



City of Copperas Cove

Youth Sports Policies and Procedures

“Reputable sports leagues provided to our citizen that grow in numbers equal to our growth in population”

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A. MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Parks and Recreation Department is: enhance the quality of life of citizens through the promotion of activities and programs; maintenance of facilities, park lands, golf course, and cemeteries; and the conservation and management of recreational, cultural, and natural resources.

B. CCPARD STAFF

Jeff Stoddard	Parks Director	jstoddard@copperascovetx.gov
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C. OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of Copperas Cove Parks & Recreation Youth Sports Program(s) are as follows:

- **Reputable sports leagues provided to our citizens that grow in numbers equal to our growth in population.**
- To offer programs to fulfill the recreation needs and wants as a service to the community.
- To offer an **equal amount of participation opportunities** to both young men and women regardless of race, religion, or socio-economic status.
- To make the programs a safe and enjoyable **atmosphere that promotes learning and participation first** and competition second.
- To have the best possible volunteer coaches, and to thoroughly train them to do the best that they can.
- To encourage our coach's **emphasis on development** rather than chasing victories.
- To expect that good sportsmanship, teamwork, and fair play are standard behaviors.
- To encourage our **parents to respect our volunteer coaches** by being supportive of their coaching strategies and philosophies.
- To encourage our parents/spectators/participants/volunteer coaches will **respect CCPARD staff and Officials.**
- To ensure that the child's participation in youth sports is a positive and worthwhile experience.
- To carry forth the Recreation Department's philosophy of a recreational sports program designed for team involvement, fun and excitement, and the development of self-esteem as well as sport specific skills.

C. PHILOSOPHY OF YOUTH SPORTS

The Copperas Cove Parks & Recreation Department believes in the benefits of participation in organized youth sports. Participation in sports has proven to build self-esteem, promote teamwork, develop the body as well as the mind, and is an integral part of the maturation process. Therefore, the goal of the Copperas Cove Parks & Recreation Department is to provide programs and services to young people of all backgrounds that will build the foundation for them to grow up healthy, competent, and caring individuals in our community. In order to operate successful youth sports programs; we will enforce the following five philosophies:

- **Everyone plays:** Our goal is for kids to play. Each sport has an allotted amount of playing time based on roster size that every player must meet.
- **Balanced Teams:** Each season we administer Player Ability Assessments (PAA's) and player drafts to make rosters as evenly balanced as possible because it is fair and more fun when teams of equal ability compete.
- **Open Registration:** Our programs/activities are open to ALL children between the ages of 3-15, regardless of race, religion, and/or socio-economic status.
- **Positive coaching:** Encouragement of player effort provides for greater enjoyment by the players and ultimately leads to better skilled and better motivated players.
- **Good Sportsmanship:** We strive to create a positive environment based on mutual respect rather than a win-at-all costs mentality. Our program is designed to instill good sportsmanship in every facet of CCPARD programs

E. ORGANIZATION:

1. Program(s)

The Copperas Cove Parks & Recreation Youth Sports programs consist of:

- Spring Baseball/Softball
- Summer Flag Football
- Summer Volleyball
- Winter Soccer
- Winter Basketball
- Fall Soccer
- Fall Tackle Football

Youth Sports are offered for ages dependent on respective sport. Subject to change based on registration numbers.

