



# NEW JERSEY DARE DEVILS

Team Policies  
2019-2020

New Jersey Dare Devils Team Policies

The New Jersey Dare Devils Hockey Program is committed to creating welcoming environments for all. In an effort to ensure the comfort and safety of everyone involved, the following policies have been installed for the 2019-2020 season.

Parents, players (ages 18+), and coaches (all ages) are required to read each policy and sign where prompted. If players are under the age of 18, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to make sure the policies are communicated to and understood by the players. Please bring this signed packet to the Parent Meeting on September 28, 2019 during practice.

Please fill out:

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Player(s) name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Coach(es) name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## CONTENT POLICY

Your presence at New Jersey Dare Devils practices, games, and events means you automatically give consent to being in content and media created for use by the New Jersey Dare Devils. If you are expressly against the potential of being in any photo, video, or sound clip, please speak with one of the executive board members. Your disagreement with this may result in asking you to observe practices, games, and events from less-visible areas.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I understand, to the best of my ability, the information outlined in the **Content Policy** above.

Parent/Guardian Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Player Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Coach Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## SOCIAL MEDIA AND FRIENDSHIP POLICY

We understand that players, coaches (both junior and senior), and family members may have social media profiles and accounts, or have access to these types of accounts. Based on past events, rules are being instated to clarify the relationship and responsibility of players, coaches, and family members on social media in relation to the New Jersey Dare Devils (“Organization”).

- 1) No player, coach, or family member should be posting questionable or illegal content on social media, especially when wearing New Jersey Dare Devils branded gear, when promoting anything for the Organization, or when attending a New Jersey Dare Devils-related event.
- 2) No player, coach, or family member should create content or post content when in locker rooms.
- 3) If a player, coach, or family member initiates connection via social media to another player, coach, or family member, the receiver of the invitation has the right to accept or decline the invitation. No party should feel obligated to befriend another party on any social media site.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I understand, to the best of my ability, the information outlined in the **Social Media and Friendship Policy** above.

Parent/Guardian Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Player Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Coach Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## PHONE NUMBER POLICY

We understand that players, coaches (both junior and senior), and family members have access to cell phones. The following rules are being instated to clarify the relationship and responsibility of the players, coaches, and family members regarding usage and exchanging of personal phone numbers.

- 1) Should a player, coach, or family member need to contact a member of the executive board, please reach out via email to **Andy Piccirillo**, Team Manager, at **teammanager@njdaredevils.net**.
- 2) No party should feel obligated to give their personal phone number or information to another party.
- 3) No party should share the personal phone number or information of another party with anyone without the party in question's consent.
- 4) All personal and team-related matters should be submitted to the executive board via email. The information for these members can be found above in part 1 of this section.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I understand, to the best of my ability, the information outlined in the **Phone Number Policy** above.

Parent/Guardian Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Player Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Coach Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## PARENT-COACH POLICY

For Parents:

Our coaches are trained to work with each player's specific needs in order to teach them the game of ice hockey and related skills including, but not limited to: teamwork, compromise, honesty, sportsmanship, and respect. By allowing your child(ren) to participate in the New Jersey Dare Devils special hockey program, you are giving the coaches your permission to teach your child(ren) these skills in the ways they see fit. Unless you presume your child(ren) are being mistreated or the coaches do not properly understand your child(ren)'s needs, you agree to allowing coaches to handle on-ice learning.

If you have any questions or concerns about the coach(es) working with your child(ren), please bring your matters to Coach Steve Ritter, Coach Myles Mitchell, or Coach Corinne Eckert.

For Coaches:

By signing this, you as a coach understand that each child has different needs and abilities, and that not one approach to coaching will work on every participant. As a coach, you must adapt your teaching styles to fit the needs of the player. Should a parent address specific needs for their child with you and you are not comfortable with this responsibility, see Coach Steve Ritter, Coach Myles Mitchell, or Coach Corinne Eckert to be reassigned.

Should a player disrespect you or make you feel uncomfortable, please bring your matters to Coach Steve Ritter, Coach Myles Mitchell, or Coach Corinne Eckert.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I understand, to the best of my ability, the information outlined in the **Parent-Coach Policy** above.

Parent/Guardian Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Player Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Coach Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## PERSONAL INTERACTION POLICY

Our players, coaches, and family members span all ages and genders. To protect all parties' interests, a personal interaction rule is being instated. Starting September 7, 2019, all hugs or forms of personal touch outside of high-fives must be asked for and agreed to before occurring. To be clear: the asking party must ask, "Can I have a hug" to the receiving party, and the receiving party must respond, "yes" in order for a hug to take place. If the receiving party does not agree to being hugged, the receiving party must respond, "no". No party should feel obligated to hug or be personally touched by another party.

