

# Eden Prairie Football Association (EPFA) Policies



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# Code Of Conduct Policy

## Code of Conduct for Players, Coaches, Parents/Guardians, and Spectators

The Eden Prairie Football Association is committed to promoting an environment that fosters a superior level of sportsmanship. This policy applies to all participants in and attendees at EPFA athletic activities, including players, coaches, parents, guardians, and spectators and is intended to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for everyone.

1. As a representative of EPFA, every coach, parent, and athlete must set examples of good sportsmanship.
2. Unsportsmanlike, abusive, or violent conduct will not be tolerated at any EPFA event or activity. Unsportsmanlike conduct includes but is not limited to the following:
  - a. Profanity
  - b. Verbal abuse of referees, coaches, other parents, or players
  - c. Physical endangerment  
*For Example:* Anyone that instigates any physical contact or confrontation with a player, coach, official, or another parent or family member before, during or after any game will be subject to an immediate and permanent ban from attending or participating in any EPFA activity
  - d. Repeated disregard for EPFA policies and rules
3. Players, parents, and spectators who do not conduct themselves appropriately will be subject to discipline by the EPFA, coaches, and/or referees. Parents and family members watching the games are to remain in the spectator area during games and will not go onto the field or approach the team during the games. Coaches who do not conduct themselves appropriately will be subject to discipline by the EPFA and/or referees. Discipline may include permanently barring the coach, parent/guardian, and/or their player(s) from any and all EPFA athletic activities when the EPFA determines that such action is required.
  - a. In most cases, disciplinary action will be progressive and can include:
    - i. A verbal warning
    - ii. A written warning
    - iii. Suspension from one or more EPFA activities
    - iv. Permanent ban of parent/guardian and/or their player(s) from all EPFA athletic activities

- b. The type of disciplinary action imposed is at the discretion of the EPFA and nothing in this policy is intended to guarantee that the EPFA must follow all disciplinary steps prior to suspending or barring any coach, parent/guardian, and/or their player(s) with or without notice. If progressive discipline is pursued, steps 3.a.i through 3.a.iii may all take place in the same game/event, if warranted.
- 4. Any coach, parent/guardian, player, or spectator permanently barred from participation in EPFA athletic events due to their failure to adhere to the highest standards of sportsmanship may not reapply for reinstatement for two years.

# Coach Code of Conduct Policy

## Code of Conduct and Expectations for Coaches

The EPFA is committed to promoting an environment that fosters a superior level of sportsmanship in the participation of athletic events. The following policy applies to all coaches in EPFA athletic activities and is intended to provide a common understanding of the expectations of coaching behaviors and philosophies supported by the EPFA.

**Prerequisites for Coaching:** 1) opt-in to EPFA league emails using an email address that is checked often, 2) complete annual background checks, and 3) submit qualifying concussion training certificate.

**You cannot start the season as a coach until these steps are complete.**

## Program Philosophy

- ✓ Provide ALL participants with a positive experience
- ✓ Inspire each player to continue playing and to develop their skills
- ✓ Teach life lessons through positive interaction
- ✓ Winning is an outcome . . . it is NOT an objective

## Coaching Behaviors

- ✓ **Competence** – Never get tired of teaching fundamentals and always have a well-prepared practice plan. Teach concepts that support the development of athletes.
- ✓ **Trustworthiness** – The coach will build trust when they apply rules consistently and fairly while keeping player confidentiality. Constructive feedback is delivered with tact during practices and in front of others. Disciplinary conversations are conducted privately.
- ✓ **Respect** – The coach treats everyone with dignity and respect without regard to their sex, age, race, language, socioeconomic status, ethnic origin, disability or religion. Is tolerant of each player and treats everyone as individuals with their own rights and individual needs while promoting a team atmosphere.
- ✓ **Fairness** – The coach demonstrates fairness by providing each athlete with the same opportunities and training time. A coach should not show favoritism to one athlete over another and teach their athletes to be fair to their teammates and opponents.
- ✓ **Caring** – Be positive and constructive – provide corrective feedback to players while avoiding too much or only negative feedback. The coach should instruct athletes in such a way as to develop a lifelong love and benefits of the sport.
- ✓ **Integrity** – The coach should act as a role model. Admit mistakes and learn from them. They should keep their personal values in word and action at all times.

