

# West Springfield Parks & Recreation Department



**Sportsmanship is our Goal!**



**To that end, we've adopted the following**

## **“ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY”**



"Remember that sports are  
meant to be **FUN**...  
Don't let someone make the  
sport **UNFUN** for you!"

We encourage parents/guardians and coaches to review and discuss the "Code of Conduct" found inside this document with each child participating in a West Springfield Park & Recreation Program.

The Zero Tolerance Policy will be given out at registration time of each and every sport.

## Code of Conduct

**For Kids Sake!** - Children's sports are supposed to be fun - for the children! Unfortunately, many parents, fans and coaches don't realize that their actions, whether verbal or nonverbal, can have lasting emotional effect on children. Too many children are leaving sport activities because the fun is unfairly taken away by adults.

The West Springfield Park and Recreation Commission has adopted the following Code of Conduct as a result of its concern for good sportsmanship. All coaches, players and parents must abide by our "Code of Conduct". Violations of this code must be reported to the Park and Recreation Department and all reported violations of the "Code of Conduct" will be investigated and enforced as stated in the West Springfield Park & Recreation Department's "Zero Tolerance Policy".

### Parents Code of Conduct

As a parent, I acknowledge the importance of being involved in my child's recreational activities.

I will introduce myself to my child's volunteer coach/leader and will exchange pertinent contact information.

I will know who is transporting my child to and from any recreational activity.

I will know my child's schedule - practice days, dates and schedules.

I will place the emotional and physical well being of my child ahead of any personal desire to succeed.

I will provide support for coaches and leaders working with my child to provide a positive, enjoyable experience for all.

My child and I will treat other participants, spectators and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or ability.

Parents will respect the decisions of officials and encourage players to do so as well.

Parents will applaud good performance and efforts from all individuals and the team.

Never ridicule players for making mistakes. Positive comments are motivational.

Condemn the use of violence in any form, whether it is by other spectators, coach officials or players.

Encourage all players to follow the rules and official's decisions.

Do not use foul language, sledge or harass players, coaches or officials.

I will demand a sport environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco and alcohol and I will refrain from their use at all sport events.

**Be A Fan...Not a Fanatic!!!**

### Coaches Code of Conduct

I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my players ahead of a personal desire to win.

I will attend all meetings and rules clinics set up by the Department prior to the beginning of each sports season.

I will treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development for the same age group.

I will do my best to provide a safe playing situation for my players.

I will promise to review and practice the basic first aid principles needed to treat injuries of my players.

I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all my players.

I will lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all my players.

I will provide a sports environment for my team that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, and I will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.

I will be knowledgeable in the rules of each sport that I coach, and I will teach these rules to my players.

I will use those coaching techniques appropriate for each of the skills that I teach.

I will remember that I am a youth sports coach, and that the game is for children and not adults.

### Players Code of Conduct

I will encourage good sportsmanship from fellow players, coaches, officials and parents at every game and practice by demonstrating good sportsmanship.

I will attend every practice and game that I can, and will notify my coach if I cannot.

I will expect to receive a fair and equal amount of playing time.

I will do my very best to listen and learn from my coaches.

I will treat my coaches, other players, officials and fans with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or abilities and I will expect to be treated accordingly.

I deserve to have fun during my sports experience and will alert parents or coaches if it stops being fun!

I deserve to play in an environment that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and expect adults to refrain from their use at all youth sports events.

I will encourage my parents to be involved with my team in some capacity because it's important to me.

I will do my very best in school.

I will remember that sports is an opportunity to learn and have fun.



### Procedure for administration of the Zero Tolerance Policy

**The West Springfield Park and Recreation Commission has adopted a policy for Zero Tolerance of unsportsmanlike conduct in its Recreational programs. The Commission along with their employees have the responsibility to adhere to and enforce this policy. All employees must read the following guidelines provide.**

It is the responsibility of the official to administer the rules and regulations of this policy in accordance to the procedures outlined below:

**OFFICIAL:** It is the responsibility of the official to immediately implement the penalties set forth in the Code of Conduct up to and including suspensions.

It is also the responsibility of the official to inform the involved party and all of the coaches of the infraction and the minimum penalty that is being instituted. (If a coach is the offender they need not be informed a second time.)

When, in the opinion of the official, rules stated in this policy are violated, the official shall notify, in writing, the Supervisor of Officials and the League Director or President of the nature of the infraction(s) and the minimum penalty(s) within 24 hours of the incident.

Any participant suspended from a game is to immediately leave the field of play or any area where the participant's presence might in any way disrupt the remainder of the activity.

**COACH:** It is the responsibility of the coaches of a contest to notify the League Director, President as well as the Supervisor of Officials, in writing, of all infractions of the Code of Ethics within 24 hours of the infraction. This includes, but is not limited to, infractions brought to the attention of the coaches by the game official or umpire. Any participant suspended from a game is to immediately leave the field of play or any

area where the participant's presence might in any way disrupt the remainder of the activity.

