

BASKETBALL RULES & POLICIES

3rd-8th graders in NVJCYO

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The following rules and policies of NVJCYO Basketball supplement the standard Virginia State High School Basketball ("State") rules as governed by the National Federation of State High School Associations ("Federation") and shall govern in the case of an inconsistency with State or Federation rules. All rules and policies may be amended by the Diocese at any time.



Office of Youth, Campus, and Young Adult Ministries

www.arlingtondiocese.org/youth-ministry

“Sports contribute to the love of life, teaches sacrifice, respect and responsibility, leading to the full development of every human person.”

—St. John Paul II

	Specifically how is our parish/team using sports to...	Coaches can promote...
Advocacy	...ensure a safe environment for youth? ...foster leadership in each youth? ...foster the development of marginalized youth? ... promote confidence?	...self-confidence; supportive environment among teammates, parents; the idea that <u>each</u> youth has leadership potential by providing opportunities to lead drills and activities; the support of players who need the most work or seem ostracized; a safe environment; identification of leaders of all sorts.
Catechesis	...teach and reinforce virtue in real-life experiences?	...sportsmanship; humility; obedience; respect; relying on others; care for others; corporal & spiritual works of mercy; persistence.
Community Life	...promote the team as community? ...make each youth feel part of the parish community? ...encourage family involvement?	...teamwork; engagement in the larger community; the idea of coach as role model; families getting involved in the parish; team socials; team activities and service for—and with—the parish (altar servers, etc.); authentic hospitality to guests.
Evangelization	...help each youth understand that how we play reflects our values? ...help each youth to be more Christ-like?	...demonstration of virtue and sportsmanship during practices and games to allow us to live our faith and for others to see that (effective player and coach role modeling makes others want what we have).
Justice and Service	...learn about the importance of respect? ...teach about service to others?	...assisting teammates who are in a tough spot; helping teammates outside of practice/games; respecting opponents, refs, coaches; corporal & spiritual acts of mercy; a team service project.
Leadership Development	...identify existing youth leaders and cultivate leadership characteristics in all? ...build confidence in each youth?	... youth respectfully advocating for themselves at practice; providing each youth with a responsibility and a leadership task; encouraging contributions by each youth; the rotation of team roles.
Pastoral Care	... to promote the total development of each youth? ...develop adult leaders and coaches to have the skills and attributes necessary to develop each youth?	...the total development of each youth; understanding each’s strengths and weaknesses; treating others fairly in a game or practice; the art of winning and losing gracefully.
Prayer and Worship	...help youth become comfortable with prayer in their daily lives? ...encourage participation in the sacraments of our faith? ...help youth reflect on spiritual needs?	... faithfulness & what that looks like for a Catholic; prayer, by the coach being comfortable in leading prayer and ensuring the team prays before & after each practice and game; personal reflection by players about expected attitudes and behaviors in parish sports; team/families attending Adoration, Confession, Mass together.

(Components of Youth Ministry in left column developed by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Renewing the Vision.*)

Rule/Policy Variations by Grade/Gender (a snapshot)

Grade/ Gender League	B-ball Size	Length of Game/ Regulation Play	# of One- Minute Timeouts <u>PER</u> <u>GAME</u>	Overtime*	Minimum Playing Time per Player per Game	3-Point Rule	Press	Foul Shots on <u>7th</u> Team Foul**
3 rd Grade Boys	27.5	20-minute running clock halves (2)	4 total (plus 3 min at half)	None	13	No	No Defense in the backcourt	13ft (2ft short of regulation)
3 rd Grade Girls	27.5	20-minute running clock halves (2)	4 total (plus 3 min at half)	None	13	No	No Defense in the backcourt	13ft (2ft short of regulation)
4 th Grade Boys	28.5	14-minute halves (2)	4 total (plus 3 min half)	One 3- minute period	9	No	No Defense in the backcourt	13ft (2ft short of regulation)
4 th Grade Girls	28.5	14-minute halves (2)	4 total (plus 3 min at half)	One 3- minute period	9	No	No Defense in the backcourt	13ft (2ft short of regulation)
5 th Grade Boys	28.5	14-minute halves (2)	4 total (plus 3 min at half)	One 3- minute period	9	No	No Defense in the backcourt	15 ft= regulation
5 th Grade Girls	28.5	14-minute halves (2)	4 total (plus 3 min at half)	One 3- minute period	9	No	No Defense in the backcourt	15 ft= regulation
6 th Grade Boys	28.5	14-minute halves (2)	4 total (plus 3 min at half)	One 3- minute period, then sudden death if nec	9	Yes, <u>in gyms where 3-point line is clearly established</u>	No Defense in backcourt by team leading <u>by 10 pts.</u> or more	15 ft= regulation
6 th Grade Girls	28.5	14-minute halves (2)	4 total (plus 3 min at half)	One 3- minute period, then sudden death if nec	9	Yes, <u>in gyms where 3-point line is clearly established</u>	No Defense in backcourt by team leading <u>by 10 pts.</u> or more	15 ft= regulation
7 th Grade Boys	29.5	15-minute halves (2)	5 total (plus 3 min at half)	One 3- minute period, then sudden death if nec	7.5	Yes, <u>in gyms where 3-point line is clearly established</u>	No Defense in backcourt by team leading <u>by 15 pts.</u> or more	15 ft= regulation
7 th Grade Girls	28.5	15-minute halves (2)	5 total (plus 3 min at half)	One 3- minute period, then sudden death if nec	7.5	Yes, <u>in gyms where 3-point line is clearly established</u>	No Defense in backcourt by team leading <u>by 15 pts.</u> or more	15 ft= regulation
8 th Grade Boys	29.5	15-minute halves (2)	5 total (plus 3 min at half)	One 3- minute period, then sudden death if nec	7.5	Yes, <u>in gyms where 3-point line is clearly established</u>	No Defense in backcourt by team leading <u>by 20 pts.</u> or more	15 ft= regulation
8 th Grade Girls	28.5	15-minute halves (2)	5 total (plus 3 min at half)	One 3- minute period, then sudden death if nec	7.5	Yes, <u>in gyms where 3-point line is clearly established</u>	No Defense in backcourt by team leading <u>by 20 pts.</u> or more	15 ft= regulation

