



## Ellington Recreation Department Team Attendance Policy

In a team sport, full and equal participation by each member of the team is essential to creating a positive, productive, safe and fair experience for all members of the team, the coaches and the parents. This team attendance policy is intended to promote values of the team, teamwork, commitment, responsibility and fairness as to all who participate, and applies to both the boys and girls travel team programs during the prime program season, to include the lacrosse program, but is NOT applicable to the recreation levels or off prime season team programs. We encourage, however, all recreation and non-prime season team members to attend as many practices and games as they can, for his/her own benefit and the benefit of the other team members, because we think that such attendance would aid in his/her development and enjoyment of the game, and as it promotes team unity and the value of commitment. As to the recreation level and non-prime season programs, the Commission's general policies regarding attendance shall remain applicable (as a general statement, if attendance is sporadic, and absent mitigating circumstance, playing time may be reduced with the consent of the Recreation Director).

Travel team players are REQUIRED to attend ALL games and practices. We view practices as, if not more, important as games. A player's failure to attend games and/or practices has a negative impact upon other team members and the coaches both physically and psychologically, and simply is not fair and equitable to the team members and coaches who make attendance to the team practices and games a priority. Attending practices and games is important both in developing a player's particular sport's abilities but also, and perhaps more importantly, to developing a player's responsibility and obligation to his/her teammates to be a total team player.

The purpose of this policy is to make clear to all team members, the coaches and the parents, that missed practices and/or games WILL affect the particular team member's playing time and his/her continued participation as a rostered team member, as the failure and/or lack of effort to attend games and practices has a negative impact upon the team and the overall individual and team success. This attendance policy is not intended to penalize players, but rather to promote attendance and reward those team members who make the team practices and games a priority. Membership on travel team is to be considered a privilege and an honor.

Players who miss travel team practices or games without excused reason will receive reduced or no game playing time, or removal from the team, based upon the policy guidelines contained herein. Examples (non-exclusive) of excused absences are as follows: Religious event, if player's attendance/participation at such religious event is required; school event, if player's attendance/participation at such school event is required; injury, when attendance is prohibitive; illness, supported by a doctor's note or if the player missed or was excused from school for being sick;

serious illness or death in the immediate family; a failure to attend a practice or game that is scheduled or re-scheduled by the coach on less than 48 hours' notice; extenuating family circumstances which are disclosed to the Recreation Director or recreation department administrator, in writing, on or before the last scheduled evaluation date for team selection; and a planned family vacation which was disclosed to the Recreation Director or recreation department administrator, in writing, on or before the last schedule evaluation date for the team selection. Examples (non-exclusive) of unexcused absences are as follows: Conflict with another sport activity; playdate; birthday party; a conflict with a dance, gymnastics, martial arts, music, or like kind, activity; a family commitment; and general schoolwork. Absences from practices or games without reasonable prior notice to the head coach, regardless of reason for absence, shall be considered an unexcused absence. It shall be the responsibility of each and every parent to ensure that their child attends all the practices and games that are scheduled for the program/team and to give timely, prior notice to the coach if his/her child will not be able to attend a particular practice or game. In this regard, it is preferable that an e-mail or text be sent to the head coach at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the scheduled game or practice. A player who attends a practice or game but who is unable to participate due to injury or illness shall be considered to have attended the practice or game for the purposes of this attendance policy.

Up to four (4) unexcused absences are allowed during the season. A 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> unexcused absence shall automatically result in his/her playing time being reduced by 20 percent (20%) for each such absence of the maximum playing time for the sport for which he/she is registered. Any subsequent unexcused absence shall result in the player being removed from the team for the balance of the season.

This policy MUST be uniformly and fairly enforced for all participants by the head coach. The head coach has no discretion in the enforcement of this policy. The head coach, or one of his/her designated assistants, SHALL take attendance at and keep a contemporaneous record of attendance for all games and practices and must take special note of all unexcused absences. All absences, whether excused or unexcused, must be properly and timely documents. Such attendance records SHALL be delivered to the Recreation Director weekly.

Parent of any player who is to be removed from the team based upon this attendance policy may seek a hearing with the Recreation Director with regard to such proposed removal from the team (and the Recreation Director may, in his/her sole discretion, refer the matter to the Recreation Commission for consideration), but not as to any other disciplinary action taken or to be taken in accordance with this policy.