

WEST VOLUSIA POLICE
ATHLETIC LEAGUE

Handbook



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Overview

WEST VOLUSIA POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE

"Serving the Community since 1991"

The West Volusia Police Athletic League is a successful partnership between the Volusia County Sheriff's Office, the DeLand Police Department and the community. The program began in October of 1991, and with strong leadership from its Board of Directors has grown steadily each year. WVPAL currently operates the refurbished Jackson Gym, dedicated on November 28, 1995. The structure had been closed to the public for more than 26 years. Through the cooperation of the Volusia County School Board and funding provided by a Community Development Block Grant, as well as generous business and private donations, the Nathaniel E. Jackson Gymnasium stands as a tribute to a community willing to invest in its children.

Mission Statement – "Training for Life"

The mission of West Volusia PAL is to provide quality athletic and educational activities for at-risk children in the greater DeLand area at low or no cost to the participant. PAL is based on the strong belief that youth sports programs help instill positive social and moral values as well as discipline, and contributes significantly to the reduction of juvenile delinquency. If young people are reached early enough in their journey through life, they can develop a strong, positive attitude toward law enforcement and achieve their goals of adulthood and good citizenship.

Vision Statement

The Vision of West Volusia PAL is to provide a positive influence on the youth in Volusia County.

Objectives and Goals

The Goals at West Volusia PAL are to provide our participants with a safe place to come and play, learn, and develop so that they reach their potential. WVPAL focuses specifically on Academic Achievement, Leadership Achievement, Physical fitness, Broadening Horizons and Reducing Crime.

Statement of Diversity

West Volusia PAL is a diverse community of people of all genders, ages, cultures, races, religions, sexual orientations, socio-economic backgrounds and abilities. WVPAL celebrates and advances diversity by creating a safe place in which people can express themselves freely and share their unique talents.



Purpose

Purpose

The purpose of this manual is to provide a resource for the West Volusia Police Athletic League staff, Board of Directors, volunteers, parents, and players/participants a reference guide for the day to day operations of WVPAL. This manual is designed to be changed as frequently as is necessary to be an accurate reflection of the manner in which the WVPAL is managing its operations.

This manual is a working document that reflects a combination of the documentation of proper and best practices operations.

Codes of Ethics

1. Value and respect each child or young person as an individual in his/her own right, in his/her role as a member of his/her family and his/her role as a member of the community s/he lives in;
2. Respect the relationship of the child or young person to his/her parents, his/her siblings, other members of his/her family and other significant persons, taking account of his/her natural ties and interdependent rights and responsibilities;
3. Facilitate the optimization and development of each individual child or young person to achieve his or her potential in all aspects of functioning;
4. Help each child or young person for whom he or she bears responsibility by preventing problems where possible, by offering protection where necessary and by providing care and rehabilitation to counteract or resolve the problems faced;
5. Use information appropriately, respecting the privacy of children and young people, maintaining confidentiality where necessary, respecting the right of children and young people to be informed of matters concerning themselves and avoiding the misuse of personal information;
6. Oppose at all times any form of discrimination, oppression or exploitation of children and young people and preserve their rights;
7. Maintain personal and professional integrity, develop skills and knowledge in order to work with competence, work co-operatively with colleagues, monitor the quality of services and contribute to the development of the services and of policy.

All other standards expected of volunteers stem from these seven clauses.



Registration

Registration

In order to attend any WVPAL activity a registration form must be completed prior to participating in the activity. This registration form must be fully completed and accurate or the participant may be denied into the activity. Registrations are only valid for one year.

Updating Records

It is the responsibility of the Parent or Guardian to update any information that changes (such as contact information and address). This is to ensure the safety of the child or young person and smooth procedures at WVPAL.

Registration Form

See attachments

Volunteer Application

See attachments

Background Check Criteria

WVPAL Background Check Criteria

- Convicted of a violent felony or conspiracy to commit a violent felony within the past ten years.
- Convicted of a non-violent felony or conspiracy to commit a non-violent felony within the past five years.
- Convicted of a felony or misdemeanor involving the trafficking, selling or possession of a controlled substance within the past five years.
- Any misdemeanor within the past ten years that would be considered a potential danger to a child or young person or is directly related to the functions of that volunteer.
- Has been convicted of any misdemeanor within the past two years.
- Any convicted cases of Domestic Violence within the past two years.