**SUPERVISOR OF OFFICIALS:** It is the responsibility of the Supervisor of Officials to compile the reports submitted by the official and coaches of any incident and forward them to the Recreation Department along with his/her own report on the incident.

It is expected that the Supervisor of Officials will submit these reports of violations of the Code of Ethics within 48 hours of the incident.

**ASSOCIATION DIRECTORS/PRESIDENTS:** The Association is responsible to submit all reports of any incident involving the violation of the Code of Ethics to the Recreation Department within 48 hours of the incident. This is not limited to violations reported by officials.

**PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT:** The Recreation Department will investigate all reported violations of the "Code of Conduct".

Review all reports, interview necessary parties, schedule necessary meetings, assess penalties and refer to Recreation Commission or Town Legal Department when appropriate.

The time frames stated will be strictly adhered to. The participant involved will remain suspended from team activities until the incident has been reviewed and a decision rendered by the Recreation Department. The Recreation Department will not review any incident until it has received reports from officials, coaches, Supervisor of Officials and Association Directors/Presidents.

## **West Springfield Park and Recreation Department's Zero Tolerance Policy**

The West Springfield Park and Recreation Department has agreed that there will be zero tolerance for fans, participants, coaches for misbehavior at all sporting events. This includes but is not limited to: booing, shouting at officials, or arguing any calls. Expressing any negative behavior or comments, threats or obscene gestures to players, coaches or officials is also unacceptable.

Cheering in a positive fashion, for both sides is highly encouraged. Ours is a recreational league with FUN as the primary emphasis. Many officials and coaches are volunteers and we should all appreciate their efforts, and support them, setting good example for the children.

Any fan, participant and coaches who does not behave appropriately, as stated in the Zero Tolerance Policy, will be asked to leave the sporting event according to the following steps:

1. Officials/Park & Recreation Staff will identify violators to the coach, or vice versa.
2. Officials/ Park & Recreation Staff will confer with both coaches, one of whom will then approach the spectator and may give a warning, or ask them to leave. If the spectator is not recognized by either coach, the home coach will speak to him/her.

If the decision is made for the spectator to leave, play will not resume until he/she has left the facility. If he/she refuses to leave, his/her team will forfeit, and the game will be over.

All violations must be reported to the Park and Recreation Department and all reported violations of the policy will be investigated and subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the "Zero Tolerance Policy; that could include, but is not limited to the following:

- Verbal warning by an official, head coach or Recreation Staff person.
- Parental game suspension with written documentation of incident kept on file by WSPRD.
- Game forfeit initiated by the official or coach.
- Parental season suspension.

### Definition of Terms Used in the Zero Tolerance Policy:

**Park and Recreation Department:** Municipal agency charged with planning, conducting and evaluating recreation, leisure and cultural activities for and in the name of the Town.

**Recreation Commission:** Appointed by the Mayor to recommend policies and direct the implementation of said policies.

**Recreation Director:** Administrator, Department Executive Officer. Implements and oversees Commission policies.

**Recreation Supervisor:** Assistant to Director. Full time Recreation employee designated to organize or supervise a wide variety of Department sponsored/co-sponsored activities.

**Associations:** Adult support groups who work together with the Park and Recreation Commission in order to provide wholesome recreation programs for Town residents. W.S. Youth Soccer Association, W.S. Youth Softball Association, W.S. Little League Baseball Association, W.S. Senior Baseball League Association, W.S. Swim Association, W.S. Suburban Football Association.

**Coach:** A person approved by the Park and Recreation Department as a team spokesperson. One who is either a player or non-player.

**Player:** A person who physically participates in the game or is on the roster.

**Spectator:** A person who watches the games for entertainment with no physical involvement.

**Official:** A person on the field or court to administer the official rules.

**Participant:** Any coach, player, spectator, official/staff personnel, or any other person involved in any way with any class, sporting or non-sporting event sponsored or co-sponsored by the Town of West Springfield Park and Recreation Department.

**Participation:** Any involvement in West Springfield Park and Recreation Department's sponsored or co-sponsored activities such as spectating, officiating, playing, coaching, registering for classes, or attending a sporting or non-sporting event.

**Recreation Activities:** Any class or sporting or non-sporting event sponsored by West Springfield Park and Recreation Department.

**Field Supervisor League Director Program Coordinator:** A Town employee, paid or unpaid, in charge of the operation and staff of a scheduled game, match or event.

**Recreation Employee:** A paid or unpaid representative of the Recreation Department providing services to the events, fields, parks and courts.

**Law Enforcement Officer/Emergency Services:** Town of West Springfield Police or Fire Departments, Hampden County Sheriff's Department, Massachusetts State Police, professional hired emergency attendants in the scope of employment or in emergency situations.

