



<b>POLICY TITLE: Code of Conduct</b>		
<b>Policy Number: 06.003</b>	<b>Review Cycle: Annual</b>	<b>Effective Date: 2/2/2024</b>
<b>Reviewer: Deputy Director</b>		<b>Approval Authority: Director</b>

**SCOPE:**

This policy applies to Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks staff and the public that use or participate in BCRP owned or operated facilities and programs.

**POLICY STATEMENT:**

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to create a safe and enjoyable environment for all visitors and participants in Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks owned or operated facilities and programs.

**General Code of Conduct**

**Expectations:**

All visitors and participants are expected to:

- Treat all people with dignity and respect
- Use appropriate language, tones, and volume when communicating
- Be responsible and exercise self-discipline
- Respect the rights and privileges of others
- Respect property, including BCRP owned and operated facilities and equipment
- Cooperate with staff and follow all rules and regulations

**Prohibited Conduct:**

The following conduct is prohibited in Recreation and Parks Facilities and programs:

- Physical, verbal, or emotional abuse or harassment of any person.
- Assault will not be tolerated!
  - Hitting, punching, or kicking someone
  - Spitting on someone
  - Throwing something at someone
  - Threatening to harm someone
  - Forcibly touching someone without their consent

- Discrimination or prejudice based on race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, marital status, or any other protected characteristic.
- Destruction or damage of park property or equipment.
- Use of drugs is prohibited.
- Alcohol is only allowed in authorized areas associated with a Facility, Pavilion or Picnic Area Permit.
- Open fires are only authorized in line with an approved appropriate program or activity and with necessary external authorization/permits as well.
- Public intoxication or disorderly conduct will result in a call to the police and removal from the facility.
- Littering or improper disposal of trash.
- No Smoking or Vaping within 30 feet of an activity, playground, or County Building. No smoking or vaping on Baltimore County Public School property.
- Use of loud or amplified music without a permit. Please be courteous to others
- No organized activities without an approved permit.
- Animals are only allowed in designated areas. Registered service animals are permitted.

#### **Enforcement:**

Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks staff are authorized to enforce this Code of Conduct. Any person who violates this Code of Conduct may be asked to leave the park or facility, and may be subject to further disciplinary action, including suspension or revocation of privileges.

#### **Reporting Violations and Public Acknowledgement:**

If the public sees someone violating the Code of Conduct, they should report the violation to a Recreation and Parks staff member immediately.

#### **Parent/Volunteer/Guardian/Participant/Coaches Code of Conduct**

##### **Expectations:**

**All Visitors** are expected to:

- Treat all people with dignity and respect
- Use appropriate language, tones, and volume when communicating
- Be responsible and exercise self-discipline
- Respect the rights and privileges of others
- Respect property, including BCRP owned and operated facilities and equipment
- Cooperate with staff and follow all rules and regulations

**All Players/Participants** are expected to:

- Players and participants are expected to demonstrate good positive behavior at all times, including during games, practices, activities, and when interacting with staff, teammates, opponents, other participants, coaches, volunteers and officials. This includes:
  - Treating others with respect, regardless of their skill level or background
  - Playing and participate fair and within the rules
  - Accepting the results of games and activities gracefully
  - Refraining from negative or abusive language or behavior
- Players and participants are expected to take all necessary precautions to ensure the safety of themselves and others. This includes:
  - Wearing appropriate safety equipment
  - Following safety rules and procedures
  - Reporting any unsafe conditions or behaviors immediately

**All Parents/Guardians** are expected to:

- **Respect and Courtesy:** Treat all participants, including staff, coaches, volunteers, officials, other parents, and children, with respect and courtesy.
- **Positive Support:** Encourage and support all participants in their endeavors, regardless of their skill level or performance.
- **Sportsmanship:** Promote fair play and sportsmanship at all times. Refrain from booing, taunting, using profane language or gestures, or engaging in any other unsportsmanlike conduct.
- **Respect for Decisions:** Respect the decisions of coaches, volunteers, officials, and other authorized personnel. Avoid openly questioning or confronting them before, during, or after events.
- **Open Communication:** Communicate any concerns or issues with coaches, volunteers or program leaders in a calm and respectful manner.
- **Safety:** Prioritize the safety and well-being of all participants. Refrain from engaging in behavior that could endanger oneself or others.
- **Positive Role Model:** Set a positive example for children by demonstrating respectful and appropriate behavior.