If unconsented or unwanted hugging or touching occurs, the receiving party must:

- 1) Voice their discontent or non-consent to the giving party; and,
- 2) If matters are deemed serious or very uncomfortable by the receiving party, the receiving party must report the incident to a coach or executive board member.

While consent is a serious topic, this rule is an easy way to teach consent and boundaries to all parties in ways everyone understands. We want to ensure the comfort of everyone taking part in the Organization.

To preserve team spirit, high fives may be given without explicit asking and consent. This is to promote support and sportsmanship both on and off the ice.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I understand, to the best of my ability, the information outlined in the **Personal Interaction Policy** above.

Parent/Guardian Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Player Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Coach Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## LOCKER ROOM AND CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

What makes Special Hockey so special is the diversity of players, skills and abilities. We adapt to welcome each individual with a shared love for the sport. From Equipment to the Locker Room, we must consider the many needs of our Association's diversity. We recognize that the proposed changes are significant and will cause both confusion and a fair bit of inconvenience.

On February 14, 2018, the "Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017" was signed into law and became effective immediately. We are asking that all members be understanding and patient as we navigate new Best Practices to comply with the "Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017".

Primarily, these Best Practices shall:

- Provide a mechanism that allows a complainant to easily report child abuse within 24 hours.
  - An individual who is required, but fails, to report suspected child sexual abuse is subject to criminal penalties.
- Provide procedures which prevent emotional, physical, and child abuse of athletes.
- Provide reasonable procedures to limit one-on-one interactions between a minor or individual with special needs and any non-related adult.
  - Provide reasonable accommodation to limit invasion of privacy between adult individuals with special needs and non-related adults.
  - Provide reasonable accommodation for family members to assist their respective player in properly dressing with appropriate and safe gear.
- Provide procedures to prohibit retaliation.
  - Whistle Blower Policy
- Include oversight procedures, including:
  - Audits to ensure the policies and procedures are followed correctly.
  - Offering and providing consistent training to adult members who are in contact with athletes.
    - Noting in Special Hockey, beyond the coaching and volunteers, consideration must be made for the literacy and cognitive abilities of individuals and families who participate.
  - A mechanism to share reports of suspected child abuse with appropriate authorities.

### **American Special Hockey Association Locker Room Policy**

In addition to the development of our hockey players and enjoyment of the sport of hockey, the safety and protection of our participants is central to the American Special Hockey Association's goals. The American Special Hockey Association requests that all members respect this policy as a means to help protect its participants from physical abuse, sexual abuse and other types of misconduct, including emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing.

To help prevent abuse or misconduct from occurring in our locker rooms, the New Jersey Dare Devils has adopted the following locker room policy. This policy is designed to maintain personal privacy as well as to reduce the risk of misconduct in locker rooms.

There are a number of locker rooms available for program use. Some teams in our program may also occasionally or regularly travel to play games at other arenas, and those locker rooms, restrooms and shower facilities will vary from location to location. We expect that all team and event organizers will attempt to provide information on the locker room facilities in advance of games/activities. When participating in arenas for which you are unfamiliar, we expect that parents/team representatives plan to have extra time and some flexibility in making arrangements for their child/individual to dress and undress.

### **Locker Room Monitoring**

American Special Hockey Association has predictable and limited use of locker rooms and changing areas (e.g., generally 30-45 minutes before and following practices and games). This allows for direct and regular monitoring of locker room areas. While constant monitoring inside of locker rooms and changing areas might be the most effective way to prevent problems, we understand that this would likely make some players uncomfortable and may even place our staff at risk for unwarranted suspicion.

American Special Hockey Association expects that team/event organizer staff will conduct a sweep of the locker rooms and changing areas before players arrive, and if the coaches are not inside the locker rooms, either a coach or voluntary locker room monitors (each of which has been screened) will be posted directly outside of the locker rooms and changing areas during periods of use, and leave the doors open only when adequate privacy is still possible, so that only participants (coaches and players), approved team personnel and family members are permitted in the locker room. Team personnel will also secure the locker room appropriately during times when the team is on the ice.

