

St. Jude Athletics Association
General Operating Policies & Code of Conduct
Revised 01/27/16

MISSION STATEMENT:

St. Jude Catholic Youth Athletics, through the St. Jude Athletic Association, is established to further the mission of the Catholic Church and the St. Jude Parish by providing sports experiences for youth that are firmly rooted in the Catholic faith tradition, based on the goals of Catholic youth ministry, and aligned with the evangelizing mission of the Catholic Church.

GOALS & GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

The goals of the St. Jude Athletics Association will mirror those outlined in the *Archdiocese of Cincinnati Charter on Catholic Youth Athletics*;

- Goal 1. Discipleship: To empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today
- Goal 2. Participation: To draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of the Catholic faith community.
- Goal 3. Growth: To foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person.

The St. Jude Athletic Association will make all decisions, conduct its business, and operate its athletic sports programs in adherence to the *Archdiocese of Cincinnati Charter on Catholic Youth Athletics* and under the following guiding principles:

Guiding Principle 1. Discipleship, Faith and Family First: Catholic Youth Athletics proceeds from and should always include Christian discipleship in the Catholic faith, in support of the parents and families whose children participate. All policies and practices will be developed with Christian discipleship, the Catholic faith, and family well-being as the top priorities.

Guiding Principle 2. Evangelizing Mission: The whole Church and each of its members are called to the mission of evangelization; so too is St. Jude Catholic Youth Athletics a part of that mission. Participants, parents, families, coaches, athletics organizations, fans, and alumni - all those involved in some way in Catholic Youth Athletics - are invited into this evangelizing mission bringing the good news of Jesus Christ to a world much in need of it.

Guiding Principle 3. Responsible Participation in the Church: Catholic Youth Athletics will reflect the priority of regular, consistent, and responsible participation in the Church, in her worship, education, community, ministries and service to the world.

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Guiding Principle 4. Faith, Character and Virtue Development: In Catholic Youth Athletics, winning, performing, and succeeding are always subordinate to the development of faith, character and virtues in participants and their families.

Guiding Principle 5. Trained and Competent Coaches and Athletics Leaders: Coaches and athletics leaders serving in Catholic Youth Athletics understand their roles as forms of youth ministry leadership, and will get training that leads to competence not only in coaching a given sport, but also in modeling and sharing faith, developing young Catholic disciples, and helping young people and their families stay meaningfully connected to the Catholic Church.

Guiding Principle 6. Safety and Well-being of Children: The safety and well-being of young people in Catholic Youth Athletics are paramount.

Guiding Principle 7. Good Stewardship and Accountability: Demonstrate good stewardship of money and other resources, with trustworthy and transparent systems of financial accountability.

ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION

In order to be eligible to participate in St. Jude Youth Athletics sport programs, participants will need to be:

Parishioner: The participant's parent or legal guardian is a registered parishioner at St. Jude. If the parents of a participant are registered at more than one parish, the child is expected to play in only one parish per school year (July through June);

-or-

School Student: The participant attends St. Jude School. Although, if a participant from one parish attends another parish's school, or a non-parish school, the participant may participate either on the team(s) of the school they are attending, or the parish's team(s);

-or-

Unaffiliated participants: Children (Catholic or non-Catholic) who are not registered at St. Jude Parish or attending St. Jude School may participate in Catholic Youth Athletics only by special application and permission by the Pastor, the St. Jude Athletics Association President and the league.

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In any case, the participant is expected to play for that same parish or school for the rest of that school year, unless the family residence moves to a different locale and parish, in which case a change is permitted. If an individual's parish or school sponsors a team in a particular sport, the individual is to participate on that parish's or school's team and is not permitted to play for a different parish or school without written approval by the parish Pastor, or non-parish school principal, the athletics organization(s) and the league(s), on a case-by-case basis.

All participants will be required to partake in Religious education to remain eligible:

Catholic participants: Catholic participants will be enrolled in and regularly attend the St. Jude's parish or school religious education in the current school year (which may be scheduled during the summer or the school year). Three or more unexcused absences from religious education sessions will result in suspension from the team. Legitimate excused absences such as due to illness will be assessed on a case-by-case basis at the local level.

Non-Catholic participants at St. Jude Schools: In the case of non-Catholic children enrolled at St. Jude Schools, they are eligible to play provided they attend the school's religious education classes in the current school year.