E. GENERAL POLICIES:

1. REGISTRATION GUIDELINES

- Each sport has specific deadlines in which participants can register for youth sport programs. Registration windows are open 4-6 weeks before the roster formation process begins.
- Each sport has an “as of” date that classifies a participant by their birthdate into the proper age group.
- Age groups/divisions offered by CCPARD: 4 years of age or under (4U), 6 years of age and under (6U), 8 years of age and under (8U), 10 years of age and under (10U), 12 years of age and under (12U), 15 years of age and under (15U).
- For the most part the leagues will be gender specific. However, Co-ed leagues will be formed if registration numbers are at a point where gender specific leagues would not create enough teams for a viable league.
- Participants can register online via active net: www.ccpard.com or in person at the Parks and Recreation office 1206 W Ave B, open Monday-Friday 8AM-5PM.
- Players are not to be placed on a team or with a coach for the convenience of the parents. This includes car-pooling, location in the city, or for any other reason. This rule is not intended to cause inconvenience, but to ensure that the nature of the league maintains a recreational philosophy.
- Players may only play on their one, assigned team. Players are not allowed to play in more than one division per season in any CCPARD Athletic Program.
- Participants must declare their jersey size during registration. If the jersey size declared does not fit the participant, the participant will have to pay for a replacement jersey.
- Players are not allowed to play in a younger age division. In rare circumstances, they may, however, play up in an older age division, upon parental or guardian written consent/release and approval from the Recreation Superintendent. Once a player moves up, he/she may not move back down during that current season.
- Each youth sport registration will be \$60.00. Tackle Football will be \$148.
- Each youth sport registration will have a \$2.00 restoration fee. These fees will be deposited into (Park Improvement Fund). The monies will be used to address facility repairs and/or improvements moving forward throughout our parks and facilities.
- Confidential applications for financial assistance are available upon request from CCPARD Staff. If a qualifying hardship is confirmed, the applicant may be granted a reduction in program fees of up to 50%. These forms must be completed during the registration period.
- When “Late Registration” begins, a \$10.00 late fee will be applied for all registrants.

- Payment must be made at the time of registration
 - A Multi-Child discount of \$5.00 will be deducted from a family's 2nd registration during a particular sports registration period (in office only).

2. VOLUNTEER COACHES

CCPARD Youth Sports Leagues are dependent on the dedication from volunteer coaches; the coaches allow for the league(s) to be possible. We truly appreciate our community members who choose to be volunteer coaches. We see this service as a direct/positive investment upon the youth of our community.

- All potential volunteer coaches must complete the following papers and turn them into either the Copperas Cove Civic Center (1206 W. Ave B) or the HR Department (914 S. Main St.):
 - a.) Volunteer Packet (includes Background Check)
 - b.) Coaches Application
 - c.) Covid-19 form
- Individuals must be **over the age of 16 to be considered as a Volunteer Coach**
- When the Human Resource Department approves a potential volunteer coach, it is then at CCPARD staff's discretion to appoint/assign them a coaching position in a particular league/sport.
- Each specific sport will have a set number of Volunteer Coaches (i.e. Youth Baseball/Softball: 1 Head Coach / 3 Assistant Coaches) which will be listed in the Bylaws.
- During games, all Volunteer Coaches on the sideline must wear a CCPARD ID badge. If a coach does not have a Volunteer ID badge on than he/she can't coach their respective team, and the team may forfeit.
- The Approval/Denial process is decided upon solely by the City of Copperas Cove.
- Background checks are valid up to a calendar year upon approval. Each year another background check must be completed by the City of Copperas Cove.
- Volunteer Coaches can't start practice, receive their roster, or start games until their background check is clear with the City of Copperas Cove. If we do not receive an approved background check CCPARD Staff will find another or coach until background is approved.
- Selection of coaches is based on availability and filled in the best interest of the league and department's reputation.
- It is mandatory that all coaches conduct themselves in a manner appropriate for a youth league. Having fun and promoting sportsmanship should be the goal of all coaches. Coaches need to keep this in mind when conduct is concerned.
- Coaches should not yell at their players during games or practices, but should provide positive guidance throughout the course of the season.

- A coach should provide direction and guidance for players during practice, timeouts, and halftime.
- Coaches should applaud opposing team's play-making abilities.
- Coaches serve as the role model for the player in demonstrating good sportsmanship, maturity and respect for the officials.
- Be creative when your team is more skilled than the other team. Do not run up the score. (Example: Rotate players in different positions)
- Coaches should be the voice of their team's players and parents. All concerns should be funneled through coaches and discussed in an appropriate manner with CCPARD.
- Coaches should make contact with every player on their roster within a week of the coaches meeting. CCPARD should be made aware of all players that coaches haven't made contact with.
- Coaches are responsible for picking up and passing out trophies to their players at the end of the season.
- Coaches are responsible for coordinating team pictures and timely distribution of pictures.
- Coaches who disrespect CCPARD staff and or CCAOA official will be subject to further disciplinary actions.

