

***GREENWICH TOWNSHIP  
RECREATION  
COMMISSION***

***SOFTBALL SPORTS POLICY  
AND GUIDELINES***

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## **OBJECTIVE**

- Create an environment in which the children have fun
- Coaches shall teach their sports safely and instill a value system to develop athletes, not the outcome of competition.
- Teach good sportsmanship by being a role-model.
- Hold all athletes to the same standard

## **SIGN-UPS**

There will be a forty five (45) day registration period, starting on January 1 of each calendar year, and extending through February 15<sup>th</sup> however; after January 31<sup>st</sup> a late fee will be assessed at whatever the rate is listed at time of registration.

\* An exception to the late fee can be made for scholarship cases, which will be decided by the recreation board in closed session so as to respect the privacy of those affected.

Refunds may only be offered in the event that said sport cannot field enough players for a team. No refunds will be offered once practice starts or after a game has been played, as clearly stated at time of registration.

## **COACHES NOTES**

All teams are coached by volunteers from the community who have been approved by the GTRC. These volunteers donate their time and services for the betterment of our township's recreational programs. Coaches will, at all times, conduct themselves in such a manner as to be a credit to the community and a worthy example for all the children in the program.

- Place the emotional and physical well-being of your players ahead of a personal desire to win
- Lead by example by demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all players
- Treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development within the same age groups
- Provide a safe playing environment for all
- Review and practice the basic first aid principles needed to treat injuries
- Organize practices that are fun, challenging and beneficial for all athletes
- Be knowledgeable of the league rules for your individual sport
- Use coaching techniques that are appropriate for each of the skills being taught. keep it simple but effective
- Always remember that GTRC programs are for the children first

## **COACHES**

### **Coaching**

All coaches shall be approved by the GTRC

### **Application/Background Check**

GTRC has provided (at no cost to the coach) the means for all coaches to complete online background check annually and be approved before being allowed to participate.

To ensure our coach's personal information and privacy are secure, only the GTRC president will have access to negative results of said background check. If a volunteer is denied the opportunity to volunteer based on the results of a negative background check, he/she will be sent a form letter indicating the results and the reasons why he/she may not be able to volunteer.

### **Certification(s)**

GTRC encourages all coaches or managers to participate in the Rutgers S.A.F.E.T.Y clinic developed by the Youth Sports Research Council. Thus allowing each coach the protection under New Jersey's Little League Law 2A:62A-6

GTRC will reimburse costs not to exceed \$50 in the event softball requires specific training or education. Coaches shall have this education pre-approved by the GTRC before attending the class or requesting reimbursement.

## **COACHES CONDUCT**

All coaches will be approved by the GTRC before the season begins. Each individual coach is expected to abide by all regulations and policies outlined by the GTRC by-laws, sports policy and each individual league rules. If any issues shall arise due to conduct said coach will be subject to reprimand by the GTRC. The GTRC reserves the right to suspend a coach for actions believed to be unbecoming of a coach.

An adult, approved coach must be present at all games and practices. No other people shall be allowed on the field without prior approval by the GTRC.

The use, carrying or conveyance of alcohol or drugs is prohibited and shall be grounds for immediate termination as a coach. This includes the smoking of

cigarettes, cigars or the use of chewing tobacco during all sponsored practices, games and events.

All Coaches are prohibited from using profanity in the presence of team members. Praise and encouragement should be stressed. Sarcasm, negative remarks and inappropriate yelling at a child are prohibited at all times.

The Coach shall be responsible for the conduct of his/her players, coaches, parents and fans at all times.

The Coach shall be responsible for the behavior of players and spectators. Unruly behavior, abusive language and profanities will not be tolerated. The GTRC and/or Coach reserves the rights to have a spectator leave the premises where an event/game is being held.

**Codes of Ethics Policy** - All managers, coaches, players, parents are to read, understand and sign the policy prior to the start of the regular season games.

## **TEAM ROSTERS**

It is the policy of the GTRC to balance teams equitably in terms of age and talent. It is also the policy of the GTRC to keep players together during their stay at each age level provided such is possible and does not distort the balance of equality.

Teams will be set up by grade levels, not age, with the exception of the Pony level. As of 2013, the softball program is under the Phillipsburg Area Girls Softball League (PAGSL).

- Pony Level – 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. Girls in kindergarten can play up one level, after being evaluated by the coach(es) and with approval of the softball coordinator and liaison. Should a player(s) not be allowed to move up, the parent(s) may appeal to the recreation board, and their decision will be final.
- Bidy Level – 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Players are not allowed to move up a level, however; a player may play up one level three (3) times per season, as needed according to PAGSL by-laws.
- Midet Level – 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Players are not allowed to move up a level, however; a player may play up one level 3 times per season, as needed, according to PAGSL by-laws.
- Junior Level – 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Players are not allowed to move up a level, however; a player may play up one level 3 times per season, as needed, according to PAGSL by-laws.