Non-Catholic participants In St. Jude Parish: In the case of non-Catholic children whose parents have enrolled in RCIA or are otherwise in the process of becoming Catholic, they are eligible to play provided they are enrolled in and regularly attend the St. Jude parish's religious education in the current school year. Missing three or more religious education sessions will normally result in suspension from the team.

Unaffiliated participants: Unaffiliated participants are not required to attend religious education, but may be welcomed and encouraged to do so.

Participants will also be required to attend practice and competitions, treat everyone with respect and dignity, avoid being a disruption and appropriately care for and respect all property (including the grounds, equipment and uniforms).

Determination of where a child is eligible to join a team is based on (i) the home parish where the parents and family are registered; then (ii) the school (in the case of non-parish schools); then if neither the child's home parish nor school offers a given sport, (iii) proximity to the child's residence. In this case, distance considerations are expected to radiate out in all directions from the child's primary residence, as follows:

The first request for participation is to be made to St. Jude only if it is the closest parish

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to the individual's residence. If St. Jude does not have a team, or doesn't accept the individual, the individual may play for the second closest parish, and so on.

A participant may only participate in a sports program after a written consent from their parent or guardian, through the execution of a standard *Permission, Release and Medical Power of Attorney* form (which is available online at the Archdiocese website at www.catholiccincinnati.org), is made.

PARTICIPANT PLAYING TIME

Playing time will be determined by the level in which participant competes. The levels, Instructional, Recreational and Competitive, are defined as follows:

Instructional athletics (up to and including Grade 5): Children are expected to have roughly equal playing time in practices, games and tournaments, monitored and maintained through the season by the coach or other athletics leader.

Recreational athletics (Grades 6-12): An athletic activity is assumed to be recreational unless explicitly and publicly designated as competitive. Children in recreational athletics should have roughly equal playing time in practices, games and tournaments, monitored and maintained through the season by the coach or other athletics leader. Coaches may limit playing time as a disciplinary measure (for example, as a consequence for missing practices, consistent tardiness, or other infractions).

Competitive athletics (Grades 6-12): An athletic activity is assumed to be recreational unless explicitly and publicly designated as competitive. In teams and in leagues designated as competitive, minimum standards for playing time that are reasonable and appropriate to the sport will be established by those teams and leagues, made public, monitored and maintained through the season.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination based on ethnicity, nationality, gender and race is contrary to Catholic moral teaching and is unacceptable in St. Jude Youth Athletics. This applies in particular to: Scheduling (e.g., preferential treatment to boys' over girls' sports); Team formation (e.g., selections based on race, ethnicity or nationality); and playing time (e.g., decisions based on race, ethnicity or nationality).

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PARTICIPANT SAFETY & WELL-BEING

All provisions of federal and/or state law, the *Archdiocese of Cincinnati Decree on Child Protection*, and St. Jude parish policies will be followed by the St. Jude Athletic Association, relating to the safety and well-being of children, will be strictly adhered to by everyone involved in the St. Jude Athletic Association.

All regular and occasional volunteers (an adult who is not a cleric or employee who functions in a regular relationship having contact with children) will be required to:

- Meet all training and operational guidelines outlined in the VIRTUS® training before having contact with children.
- Fingerprinting and Background Check: Background checks through fingerprinting or otherwise in a manner approved by the Archdiocese.

For any activity sponsored by St. Jude Athletics Association, at least two adults, both of whom have successfully completed a VIRTUS® Child Awareness Session and background check through fingerprinting or otherwise in accordance with the current policies of the Archdiocese, and who are not related to each other, must be present for any activity, including but not limited to after school tutoring of any sort (whether the tutor is hired by the parents or not).

Moreover, the number and gender of the adults are to be in proportion to the age, number and gender of the participants, and the duration and difficulty of the activity. Prudence is required in applying this policy to different age groups, length of activity and the risk level of the activity.

A ratio of 1 adult for every 10 participants is recommended. Single sex athletics must have at least one adult of the same gender as the players whenever possible, one of the adults should be a parent or guardian of a participant.

Discipline will be handled with professionalism, needs to be age-appropriate, and shall not be corporal in nature or include abusive language. Incidents of inappropriate discipline should be immediately reported to the Athletic Association President or Pastor.