For the purpose of grandfathering current volunteers that may not qualify using these new criteria the Executive Director reserves the right to review the information based upon frequency of arrest, type of charges, convictions and how the applicant has improved their lifestyle since the last arrest.

Pending Cases: Anyone who has been arrested/charged for any of the disqualifying offenses or for cases pending in court will not be permitted to volunteer until the official adjudication of the case.



General Information

Dress Code

Dress Code at WVPAL is the same as the School's dress code. If the clothing in question would not be allowed at school it is also not allowed at WVPAL.

Staff

The staff at WVPAL is dedicated and friendly. Each member is carefully selected to hold the values of WVPAL. Members are expected to strive to achieve the mission and vision of WVPAL and help guide participants in the direction. WVPAL staff is well trained, professional and works hard to provide the participants with an excellent experience while they are under WVPAL supervision.

Transportation

WVPAL may provide transportation in some instances. A trip permission form must be completed and signed in order for WVPAL to provide transportation (see registration form). However, WVPAL will not provide transportation to an individual's house or neighborhood.

Homework Assistance

WVPAL has teamed up with the House Next Door agency to provide homework assistance to elementary school students. Contact the House Next Door representative at the WVPAL center for more information.

Field Trips

During the year, WVPAL may take field trips to various locations with the participants. We will provide the transportation to the location and back again to WVPAL. If there is a fee associated with the field trip parents will be notified beforehand.

Personal Items and Electronic Devices

WVPAL is not responsible for any lost or stolen personal items or electronic devices. Each participant is responsible for their personal belongings. **Do NOT leave items unattended at any time.**

Note: We do NOT allow participants to come and go as they please. Participants are not allowed to leave the complex to go to the store, a friend's house, or to go home to get something. Our goal is to keep participants safe and off the streets.

Smoke Free/Drug Free Policy

WVPAL has ZERO TOLERANCE for the use of drugs and smoking. WVPAL is dedicated to providing a healthy and comfortable environment for staff, coaches, players, participants, parents and volunteers. Therefore, smoking, use of all tobacco products and illegal drugs are strictly prohibited.



Medical/Emergencies

Medication

WVPAL staff is not permitted to dispense any forms of medication.

Sick Child/Injury

If a participant is found to be ill the parent / guardian will be contacted to come and retrieve the child immediately. In the event of an injury, Emergency Medical Services and the parent or guardian will be contacted. Depending on the injury the participant will be transported to the hospital.

Discipline/Dismissal

Discipline / Dismissal

Many of the challenges that the WVPAL staff face day to day can be handled between the child or young person and WVPAL staff. We always make sure the punishment fits the behavior.

Example:

- Frequently stopping the behavior is enough to end the discussion. “ Hey stop that”
- Going to an office to calm down, then talking to a staff member and deciding on appropriate actions to take
- Cleaning something at WVPAL building or other appropriate task
- Conversation with parent / guardian
- Suspension with the number of days to be determined by the WVPAL Program Director

WVPAL handles disciplinary procedures on an individual basis. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to let staff know if the child or young person has a developmental issue so that we can better understand the behavior. If the behavior is ongoing or extreme the child or young person will be sent to WVPAL Program Director for further guidance and discussion. **WVPAL holds the right to dismiss any child or young person for extreme behavior if necessary (ex: intentional injury of staff or another child or young person, or damage the property of WVPAL).** Dismissal can be immediate and without advance notice. In the event of dismissal the parent or guardian will be notified.

Child Abuse Avoidance

Child Abuse Avoidance

It is the strict and unequivocal policy of WVPAL that we strongly condemn the physical, sexual or emotional maltreatment or neglect of a child or children. In addition, through policy, WVPAL will direct



all staff, coaches and volunteers to behave in such a manner that there will not be circumstances where such abuse will occur. If such abuse is discovered to have occurred, WVPAL will fully cooperate with law enforcement and DCF to prosecute the abuser.

WVPAL staff, coaches and volunteers will ensure that they are not alone with a child and isolated in any manner.

WVPAL does not permit any corporal punishment by any staff, coach or volunteer while they are acting in their professional or volunteer capacity.

