

# STERLING PARK DISTRICT FALL SOCCER 2022 COACHING HANDBOOK



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## **WELCOME TO STERLING PARK DISTRICT ATHLETICS!**

The Sterling Park District would like to extend our sincerest thank you to all volunteer coaches that will participate in the **2022 Fall Soccer Program**. Our goal is to provide fun sports programs for the youth of Sterling and the surrounding communities that are served by the Sterling Park District. We encourage feedback from you regarding our programs and services. There are many ways to contact us to provide feedback or receive information:

**Sterling Park District Website:** [www.sterlingparks.org](http://www.sterlingparks.org)

**Brian Totey, Athletics Manager:** [Btotey@sterlingparks.org](mailto:Btotey@sterlingparks.org)  
Or (815) 622-2219

**Westwood Fitness and Sports Center:** (815)-622-6201  
1900 Westwood Drive, Sterling, IL 61081

**Weather Cancellation Line:** (815) 499-4703

## Philosophy of Recreational Youth Sports

Sterling Park District recreational youth sports programs are designed to allow all children to have the opportunity to have fun, participate and learn fundamental sports skills. Participants should learn sportsmanship, respect, teamwork, fair play and self-confidence. The sports environment will be safe and well maintained. Prudent behavior by adults is mandatory. The Sterling Park District also believes that the safety and well being of the youth participant is the highest priority.

### The seven essential components of the Sterling Park District Recreational Youth Sports Philosophy:

1. All children in our community who meet the basic program registration requirements have the opportunity to participate in Sterling Park District youth sports programs.
2. The Sterling Park District will offer programs at a reasonable cost while providing quality facilities, quality equipment and recognition to both volunteers and participants.
3. Sterling Park District staff will recruit volunteers who have the ability to act as role models, mentors and facilitators.
4. All participants in Sterling Park District youth sports programs shall be treated fairly, and without regard to race, color, disability, religion, sex or national origin.
5. Sterling Park District youth sport practices and games should be an enjoyable, challenging and learning experience for all participants.
6. Those people in coaching and leadership positions in Sterling Park District youth sports shall lead by example through the promotion of fair play and sportsmanship.
7. Sterling Park District programs should focus on the enjoyment of the sport and the development of the athlete – **not the score**.

### ➤ Roster Procedure

Rosters are set prior to the coaches meeting or “Team Orientation Day.” Team assignments are random but are subject to the following parameters:

- A coach’s child(ren) will automatically be placed on his/her team.
- Siblings will automatically be placed on the same team, unless requested otherwise.
- Requests to not have a particular coach will be honored whenever possible. Other requests will be dealt with on a case by case basis.
- If the program is allowing late registration, late registrants will be placed on a team based on enrollment numbers.
- The Sterling Park District reserves the right to change/update rosters as necessary.

## **COACHING INFORMATION**

### **➤ Coaching for the Sterling Park District**

The Sterling Park District will utilize the services of volunteer coaches for all of their recreational youth sport programs. These volunteers are essential in providing these programs, as we can only form as many teams as there are coaches available. Without the participation of the volunteer coaches, participation by our young athletes would not be possible.

In addition to the rewards inherent in coaching youth sports, the head coach from each team will receive a Sterling Park District Coach shirt.

### **➤ Volunteer Information and Criminal Background Checks**

Coaches are required to complete volunteer information and background check forms if they have not completed them during a recent previous season. All information submitted on the Volunteer Information Form and Criminal Background Check will be treated as confidential by the Sterling Park District and will only be available to those full time staff members responsible for screening and selecting coaches.

### **➤ Coaches' Code of Conduct and Expected Behaviors**

- **I will place the emotional and physical well being of my players ahead of a personal desire to win.**
  - Use appropriate language in appropriate tones when interacting with players, league officials, game officials, parents and spectators.
  - Include all players in team activities without regard to race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, body type, national origin, ancestry, disability, ability or any other legally protected classification.
  - Treat all players, league officials, game officials, parents and spectators with dignity and respect.
  - Play all players according to the equal participation rules established by the league and the spirit of those rules.
  - Encourage youth to participate in other sports and activities to promote all aspects of their development.
  - Allow reasonable absences from practice and/or games.
- **I will treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development for the same age group.**
  - Recognize the differences of each child and treat each player as an individual while demonstrating concern for their individual needs and well being.
  - Encourage all players, regardless of skill level, to be included as a member of the team and to remain involved in sports.
  - Recognize that some physical tasks, drills and demands are not appropriate for all youth.
  - Recognize that youth may vary greatly in physical, social and emotional maturation and consider these factors when setting goals when interacting with youth.
- **I will do my best to provide a safe playing situation for my players.**
  - Maintain a high level of awareness of potentially unsafe conditions.
  - Correct or avoid unsafe practice or playing conditions.
  - Use appropriate safety equipment necessary to protect all players.