Evaluations are not mandatory, but encouraged after moving from one level to the other. After rosters are selected and in the event that both coaches are not satisfied with selections, an evaluation will take place with alternating selections.

### **Transfers/Trades**

After rosters are selected and in the event that both coaches are not satisfied with selections, an evaluation will take place with the alternating coaches' selections. Granting of trades, whether or not extenuating circumstances exist, shall be determined by the GTRC Liaison, Coordinator and the Coaches involved. Trades will be reported to the GTRC. Extenuating circumstances include, but are not limited to the following: serious car pool issues, whereas a child would be unable to play; behavior amongst parents which would make the playing situation for the child unpleasant.

### **PARENTS MEETING**

Managers/Coaches shall hold a parents meeting as soon as rosters are complete to discuss the following:

- Review practice schedule
- Review attendance policy
- Review procedures for pick up after practices/games (see Safety Section)
- Review game schedule (if available at time)
- Distribute Managers/Coaches/Players phone numbers
- Review expectations of both the Manager/Coaches and the Parents
- Confirm medical consent form information and have them re-sign in space provided
- Review policies with regards to misbehavior on team
- Review policies regarding Code of Ethics for players, parents and managers/coaches and distribute forms. Forms to be signed prior to a player attending first practice
- Thoroughly explain playing time or the lack thereof due to discipline, tardiness, absenteeism

## **PLAYER DISCIPLINE**

Coaches, during the initial team meeting, shall clearly state their coaching policies with regard to misbehavior, including attendance policy as well. Be consistent with punishments. Punish the same way for the same situation for all players. Type of punishment: taking the player away from the activity is highly recommended. In the event a player is disciplined, it should be separate from the other players, unless such immediate action is necessary to control a dangerous situation. In addition, if a player is disciplined, the players parent is to be notified.

When rules are broken, explain to the players, in an impersonal way the specific actions which brought the punishment on. Also, inform the players what to expect if this misbehavior would occur again.

For more serious offenses (violations to the Code of Ethics Policy), the Coach and Sports Coordinator can recommend to the GTRC Liaison of a possible suspension or severe reprimand. All suspensions must be referred to the GTRC for a final ruling.

## **TEAM EQUIPMENT**

Inventory should be conducted at the start of the season and end of the season. This is done for two (2) primary reasons: Ensure equipment has been returned and to budget for the next season.

Equipment will be distributed during an established date/time set by the Coordinator or Equipment Manager. Each coach shall be present to receive, inspect and sign for all equipment. For softball, the GTRC provides all of the playing equipment. There are times when a parent/guardian may choose to purchase their own equipment for the daughter's use, however; the equipment needs to meet the current ASA guidelines and PAGSL rules/regulations.

In order to place an order for uniforms or equipment, three (3) bids need to be obtained from a list of approved vendors used by the Township. A spread sheet of what is being ordered, along with the itemized bids from the 3 vendors need to be forwarded to the coordinator, who will then forward same to the GTRC for approval. The coordinator should include their recommendation as the lowest price is not always going to get the bid. Special attention should be given to quality, past purchases, and customer service.

Throughout the practice and playing season, managers are responsible for ensuring that equipment is in proper and safe playing condition. The coaches are responsible to maintain the equipment during the season.

Any equipment problems that cannot be corrected by the coaches should be reported to the Coordinator and/or Equipment Manager.

Coaches are required to return all equipment issued at the end of the season, by a date established by the Coordinator or Equipment Manager during the season. All equipment assigned to a coach shall be his/her responsibility until returned.

The Coordinator and coaches are to ensure that all equipment is maintained and safe for use and of appropriate size/fit for the player.

## **UNIFORMS**

Uniforms are distributed to the coaches during equipment distribution. Prior to distribution the coordinator needs to make sure the uniforms are in a serviceable condition. Each coach is responsible for distributing the uniforms to the players and to have the players ensure the uniforms fit.

GTRC provides shorts, shirts, socks, and visors for the Bidy, Midget, and Junior levels. The Pony level players receive a t-shirt (which they keep), visors, and pants.

During the season, each player is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of said uniform. In the event the uniform becomes unserviceable during the season, the coach is to be notified.

Uniforms are only to be worn for scheduled games or GTRC functions during the season. The head coach or his/her designee is responsible for collection of the uniform and the timely return of same to the Coordinator or Equipment Manager.

## **SNACK STAND**

(If applicable) Coaches are responsible for the delivery to each parent a copy of the Snack Stand Schedule as soon as it is received from the GTRC. Questions regarding the Snack Stand should be directed to the Snack Stand Coordinator.

