

## **Recreation League Coaches Background Screening Policy**

### **PURPOSE**

It is the intent of this policy to establish certain guidelines wherein the Botetourt County Department of Parks and Recreation (hereinafter referred to as "Parks and Recreation Department") and its affiliated booster clubs can seek to protect our children by investigating the background of volunteers who will be coaching children involved in athletic programs approved by the Parks and Recreation Department.

### **GENERAL**

- A. All booster clubs shall ensure that all participants 18 years of age or younger shall have at least one (1) approved coach or assistant coach (hereinafter collectively referred to as "Coach") present at each athletic activity, including practices and games. A Coach becomes approved once the process described in this policy is completed.
- B. Any person who has been found guilty, pled guilty; or pled no contest, regardless of adjudication, or has a pending charge pertaining to, any of the disqualifying offenses listed in this policy will be immediately disqualified from coaching (either as a head coach or an assistant coach) in any athletic program approved by the Parks and Recreation Department. The Parks and Recreation Department also reserves the right to disqualify a person for any crime that would be considered a potential risk to children and/or vulnerable populations. A Coach who willfully fails to comply with this background screening policy shall be automatically disqualified.
- C. This policy will apply to all youth sports coaches, both head and assistant, participating in sanctioned Botetourt County recreational athletic leagues. If there is any doubt as to which coaches should be screened, the general rule is anyone who would potentially have unsupervised access to children on the team. Each Coach will have his or her background checked every 36 months for as long as he or she continues coaching.

### **SCREENING PROCESS**

1. The Parks and Recreation Department will provide each booster club's sport coordinator with a Volunteer in Youth Sports Consent/Release Form for each head coach and assistant coach(s) for each team. Sport coordinators will distribute these to all prospective coaches and assistant coaches to be completed and returned to the sport coordinator for the booster club or the Parks and Recreation Department.
2. The Parks and Recreation Department Athletics Staff will establish deadlines to submit the Volunteer in Youth Sports Consent/Release Forms to the Parks and Recreation Department. These deadlines will be at least two weeks prior to the start of practices for each sport. This will give the Parks and Recreation Department time to compile the forms, process the forms, and have the background checks conducted.



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3. The third party contractor conducting the checks will cross-reference the screening results with the disqualifying crimes listed in this policy. A pass/fail grade will then be emailed to the Parks and Recreation department based on the cross-reference. A pass grade for any Coach that has zero disqualifying crime matches, a fail grade for any Coach that has one or more disqualifying crime matches. All information pertaining to the background check will remain with the third party contractor, subject to the applicable laws requiring disclosure. The Parks and Recreation Department will not be informed of the results of any background check; rather, the Parks and Recreation Department will only be issued a pass/fail grade for each Coach.
4. If the third party contractor reports any "fail" grades to the Parks and Recreation Department, the Department shall notify the Coach by certified mail that he is disqualified and may notify the Coach's booster club by first-class mail, or by telephone, or by both forms of notification, that the Coach is disqualified. Upon request, the Coach will receive a copy of the background check from the third party contractor.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

To help ensure confidentiality, booster club presidents, sport coordinators of a booster club, and the Parks and Recreation Department should not be notified of a Coach's criminal history. The criminal background reports shall be kept in a secure location by the third party contractor for a period as required by applicable law.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

Booster clubs play just as important a role in this screening program as does the Parks and Recreation Department. It is important for the integrity of the background screening program that all booster club presidents and sport coordinator verify that (1) only those persons who are screened and who are not disqualified coach or assist in the coaching of the young people in the athletic programs approved by the Parks and Recreation Department, and (2) that such persons are active with only the team or teams identified on the Volunteer Youth Sports Consent/Release Form pertaining to that person.



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## **APPEALS PROCESS**

If a Coach's background check includes a charge set forth on the list of disqualifiers below, the Parks and Recreation Department shall immediately disqualify a person from volunteering as a Coach. There shall be no appeal of a decision to disqualify a Coach, if the Coach's relevant criminal history is accurate; all decisions are final.

If a Coach wishes to dispute the content of the profile report, the Coach shall contact the third party responsible for conducting the background check by calling the telephone number listed on the report. The Coach is responsible for providing any or all documentation to support his or her claim.

## **DISQUALIFYING CRIMES**

If a Coach (1) has been convicted of, (2) has a charge pending against him or her in which it is alleged that he or she has committed any of the following crimes, or (3) has a record of a conviction of an equivalent offense in another state, the Coach will be disqualified from volunteering for a coaching or assistant coaching position with any athletic team in any athletic program approved by the Parks and Recreation Department.



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### **All Sex Offenses**

Examples include, but are not limited to: child molestation, rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sodomy, prostitution, solicitation, indecent exposure, etc.

### **All Felony Violence Offenses**

Examples include, but are not limited to: murder, manslaughter, aggravated assault, kidnapping, robbery, aggravated burglary, etc.

### **All Felony offenses other than violence or sex within the past ten (10) years.**

Examples include, but are not limited to: drug offenses, theft, embezzlement, fraud, child endangerment, etc.

### **All Misdemeanor Violence offenses within the past seven (7) years.**

Examples include, but are not limited to: simple assault, battery, domestic violence, hit and run, etc.

### **Two Misdemeanor Alcohol offenses within the past five (5) years or multiple offenses in the past ten (10) years.**

Examples include, but are not limited to: driving under the influence, drunk and disorderly, public intoxication, etc.

### **All Misdemeanor Drug offenses within the past five (5) years or multiple offenses in the past ten (10) years.**

Examples include, but are not limited to: simple drug possession, possession of drug paraphernalia, etc.

### **Any other misdemeanor within the past five (5) years that would be considered a potential danger to children or is directly related to the functions of that coach.**

Examples include, but are not limited to: contributing to the delinquency of a minor, providing alcohol to a minor, etc.

## **WHY THESE CRIMES?**

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has reviewed the resources of the National Association of Professional Background Screeners and sought the counsel of recognized background screening experts to develop a set of Recommended Guidelines for Volunteer Background Screening in park and recreation settings. These guidelines were produced as a result of this review.



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## **SUMMARY CHECKLIST**

- Parks and Recreation Department will provide Background Screening Policy and Volunteer Consent/Release forms to each sport coordinator in a booster club.
- Sport coordinator gives to the coach Background Screening Policy and Volunteer Consent/Release form.
- Coach retains policy for his or her records, completes form and returns it to sport coordinator or Parks and Recreation.
- Sport coordinator returns forms to Parks and Recreation.
- Parks and Recreation Department sends forms to third party contractor to perform background checks.
- Third party contractor cross-references background check with disqualifying crimes listed in this policy and sends a pass/fail email to Parks and Recreation based on this cross-reference.
- Parks and Recreation Department notifies Coach and Coach's booster club of the disqualification.