



## **Nicholasville-Jessamine County Parks and Recreation (NJCPR)**

### **Policy: Participant Protection Policy**

**Authorized by: Anessa Snowden, Director**

**Review Date: 08/21/2024**

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**Date: 08/20/2024**

**Review Date:**

**Review Date:**

### **Purpose and Scope**

This policy is designed to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants, particularly minors, in Nicholasville-Jessamine County Parks and Recreation and partnered programs and activities. The policy incorporates guidelines from the Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act of 2010, Kentucky Unified Juvenile Code KRS 600.020, and standards set forth by the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, including the "Child Abuse and Neglect Booklet" and 922 KAR 2:120 Child Care Center Health and Safety Standards.

Coaches, officials, staff, parks employees, volunteers, and chaperones are in positions of authority and trust. All persons on Nicholasville-Jessamine County property, in parks, or in our recreation programs are to comply with this policy.

### **Definitions**

- **Child Abuse and Neglect:** As defined by KRS 600.020, child abuse and neglect refer to acts or omissions that result in harm or substantial risk of harm to the child's physical or emotional health and development.
- **Mandated Reporter:** Any individual required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. This includes all staff, volunteers, and contractors involved in Parks and Recreation programs.

### **Policy**

Nicholasville-Jessamine County Parks and Recreation is committed to creating a safe environment for all participants. It is the responsibility of every employee, coach, official, volunteer, chaperone, and contractor to protect children from abuse and neglect and to report any suspicion of such incidents to the appropriate authorities.

Abuse or harassment may occur in several forms including, but not limited to improper or inappropriate actions, gestures, or comments related to race, national origin, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, religion, personal characteristics, or of a sexual nature. Abuse or harassment in

the form of conduct or speech that is insulting, intimidating, demeaning, offensive, humiliating, interferes with the positive and safe experience Nicholasville-Jessamine County Parks and Recreation seeks to provide. Harassment may come from adults, teenagers, or other children. NJCPR will not tolerate or condone any form of abuse or harassment.

The Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act of 2010 defines child abuse and neglect as, at a minimum:

(1) "Abused or neglected child" means a child whose health or welfare is harmed or threatened with harm when:

(a) His or her parent, guardian, person in a position of authority or special trust, as defined in KRS 532.045, or other person exercising custodial control or supervision of the child:

1. Inflicts or allows to be inflicted upon the child physical or emotional injury as defined in this section by other than accidental means;
  2. Creates or allows to be created a risk of physical or emotional injury as defined in this section to the child by other than accidental means;
  3. Engages in a pattern of conduct that renders the parent incapable of caring for the immediate and ongoing needs of the child, including but not limited to parental incapacity due to a substance use disorder as defined in KRS 222.005;
  4. Continuously or repeatedly fails or refuses to provide essential parental care and protection for the child, considering the age of the child;
  5. Commits or allows to be committed an act of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or prostitution upon the child;
  6. Creates or allows to be created a risk that an act of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or prostitution will be committed upon the child;
  7. Abandons or exploits the child;
  8. Does not provide the child with adequate care, supervision, food, clothing, shelter, and education or medical care necessary for the child's well-being when financially able to do so or offered financial or other means to do so. A parent or other person exercising custodial control or supervision of the child legitimately practicing the person's religious beliefs shall not be considered a negligent parent solely because of failure to provide specified medical treatment for a child for that reason alone. This exception shall not preclude a court from ordering necessary medical services for a child;
  9. Fails to make sufficient progress toward identified goals as set forth in the court-approved case plan to allow for the safe return of the child to the parent that results in the child remaining committed to the cabinet and remaining in foster care for fifteen (15) cumulative months out of forty-eight (48) months; or
  10. Commits or allows female genital mutilation as defined in KRS 508.125 to be committed; or
- (b) A person twenty-one (21) years of age or older commits or allows to be committed an act of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or prostitution upon a child less than sixteen (16) years of age