- **Responsibility** – The coach needs to give each athlete the opportunity to develop their skills, confidence, and self-esteem. The coach needs to promote the values of team spirit and fair play and winning is only one part of athleticism.

### **Expectations**

The EPFA is committed to providing all participants in the program an enjoyable football experience. To achieve that the EPFA must take steps to ensure that coaches conduct themselves appropriately. In recent years, the EPFA has had to deal with coaches whose behavior fell short of our expectations. Individuals that fail to meet these expectations will be subject to sanctions as determined by the EPFA Executive Team. The expectations are as follows:

- EPFA coaches are expected to read and understand all EPFA policies.
- As a representative of EPFA, every coach must always exhibit examples of good sportsmanship.
- Unsportsmanlike, abusive, or violent conduct will NOT be tolerated at any EPFA event or activity. This includes but is not limited to the following:
  - Profanity
  - Verbal abuse, shaming or intimidation of players
  - Verbal abuse of referees, other coaches or parents
  - Physical endangerment, contact or confrontation with a player, parent, official, or spectator
  - Repeated disregard for EPFA policies or philosophies
- Coaches are expected to work out any player/parent issues first with the player/parents in question. If no solution is reached, the coach should raise concerns to the Grade Level Commissioner. Issues can also be raised to the EPFA executive leadership team (President, Vice President, Treasurer) if the coach feels they are not getting reasonable resolution from their escalation contact.
- Exhibiting good sportsmanship and the development of players and their football skills are our primary points of emphasis. Coaches are not required to play each player equally and coaches do have the right to bench player for disciplinary reasons.
  - The playing time policy for **football players** of the EPFA is that each player will play **in accordance to the rules set for by Southwest Metro League**.
  - For outline of rules, visit [Rules](#) on SWML website.
  - We encourage our athletes playing multiple sports, however missing practice time during the week consistently will result in **Less** playing time in games. The reason for this is player safety to himself and teammates.
  - **Tackle football should be treated as a travel sport.**
  - Players will be forced to sit out if said player is harassing or verbally insulting any teammate. We **DO NOT ALLOW** players putting down each other.
  - We do our best to ensure equal playing time for players in games. However, we cannot guarantee players playing RB, QB and WR. Teams have about 2 to 3 weeks to get a team organized and on the field with positions identified and plays learned.

- When necessary, coaches may remove a player from a game to teach and reinforce football concepts. It is expected that players will be returned to play to demonstrate understanding of concepts. Players should not be benched for extended periods of time.
- It is a privilege to be a coach in the EPFA. Coaches who do not conduct themselves appropriately will be subject to discipline by the EPFA. Discipline may include permanently barring the coach from coaching within the program when it is in the judgment of the EPFA that such action is required. In most cases, disciplinary action will be progressive and can include:
  - A verbal warning
  - A written warning
  - Suspension from one or more EPFA activities

NOTE: The type of disciplinary action imposed is at the discretion of the EPFA and nothing in this policy is intended to guarantee that the EPFA must or shall follow all the disciplinary steps prior to suspending or barring any coach with or without notice. If progressive discipline is pursued, all steps may take place in the same game/event if warranted.

# Financial Aid Policy

## Overview

### Financial Aid for players participating in Grades 3-8 Program:

In-House financial aid will cover the base registration fee. Families who qualify for free and/or reduced school lunch are eligible.

## Application Process

**Applying for Financial Aid:** Parents interested in applying for financial aid for the fall football season:

- Complete online application under EPFA website
- Attach a verification letter from the school stating that you qualify for free and/or reduced school lunch

**Deadline:** The deadline for Financial Aid requests is the same as the registration deadline, which is posted on the EPFA website.

