teams roster and the drops off that NJSIAA team during that sports season they will be ineligible to join a CYO teams for that sport for that season.

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 Team in question and the OYYAM.