## **Procedure**

1. Individuals in the following positions are expected to always comply with the following procedures: employee, coach, official, volunteer, chaperone, and contractor (collectively “adult leaders”). Parents and guardians should be encouraged and given the opportunity to support and attend their child’s programs, games and practices.
2. All practices, games and programs will be open to observation by parents, guardians, and program supervisors always. Parents, guardians and family members may not cause a disturbance with the program while observing or they may be asked to leave.
3. Two-deep leadership: at least two adult leaders that have passed background checks shall be present at all programs, practices and activities. The two leaders should not be closely related family members, as defined BY the NJCPR Nepotism Policy.
4. All interaction between adult leaders and program participants shall be conducted in an open and observable environment. In the event of a program designed to provide services to participants that require personal hygiene care, trained adult leaders may provide such care, but shall be accompanied by another trained adult leader, or if accompaniment is nor possible, shall notify a program leader prior to and immediately after providing personal hygiene care.
5. Adult leaders shall not invite youth participants to their home without prior permission of a parent or guardian.
6. Youth participants should not ride in an adult leader’s vehicle without another adult present or without prior parental or guardian permission.
7. Communication between participants and adult leaders shall be positive and relevant to activity. Communication of a sexual nature is NEVER appropriate; any individual that has knowledge of such communication or has reason to believe such communication may be or has taken place, shall immediately report the incident to the program supervisor and the Director of Parks and Recreation.
8. To promote healthy, non-threatening interaction between youth participants, adult leaders should ensure that participants are within their scope of vision or range of voice, as may be appropriate, while engaging in program activities.
9. Should program travel occur, all room checks, meetings and activities shall have two-deep leadership. If participants are paired for overnight stays, they shall be of the same gender and similar age. Any other arrangements shall be discussed and with all parties and written permission obtained from the parent or guardian beforehand.
10. At a minimum, every franchise and partner league shall confirm on an annual basis that this policy is understood and communicated to everyone involved in the program/league. Every franchise and partner league shall adopt and comply with their organization’s abuse and harassment policy. If their policy conflicts with the NJCPR’s policy, the partner agency must notify Parks and Recreation and request clarification. Allegations of child abuse or neglect shall always be reported to and investigated by qualified social service staff or law enforcement.

### **Employee and Volunteer Screening**

All employees and volunteers who have direct contact with minors will undergo a background check, including a criminal history check and verification against the Kentucky Child Abuse and Neglect Registry.

### **Training**

All staff and volunteers will receive mandatory training on recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect. This training will cover:

- Definitions and signs of abuse and neglect as per KRS 600.020.
- Reporting obligations and procedures under the Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act and Kentucky state law.
- Procedures for handling disclosures of abuse from participants.

### **Reporting Procedures**

- **Immediate Reporting:** Any employee or volunteer who suspects that a child is a victim of abuse or neglect must report this immediately to the local Department for Community-Based Services (DCBS) office or the Kentucky Child Protection Hotline at 1-877-KYSAFE1 (1-877-597-2331).
- **Internal Reporting:** The employee or volunteer must also notify their immediate supervisor or the designated Child Protection Officer within Nicholasville-Jessamine County Parks and Recreation.
- **Confidentiality:** All reports of suspected abuse or neglect will be handled with the highest level of confidentiality to protect the privacy and dignity of all involved.

### **Response to Reports**

Upon receiving a report of suspected child abuse or neglect:

- Nicholasville-Jessamine County Parks and Recreation and its affiliates will cooperate fully with any investigation and take appropriate steps to protect the child involved, including removing the alleged perpetrator from contact with participants during the investigation.

### **Disciplinary Actions**

Any employee, volunteer, or contractor found to have violated this policy or engaged in any form of child abuse or neglect will face immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination and legal prosecution.

### **Review and Updates**

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to ensure compliance with all federal and state laws, as well as to incorporate best practices in child protection.

### **Contact Information**

For questions or concerns about this policy, please contact the Nicholasville-Jessamine County Parks and Recreation offices at 859-885-9787.

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**References:**

- Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act of 2010
- Kentucky Unified Juvenile Code KRS 600.020
- The Legislative Research Commission [statute.aspx \(ky.gov\)](http://statute.aspx(ky.gov))
- Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services "Child Abuse and Neglect Booklet"
- 922 KAR 2:120 Child Care Center Health and Safety Standards