## Field Use Policy

The EPFA places a great emphasis on providing our players with an experience that balances fun, safety and learning. Given these priorities we've developed a policy that requires the following elements of appropriate facility use for games and practices:

- Only players and coaches are allowed on the field and only during their scheduled practice and game time.
- Siblings and friends of players are not allowed on the football field at any time and must always remain with their parents. Field times are reserved for players, and warm up time or breaks during the game or practices are not open for public use.
- Players should arrive no more than 15 minutes prior to start time and leave immediately after practice and games to minimize the potential for disruptive behavior.

We appreciate the support of parents and coaches to reinforce these guidelines.

# Refund Policy

Issued March 2025

## Overview

Base registration fees are collected with online registration. Registration fees are collected by payment via Sports Engine from players (Grades 3-8) during registration.

Cancellations requested prior to August 1 before the release of teams will result in a full refund, less than a \$20 administrative fee. No refunds after August 15<sup>th</sup>

If a player sustains an injury prior to the season that will result in the player missing more than 50% of the season (physician documentation required). In this situation, EPFA will issue a full refund less a \$20 administrative fee and any costs incurred by the EPFA on the injured player's behalf (e.g. uniform, SE transaction fees).

If a player is removed from the program by the EPFA due to behavior, rules infringement, or other reasons, no refund will be issued.

All refund requests must be submitted to the treasurer of the EPFA board.

## Player Pick-up and Drop-off Policy

**GRADES 3-8:** Parents or a designated adult are not required to be present during a game or practice, but the child must have their own transportation (vehicle, bike, or walking) or transportation home arranged with a parent, designated adult or another player.

If a child is not picked up when the practice or game has ended, every effort should be made to contact the parents via cell phone or home phone. Coaches, Team Managers, and Commissioners should have access to rosters showing contact phone numbers of players on each team. If the child has another sibling playing football at the same time, it is likely that the other game/practice is running long and, if possible, two responsible non-related adults can stay with the player until a parent does arrive.

Team Managers, Grade Commissioners, Coaches, etc., should work together to determine who can stay and assist with the situation. Two responsible, non-related adults need to remain with the child at all times.

If the situation cannot be resolved quickly, the Eden Prairie police will be notified via a 911 call that there is a forgotten child. There is no need for any “grace period” before calling the police. The Eden Prairie Police will come and pick up the child and take them back to the Eden Prairie Police station.

In Grades 5-8, a player can inform the coaches or responsible adults they have permission to wait for their parent or designated adult to pick them up and a coach or other responsible set of adults are not required to wait for their pick-up. In such cases, the coach or other responsible adults may decide to remain, but they are not required to do so. If a coach or responsible adult decides to remain with the child, the EPFA’s policy remains in force in that at least two, non-related responsible adults must be present with any player.

The EPFA reserves the right to suspend or remove a player from league participation (without refund) if this policy is not followed.

## **Adult Supervision Policy**

The EPFA places great emphasis on providing our players with an experience that balances fun, safety, and learning. Given these priorities, we've developed a policy requiring players in grades 3-8 to have a designated adult at their games and practices at all times.

For players of all ages, league events will have at least two adults present at all times as outlined below.

### **Adult Supervision For All Grade Levels**

The EPFA requires there be at least two responsible, non-related adults on the field at all times players are present.

### **Injuries and Medical Attention**

Parents should be aware that if their child is injured and a parent or guardian is not present, the EPFA commissioners, coaches, or team managers will seek appropriate medical attention including calling 911. All costs for this medical treatment and/or transport will be the responsibility of the child's parent or legal guardian.

Coaches, Commissioners, and members of the EPFA are authorized to contact emergency personnel at no personal civil liability to them under Minnesota's Good Samaritan Law.

# Coaches Mandatory Background Screening Policy

## Overview

The EPFA provides a safe and secure environment for the players and the parents/guardians who participate in the practices and games organized by the EPFA. As part of this commitment, the EPFA requires a mandatory background check for all Head Coaches and Assistant Coaches of football teams for all grades who are part of the EPFA.