Ohio law (Ohio Revised Code § 2151.421(A)(1)(a); § 2151.421(G)(1)(a)) requires all persons acting in an official or professional capacity to immediately report any actual or suspected act of child abuse to the Hamilton County Children's Services (513-241-

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KIDS) or to the Green Township Police (513-825-2280). Failure to do so is unacceptable and subject to criminal prosecution. The Archdiocese, St. Jude Parish, and the St. Jude Athletic Association encourages all persons to immediately report any actual or suspected acts of child abuse to the authorities. In either case, a person reporting in good faith in making such a report is immune from both civil and criminal liability.

All St. Jude Athletic Association coaches will comply with state law (see Ohio FIB 143 for more details) as regards concussions, including:

Before practice or play begins for each sport or season, the parent or guardian of each participating child should review and sign the head injury information sheet required by Section 3707.52 of the Ohio Revised Code and available at www.healthvohioprogram.org/concussion.

All St. Jude Athletic Association coaches will successfully complete all prescribed training, as outlined by Ohio law, on concussions before beginning to coach.

If a participant exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with having sustained a concussion or head injury while participating in practice or competition, the player shall be removed from the practice or competition and their parent or guardian is to be immediately notified. The player shall not return to practice or competition unless: (i) The student's condition is assessed by a physician or other authorized licensed health care provider; and (ii) the player receives written clearance that it is safe to return to practice or competition from a physician or other authorized licensed health care provider.

When the weather exposes participants to possible injury or sickness, coaches will take the appropriate action to minimize the risk:

When thunder is heard or a lightning is seen at a practice or competition, teams will suspend play and take shelter immediately. Once play has been suspended, play or practice will not resume until approximately 30 minutes has passed since the last thunder was heard or lightning flash witnessed.

To prevent heat illness (i.e. heat cramps, heat exhaustion, or heat stroke), when there are high temperatures, coaches should exercise prudence (such as by monitoring athletes closely, limiting practice duration, allowing lighter clothing, providing frequent fluid breaks for rehydration, and/or providing for shade).

The St. Jude Parish and St. Jude Athletic Association is responsible for

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the condition of the fields and facilities used for athletic practices and competitions. It is up to the leaders of the organization and coaches to pay close attention to the condition and upkeep of the facilities to insure that they are in good condition.

Coaches should take time before practices and competitions to walk the facility that they are scheduled to use to insure that there are no conditions that pose a danger to the participants, of damage to equipment. If something is found, it is essential that it is immediately reported the proper official. If the condition cannot be resolved then the practice or competition should be or cancelled.

LEAGUE AND TOURNAMENT PARTICIPATION

St. Jude Athletic Association teams will only participate in leagues and tournaments that are approved by the Pastor or the Commission and participation should insure parity for boys and girls sporting activities.

Tournament participation is limited to tournaments sponsored by leagues, or parishes or schools within the leagues. Participation cannot be excessive and should avoid placing undue burden upon families. There shall be no financial or other obligation placed upon parents to participate in more tournaments than those for which the athletics organization has planned and paid.

Team uniforms are for parish and/or school-sanctioned activities only (e.g., games, tournaments, pep rallies, etc.). Team members are not permitted to wear their uniforms outside parish and/or school-sanctioned activities.

SCHEDULING

There will be no scheduling of athletics activities (including games, practices, tournaments, and other meetings) at parishes, schools or at facilities, on or off-site, on Sundays and Holy Days before 1:00pm (e.g., 1:00pm kickoff, tipoff, starting whistle, etc.). Also, no scheduling of athletics activities on-site at Catholic parishes that adversely affect the parish's worship (for instance due to noise or parking problems) during Saturday and Sunday afternoon and evening liturgies.

Additionally, athletics activities (including games, practices, tournaments, and other meetings) cannot be schedule on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday or Easter Sunday.

Athletics activities (including games, practices, tournaments, and other meetings) are not to be scheduled when the children involved normally would be attending religious education, sacramental preparation programs and the like. If conflicts occur, programs of religious education, sacramental preparation and the like take precedence. Coaches are expected to support the faith formation of their players, and in no case are children to be penalized (for example, being required to sit out all or

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part of a game) by coaches or athletic leaders for missing a practice or game due to participation in such programs.

