

**South Hadley Recreation Department  
Policies and Procedures  
Approved 1/12/15**

**Mission Statement**

To provide a wide range of recreational programs and activities through the utilization of tax dollars and self-support.

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The Recreation Commission is a seven member panel of South Hadley residents that makes policy and advises the Recreation Director on many different issues relating to recreation in the Town of South Hadley. Members of the Recreation Commission are appointed by the Selectboard for a three-year term of office. The Commission meets monthly with the Recreation Director to accomplish their goals. Any resident of the Town of South Hadley is encouraged and invited to attend any of these meetings.

These policies and procedures are intended to support the Recreation Director in his/her everyday tasks. The Recreation Commission reserves the right to rule on anything not specifically covered in this document and/or vote to change/suspend a policy based on a specific situation they will discuss.

**Eligibility (Youth Sports)**

- To play in a Recreation Department sponsored youth sports league, participants must turn five years of age by the qualifying date to be a kindergarten student in South Hadley. Currently, that date is August 31 as of the current school year.
- All participants must be able to furnish a copy of the child's birth certificate if one is required and/or requested.
- Recreation sports are open to any child that resides in South Hadley or attends South Hadley Public Schools.
- Children residing in neighboring communities may join a sports league provided their town does not offer a comparable program and/or there is a need for participants in a South Hadley league.

**Age Divisions (Youth Sports)**

- Players are not permitted to play up a division for our recreational sports leagues. The exceptions to this policy are if a coach is needed in a specific division and/or we need players to have a team. We do not move players up based on size and/or ability level unless that activity includes a posted evaluation or tryout.
- Our recreational leagues are split up by grade with age minimum/maximums.
- Most travel sports leagues have specific age/grade requirements that must be followed; however, the Recreation Department can set more stringent guidelines when appropriate.

### **Eligibility (Summer Programs)**

- The age requirement for Recreation Department summer programs will be set based on the focus and requirements of each specific program and is specified in the Summer Program Guide.
- For programs with roster limitations, residents and school choice students of South Hadley will be given the first opportunity to register for programs if they register by the established deadline. After the deadline, anybody can register for these programs until they are full.

### **Eligibility (Adult Programs)**

- Adult programs are open to any participant that is in good standing with the department and meets the age requirement of that specific activity. Good standing refers to having all dues paid on time and an individual who has not been suspended from another South Hadley sports league.
- There will be non-resident fees associated with each event to be set by the director. These fees will be based on the total cost, popularity and availability of the program.
- Any team that has more than three non-residents on their roster at any point during the season will fall into the non-resident fee category.

### **Registration Policies**

- Registrations shall be taken during the posted registration hours and registration periods.
- Registration periods are typically advertised in the school newsletters, the Town Reminder, Recreation Department website, local cable access channel (TV-15), social media, local newspapers and at the Recreation office bulletin board.
- A parent/legal guardian must sign the registration form for anybody under the age of eighteen.
- There will be a waiting list for anybody signing up after the posted registration date if that sport or activity has reached full enrollment. Additionally, if an activity reaches a full enrollment when there is no closing date (an activity with capped enrollment), then a waiting list will be started. Participants will come off the waiting list on a first come, first served basis.

### **Multiple Sports/Same Season**

- Players are permitted to play for multiple Recreation Department sports in the same season provided tryouts are not required for either team they are playing on. In the case where a sport has a tryout option, that player will be permitted to play on the tryout team provided they make it. If a tryout is not required and/or a player does not make the tryout team, that player can then play in two sports in the same season.

- Any player that registers and plays tackle football for the Recreation Department will not be permitted to play another Recreation Department sport during the fall season due to the time demands.

### **Seasonal Field/Sport Policy**

- The Recreation Department will sponsor sports that are “in season.”
- If space is available and it is feasible for the Parks Dept to prepare the field, the Recreation Department will allow “out of season” sports to compete; provided they meet the requirements as set forth by the department and pay any applicable fees.