EPFA has contracted an independent third-party, Protect Youth Sports, to provide background checks of applicants. The background check is thorough, confidential, and independent of EPFA. The annual background check is provided at no cost to each Head Coach and Assistant Coach of the EPFA.

All members of the EPFA are also screened annually.

## Process

### Purpose

This policy establishes guidelines wherein the EPFA can seek to protect children registered in EPFA leagues and teams by investigating the background of volunteers who will be coaching in sanctioned athletic programs.

### Statement

Criminal background screening is conducted by an outside third party and reviewed (in specific instances) by a screening committee, consisting of a subset of the Eden Prairie Football Association

### Definitions

EPFA recognizes a head coach, or an assistant coach is any person who leads and instructs players at practices or games - or portions of practices or games – for the football season.

This criminal background screening is mandatory. There are no exceptions.

## Procedure

All candidates for Head Coach, Assistant Coach, or EPFA must sign a Release Form for Criminal History to permit the EPFA to check criminal history records and verify social security numbers. This work is executed directly, through [www.protectyouthsports.com](http://www.protectyouthsports.com), and the secure URL at which coaches can execute their EPFA background check is:

<https://opportunities.averity.com/opportunity/34037>

No other personal information (work history, financial, credit, etc.) is searched. If no issues are found, the company does not forward applicant information to EPFA. The company executing background checks has agreed to such terms under contract and confirms such direction annually.

In the event information surfaces via the background check, a screening committee, with members consisting of the EPFA Executive Committee, will review such background check information to determine coaching eligibility. Only members of the screening committee will review the data obtained, which will then be processed discreetly. All information is strictly confidential and will not be made public under any circumstances. Reasons for being declined the opportunity to coach are noted below as part of this policy. In some instances, factors of time may be considered when considering coaching eligibility (i.e. length of time since the disposition of certain offenses). The screening committee decision may be appealed to clarify facts or explain extenuating circumstances.

All criminal history record information is destroyed at the end of each EPFA football season.

All coaches, assistant coaches, and EPFA members are required to notify the committee immediately following an arrest or conviction on any of the listed offenses. They will immediately forfeit his/her eligibility until disposition by the courts. Conviction of a listed offense will result in termination of eligibility as stated in the policy.

**Screening / Background Check Search Criteria**

The list of offenses prohibiting an applicant from participation as a head coach, assistant coach, or EPFA board member includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Arson
- Assault (including aggravated and sexual)
- Aggravated Kidnapping
- Aggravated Robbery
- Crimes against Children (including abandonment, abuse, endangerment, pornography, possession or promotion of pornography, enticement, solicitation, sale or purchase of, injury to, or indecency)
- Criminally Negligent Homicide
- Deadly Conduct
- Delivery of Marijuana
- Manufacture of, or Delivery of a controlled substance or dangerous drug
- Any violation of a law intended to control the possession or distribution of any controlled substance or illegal drug
- Indecent Exposure
- Injury to Elderly or Disabled
- Intoxication Manslaughter
- Kidnapping
- Manslaughter (voluntary or involuntary)
- Murder
- Prohibited Sexual Conduct
- Prostitution (including the promotion of, aggravated promotion of)
- Public Lewdness
- Rape
- Sexual Abuse
- Marijuana Possession\*
- Driving While Intoxicated/Impaired (DWI) / Driving Under the Influence (DUI)\*
- Theft\*\*

\*If this is the first offense and you are not currently under probation, you may be eligible to coach, but you cannot drive any child other than his/her own. If more than one violation has occurred or you are currently on probation, you are ineligible.

\*\*Eligibility is dependent upon the severity and length of time since offense occurred.

## Independent Team Policy

The EPFA does not sanction or provide support for any teams operating independently of the EPFA.

If independent teams form and the rules of the association or tournament those teams desire to participate in require permission or approval of the EPFA, that permission or approval will not be granted by the EPFA for teams in Grades 3-8. This applies to tournaments throughout the season as well as for season-ending "state" tournaments.