COACHES

St. Jude Athletic Association will exercise great care and attention in the recruitment, selection, preparation, training and support of coaches. All those acting as head coaches, assistant coaches, and consultants must:

- Abide by and uphold all applicable laws, the *Archdiocese of Cincinnati Charter of Catholic Youth Athletics*, *Archdiocese of Cincinnati Decree on Child Protection*, and all policies and practices of St. Jude Parish and St. Jude Athletic Association.
- Represent their team with the highest level of sportsmanship, integrity and respect towards team, parents and opponents at all times (sidelines and practices included).
- Support and assist in the spiritual, emotional, social and physical development of all participants by providing opportunities for athletic skills training, character development, and spiritual growth.
- Work with the St. Jude Athletic Association's Spiritual Liaison to ensure an environment conducive to growth in faith, character, and virtues.
- Reinforce with children and their families the importance of faith and religious practices including Sunday Mass, Holy Days of Obligation and regular, ongoing religious education.
- Ensure that prayer happens at each practice and game.

To qualify for a coach, individuals will be required to:

- Be at least 21 years of age for a head coach or 19 years of age (being graduated from high school) to be an assistant coach or consultant.
- Living the values and virtues of the Catholic faith whether or not a member of the Catholic Church.
- Possessing the knowledge of the sport that he/she is coaching and about coaching children in a particular sport.
- Possessing the appropriate maturity to coach youth participants a positive ability to communicate with both children and adults.

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- Able to commit the time necessary for preparation, practices and games.

The St. Jude Athletics Association will conduct at least 1 annual meeting for all coaches in which they will receive a presentation of the mission, principles and goals of Archdiocese of Cincinnati Catholic Youth Athletics ministry and Code of Conduct, along with any updates on safety. Best Practices, changes in parish, or non-parish school, policies or practices, and other matters. Parishes, and non-parish schools, have the option of offering this at least once for everyone or multiple times as per sports seasons.

St. Jude Athletic Association will secure anonymous, written evaluations of coaches from parents whose children are participating in the athletics program at least on an annual basis, Follow-up: The association executive board will review the evaluations and use them in assisting coaches in their development, counseling them on problems, working with them to correct serious deficiencies, using them to determine that a coach needs to be replaced, and when warranted keeping parish or school leaders informed. The evaluations will be retained for at three years to allow for continuity of perspective in working with coaches.

COMPLIANCE - LAWS & POLICIES

The provisions of this Charter and this Code of Conduct are based upon the intent of the Archbishop, the Archdiocese and its agents and institutions, to abide by all Church, Archdiocesan, federal, state, and local laws and policies.

COMPLIANCE - CHARTER REQUIRED AS A CONDITION OF PARTICIPATION

As a condition to being identified with Catholic Youth Athletics, organizing competitions with other participating Catholic Youth Athletics entities, and using facilities, leagues, athletics organizations, athletics leaders, coaches and any other representatives of the Catholic Church are responsible for conducting youth athletics in compliance with this Charter. Individuals and organizations found to be not in compliance with this Charter will no longer enjoy the privileges connected with Catholic Youth Athletics, including but not limited to:

- (a) Being permitted to be identified with Catholic Youth Athletics;
- (b) Being allowed to participate in Catholic Youth Athletics;
- (c) Being allowed to use Facilities; and
- (d) Having access to parish or school communications to convey information about youth athletics.

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TRANSPORTATION

The same laws, policies and guidelines that govern other Archdiocesan programs, schools and ministries are in effect for athletics programs under Catholic parish or school auspices, as follows:

Laws:

- (i) In an automobile, all passengers must wear seat belts, with no more than one passenger per seat belt.
- (ii) Schools must transport by bus (by mandate of the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Revised Code).

Policies:

If it becomes necessary for any priest, deacon, auxiliary services personnel, personnel furnished by a third party contractor, employee or volunteer to provide transportation for children, the following guidelines must be strictly observed:

- Priests, deacons, auxiliary services personnel, personnel furnished by a third party contractor, employees or volunteers must never transport one child alone. There are expected to be at least two adults in every vehicle that transports children. In exceptional situations, it may be permitted for one adult to transport children in a vehicle, provided a caravan of vehicles goes directly from point A to point B, with no stops in between;
- When traveling in a caravan there must be a minimum of one adult in every vehicle. If a vehicle is traveling alone, there must be at least two adults in the vehicle;
- Children must be directly transported to their destination, or make only previously planned stops (e.g. stopping for food or gas on a long trip). If an emergency stop must be made, all reasonable efforts must be made to ensure that two adults are present (e.g. calling another car in the caravan to pull over as well);
- Children must never be transported without written permission from the child's parent or guardian;
- Clerics, auxiliary services personnel, personnel furnished by a third party contractor, employees or any volunteers must avoid unnecessary physical contact with children while in the vehicle.