3. ROSTER FORMATION

- Participants registered in 4U divisions will be placed on teams randomly (teaming family together).
- CCPARD may add, at its discretion, to the maximum number of players to the roster for each league / sport.
- CCPARD is responsible for all teams. All ads and drops must be approved and organized by/through CCPARD.
- CCPARD's main goal during roster formation is to ensure parity of teams.
- For the retention of Volunteer Coaches, participants will be returned to the same coach they had the previous season for a specific sport....only if said coach is still coaching in the same division. If said coach moves up a division, the team will be dispersed. If a participant chooses not to return to the same coach then they will be placed back on the draft board to be picked during the player draft.
- For 8U-15U divisions, teams will be drafted by volunteer coaches based on the following criteria:
 - Protected Players (coaches' child(ren) only)
 - Age/Gender/Grade
 - Player Ability Assessment

A. Protected Players

- Coaches' child(ren) only
- Volunteer Coaches will get back their returning players from the previous season only if coaching in the same division. Participants not wanting to return to the same volunteer coach, must make this request through CCPARD. The participant will then be placed back into the Player Draft.

B. Player Ability Assessments

- Each registrant (8U-15U) will participate in a Player Ability Assessment (PAA). This program is designed to assess the basic fundamental skills of each player in a specific sport.
- The effectiveness of the PAA depends highly on player attendance and coach participation, so please make plans to attend.
- Parents will be notified when and where the assessment will be conducted during the registration process.
- The atmosphere of the PAA is very relaxed, so players should not have any undue pressure from parents. Please note: this is **NOT A PASS/ FAIL/ TRYOUT** type of event.
- PAA participants will be graded on a scale of 1-5 (5=best value), (4=good value), (3=average value), (2=needs improvement), (1=lowest value). These values will be determined by the following graders:
 - Volunteer Coaches
 - CCPARD Staff

C. Player Draft

- Each sport will have a coaches meeting. The player draft will take place at this meeting.
- Any/all "U" unrated players will be declared not available to draft....CCPARD staff will randomly assign these players to teams.
- When all participants have a value (1-5) attached to them and all protected players have been selected, the player selection process will begin.
- Volunteer Coaches who have returning players will see them already added to their team at the beginning of the draft. The team will not get a pick in the player draft until all teams have equal amounts of participants.
- The draft order will be determined by the drawing of cards.
- The volunteer coaches will select players in a snake style draft selecting 5's/4's/3's/2's/1's until all participants have been selected.

D. PRACTICES/GAME SCHEDULES

- Practice/Game locations can be found at:
<http://ccpard.com/sites/copperascove/locations>

- Practice times/locations will be determined by CCPARD. Each sport will have a practice schedule that is sent to volunteer coaches. Practice times and locations may be allocated/assigned at the end of the coaches meeting via a sign-up sheet.
- Each team is limited to a maximum of three (3) practices per week, until the season begins. After season begins the practices are limited to a maximum of two (2) practices per week. The time limit of each practice shall not exceed 2 hours and will vary based on age/division.
- Only kids who are registered in a CCPARD league will be allowed to participate in practice.
- Only coaches who have passed a City of Copperas Cove background check are authorized to administer, assist, demonstrate, or interact w/ participants during a CCPARD practice.
- Game Schedules and league standings will be available during the season on our Team Sideline page: www.ccpard.com
- CCPARD shall have the power to schedule/reschedule or cancel any games necessary to complete the season or play-offs. Schedules will be updated 48 hours post game.
- Game Schedules will be released by CCPARD staff at the time of completion. Normally, the game schedule will be posted a month before the season begins.