### **Field Usage**

- Any outside group wishing to use a playing field must fill out the necessary forms and receive written permission from the Recreation Department.
- Recreation and School Department activities have the priority for field use and scheduling.
- Any group wishing to use a school building must have permission from the School Department through their Facility Use procedures.
- Any group not affiliated with the Recreation Department must pay a fee for usage of the fields/athletic facilities. This fee has been set at \$25 per day the field is used.
- Additional fees may be charged as are necessary to cover staff expenses associated with that event.
- The Parks Department Superintendent, the School Athletic Director and the Recreation Director will meet to determine the opening and closing dates for town fields. The Parks Department Superintendent has the ultimate authority over when to open or close the fields due to inclement weather.

### **Registration Fees**

- The Recreation Director and/or Recreation Commission will set the registration fees based on the cost per each program and the needs of the Recreation Department.
- Financial waivers are available for those that need financial assistance. The criteria for receiving a financial waiver are listed under the “financial waiver policy.”

### **Financial Waiver Policy**

- Any child that qualifies for free school lunch will have 100% of their registration fee waived if they fill out the necessary form(s).
- Any child that qualifies for reduced school lunch will have 50% of their registration fee waived if they fill out the necessary form(s). Anybody meeting this qualification wishing for a 100% waiver must show further specific hardship to be approved by the Recreation Director.
- Payment plans are available for those requesting one. Payment must be completed before the season begins.

- Anybody not meeting the aforementioned qualifications that would still like to apply for a financial waiver must appeal to the Recreation Director. Guidelines that will be used in this situation will be recent job loss, disability or other similar financial hardship.

### **Staff and Coaches**

- All staff, volunteers and coaches will be selected by the Recreation Director.
- All staff, volunteers and coaches must receive a CORI check as Massachusetts Law dictates.
- It is highly recommended that all coaches become NYSCA (National Youth Sports Coaches Association) certified and/or have a sport specific certification from a group like US Lacrosse, USA Football, etc...
- The Recreation Director may make it mandatory for certain members of the staff, volunteers or coaches to have the following certifications: CPR, first aid, concussion (NFHS and/or CDC) based on the demands of that program.
- The Recreation Director will set the wages for staff based on a study of other communities and the approval of the Town Administrator.

### **Coach Selection**

- The Recreation Director will select the coaches for all Recreation Department teams.
- The criteria used for selecting coaches will be their coaching and/or playing experience, behavior, and knowledge of the game.
- Anybody that would like to appeal the selection of a coach by the Recreation Director may bring their concerns to the Recreation Commission through written notification to both the Director and Chair of the Recreation Commission.

### **CYO Basketball Policy**

- Any participant of a CYO basketball team is not eligible for participation in any winter Recreation Department basketball league.

### **Tryout Policies**

The following guidelines will be followed for the purpose of selecting team members for Recreation Department tryout teams.

- An independent panel (selected by the Recreation Director) will be utilized for any tryout where players will be “cut” from the team. The coaches will not have any authority over selecting the team.
- The panel will be given criteria defined by the Recreation Department to select players. Some of the criteria will be the player’s skill, attitude, hustle, position, coach-ability and the number of players on a team. Grade, size and team role may also play a part in the decision making process.
- The prospective coaches of the team will be invited to view the tryouts. The coaches will not be actively engaged in the tryout process or have any interaction with the players or panel.

- The coaches may prepare a list of players they would select and submit it to the panel for their consideration.
- The selection panel will have the final determination regarding the players chosen for the team and will submit the list of players that were chosen to the Recreation Department.
- The Recreation Department will email the participants who attended the tryouts informing them of their status on the team by 9pm on the next available business day.

### **Discipline**

- Any player, coach, parent, spectator or official is subject to the Recreation Department's Code of Conduct. It is the expectation of both the Recreation Department and Recreation Commission that the safety of all participants, coaches, spectators, officials and employees be paramount. Deviations from this policy will not be permitted.
- If anyone is found to be in violation of the Code of Conduct, they will be suspended by the Recreation Director. The length/severity of the suspension will be based upon the severity of the offense, number of previous offenses/behavior and any other mitigating factors.
- Suspensions may be appealed to the Recreation Commission. The suspended individual must send a written request to the Recreation Commission five days prior to their next meeting to request to be on the Recreation Commission agenda. The suspended individual will be given an opportunity to plead their case before the Commission and will be subject to any questions the Commission may have. Following this meeting, the Commission will determine if the suspension shall be reduced or rescinded.