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(iii) 15-passenger vans have been prohibited since May 2005 as per the recommendation of the General Secretary of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

CODE OF CONDUCT

It is expected that all coaches, players, parents, and visitors behave in such a way that they represent the St. Jude Parish community in a professional manner, treating everyone with respect and dignity.

Coaches are responsible for the behavior of their players during practices, games, meetings, and tournaments, while parents are responsible for their own behavior, and the behavior of children in their care.

Participation on a team and attendance at practices and games are privileges not rights for players, coaches, parents and fans. In the case of a violation of the St. Jude Athletic Association Code of Conduct, a coach or other official or authorized leader may choose to deliver a warning, or if the violation warrants it the individual may be ejected and suspended, as follows:

- Ejection: A coach, parent, or fan that is ejected for any reason must leave the premises (including the field of play, stands, and adjacent areas such as nearby parking lots) and shall be suspended for the next scheduled game. A player who is ejected from the game is not required to leave the premises. However, if a player (or child fan unaccompanied by an adult) is ejected and required to leave the premises, that child should be supervised by at least two adults until the child is directly under the supervision of a parent or guardian, in compliance with the *Archdiocese of Cincinnati Decree on Child Protection*.
- Suspension: An individual who is suspended shall be prohibited from attending the next game. Suspensions for egregious violations may include multiple games, practices, and other team activities at the discretion of athletics leaders.

PROCESS FOR FILING COMPLAINT INVOLVING MISCONDUCT

In the event that there is suspected violation of the policies or practices of the St. Jude Athletic Association, a complaint should be filed in writing with the St. Jude Athletic Association President or Pastor. .

The President (or Pastor if the complaint involves the President) will investigate. The investigation will include:

- A description of the incident by the complainant.

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- A description of the incident by the person whose conduct is being questioned.
- Descriptions of the incident by others who were involved in the incident.
- Descriptions of the incident by any other witnesses.
- A list of those contacted during the investigation.

Upon the completion of the investigation the President (or Pastor in situations involving the President) will present their report to the Executive Committee at a special meeting. The person being investigated may attend this meeting. After reviewing the report and all pertinent questions have been addressed, the Executive Committee will hold a meeting to first decide if disciplinary actions should be taken, and if so, what actions will be taken. The President will provide that determination in writing to the individual in question

The Pastor has the final authority over ride the decision and make a determination on his own.

GRIEVANCE PROCESS

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati, St. Jude Parish, and St. Jude Athletic Association are committed to a safe and healthy environment for children, parents, coaches and spectators at all athletic events that take place in its name. Effective communication between athletics organizations, leagues, parents and children, inspired by Christian ideals, is an essential element of Archdiocesan athletics programs. Moreover, the Catholic principle of subsidiarity calls for matters to be handled at the lowest possible level, so that grievances are best managed and settled locally between people of good faith. In order to ensure healthy and effective communications especially in situations of disagreement or conflict, the St. Jude Athletic Association sets up the following grievance process.

In the event that there is a disagreement or conflict involving the manner in which the youth athletics are being administered or managed, with policies or practices, or for some other reason, a grievance should be filed in writing with the St. Jude Athletic Association President or Pastor.

The President (or Pastor if the complaint involves the President) empanels the Grievance Committee, who will subsequently investigate the matter to determine its validity. If the Committee finds that the grievance has merit, then they will make the necessary decisions to rectify the issue.

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Approved By:

Revision Date: _____, 2016

_____, Fr. Michael Hey

_____, Ken Schultz

_____, Mike Paff, President

_____, Tim O'Connell, Vice President

_____, Mike Schaffer, Treasurer

_____, Andy Paff, Secretary

Note: For the purpose of this document, the term "St. Jude" also includes St. Aloysius Gonzaga, as it relates to the sports programs that are not supported by that parish