5. GAME CANCELLATIONS/INCLEMENT WEATHER

- All game cancellations are decided upon by CCPARD staff.
- If a game is canceled due to weather or other unforeseeable circumstances, all efforts will be made to reschedule that game in a timely manner.
- Due to time restraints and/or field usage conflicts, some games might not be rescheduled.
- Our department will cancel outdoor games for inclement weather if:
 - The field of play/weather conditions are dangerous for participants.
 - Moisture level of playing surface will damage fields.
 - Visible presence of lightning or audible range of thunder.
- For the safety of participants and patrons, CCPARD staff will carry a “Personal Lightning Detector” during any outdoor event, open swim, or field competition. The “Strike Alert HD” has 360 degree lightning strike detection and detects lightning up to 40 miles away. This device serves as further security against lightning storms and allows are staff to view lightning activity real-time.

Lightning Policy:

- If thunder is heard, the game should be suspended and the fields cleared. Everyone should immediately go to a safe shelter.
 - If lightning is seen, the game should be suspended and the fields cleared. Everyone should immediately go to a safe shelter.
 - If a thunderstorm is heard or seen coming or your hair stands on end, the game should be suspended and the fields cleared. Everyone should immediately go to a safe shelter. Do not wait until it rains.
 - Wait a minimum of 30 minutes from the last observed lightning or thunder before resuming activities.
 - The game will be cancelled by the decision of CCPARD staff if lightning continues for an extended amount of time, or if the forecasted weather is unsafe for participants and spectators.
- If CCPARD decides to cancel games, we will communicate externally by:
 - E-mail to all Volunteer Coaches
 - Posting of specific cancellations on Facebook/Team Sideline
 - Updating the CCPARD Sports Line: **(254)-542-8972**

6. AFFILIATIONS/SPORTS ASSOCIATIONS

CCPARD Athletic Programs partner/align with various Sports Associations. These Associations provide us with universal rules/regulations, recommended standards/policies, and a chance to compete on the Regional/State level(s).

Sport: Affiliate

Baseball/Softball: Texas Teen-Age Baseball/Softball Association (TTAB/TTAS)

Flag Football: Texas Amateur Athletic Federation (TAAF) / National Intramural Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA)

Volleyball: Texas Amateur Athletic Federation (TAAF)

Soccer: CCPARD Bylaws backed by U.S. Youth Soccer specifications

Basketball: Texas Amateur Athletic Federation (TAAF)

Tackle Football: CCPARD Bylaws backed by NCAA Football Rules and/or the Hill Country Pop Warner League

- All CCPARD Sports will have an updated set of CCPARD bylaws. Anything not covered under the CCPARD Bylaws, will fall under the sport specific Affiliation/Association bylaws.

- Local Bylaws can be found at: www.ccpard.com
- In order to compete in Regional/State Competitions a participant must first have been registered to play in our local CCPARD league.
- Tournament Fees associated with Regional/State Competitions will be covered by teams.
- Sports association allow at times, pick-up players for postseason competition. The rules/regulations for this process are ever changing. CCPARD will communicate these processes to Volunteer Coaches before/during the season.

7. AWARDS

- Participation Awards will be given out to 4U and 6U participants.
- 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place awards will be given to participants in 8U-15U divisions based on season standings.

8. SUSPENSIONS/EJECTIONS/DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Coaches SHALL NOT take any disciplinary action on a child without requesting said discipline through CCPARD beforehand. CCPARD will investigate the situation and decide accordingly.

- Any **player, coach, or spectator** ejected from any league game must leave the facility/park in a timely manner. Failure to leave in a timely manner WILL result in further discipline.
- Any player, coach, or spectator ejected from any league game is subject to a possible league game suspensions and/or removal from league.
- Players, coaches, or spectators who have been suspended may not return until the completion of their suspension. Suspensions can carry over from season to season or into additional leagues / sports.
- Each team sponsor/coach is held responsible for the conduct of their fans/spectators/team participants.
- No coach/parent shall interfere with the officials. Any concerns regarding the officials must be brought to the attention of CCPARD.
- No fighting is allowed. Each offense will be ruled upon accordingly, and is subject to removal from all programs for the period of one (1) year or more.
- An official has the authority to remove a player, coach, or spectator from a game and/or forfeit the game due to unsportsmanlike conduct. Unsportsmanlike conduct shall include, but not limited to profanity, threats of any kind toward the referees or scorekeeper, fighting (before, during, or after the game), excessive obscene behavior, or any flagrant foul as determined by the referees.
- In the event of a coach or a fan ejection, the individual ejected will be subject to further disciplinary action (i.e., dismissal as coach or removal of player from the league) from the Parks and Recreation Department.
- No coach/parent should be present at any CCPARD Youth sporting event under the influence of any alcohol, illegal drugs. Patrons in violation of this rule will be asked to leave the facility.