- See that the players are provided with adequate adult supervision while under the coach's care.
- **I will promise to review and practice the basic first aid principles needed to treat injuries of my players.**
  - Acknowledge basic first aid supplies available in all practice and game situations
  - Recognize and administer proper first aid to an injured player.
  - Demonstrate concern for an injured player, notify parents and cooperate with medical authorities
  - Protect the players' well being by removing them from activity when injured and not returning them to activity if they are compromised by injury.
- **I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all my players.**
  - Establish practice plans that are interesting, varied, productive and aimed at improving all players' skills and individual abilities.
  - Devote appropriate time to the individual improvement of each player.
  - Conduct practices of reasonable length and intensity appropriate for the age and conditioning of the players.
- **I will lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all my players.**
  - Adopt the position; teach and demonstrate that it is our basic moral code to treat others as we would like to be treated.
  - Abide by and support the rules of the game as well as the spirit of the rules.
  - Provide an environment conducive to fair and equitable competition.
  - Use the influential position of youth coach as an opportunity to promote, teach and expect sportsmanship and fair play.
- **I will provide a sports environment for my team that is free of drugs, tobacco and alcohol and I will refrain from their use at all Sterling Park District youth sports events.**
  - Be alcohol and drug free at all team activities, post season parties, after game outings or any situation in the presence of players.
  - Refrain from the use of any type of tobacco products at all team activities or in the presence of your players.
  - Refrain from providing any type of alcohol, drug, or tobacco products to any of the players.
  - Encourage parents to refrain from the public use of tobacco products or alcohol at team activities.
- **I will be knowledgeable in the rules of each sport that I coach, and I will teach these rules to my players.**
  - Be knowledgeable, understanding and supportive of all applicable game rules, league rules, regulations and policies.
  - Teach and require compliance of these rules among players.
- **I will use those coaching techniques appropriate for each of the skills that I teach.**
  - Teach techniques that reduce the risk of injury to both the coach's own players and their opponents.
  - Discourage illegal contact or intentional dangerous play and administer swift and equitable discipline to players involved in such activity.

- **I will remember that I am a youth sports coach and that the game is for children and not adults.**
  - Maintain a positive, helpful and supportive attitude.
  - Exercise your authority/influence to control the behavior of the fans and spectators.
  - Exhibit gracious acceptance of defeat or victory.
  - Accept and adhere to all league rules and policies related to the participation of adults and youth.
  - Fulfill the expected role of a youth coach to adopt a “children first” philosophy.
  - Allow and encourage the players to listen, learn and play hard within the rules.
  - Place the emphasis on fun and participation.

The Sterling Park District is dedicated to raising the standard of service to youth in sports through the enforcement of this Code of Conduct in all Sterling Park District youth sport programs. The Code of Conduct defines the expectation for individuals serving as coaches in youth sports and provides the tools to be used by Sterling Park District, when necessary, to check behavior and to protect all children from the psychological, emotional, physical or social abuses that can be perpetrated against them by youth sport coaches. The Sterling Park District firmly believes that the sports experience should be positive, safe and a learning experience for youth. Volunteer coaches must be held accountable for their behavior when working with and around children.

### ➤ **Concerns with a Coach**

Any concerns with a coach’s actions should be submitted in writing (e-mail is acceptable). Once the written complaint is received, the Sterling Park District will initiate a review process; gather information and document eyewitness accounts of the event(s) that took place from everyone involved to determine if a violation of the letter or intent of the Coaches’ Code of Conduct has occurred. This may include the site supervisor, game officials, other coaches, parents and children. The Sterling Park District will then determine the severity of the situation and whether or not the affected coach has violated the Code of Conduct and the expected behaviors that are listed under each section of that code. The Sterling Park District will then have the authority to determine the appropriate disciplinary action, if any, as listed below. If the coach is a member of the NYSCA or any other organization, the nature of the complaint, the findings of any investigation and the sanction applied to the coach will be reported to the appropriate representative of said coaching organization and logged in the coach’s file.