**All Coaches and Volunteers** are expected to:

- **Respect:** Coaches and Volunteers should treat all individuals with respect, regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity, ability level, or background. This includes respecting athletes, participants, parents, officials, opponents, and spectators.
- **Integrity:** Coaches and Volunteers should be honest and ethical in their conduct.
- **Fairness:** Coaches and Volunteers should treat all participants fairly and equitably. This includes providing all participants with equal opportunities to participate and develop their skills.
- **Responsibility:** Coaches and Volunteers should take responsibility for their actions and the actions of the participants that they oversee. They should be role models for these participants and help them to develop positive character traits. All coaches and volunteers must be background-checked before the start of their service.
- **Competence:** Coaches and Volunteers should possess the necessary knowledge and skills to oversee the activity they are working in. They should stay up-to-date on the latest techniques and best practices.

**Enforcement:**

Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks staff are authorized to enforce the Code of Conduct. Any person in violation of the Code of Conduct may be subject to formal disciplinary actions. All such actions shall be governed by the following principles:

- **Corrective.** The intent of the disciplinary action is not to punish, but to correct unacceptable behavior. Accordingly, disciplinary action should only be as severe as necessary to bring about the desired change.
- **Consistent.** Similar consequences shall be imposed for like offenses.
- **Nondiscriminatory.** Disciplinary action shall not be influenced by race, color, religion, age, personal beliefs, national origin, disability, gender, sexual orientation or any other factor other than the circumstances of the incident.
- **Timely.** Disciplinary action shall be initiated as soon as practical following the occurrence of the said infraction.
- **Progressive.** A more severe action shall be imposed upon an individual if the person has received prior disciplinary action. Prior offenses need not have been of the same nature as the current offense to warrant a more severe action.

The Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks reserves the right to have any individual removed from County recreational facilities, parks and/or programs, and subsequently suspend participation for a defined length of time in accordance with this policy. Any participant suspended from a County recreational facility, park or program is suspended from all Parks and Recreation programs, parks and recreational facilities. Refunds will not be provided to anyone asked to leave any facility, park or program for disciplinary reasons.

On the day of the incident, the supervisor on duty of the recreation facility, park or program can require any participant to leave the premises immediately due to an incident requiring disciplinary action. Staff members will document each incident on an official Parks and Recreation Incident-Accident Report form. Incident-Accident Reports will be retained for five (5) years in accordance with the Department's Records Management Policy.

Incidents potentially requiring disciplinary action shall be immediately reported to the appropriate site manager and division chief. Final decisions regarding the length of the suspension, if warranted, will be made by the Deputy Director and/or the Director of Recreation and Parks, following the terms outlined in this policy and if needed, in accordance with the 08-002 Handling of Disruptive Behavior Policy.

Written notification of suspension will be sent to a participant's parents or legal guardian if that individual is under 18 years of age (assuming the department is able to secure a method of contact). If the participant is over 18, written notification will be sent directly to the participant. All suspensions begin immediately, with the next calendar day after the incident considered day one of the suspension.

#### **REFERENCES:**

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08-002 Handling of Disruptive Behavior Policy

#### **REVISIONS:**

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Policy Created 2/26/24

Redrafted 12/3/24 To include language inclusive of Nature activities, use of open flames and clarity on approval of alcohol in certain cases, in addition to inclusion of Handling of Disruptive Behavior Policy.