### **Parents in Locker Rooms**

We discourage parents from entering locker rooms unless it is *truly* necessary. If a player needs assistance with his or her uniform or gear, if the player is or may be injured, or a if player's disability warrants assistance, then we ask that parents/guardians let the coach know beforehand that he or she will be helping the player. The coach may in his or her discretion prohibit parents from a locker room. To ensure compliance and privacy protection for independent individuals, the coach shall (as needed):

1. Require that all adults entering the dressing room have verified documentation of an accepted background check and sexual abuse training.
2. Determine the need for a "Family Dressing Area" (Similar to a Family Bathroom).
3. Implement a "Skate Tying Area" outside of the dressing room (often a primary reason for parental/guardian support).

We encourage parents to teach players how to get dressed so that players will learn as quickly as possible how to get dressed independently. In circumstances where parents are permitted in the locker room, coaches are permitted to ask that the parents leave for a short time before the game and for a short time after the game/activity so that the coaches may address the players.

### **Mixed Gender and Mixed Needs Teams/Organizations**

American Special Hockey Association consists of both male and female players. It is important that the privacy rights of all of our players are given consideration and that appropriate arrangements are made. Deliberately exposing a special hockey player or minor to inappropriate observation or nudity is a noted violation of guidelines. If a player requires privacy for any reason, it is expected that the parent/guardian will make arrangements in advance to reduce the risk of any unwarranted suspicion and protect the privacy of the player.

Where possible, American Special Hockey Association will have the male and female players dress/undress in separate locker rooms. This extends to individuals who require assistance from their parent/guardian to dress them. After dressing, the team can convene in a single locker room before the game or team meeting. Once the game or practice is finished, the players may come to one locker room for a team meeting and then proceed to their separate locker rooms to undress, if available.

If separate locker rooms are not available, then the players will take turns using the locker room to change. We understand that these arrangements may require that players arrive earlier or leave later to dress, but believe that this is the most reasonable way to accommodate and respect all of our players.

### **Cell Phones and Other Mobile Recording Devices**

Cell phones and other mobile devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras, are not permitted to be used in the locker rooms. If phones or other mobile devices must be used, they should be taken outside of the locker room.

### **Prohibited Conduct and Reporting**

American Special Hockey Association prohibits all types of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing. Participants, employees or volunteers in the American Special Hockey Association may be subject to disciplinary action for violation of these locker room policies or for engaging in any misconduct or abuse that violates the policies. Reports of any actual or suspected violations can be directed by email to the appropriate authorities in your local area, USA Hockey at [SafeSport@usahockey.org](mailto:SafeSport@usahockey.org) and the American Special Hockey Association.

## Abuse / Molestation Risk Management Program

### A. Criminal Background Check on All Staff with Access to Youth

All administrators and staff with access to youth/eligible individuals including directors, officers, coaches, assistant coaches, managers etc. should have their backgrounds checked for acceptability prior to initial assignment of duties. Thereafter, a subsequent background check should be run every two year(s).

The Board shall appoint a Conduct Official each season. *Note: the conduct official can be the Risk Management Officer (RMO) or any other responsible administrator capable of protecting the confidentiality of information and is not prone to gossip.* The RMO responsible for implementing, monitoring, taking corrective action, disqualifying unfit candidates, and working with third party background check vendors on all issues related to our criminal background check program. The Conduct Official should maintain the confidentiality of all information to protect against possible claims of slander or libel. The Conduct Official should work with third party vendors for assistance in interpreting background check results and to protect against possible claims under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, First Offender Act, and all other state and federal laws protecting those who undergo criminal background checks.

### B. Policies to Protect Against Misconduct

The following policies should be communicated to all paid and volunteer staff:

- All forms of abuse including sexual, physical, emotional, harassment, bullying, and hazing are prohibited.
- Prohibited sexual abuse physical acts include genital contact whether or not either party is clothed; fondling of a participant's breast or buttocks; sexual penetration; sexual assault, exchange of a reward in sport for sexual favors; lingering or repeated embrace that goes beyond acceptable physical touch; tickling, wrestling, or massage; and continued physical contact that makes a participant uncomfortable.
- Prohibited sexual abuse verbal acts include making sexually oriented comments, jokes and innuendo; staff member discussing his or her sex life with participant; asking about a participant's sex life; requesting or sending a nude or partial dress photo; exposing participants to pornographic material; voyeurism; and sexting with a participant.
- Any type of grooming behavior is prohibited.
- Prohibited forms of physical abuse include punching, beating, biting, striking, choking, slapping, or intentionally hitting a participant with objects or sports equipment; providing alcohol to a participant under legal drinking age; providing illegal drugs or non prescribed medications to any participant; encouraging or permitting a participant to return to play after injury or sickness prematurely without clearance of a medical professional; prescribing dieting or other weight control methods for humiliation purposes; isolating a participant in a confined space; forcing participant to assume a painful stance or position for no athletic purpose; withholding, or denying adequate hydration, nutrition medical attention, or sleep.