### **Code of Conduct**

- I will provide positive support and encouragement for any player, coach, official, and employee when attending or participating in any South Hadley Recreation Department activity.
- I will encourage good sportsmanship at any game or practice.
- I will place the emotional and physical well-being of any participant ahead of any desire to win.
- I will demand a sports environment that is free of drugs, tobacco and alcohol and refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
- I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for any child.
- I will insist that any event will be safe and healthy and I will not be involved with any altercations (verbal or physical) with any other parents, spectators, coaches or officials.
- I will not coach or yell instructions at players, coaches or officials from the sidelines.
- I will use any social media in a respectful fashion when referring to my Recreation Department team or activity. Name calling and threats made to opposing players, teammates, coaches or officials will not be tolerated and can result in suspension and/or removal from the team.

## **Alcohol Policy at Youth Sports Events**

- Alcohol is not permitted at any Recreation Department youth sport game or event. An event is defined as any mandatory team function where youth players are in attendance. These include but are not limited to practices, games, team dinners, fundraisers, banquets and post season parties. Coaches and adults have a significant impact upon the lives of our young participants and consuming alcohol at team events gives them the impression that drinking is acceptable in this environment.
- Any person violating this policy will be removed or ejected from the activity and will be subject to further disciplinary action from the Recreation Commission. Any coach that consumes alcohol before or during a team event will be removed from his or her coaching position and may be suspended from coaching in the future.
- Alcohol is permitted at Recreation Department youth sports fundraisers where the players participation is voluntary. An example of this is a golf tournament benefiting a specific activity. While there may be youth players in attendance, parents are aware that alcohol will be consumed at this event and it is their choice to put their children in that environment.

## **Bus Trip Polices**

- Tickets are provided on a first come, first paid basis. The Recreation Director will set the release date for all tickets/events and he/she may set a presale date for South Hadley Residents based on popularity of the program.
- Fees:
  - Deposits (50%) may be accepted for any trip: however the full balance must be paid 30 days prior to the trip or by the specific date set at the time of registration.
  - Non-resident fees will be charged at the discretion of the director.
- Cancellation Policy
  - The Recreation Department may cancel the trip within 7 days of the trip due to lack of enrollment. Any trip may be cancelled at any time due to weather, natural disaster, etc...
  - Any registrant may request a full refund 21 days prior to the trip.
  - Any registrant requesting a full refund within 21 days of the trip will only receive a refund if they can be replaced by people on a waiting list or other interested parties. If they cannot be replaced, they will not receive a refund and are responsible for their tickets.
- Each registrant with more than one person attending the trip must provide a group leader who is responsible for their group. Each group leader must provide a list of attendees when they register for the trip and any information that is required.
- All participants must act appropriately when they are on a Recreation Department sponsored trip. Any person that violates this policy will be barred from attending any future events. Inappropriate behavior includes but is not limited to:
  - Swearing, offensive remarks, etc...
  - Fighting

- Possession of narcotics
- Smoking on the bus
- Alcohol abuse and disruptive behavior.

### **Summer Concerts**

- In conjunction with the Village Commons, the Recreation Department will run a concert series on the Town Common.
- The dates, times, and number of acts each year will be determined by the Recreation Director and the Summer Concert Committee.
- The Director may appoint a committee to assist him/her with the selection of bands, recruitment of sponsors and/or administration of the concerts. Residents of the Town of South Hadley are encouraged to join this volunteer committee.
- It is highly recommended that one-half of the acts have a direct connection with the Town of South Hadley. This refers to current residents, alumni of South Hadley High School, etc...
- The same act cannot play in two consecutive years unless there are extenuating circumstances which are approved by the Recreation Director.