### ➤ **Disciplinary Action for Coaches**

Possible disciplinary actions for coaches include:

- Warning to and/or apology from the coach
- Probation
- One game suspension
- Multiple game suspensions
- Season suspension
- Permanent expulsion

The specific response of the Sterling Park District Administration may include terms and conditions supplementing one or more of the listed disciplinary actions. When reviewing a concern and deciding what actions are the most appropriate in a given situation, the Sterling Park District will take into consideration various extenuating circumstances.

## **WORKING WITH PLAYERS**

### **Player Guidelines**

Participation in youth sports programs can have a lasting and meaningful effect on children's lives. Therefore, it is the goal of the Sterling Park District to provide the highest quality of athletic programs to ensure that a child's experience with sports is a positive one. It takes the cooperation of everyone involved, including the participant, to make this happen. Therefore, the Sterling Park District has established the following responsibilities for participants to adhere to:

- Players will listen to their coaches and be respectful of others.
- Players will take care of the facilities, equipment and uniforms.
- Players are encouraged to eat the right foods and drink plenty of water before and after practices and games.
- Players will avoid all types of taunting and belittling remarks to their teammates or opponents.
- Players will show good sportsmanship at all times, win or lose
- Players will not make sports a priority over schoolwork or family.
- Players will refrain from horseplay and all other dangerous activities.
- Players will participate for the love of the game and competition and not to win at all costs.

Coaches should work with individual players who are having challenges with the guidelines to ensure a positive experience for everyone. Coaches may wish to visit with a parent confidentially with any concerns over a child's behavior. The Athletics Manager is available to offer support and suggestions to finding solutions to these types of issues.

## **WORKING WITH PARENTS**

In order for a program to be truly successful, it takes the cooperation of everyone involved; players, coaches, officials, league administrators and especially parents. Parents have the following responsibilities and expectations when their child is participating in a Sterling Park District youth athletic program:

- **Parents have a responsibility to their children.**  
To make sure their child gets the most out of his or her playing experience, parents should show their unwavering support, including positive reinforcement of your child's performance and effort. This is absolutely essential, especially at an early age, to ensure their healthy development. Parents should also be positive role models, including, but not limited to, showing proper sportsmanship at all times and refraining from negativity of any kind.
- **Parents have a responsibility to the coaches.**  
Coaches volunteer their personal time. Parents should be supportive of the coach's decisions and not undermine their efforts. If a parent wishes to address an issue with a coach, it should be done in a respectful manner, at the right time and place and not in front of the children. Parents are expected to be respectful of the coaches and staff's time by being punctual for game and practice start and end times. It is highly recommended for parents to stay and support their children and assist the coach if requested.
- **Parents have a responsibility for safety and security of the league.**  
In order to maintain the safety and security of all league participants, it is essential for parents to report abusive behavior or dangerous situations that need to be addressed to the Sterling Park District Athletics Manager. This is the only way that these programs can achieve their intended goals.



- **Parents have responsibility to other parents.**  
Personal gain should not be derived from any child's performance. Competition and taunting between parents is never acceptable, and no parent should ever feel embarrassed or disappointed by their team or child's performance. **Good plays should always be cheered and disappointments should always be consoled, no matter whose team it affects.**
- **Parents have a responsibility to themselves.**  
It is the parents' responsibility to enjoy watching their child and other children participate and learn. The joy and pride associated with watching children participate in sports should be experienced to the fullest, because a lifetime of memories is being created before their very eyes.

**Physical/verbal threats or the endangerment of another individual, whether child, spectator, coach, game official, facility staff, or league official, or to otherwise spoil the experience of participation in youth sports for the children will not be tolerated and actions will be taken against those that do so.**

## **SAFETY INFORMATION**

### ➤ **Medical Conditions / Disabilities**

We ask that all parents please notify the Sterling Park District if their child has a pre-existing condition (i.e. allergies, medications, physical impairments, etc.) so that we can pass that information on to the coaches. This is essential in order to help ensure the safety of the participants.