- Prohibited emotional abuse includes a pattern of verbally attacking a participant personally such as calling them worthless, fat or disgusting; physically aggressive behaviors such as throwing or hitting objects; and ignoring a participant for extended periods of time or excluding them from practice.
- Bullying includes an intentional, persistent, or repeated pattern of committing or willfully tolerating (e.g., staff not preventing) physical, nonphysical, or cyber bullying behaviors that are intended to cause fear, humiliation, physical harm in an attempt to socially exclude, diminish, or isolate another person emotionally, physically, or sexually. It is often not the staff, but instead, other participants who are the perpetrators of bullying. However, it is a violation if the staff member knows or should have known of the bullying behavior but takes no action to intervene on behalf of the targeted participants.
- Prohibited hazing includes any contact which is intimidating, humiliating, offensive or physically harmful. Hazing typically is an activity that serves as a condition for joining a team of being socially accepted by team members.
- Two deep leadership is required where two adults (e.g., any combination of staff or parents) should be present at all times so that a minor participant can't be isolated with a single unrelated adult, except in the case of an emergency.
- All electronic communications including email, texting, social media, etc. between the staff member and a minor participant should be limited strictly to the legitimate activities of the organization.
- Any overnight travel exposure should prohibit adults spending the night in the same room as an unrelated minor participant; require grouping of participants of the same sex and age group in rooms; and provide adequate oversight with a same-sex chaperone for each group.
- Take off/pick up of athletes by staff should be strongly discouraged because of the difficulty in limiting one-on-one contact.

### C. Recognizing Grooming

Grooming is the process of which sexual predators pave the way for sexual abuse by gradually gaining the trust of and conditioning of minors, parents, and administrators. The steps in the grooming process are as follows:

- Identify a vulnerable child whose needs are not being met such as lack of attention by parents, lack of spending money, etc.
- Fill the missing needs of the child by providing attention, transportation, help with homework, special favors, confiding in secrets, spending money, gifts, etc. to create a "special bond".
- Gain trust of family by spending disproportionate amount of time with them.
- Isolate the victim to create one on one opportunities.
- Gradually use boundary invasions that start off with inappropriate electronic communications and photo sharing, tickling, wrestling, massages, alcohol, drugs, pornography, etc. that lead to nudity and sexual activity.
- Maintain control and silence with threats of fear and shame.

#### D. Awareness

All administrators, staff and parents are to report all concerns, complaints, allegations, and policy violations to the Conduct Official within 24 hours. If the Conduct Official is the alleged abuser, the report should be made to the league's president.

The Conduct Official should immediately perform an investigation with the results brought to the attention of the board of directors. The investigation should include a gathering of all pertinent facts in a fair, respectful, and confidential manner including an interview with both the accuser and accused.

After the investigation, the Conduct Official should determine if the alleged acts were appropriate, but unappreciated; inappropriate, but not illegal; or illegal. If the Conduct Official has reasonable cause to believe that child sexual or physical abuse has occurred, law enforcement should be immediately notified within 24 hours. At that point, the Conduct Official should immediately cease all investigation and let law enforcement do its job. The suspected staff member should be suspended pending the outcome of the investigation.

Staff members may be required by state and federal law to independently and directly report to law enforcement, within 24 hours, any suspicions of child sexual or physical abuse and may have criminal and civil liability for failure to do so. All persons reporting suspected cases should be given immunity from civil lawsuits if acting in good faith.

Short of an illegal act, the board should decide the appropriate action and can perform additional follow up investigation. Depending on the nature of the act, the board may decide to give an oral or written reprimand, suspend, or terminate the staff member.

The organization is prohibited from retaliating in any way against a staff member who makes a good faith report of suspicion of any form of misconduct. *Note: Employees have more legal rights than volunteers. Always consult with an attorney before taking action against an employee.*

#### No Waiver of Discretion

Nothing in this program shall be construed as a waiver or limitation of the league discretion to disqualify an applicant for an employment or volunteer position, when in the sole opinion of the board, such disqualification is in the best interest of the league or its program participants.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I understand, to the best of my ability, the information outlined in the **Locker Room and Child Safeguarding Policy** above.

Parent/Guardian Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Player Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Coach Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_