Reporting of Child Abuse

MANDATORY REPORTERS; although every person has a responsibility to report suspected abuse or neglect, some occupations are specified in Florida law as required to do so. These occupations are considered “professionally mandatory reporters”. A professionally mandatory reporter of child abuse/neglect is required by Florida Statute to provide his or her name to the Abuse Hotline Counselor when reporting. A professionally mandatory reporter’s name is entered into the record of the report, but is held confidential (§ 39.202, F.S. and 415.107, F.S.)

To Report Abuse: Phone 800 96 ABUSE (22873)

WVPAL Sponsored Athletic Events

Code of Conduct – Player/Participant:

- Be a good sport (win or lose), be honest, fair and always show good sportsmanship to all coaches, players / participant, officials and fans.
- Learn the value of commitment to the team.
- Put personal goals aside for the betterment of the team.
- Show courtesy and respect to teammates, opponents, coaches
- Realize that athletic contests, including practice sessions are educational experiences and opportunities.
- Players or Participants will not engage in unsportsmanlike conduct.
- Players or Participants will not engage in rude behavior.
- I will treat everyone, including coaches, parents, players, and officials with respect regardless of race, creed, color, nationality, or sex.
- I deserve to play in an environment that is free of drugs, tobacco and alcohol; and expect everyone to refrain from their use at all WVPAL events / games.



- I will refrain from any activity or conduct that may be detrimental or reflect negatively upon WVPAL or its member agencies, or their programs such as profanity, fighting, stealing, bullying, and destroying property of WVPAL.
- Players or Participants must have a minimum of a 2.0 GPA from the previous school year in order to be involved in WVPAL athletic activities.

Code of Conduct –Parents/Guardians:

- Support your coach, and refrain from excessive “sideline coaching” from the stands.
- Refrain from using profanity.
- Accept the decisions of officials on the field as being fair and called to the best ability of the officials. Parents must stay off the field and remain under control in order to set a good example for players/participants and other spectators.
- Do not criticize an opposing team, its players, fans, coaches or team, by words or gestures.
- No Profane language or inappropriate behavior by words or gestures will be allowed.
- Respect for the coaches, players, officials and other bystanders must be observed.
- Repeat offenses will result in being barred from future games and league sponsored activities. Parents will not encourage their child, or any other person, to engage in unsportmanship conduct with any coach, parent, player, participants, officials or any other attendee.
- I will refrain from any activity or conduct that may be detrimental or reflect negatively upon WVPAL or its member agencies, or their programs.
- I will not use drugs, tobacco or alcohol at any WVPAL practices, games or events and will remind other adults not to do so.

Code of Conduct – Coaches:

- The coach will accept the decisions of officials.
- The coach will not criticize the officials, the opposing team, the coaches, fans or parents, through language, gesture or any other means.



- The coach will emphasize that good athletes are good students and citizens, and both physically and mentally alert.
- The coach will strive to make every athletic activity to serve as a training ground for life, and as a basis for good mental and physical health.
- The coach will emphasize that winning a game/event is the result of good teamwork.
- The coach shall not use abusive or profane language before anyone connected with the game /event.
- The coach will not argue with his assistant coaches in the presence of players / participants.
- The coach shall set an example in personal conduct at all times.
- The coach shall not be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- The coach will not smoke or use any form of tobacco while on the field of play or park grounds during games, scrimmages or practices.
- The coach will treat each player /participant, opposing coach, parent and administrator with respect and dignity.
- The coach will learn the strengths and weakness of his/her players / participant so she/he might play them into situation where they have a maximum opportunity to achieve success.



Fee schedule

Registration: \$25.00 annually

Activity Fee: (per participant)

Football:	\$20.00 (Flag) \$50.00 (Tackle)
Cheerleading:	\$35.00
Basketball:	\$20.00
Spring Break camp:	\$25.00
Summer camp:	\$TBD
Sheriff's Youth camp:	\$TBD (WVPAL week)
Soccer:	\$TBD
Track:	\$40.00

(Prices are subject to change with a reasonable notice)

Scholarship Policy

WVPAL believes that no player or participant should be turned away due to financial hardship. Please contact Cliff Williams – PAL Program Director for additional information concerning various scholarships that may be available.