Independent teams should familiarize themselves with the rules of the association they desire to participate in before forming their teams.

Independent teams are responsible for the following:

- ✓ Reserving and paying for field and for appropriate insurance.
- ✓ Paying all tournament entry fees.

## Concussion Return to Play Policy

The EPFA places great emphasis on providing our players with an experience that balances learning, fun, safety, and alignment with Minnesota concussion law. Accordingly, we are clarifying the return to play policy for players that show signs or symptoms of a concussion as follows:

1. The Minnesota Concussion Law mandates that:
  - ✓ All coaches (head and assistants) and officials receive concussion training and education by September 1, 2011, and then at three-year intervals thereafter.
  - ✓ Coaches must remove an athlete from activity if they exhibit signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as the loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) and/or are suspected of sustaining a concussion.
  - ✓ The law also requires an appropriate health care professional's signature to return to play if an athlete is removed due to a concussion or is showing signs or symptoms of a concussion.

For reference, refer to the MN State High School League rules or the Minnesota Concussion law.

2. EPFA coaches are subject to concussion certification every 3 years as outlined in the EPFA [Concussion Law Certificate](#) page under Coach Resources.
3. The EPFA Concussion Return to Play Policy requires the following steps:
  - ✓ If an athlete is removed from play because they are showing signs or symptoms of a concussion, they must have written authorization from a health care professional before returning to play.
  - ✓ The athlete must provide the health care professional's form to their EPFA head coach.
    - Until the written authorization is provided to the head coach, the coach shall ensure that the player does not participate in any team physical activities.
  - ✓ The EPFA head coach will give the form to the EPFA President.
4. For more information, refer to these CDC fact sheets for [parents](#), [coaches](#) and [athletes](#).

## Friend Request and Draft Policy

The EPFA places great emphasis on providing our players with an experience that balances learning, fun and an opportunity to play football with grades 3-8. The following best practices help to balance fair and balanced teams.

### **For teams at all grade levels:**

To balance out the teams, coaches conduct a football draft after the football combine at the risk of making things too complicated, we don't allow friend requests for teams. Tackle football is a travel sport. We will allow siblings to be on same team dependent on grade level.

## Privacy and Email Marketing Policy

The EPFA has created this Privacy and Email Marketing Policy in line with EPFA's commitment to your privacy on EPFA websites and marketing initiatives. The following discloses EPFA's information gathering, dissemination, and protection practices.

### **Compliance**

If you do not agree to the terms of this Privacy Policy, please do not access or use the EPFA website. If you wish to stop receiving EPFA marketing materials, then please click on the Communication Preferences link within the marketing email you have received from us.

### **Valid Email Requirement for EPFA Coaches**

Email is a primary method of communication from the EPFA to Coaches and to Players. The Coach Code of Conduct Policy requires Coaches to: 1) opt-in to EPFA league emails using an email address that is checked often, 2) complete annual background checks, and 3) submit qualifying concussion training certificate.

### **Collection of Information**

EPFA collects information to provide better services to its players, families, and coaches. EPFA collects information in the following ways:

- information you affirmatively choose to submit to us (such as your name, email address, your child's name and birthdate, your address, your child's school) for the purpose of registering for EPFA programs. You will receive marketing communications from EPFA if you have registered for our programs in the past and are included in the target audience for specific grade-level EPFA programming.

Other than as required by law, EPFA website does not collect any special categories of personal information about you (this includes details about your race or ethnicity, religious or philosophical beliefs, information about your health and biometric data unrelated to the sport.) We do collect weight of players for purposes of Southwest Metro League rules regarding positions.

EPFA will only use your personal information for the purposes for which it was collected. If EPFA needs to use your personal information for an unrelated purpose, EPFA notify you and explain the legal basis which allows EPFA to do so.