### ➤ **First Aid & Accident/Incident Reporting**

A basic first aid kit will be provided to the game site at the beginning of the season.

If in doubt of the extent of an injury:

- Do not attempt to diagnose the extent of the injury if you are unsure of its seriousness.
- Call the emergency services (911) for emergency paramedical service. Be prepared to give emergency services your precise location. The coach's primary responsibilities are to attend to the injured person(s) and to supervise the other players. If, after attending to the primary responsibilities, another adult is available, then arrange for someone to meet paramedics at an easily designated location.
- Contact family/parents/guardian and inform them of the situation. Ask them to remain by the phone until emergency services contacts them.
- Contact the Athletics Manager.
- An adult may be needed to ride with the injured person(s) in the ambulance in the event that a parent/guardian/emergency contact is not available. The parent/guardian/emergency may need to meet the coach at the hospital.
- Complete an accident report and forward it to the Athletics Manager as soon as possible. Reports may be faxed to (815) 622-2264.

Common situations that may be encountered and the treatment that should be given:

- **Heavy Cuts**
  - Cover the bleeding area with gauze and apply pressure.
  - Never remove the old gauze, the bleeding will start again.
  - If necessary, add more gauze.
  - Elevate the cut above the heart.

- **Nose Bleeds**
  - Place the gauze or paper towel under the nose and tilt the head forward.
  - Place ice packs on the bridge of the nose if the bleeding continues.
- **Heat Exhaustion**
  - The person will be very sweaty, clammy, disoriented, and feel light headed.
  - Remove the person from the sun and call the parent/guardian/emergency contact and 911 if needed.
- **Heat Stroke (very serious)**
  - The person may be unconscious, feel very hot to the touch and/or look red.
  - Call 911 immediately
- **Splinters and Foreign Objects**
  - Do not attempt to remove, contact the parent/guardian/emergency contact.
- **Poison Ivy**
  - Immediately after exposure, wash with soap and water. Seek medical aid.
- **Bee Stings**
  - Use ice packs to reduce swelling and apply a bee sting patch.
- **Sprains and Twists**
  - Apply ice to the injured area and elevate it if possible.

➤ **Communicable Diseases**

General Precautions and Procedures:

- Disposable gloves must be worn when blood and/or body fluids are present. Gloves are available in all first aid kits. Care should be taken to avoid any bodily contact with blood or other bodily fluids of other persons. Even though gloves are used, hands must be washed with soap and water immediately and thoroughly after the gloves are removed.
- Soiled surfaces and recreational materials or any kind (including balls, exercise mats, toys and other equipment) should be promptly cleaned with a disinfectant, and not used until this is done. When cleaning up, disposable towels or tissues should be used whenever possible. After use they should be saturated with the disinfectant and disposed of in plastic bags rather than unlined containers.
- Coaches should avoid placing their hands in trash or waste containers in order to “pack down” the trash and should otherwise handle trash with care.
- All cuts and open wounds should be covered following basic first aid procedures. Protective coverings, band-aids, bandages, etc. should be worn by all staff, volunteers and participants with open wounds. Staff and volunteers are responsible for providing protective coverings to participants who have open lesions.
- Sharing of personal items should be avoided. Whenever possible, disposable items such as cups and utensils should be provided and are not to be shared by others.
- Documentation of incidences of contact with blood or other bodily fluids should be made whether or not an individual is known to have a communicable disease.

➤ **Weather Cancellations**

The Athletics Manager shall be responsible for determining whether GAMES should be cancelled up until 1 hour before the scheduled start time. Game cancellation or field closing information will be updated on the sports hotline at (815) 622-PARK. Coaches and participants will be responsible for utilizing this resource to get cancellation information. WITHIN 1 HOUR OF THE START TIME, the GAME OFFICIALS will be responsible for determining whether play should start or continue. If there are no game officials (no-show, league does not utilize officials or it is a practice) then the coaches will make the determination. The Athletics Manager, or their designate, will reserve the right to instruct the game officials or head coaches to suspend or resume play based on what is best for the safety of the participants and the best interested of the league and Sterling Park District.

➤ **Lightning Procedure:**

Whenever lightning is observed or thunder is audible, all outdoor activities should be suspended for a minimum of 30 minutes after the last sign of lightning or thunder is noted.

**The Sterling Park District thanks you for volunteering to coach!**