- There will be no use of tobacco and or alcohol by players or coaches on the playing field, coaches' box, in or around the dugout, or in the stands. Spectators are also not allowed to smoke in the stands around other spectators. *Ordinance No. 2013-26; Sec. 8-2. SMOKING IN PUBLIC PLACES*
- All use of smokeless tobacco and vapor pens will be prohibited around other participants, coaches, and other spectators.

9. GAME DAY PROCEDURES

a. Equipment/Uniforms

- All players on each team must wear the uniforms provided by the Parks and Recreation Department. No modifications can be made to these uniforms. (Player name and Team name on back of jersey is allowed)
- All player uniform bottoms (such as shorts) shall have **NO POCKETS**.
- Proper cleats and pads must be worn for the respective sport the items are intended for.
- **NO JEWELRY** may be worn at any time during the game
- Medical alerts need to be taped down and used in a manner deemed appropriate from a physician.
- Referees may ban any equipment that they deem as unsafe or illegal.
- All players wearing eyeglasses must have a **retainer band attached** to glasses during play.
- If a participant lost/isn't wearing team jersey, then he/she must have permission from CCPARD to participate. A like color t-shirt must be worn in place of jersey.
- Each specific sport may have equipment rules and regulations which will be identified in CCPARD Bylaws.
- During games, all Volunteer Coaches on the sideline must wear a CCPARD Volunteer Coaching shirt or badge. If a coach does not have a Volunteer Coaches shirt or badge on then he/she can't coach their respective team. (As outlined in section: 2)

b. Bylaws

- The bylaws as set forth by the athletic department shall supersede rules from all other sources in the specific sport with which they are concerned.
- All areas not specifically covered in these bylaws are subject to the playing rules or governing body of that sport, such as TAAF, TTAB, U.S Youth Soccer, etc. Each governing body will be determined prior to the registration of that specific sport.(Also outlined in section: 6)
- Any matter not covered in sport specific bylaws/affiliate bylaws shall be left to the discretion of CCPARD.
- Player Participation must be followed as closely as possible to the specifications of the bylaws (unusual circumstances may occur, i.e. Injury etc). If the player

participation rules are not followed, the game is subject to forfeit and disciplinary action will ensue towards the Volunteer Coach.

- If a participant is late to a game, the Volunteer Coach must still play them by the specifications of the player participation rule.
- If a participant fails to make it to 50% of the team's practices in the last 7 days, the volunteer coach can submit in writing a request to play that participant less than the minimum participation rule. CCPARD will accept or deny this request based on the participants reasoning for not attending practice.

c. **Officials**

- CCPARD Officials are contracted out through an agreement with Copperas Cove Athletic Officials Association (CCAOA).
- All officials within this organization must pass a criminal background check to be qualified to work.
- All games will be under the control of the official(s), each player coach and fan must respect their control to ensure the quality of the game.
- Officials undergo training/testing/certification of CCPARD bylaws for each league/sport.
- The officials are instructed to eject a coach or team supporter from the playing area if the official feels the level of disrespect warrants it.
- At no time shall players or spectators approach an official complaining about a call or lack of call.
- Coaches should communicate either by phone, email, or in writing with CCPARD for any problems, concerns and/or questions pertaining to an official at a game or on the field/court.

To become an Official contact

Mitch Lofton: covesports@aol.com or Alfonso Ross Jr: alfonso.ross.jr@gmail.com

d. **Forfeits**

Forfeits will take place if:

- Team doesn't meet the minimum number of participants designated by CCPARD bylaws
- Team does not have minimum required players or coaches within 10 minutes after the designated start time, unless overridden by the CCPARD Superintendent
- A coach must notify the CCPARD Superintendent at least 30 minutes prior to the designated start time of their event to receive an extension
- Player(s) or coach(es) are ejected, placing the team under minimum required participants
- Officials determine a team's behavior (to include coaches, players, and patrons) too hostile to safely continue the event.
- Coaches are found to be in violation of roster bylaws or player participation rules.

e. Protest

- There is no formal protest of an official's call or lack of call. The officials' decision is final during any competition game.