## **Sharing of Information**

EPFA may disclose your personal information to the following categories of recipients:

- to any **competent law enforcement body, regulatory, government agency, court or other third party** where EPFA believes disclosure is necessary (a) as a matter of applicable law or regulation, (b) to exercise, establish or defend its legal rights, or (c) to protect your vital interests or those of any other person.
- to any **other person or entity with your consent** to the disclosure.

## **Use of Information**

Any information collected by EPFA will be done in accordance with this Privacy and Email Marketing Policy for the purposes of supporting the EPFA activities you choose to engage in and we may include opportunities for related products or services (team photos, apparel, camps/clinics) in email communications about our 3-8 programs. EPFA will only retain your personal information for as long as necessary to fulfill the purposes it was collected for, including for the purposes of satisfying any legal, accounting, or reporting requirements.

To determine the appropriate retention period for personal information, EPFA considers the amount, nature, and sensitivity of the personal information, the potential risk of harm from unauthorized use or disclosure of your personal information, the purposes for which EPFA processes your personal information and whether it can achieve those purposes through other means, and the applicable legal requirements.

## **Information Security**

EPFA protects your personal information in the same way that it protects its other confidential information. EPFA has put in place procedures to deal with any personal information breach and will notify you and any applicable regulator of a breach when legally required to do so.

## **Marketing**

As explained above, EPFA will collect and use your personal data for marketing purposes for our programs. Your data will be stored in our CRM system. We will use your data to inform you about EPFA programs we think may be of your interest and sending you our email news.

## **Affiliated Vendors**

The EPFA doesn't have subscription preferences to allow us to segment to those who "want special offers." Therefore, we control and limit specific communications about vendor offers outside of our program (team photos, apparel, camps/clinics.) Those requests must be reviewed and approved by the EPFA Executive Team. If approved, they are likely included as a part of other league emails rather than a

dedicated email. Alternatively, we may choose to post a link to camps, clinics, and training programs on an EPFA website page created for that purpose.

### **Links**

EPFA website contains links, plug-ins, and applications to various third-party websites (for camps, clinics and affiliated vendors). Clicking on those links or enabling those connections may allow third parties to collect or share data about you. EPFA has no control over, and is not responsible for the content, privacy policies or reliability of such third-party connections. When you leave EPFA's website, EPFA encourages you to read the privacy notice and privacy policy of every website you visit.

### **Your Data Protection Rights**

You have the following data protection rights which you may be able to exercise by contacting EPFA:

- If you wish to **access, correct, update or request deletion** of your personal information, you can do so at any time by contacting EPFA.
- You have the right to **opt-out of marketing communications** that EPFA sends you at any time. You can exercise this right by clicking on the Communication Preferences link in the marketing emails EPFA sends you or by using the relevant opt-out mechanism for non-email-based marketing.
- Similarly, if EPFA has collected and processes your personal information based on your consent, then you can **withdraw your consent** at any time. Withdrawing your consent will not affect the lawfulness of any processing EPFA conducted prior to your withdrawal, nor will it affect processing of your personal information conducted in reliance on lawful processing grounds other than consent.
- You have the **right to complain to the data protection authority** about EPFA's collection and use of your personal information. For more information, please contact your local data protection authority.

You will not have to pay a fee to access your personal information (or to exercise any of the other rights). However, EPFA may charge a reasonable fee or refuse to comply with your request if your request is clearly unfounded, repetitive, or excessive. EPFA tries to respond to all legitimate requests within one month. Occasionally, it may take longer if your request is particularly complex, or you have made a number of requests. In this case, EPFA will notify you and keep you updated.

### **Changes To The Policy**

EPFA reserves the right to modify or amend this Privacy and Email Marketing Policy at its own discretion from time to time. Your continued use of EPFA website constitutes your acceptance of those changes.

This version was last updated on 09 March 2025.

### **Contact Details**

It is important that the personal information EPFA holds about you is accurate and current. Please keep EPFA informed if your personal information changes during your relationship with EPFA.

Additionally, if you have any questions about this Privacy Policy or your interaction with EPFA via the EPFA website, please contact any member of the executive leadership team on the association website.