Fundraiser

Anyone wishing to coordinate a fundraising activity must have the approval of the WVPAL Executive Director. This is to ensure that the fundraiser supports the Objectives and Goals of WVPAL.

WVPAL Athletic Activities

Athletic Activities

No player/participant will be allowed to participate in any WVPAL sponsored athletic event before having a sports physical on file with the PAL Program Director. Sports physical are only valid for one year.



Lightning Safety Rules

Each year, about 400 children and adults in the U.S. are struck by lightning while working outside, at sports events, on the beach, mountain climbing, mowing the lawn or during other outdoor activities. About 80 people are killed and several hundred more are left to cope with permanent disabilities. Many of these tragedies can be avoided. Finishing the game, getting a tan, or completing a work shift is not worth death or crippling injury.

All thunderstorms produce lightning, by definition. If you can hear thunder, you are close enough to the storm to be struck

If you can hear thunder, you are within 10 miles of a storm—and can be struck by lightning. Seek shelter and avoid situations in which you may be vulnerable.

Use the 30-30 rule, when visibility is good and there is nothing obstructing your view of the thunderstorm. When you see lightning, count the time until you hear thunder. If that time is 30 seconds or less, the thunderstorm is within six miles of you and is dangerous. Seek shelter immediately.

Coaching Responsibilities

Coaches are responsible for conducting themselves in an appropriate manner on the field. This shall include attendance at all games/events, coaches meetings or functions at which the coaches formally and informally represents WVPAL, or is recognized as being a member of WVPAL. Inappropriate actions shall include but are not limited to the use of alcohol, tobacco products, illegal drugs, poor sportsmanship, inappropriate language, inappropriate physical contact or verbal abuse of players/participants or officials, or any other actions or behavior determined to be injurious or hostile to the interest of WVPAL.

Specific responsibilities of coaches shall include a minimum of the following task:

1. Attend all coaches meeting
2. Schedule, organize and conduct practices according to allowed hours per week prior to the start of the regularly scheduling season, weather permitting
3. Make practice and the game/event fun
4. Teach sport skills to all players/participants, not just the gifted ones
5. Encourage, reward and praise players/participants
6. Remember that effort is more important than results
7. Set realistic goals with players/participants
8. Ensure the training/playing areas are safe before play or practice
9. Accept the “youth athletic first, winning second” perspective on youth sports
10. Be the team leader and continuously set a positive, good sportsmanship example for players/participants
11. Permit players/participants to share in leadership and decision made for their team



12. Attend all games/events and practices or appoint an assistance coach to function as the Head Coach if he/she is unable to attend
13. Be responsible for the safety and well-being of all players/participants, ensuring that they wear appropriate equipment at all times
14. Supervise the activities of all players/participants at practices, games and other functions. This includes such things as ensuring that all players/participants are picked up by the parents or other responsible individuals after such activities. Ensuring the area is cleaned up after the practice, game or event is done
15. Complete mandatory coaches training and certification that is required
16. Be responsible for all WVPAL equipment that is issued. Any equipment lost during the season shall be reported as soon as possible to WVPAL Program Director or the Football Commissioner
17. Responsible for the actions and behavior of players/participants and parents. This shall include the time immediately before, during and immediately after a game/event and practices on and off the field
18. Responsible for teaching and demonstrating sportsmanship whether winning or losing to all players

WVPAL Coaching Related Requirements:

- The head coach must be at least 21 years of age. All assistant coaches are appointed by the head coach of each team and must be at least 18 years of age
- The head coach is responsible for the actions of the assistance coaches, parents and team, prior to, during and after each game/event, practice and league event
- If a head coach or one of his assistants is penalized for unsportsman-like behavior, the head coach /assistance coach will be put on probation for the remainder of the season and is subject to further action by the WVPAL Football Commissioner, WVPAL Program Director or WVPAL Executive Director
- A head coach or assistant coach can be removed from their duties if the said coach's actions are detrimental to the welfare of WVPAL
- Each head coach is required to maintain accurate attendance of all players/participants on his/her roster
- If an injured player/participant cannot get up on his/her own power, emergency medical aid will be summoned
- Foul and abusive language used by any coach or player/participant will not be tolerated
- THERE ARE NO STAR PLAYERS/PARTICIPANT ON THE TEAM. We know there are some players that are more talented than others, but all players/participants must be treated the same and needs and deserve equal game/ event time
- All coaches must wear approved badges to every game, if required by the league or event



Football Guidelines

WVPAL supports the guidelines and rules established by the Mid-Florida youth Football Conference. In the event of any conflict between the policies of MFFCC and WVPAL, the stricter standard is observed.