10. Youth Sports Parents

Being a parent is a tough job, and when a member of the family decides to join a youth sports team, it gets even tougher.

You've done a lot already to bring up your child. You've created the environment in which your child has grown. You've shared your values with your child by the structure you've given his/her life and by the model you have been for him/her. You've exposed him/her to the world as he/she knows it.

Since your child joined a youth sports team, you've been involved in a whole new set of things. You have had to adjust the family routine; a lot of your time has gone into transporting your child to practice at inconvenient times and to weekend games. You have sacrificed some of your own interests, and others in your family have had to adjust, but you have gotten some returns too. There is the pride you feel as your son or daughter plays. There is some kind of expression of thanks your child has "said" to you. You have met other parents and gained new friends.

IMPORTANT DON'T'S FOR PARENTS

1. Don't put yourself in the place of your son or daughter on the field/ court. Your child is in the game, not you. Glory or grief, it is his/her game.
2. Don't talk about the "big game" all day. Chances are the "big game" isn't as important to your child as it is to you. Your child will most likely keep the game in its proper perspective if only you would.
3. Don't criticize your child or other children on your child's team or other teams.
4. Don't yell instructions to your child; that is the coach's job. Besides, your child will be able to hear your voice over the crowd, which will make him/her more nervous. Please shout encouragement only.
5. Don't start analyzing your child's performance right after the game. All your child wants is peace, quiet, and something to eat.
6. Never criticize the coach, even if it is apparent that he/she doesn't understand the game. Before you complain, decide whether you are ready to give up your valuable free time to step into the shoes of the coach. If not, don't complain.

7. Don't abuse or criticize the officials. This type of behavior does not promote the respect for authority you expect from your children.
8. Don't decide that your child has a future with a professional team, but don't write him/her off either. Kids mature athletically at different paces.
9. Don't forget to praise your child for simply performing. Don't over praise or dwell on a mistake with scorn or anger.
10. Don't forget to praise all of the players after a game, even if they lost.
11. Don't take sports so seriously. Even the "big game" can't solve the world's problems. Just let the kids have fun!

Parents have a responsibility to their *children*:

To make sure that your child gets the most out of his or her playing experience, parents should show their unwavering support, including positive reinforcement of your child's performance and effort. This is absolutely essential, especially at an early age, to ensure their healthy development. Parents should also be positive role models, including, but not limited to, showing proper sportsmanship at all times and refraining from negativity of any kind.

Parents have a responsibility to the *coaches*:

Coaches volunteer their personal time to spend it with your child. They need you to be supportive of their decisions and not undermine their efforts. If you don't agree with a coach, you are expected to tell that coach, but make certain it is done at the right time and place and not in front of the children. It is not acceptable to approach a coach before or during a game to discuss playing time etc. Parents are also expected to drop off and pick up their children on time for games and practice, and it is highly encouraged for parents to stay and participate in order to maintain control of the group and assist the coach as needed.

Parents have a responsibility to the *league*:

League Administrators cannot be at all games and practices of all teams. Therefore, in order to maintain the protective shell around these programs, it is essential for parents to report abusive behavior or any other situation that needs to be addressed to the league administrator. This is the only way that these programs can achieve their intended goals.

Parents have a responsibility to the other *parents*:

Personal gain and satisfaction should not be derived from your child's performance. Competition and taunting between parents is never acceptable, and no parent should ever feel embarrassed or disappointed by their team or child's performance. Good plays should always be cheered, and disappointments should always be consoled, no matter whose team it affects.

Parents have a responsibility to *themselves*:

It is your responsibility to enjoy watching your child and other children participate and learn. The joy and pride associated with watching children participate in sports should be experienced to the fullest, because a lifetime of memories is being created before your very eyes.

*If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact CCPARD staff *see page 3**