



## Youth Athletics Background Screening and Credentialing Policy

### Purpose

It is the intent of this policy to establish certain guidelines wherein the County of Botetourt Department of Parks and Recreation (hereinafter referred to as “the Department”) and its affiliated recreation associations protect the children of Botetourt County conducting conviction checks on volunteers who will be coaching in sanctioned athletic programs to ensure individuals supervising youth sport participants meet the recommended criteria established by the National Recreation and Park Association for youth sport volunteers.

### General Guidelines

All recreation sponsored youth coaches must undergo a criminal history background screening annually to verify their eligibility to coach in a program sponsored by the Department. The Department will provide the following complimentary screenings per sanctioned youth sport team:

- Baseball/Softball - 3 (Three)
- Basketball - 2 (Two)
- Cheer- 3 (Three)
- Football - 4 (Four)
- Soccer - 2 (Two)

Any person who has **been convicted of or has a pending charge** pertaining to any of the disqualifying offenses listed in this policy will be immediately disqualified from coaching (either head or assistant) in any sanctioned athletic program approved by the Department. A coach who willfully fails to comply with this background screening shall be automatically disqualified.

Everyone who has been deemed eligible to coach will be provided a credential they must carry with them at all team activities including games and practices. Only coaches who have their credential, players and authorized game personnel will be permitted on the field, bench, sideline or in the dugout during a game or practice. Botetourt County staff and Booster Club supervisors will routinely check for compliance with this rule. Non credential carrying individuals found on the field, bench, sideline or in the dugout will be removed, regardless of if they have successfully completed the screening program. Coaches will be given one (1) “warning”. If a coach continues to be noncompliant with the credential policy after their warning, they are subject to face noncompliance with county policy face a one (1) game suspension.

If there is no certified/background coach available, the team is ineligible to participate in their scheduled game.

Meeting the background screening qualifications does not guarantee an individual will be selected to coach.

### **Screening Process**

Department staff and Booster Clubs will direct individuals who want to coach to the Background Investigation Bureau, LLC (BIB) website, which serves as the Department's third-party background check company.

Volunteers will fill out the form provided on the website. After the background check is performed, a pass or fail result will be forwarded to Parks and Recreation staff. Staff will notify the Booster Clubs of the pass/fail results of the background screening for their coaches. When an applicant fails, BIB shall notify the applicant by mail that he or she is disqualified.

### **Confidentiality**

The Department respects the privacy of prospective volunteers. Information received during a volunteer's screening process will not be disclosed outside of the Department and will only be shared within the Department on a "need to know" basis.

### **Accountability**

Botetourt County staff will routinely check for compliance with the screening policy by verifying coaches are properly displaying their coaching credentials. Non credential carrying individuals found on the field, bench, sideline or in the dugout will be removed, regardless of if they have successfully completed the screening program.

Booster Clubs play a vital role in the screening program as does the Department. It is important for the integrity of the screening program that all recreation club presidents and personnel verify that only those persons who are successfully screened and credentialed by the Department be allowed to coach.

### **Disqualification**

Volunteers will be disqualified from coaching if any of the following statements are true:

- The individual has been convicted of an offense listed in the disqualification criteria below.
- The individual has a charge pending against him or her in which it is alleged that he/she has committed one of the offenses outlined below.
- The individual has a record of a conviction of an offense in another state equivalent to the offenses outlined below.



## Disqualification Criteria as recommended by the National Recreation and Park Association

### SEX OFFENSES

- **All Sex Offenses** – Regardless of the amount of time since offense.  
*Examples include child molestation, rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sodomy, prostitution, solicitation, indecent exposure, etc.*

### FELONIES

- **All Felony Violence** – Regardless of the amount of time since offense.  
*Examples include murder, manslaughter, aggravated assault, kidnapping, robbery, aggravated Burglary, etc.*
- **All Felony Offenses** other than **violence** or **sex** within ten (10) years.  
*Examples include drug offenses, theft, embezzlement, fraud, child endangerment, etc.*

### MISDEMEANORS

- **All misdemeanor violence** offenses within the past seven (7) years  
*Examples include simple assault, battery, domestic violence, hit and run, etc.*
- **All misdemeanor drug and alcohol offenses** within the past five (5) years or multiple offenses in the past ten (10) years.  
*Examples include driving under the influence, simple drug possession, drunk and disorderly, public intoxication, possession of drug paraphernalia, etc.*
- **Any other misdemeanor** within five (5) years that would be considered a potential danger to children or is directly related to the functions of that volunteer.  
*Examples include contributing to the delinquency of a minor, providing alcohol to a minor etc.*

### **WHY THESE CRIMES?**

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) 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.

### **Appeals Process**

If a volunteer's background check includes a charge set forth on the list of disqualifiers above, 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.