PRACTICE

No Mid-Florida Youth Football Conference team may begin practice prior to July 8 (**conditioning may begin July 1**) of the current football season year. No team may schedule more than eight (8) hours of practice per week. A week is defined as seven (7) consecutive calendar days. No more than 2 ½ hours of practice may be scheduled on any one-day.

DEFINITION OF PRACTICE

To prevent possible bending of the rules and as protection of children, practice is defined as a gathering of players, without a minimum number, requiring the presence of at least one coach, where one or more activities take place.

1. Weekly film review
2. Chalk talk, strategy session
3. Play run through without pads
4. Controlled scrimmage.

The so-called "party" at the coach's home where films are shown or football is worked on or discussed can be deemed a practice. Use of the football field or a football is not required to satisfy the definition of practice.

Practices are held on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 5:30 pm – 7:30pm

Coaches are required to conduct an adequate warm up time before each practice and game and make sure every player/participant has on proper clothing and shoes to participate in practice.

Heat Index Practice Modifiers / Severe Weather Emergencies

Often during July, August, September, and October we are faced with extreme heat conditions. WVPAL has implemented the following practice guidelines as it relates to heat index as the start of conditioning and practices:

- Heat index of 90 degrees or less
 - Normal activities
 - At least three separate rest breaks each hour
- Heat index between 91-99 degrees
 - Two hours maximum practice time



- Provide unlimited fluids and monitor players for signs and symptoms of heat illness
- Heat index between 100 – 109 degrees
 - Restricted activities, no equipment
 - On hour of maximum practice time
 - Provide unlimited fluids and monitor players for signs and symptoms of exhaustion, heat cramps and sunstroke likely and heatstroke possible

When thunderstorms with lightning or other severe weather patterns are reported within 6 miles:

- If at practice, the WVPAL Program Director or the WVPAL Football Commissioner or his /her appointee will make the determination whether to cancel practice for inclement weather.
- If at game time or after the game starts, the official and coaches should make the determination whether to cancel the game for inclement weather
- If thunderstorm with lightning within 6 miles, players/participants will exit the playing field and seek shelter in cars or building, until the storm passes. (Refer to Lightning Safety Rules for additional information)

Head-to-Head Contact

No full speed head-on blocking or tackling drills in which the players/participants line up more than 3 yards apart are permitted. However, having two linemen in stances immediately across the line of scrimmage from each other and having full speed drills where the players/participants approach each other at an angle, but not straight ahead in to each other are both permitted. WVPAL coaches should do everything in their power to avoid all intentional head-to head contact.

Concussion Protocol

WVPAL will follow Heads Ups Football recommended protocol when a player/participant has sustained a concussion or other brain injury.

- No player/participant should return to the game or practice on the same day he/she sustains a concussion or brain injury. A licensed health care provide will make the final decision.

Heads Up Football Action Plan

If you suspect that a player/participant has a concussion, you should take the following four steps:

1. Remove player/participant from the field
2. Ensure that the player/participant is evaluated by an appropriate health care professional. Do not try to judge the seriousness of the injury yourself
3. Inform the player's/participant's parents about the possible concussion and give them the fact sheet on concussion



4. Keep the player/participant out of play the day of the injury and until an appropriate health care professional examines the player/participant

Coaches Box Rules

During games, only players/participants, league approved coaches, team medical aid, team parents, WVPAL staff and the WVPAL Football Commissioner will be allowed in the Coaches Box. During emergencies or injuries; parents, emergency medical services will be allowed in the Coaches Box or on the field if necessary.

Items still under development:

Assigning and returning of football equipment

Awards ceremony / Banquet

Cleaning and care of equipment

Parents using their own equipment

Etc.

Other sporting activities guidelines will be added.

