

Youth Protection

Human Resources Policy- #127

Policy:

Davidson County understands the importance of protecting youth in the community and in our programs and therefore wishes to provide a safe and secure environment. The County has adopted this policy in order to provide an environment that will protect youth from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior. All adults working with youth under the age of 18 at any County sponsored events are expected to read/understand, agree to, and abide by this policy.

Definition

Staff – all employees, full and part-time, and program volunteers that have any contact with youth or access to facilities that have been approved by the County to work with youth members at specific events.

Youth – individuals under the age of 18.

Screening

All County staff will be screened in accordance with this policy. Screening will include at least the following:

Written Application

All potential staff must complete and sign a written application form that includes a Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) compliant release allowing the County to conduct a background information search. The application will request basic information from the applicant and will inquire into previous experience with children, reference and employment information, as well as disclosure of any previous criminal convictions. The application form will be maintained in a personnel file in the Human Resources Department.

Youth Protection

Personal Interview

A personal interview will be conducted with the applicant by management staff to discuss the position and the applicant's talents, qualifications and abilities. Multiple and/or group interviews may be conducted as appropriate.

Reference Checks

All applicants must provide at least three (3) references. References may be personal or professional and be presented in written form including email addresses. All references will be confirmed by management staff and documented in the applicant's personnel file. At least one reference will be from a personal contact if available.

Criminal Background Check

Criminal background checks will be conducted for all potential staff after they've completed an application. The background check will include a Criminal Background check, a sex offender registry search, and motor vehicle record check. Background checks will comply with applicable regulations governing programs. Background checks will be performed at least every two years on volunteers.

Disqualifications

The County may deny an individual the right to work in youth athletics based on the following:

- Felony convictions within the last fifteen (15) years
- Misdemeanor convictions within the last five (5) years
- Any narcotic drug convictions within the last five (5) years
- Two or more alcohol related convictions within the last five (5) years
- Any child abuse or domestic violence convictions or expunction of such conviction.
- Any conviction against the welfare of a juvenile or expunction of such conviction.
- Any sex or sexual misconduct convictions or expunction of such conviction.

Youth Protection

- Aberrant behavior that presents a potential danger to self and others

Failure to disclose a criminal conviction on the application form may also terminate an individual's application.

Training and Education

All adults (coaches, support volunteers and parents) working with youth under the age of 18 at any Davidson County sponsored events will receive an orientation that includes:

- Review and receipt of the County Code of Conduct; an original signed copy will be kept in the individual's personnel file.
- Review of policies related to:
 - transportation,
 - medications,
 - use of alcoholic beverages and tobacco,
 - prevention and reporting of child abuse, and
 - emergency procedures

All parents and coaches will be required to sign a form acknowledging that they attended and participated in the orientation session. Records of attendance must be taken for all orientation and training sessions.

Supervision

Supervision of youth, programs, facilities and staff will be designed to protect youth and staff at all times. Practices to ensure a safe and caring environment will include:

- Transportation: Staff transporting youth in a vehicle should do so with a second adult in the vehicle. If a second adult is not available the "rule of threes" is recommended: at least three people in the car at all times. All transportation decisions should be made in accordance with local laws and County policies.

Youth Protection

- Supervision: Staff members will never be alone with an individual youth where they are not observable by others.
- Medications: Staff is prohibited from administering prescription and nonprescription medications to youth at events.
- Use of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco: Use of alcoholic beverages and tobacco is prohibited at events.
- Reporting: If a staff member observes troubling behavior involving a youth at an event or becomes aware of a situation that is illegal or potentially unsafe for a young person at an event, he or she must immediately contact the appropriate personnel at the event as well as provide notification to law enforcement personnel as appropriate. If staff becomes aware of the troubling behavior after the event, he or she must immediately contact the appropriate personnel at the event as well as provide notification to law enforcement personnel as appropriate. All local, state, provincial and federal laws regarding reporting must be followed.
- Personal Information: All documents bearing personal information of any youth participating in an event, including registration forms, medical information forms, permission to treat forms, etc. should be treated as confidential. Processes that protect this information must be created, including minimizing the number of people who have access to any such documents. The documents shall be maintained a minimum of three years or longer as may be required by local and state laws and regulations. After the maintenance period has expired, the documents shall be destroyed in a way that maintains confidentiality, such as shredding.
- Emergency and medical procedures: A qualified physician or certified athletic trainer should be available in person or by phone at every practice or competition. Staff will be supplied with local emergency medical responder contact information or will have access to 911 services at each practice or competition.

Youth Protection

- Contact with Youth: Staff will not initiate contact with or accept supervisory responsibility for youth outside of County programs and activities, including baby-sitting or private instructions. Staff with prior or family relationships to youth may be relieved of this restriction with prior written parental approval. Staff will not communicate with youth outside of programs via written, electronic or other means without written parental approval.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees and program volunteers that have any contact with youth or access to facilities that have been approved by the County to work with youth members at specific events.

Document Change Record

Revision	Description
6-27-2023	New Policy