



NORTH CARROLL RECREATION COUNCIL
IN COOPERATION WITH CARROLL COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION & PARKS
ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY & GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES
June 1, 2016

Zero Tolerance Policy on Abusive Behavior

Purpose of the Policy

This policy is being implemented to eliminate abuse of NCRC coaches, referees/umpires, or volunteers by adult spectators; both physical and verbal, and to discourage public dissent of same. The purpose is to make clear that verbal abuse or overtly unjustified or unproven negative criticism of NCRC coaches, referees/umpires, or volunteers is as unacceptable as verbal abuse or physical altercation and to adopt basic standard sanctions for improper conduct. Even though public dissent may not be considered abuse it is not in keeping with the principles of a positive participation environment for our youth in teaching good sportsmanship and therefore will not be tolerated.

This policy is not intended to imply that all NCRC representatives, coaches, referees/umpires, or volunteers are always right and the adult spectator is always wrong. However, we must remember that the focus of the service we bring forward for the community is focused on providing a fun and rewarding experience for our youth participants.

There are appropriate avenues for spectators to share concerns about the quality of coaching, officiating, or volunteerism. Each NCRC Program has a Program Coordinator in charge and will hear any constructive comments on coaches, referees/umpires, or volunteers. As well, the NCRC has an Executive Board and Grievance Committee that have the responsibility to objectively hear and consider any constructive criticism.

The Zero Tolerance Policy on Abuse Behavior highlights the procedures we hope our adult spectators follow. More importantly, abuse or dissent of youth referees will be held to a more severe standard.

Guidelines for disciplinary action range from a one-week suspension for verbal abuse to expulsion from participation with any NCRC Program for egregious offenses.

North Carroll Recreation Council
P.O. Box 546 Manchester Maryland 21102
www.NorthCarrollRec.org

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Policy procedural details are outlined below.

Grievance Procedures

If an Adult Spectator has an issue, please follow the simple steps below to convey or formally file your grievance with the NCRC or CCRP.

1. **If the issue is with the Referee/Umpire**, please contact your coach. The coach has the ability to speak with a referee/umpire after a game and sometimes at halftime. Some league rules specifically state that a referee/umpires calls during a game cannot be protested, period. Some even charge money for a protest to be filed.
2. **If the issue is with the Coach/Volunteer**, please try and communicate with the coach/volunteer. If that is not feasible, contact the Program Coordinator. The NCRC Executive Board and Grievance Committee would prefer and hope that as adults most concerns or issues can be worked out prior to escalation.
3. **If the issue is with the Program Coordinator**, please try and communicate with the Program Coordinator. If that is not feasible, contact any NCRC Executive Board Member or the NCRC Grievance Committee. To contact the NCRC Grievance Committee, email: <grievance@northcarrollrec.org>. If you file a formal grievance, please be sure to have information that supports the justification for the grievance filing. In all cases the NCRC Grievance Committee will hear both the filing party and the accused.
4. **If the issue is with the NCRC**, please try and communicate with any of the NCRC Executive Board Members. If that is not feasible, contact the CCRP. To contact the CCRP, email ccrec@ccg.carr.org or call 410-386-2103.
5. **All NCRC Program contact email addresses can found on the NCRC website (www.northcarrollrec.org).**
6. Please **DO NOT**: step on to any playing field before, during, or after a game/practice to confront any coach, referee/umpire, or volunteer. Simply follow the procedures above. Your voice will be heard, but remember all resolution may not be in your favor.
7. Please **REMEMBER** that the NCRC has valid and legal permits for all its events. With that said, if an NCRC Volunteer feels physically threatened they have been instructed, if necessary, to call the police.

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Guidelines for Disciplinary Action:

1. Verbal abuse of a coach, referee/umpire, or volunteer = 1-game/week suspension; whichever is more.
2. Extreme/Serious verbal abuse of a coach, referee/umpire, or volunteer (e.g. using foul/profane language) = 2-game/week or more suspension; whichever is more.
3. Stepping onto the field or other threat to a referee/umpire or volunteer (by word or action) = 3 or more game/week suspension; whichever is more.
4. Egregious offenses (e.g. multiple abusive situations, physical contact with a coach/referee/umpire/volunteer, or another person, or exceptional misbehavior/harassment/unwarranted character assassination (including social media) directed toward a coach/referee/umpire/volunteer/team/program shall result in immediate removal from the NCRC program via an extended suspension (6-months or more), termination of volunteerism, exclusion of your family as a participant in any NCRC Program until further notice. This also constitutes any egregious negative action viewed as detrimental to the positive function of the NCRC or any of its programs.
5. If necessary local law enforcement will be called in for assistance. The incident will be reported to Carroll County Government. An egregious offense violates the fundamental mission of youth activities and sports and requires strong action.

Of course, the NCRC hopes it never has to take any disciplinary action toward any of its Volunteers or Adult Spectators. The NCRC is a volunteer organization. NCRC volunteers did not signed-up to support our community and service its recreational activity requirements. NCRC volunteers did not sign-up to referee unacceptable adult behavior and be abused. Please read information below.

- **When a decision is made to no longer accept the gift of volunteer services from an individual, there is no obligation from NCRC to provide cause per the direction of the CCRP because volunteering is a privilege, not a right.**
- **If adults affiliated with an NCRC program cannot consistently govern themselves in a reasonably positive manner that promotes a positive fun participation environment for our community, the NCRC Executive Board has a responsibility to take action to remove all negative parties and even shutdown the offending team and/or program as a whole.**

This policy applies primarily to the discipline of adult spectators, coaches and volunteers. Youth violations may follow these tenants, but will be discussed as a council towards an agreeable resolution.

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