1. **NO PARTICIPANT SHALL:** At any time lay a hand upon, shove, strike, or threaten an official, coach, player, or spectator. Officials are required to suspend any player who violates this rule immediately from play and report players to Recreation Department. Such players shall remain suspended for the maximum penalty period or until reinstated by the Recreation Department.

**MINIMUM PENALTY:** Suspension from two league games, placed on probation for the remainder of the season.

**MAXIMUM PENALTY:** Suspension from all recreational activities for one year and placed on probation the following year.

2. **NO PARTICIPANT SHALL:** Refuse to abide by an official's decision. Officials are required to suspend any player violating this rule immediately from further play and report such player to the Recreation Department. Such player shall remain suspended for the maximum penalty period or until reinstated by the Recreation Department.

**MINIMUM PENALTY:** Placed on probation for the remainder of the Season.

**MAXIMUM PENALTY:** Suspension from all recreational activities for one year and placed on probation the following year.

3. **NO PARTICIPANT SHALL:** Use obscene gestures or objectionable demonstrations of dissent concerning an official's decision. The degree of the infraction of this principle of good sportsmanship shall, in the official's judgment, draw the following:

**MINIMUM PENALTY:** Immediate removal from the game.

**MAXIMUM PENALTY:** Suspension from all recreational activities for one year and placed on probation the following year.

4. **NO PARTICIPANT SHALL:** Discuss with an official in any manner the decision reached by an official. The coach or team captain shall be exempt from this rule. The degree of infraction of this principle of good sportsmanship shall, in the official's judgment, draw the following:

**MINIMUM PENALTY:** Warning by the official.

**MAXIMUM PENALTY:** Removal from the game.

5. **NO PARTICIPANT SHALL:** Use unnecessary roughness in the play of a game against an opposing player. Officials are required to suspend a player who violates this rule immediately from further play and report such players to Recreation Department. Such player shall remain suspended for the maximum penalty period or until reinstated by the Park and Recreation Department.

**MINIMUM PENALTY:** Placed on probation for the remainder of the season.

**MAXIMUM PENALTY:** Suspension from all recreational activities for one year and placed on probation the following year.

6. **NO PARTICIPANT SHALL:** Fight, physically attack as an aggressor upon any player, coach, official, or spectator. Officials are required to suspend a player who violates this rule immediately from further play and report the player to the Recreation Department. Such player shall remain suspended for the maximum penalty period or until reinstated by the Park and Recreation Department.

**MINIMUM PENALTY:** Suspension from two league games, placed on probation for the remainder of the season.

**MAXIMUM PENALTY:** Suspension from all town recreational activities for an indefinite period of time. Referred to town attorney for possible criminal complaints.

7. **NO PARTICIPANT SHALL:** Use abusive language or verbally attack another player, coach, official, or spectator. Officials are required to suspend any player who violates this rule immediately from further play and report such player to the Recreation Department. Such player shall remain suspended for the maximum penalty or until reinstated by the Park and Recreation Department.

**MINIMUM PENALTY:** Removal from the game.

**MAXIMUM PENALTY:** Suspension from all recreational activities for one year and placed on probation the following year.

8. **NO PARTICIPANT SHALL:** Appear on the court or field of play under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

**MINIMUM PENALTY:** Suspension from two league games, placed on probation for the remainder of the season.

**MAXIMUM PENALTY:** Suspension from all recreational activities for one year and placed on probation the following year.

9. **NO PARTICIPANT SHALL:** Smoke while in any facility used for town recreational programs or coming off or going on the field of play, or while on the field of play.

**MINIMUM PENALTY:** Warning by the official.

**MAXIMUM PENALTY:** Removal from the game.

10. **NO PARTICIPANT SHALL:** Be cited in violation of the Town of West Springfield's open container or other alcohol/drugs law in town parks or facilities.

**MINIMUM PENALTY:** Suspension from one league game, placed on probation for the remainder of the season.

**MAXIMUM PENALTY:** Suspension from all town events and/or recreational activities for one year and probation the following year.

11. **NO PARTICIPANT SHALL:** Participate in any bullying activity. Bullying is the act of one or more individuals intimidating one or more persons through verbal, physical, mental, written interactions or by electronic means.

**MINIMUM PENALTY:** Suspension for two league games.

**MAXIMUM PENALTY:** Suspension from all Recreational Activities for one year.

12. **NO PARTICIPANT SHALL:** Be in violation of any three of the above conduct rules. Three violations in any class, sporting or non-sporting event sponsored or co-sponsored by the Town of West Springfield Recreation Department will result in the following:

**MINIMUM PENALTY:** Suspension from any West Springfield Recreation sponsored/so-sponsored events or activities for one full year and two years probation.

**MAXIMUM PENALTY:** Suspension from any Town of West Springfield Recreation sponsored/co-sponsored events or activities for indefinite period of time.

**PROBATION:** Any participant who violates any of the above conduct rules while on probation shall be subject to suspension for one to five years. In any instance where there is a difference in these stated minimum penalties and a league or association's minimum penalties, the more stringent of the two would take precedent.