## **PICTURES**

This position can be a coach / co-coach, and is the liaison between the sport and the sport photographer for team photos. Although the sports parents pay for the individual photos and team photos, the selected photographer needs to be approved by GTRC to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest. When scheduling team photos the dates need to be forwarded to the coordinator who

will then fill out a “School Use Order” if the team photos are to be held at a school. There is at least a 3 week turnaround between the request and school approval. If possible, team photos should be conducted prior to the start of games so conflicts are at a minimum.

## **MAINTENANCE OF PLAYING/PRACTICE FACILITIES/PRACTICE EQUIPMENT**

In general, field maintenance in Greenwich Township (GT) will be completed by the GT Road Department. However, there are certain responsibilities that the GTRC has to assist in keeping the fields in the best possible condition.

It is everyone’s responsibility to maintain safe playing conditions on all fields. The appropriate response to an unsafe condition on the field depends upon the situation, but in all situations, such conditions should be reported to your Coordinator and/or GTRC Sport Liaison. If you are practicing and an unsafe condition exists on the field, avoid that location and alert teams that are following you on the field. If you are in a game and an unsafe condition exists on the field, notify the umpire/official in charge so that appropriate measures can be taken. Never assume that somebody else already knows about the problem.

## **FIELD MAINTENANCE**

The job of every field user (managers, coaches, players) should be to leave the fields in as good or better condition that they were in before use. This needs to be both a short term goal (single game/practice) and long term goal (season). Considering both needs this leads to a number of “best practices” for fields and equipment care.

## **FIELD LINING**

Generally the GT Road Department will handle lining of fields. They are provided the official league schedule at the start of the season and will prepare fields per this schedule. If at any time a game is scheduled outside of the published schedule contact your Coordinator if you wish to have the field lined. They will in turn notify the GTRC board contact.

There are instances when the games/practices are held at the Bloomsbury field(s) and it will be the responsibility of the Bloomsbury Road Department to line that field. Any team utilizing the Bloomsbury field(s) will forward an official season schedule so that the fields can be lined properly.

## **SAFETY**

At equipment/uniform handout, all Coaches will be given the Emergency Medical Consent Forms for their respective players. Coaches shall maintain a binder in which each player's medical information form shall be kept in addition to the Coach's Guidelines. This binder shall be readily available at all practices and games.

## **EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN**

This section is to familiarize Coaches with basic principles and emergency procedures; however it is **not** intended to substitute for comprehensive first aid training.

When the team equipment is distributed, a basic first aid kit with a supply of ice packs is issued – Coaches may administer minor first aid (ice packs, band aids, etc.) as required during practices or games.

GTRC requires any injury to be treated as a serious condition. If coaches or managers are unsure of the extent of the injury do not hesitate to **call Emergency Services – 911**.

Coaches shall review this section and become familiar with the Emergency Action Plan and be able to implement the plan when necessary. Often the first responder is the Coach or Assistant Coach. Keep in mind that his/her assistant coach shall carry out such things as the supervision of the uninjured athlete's.

Elements of the emergency action plan are as follows:

- In the event an injury occurs Coaches shall call 911 personnel
- At least one coach should have the knowledge to provide basic first aid and take reasonable steps until medical care arrives.
- Coaches shall contact parent(s) or legal guardian immediately.
- In the case of outdoor activities where such activity spans multiple fields it would be appropriate to have someone meet or flag down EMS and point them to the proper location.
- Coaches should reflect to their booklet and prepare all emergency personnel with the child's Medical Treatment Authorization Form that was previously submitted.
- In the event the parent is not present and EMS will be transporting the athlete to a hospital it is expected that the coach shall follow in his/her own vehicle. Coaches should make sure that the remaining athletes will be properly supervised by a qualified coach.
- The Coach shall reflect and document the incident and complete the incident report contained herein.

- Coaches shall provide the GTRC with a copy of the incident report.

**Exception: Occasionally a parent offers to drive their children to the hospital or to their pediatrician rather than have the EMS transport. In this instance, the Coach should make sure to have an assistant observe the parent declining EMS transportation.**

### **PLAYER PICK-UP**

Coaches shall ensure that at the completion of all practices, games and events each child is picked up by their respective parent/guardian prior to the coaches leaving the playing/practice facility. Managers shall review these procedures with the parents in the Parents Meeting, prior to the first practice. Parents are to be informed in this meeting that if there are any on-going car pool arrangements, these should be communicated to the coach prior. Also, if the need ever arises at the last minute on any given day for a parent to make alternate pick up arrangements, this must be communicated to the coach by the respective parent/guardian at drop off.

### **FUNDRAISING**

The GTRC recognizes the fact that fundraising is an arduous task, however; fundraising is an essential part to each sports viability. Each sport is encouraged to select a coach or co-coach to develop and implement a fundraising plan. Each fundraising selection needs to be communicated through the coordinator to the GTRC board for approval. The funds collected from the fundraising efforts go back to that specific sport.