***Overtime Timeouts:** One extra timeout per overtime period allotted each team. **See foul shot rule for 3rd-5th.

SECTION: PRE-GAME

I. Prayer

Prayer is essential to our lives, our community, and to this activity. Please make certain that all coaches and players reinforce its importance in practices and at games.

- A. All games must begin with a prayer. Teams meet at midcourt.
- B. Coaches must close each post-game wrap up with a prayer.
- C. Gym (including spectators) should be quiet and reverent prior to the start of prayer. Coaches, please ask your spectators who are able to stand during prayer.
- D. Acting commissioner, commissioner or other appropriate individual will use script provided by the Diocese. (If a priest is in attendance, ask him if he'd be available to bless the players/activity.)

II. Number of Players Required/Forfeit

- A. If a coach does not have (5) players at scheduled game time, the coach may either forfeit or start the game at scheduled game time if his/her team has at least four (4) players and may insert the 5th players as soon as the 5th player arrives. The 5th player may only enter the game during a dead ball situation, per normal substitution rules. A team without at least 4 players at game time is an automatic forfeit. [No grace period exists anymore.]

III. Designated Start Time

- A. Games shall start promptly at their designated time.
- B. No cancellations or rescheduling shall be made without the prior approval of the NVJCYO Basketball Program-wide Commissioner.
- C. There shall be a minimum of 5 minutes of warm up prior to each game. Coaches who arrive early are encouraged to get their teams warmed up outside if there is a safe place to do so.

IV. Official Scorekeeper and Timekeeper

- A. The home team or visiting team shall provide a capable and responsible person to be the official scorekeeper for the entire game using the provided scorebook. The other team shall provide a capable and responsible person to be the official timekeeper for the entire game, using the equipment provided.
- B. Coaches should bring an extra scorebook to games in case of a missing scorebook.
- C. The official scorekeeper and the timekeeper must be seated together at the scorer's table and remain neutral—the scorekeeper or timekeeper shall not cheer or coach players or question officials' calls. Coaches are expected to ensure their representative at the table remains neutral but may not interact with the representative at the table from the other team other than to ask about the number of fouls for an individual player. Failure to abide by neutrality will result in the timekeeper or scorekeeper being asked to leave the table.

- D. No one other than the scorekeeper and timekeeper will be seated at the table. (Exception: the Acting Commissioner may choose to sit at the table depending on circumstances of the game.)
- E. For each game, the second team listed on the official league schedule shall be the home team.
- F. If the electronic clock is not working for whatever reason the officials and both teams' head coaches must agree to an alternative method of timekeeping and how and how often notifications regarding remaining time and score will be made.

V. Roster Entry

- A. Each coach shall have the team's players listed by name and number in the official score book at least 5 minutes prior to the start of the game. Failure to do so would result in one technical foul being assessed for an administrative error in the official score book. (Adding a player or players after the game has started would also elicit a technical foul.)

VI. Officiating

- A. Two referees shall be arranged for each game.
- B. If only one referee is present at scheduled game time, the game will be played as scheduled and will be considered an official game. If no referees are present, a fifteen (15) minute grace period will take effect. If at least one referee arrives during the grace period, the game will begin immediately and will be considered an official game. If the grace period expires and no referees are present, then the game will not be played.

VII. Basketballs

- A. Each team should have a good, preferably leather, basketball to submit before each game for consideration to play. Specific game basketballs to be used shall be chosen by the game officials and will meet the specifications set forth by the Federation. Leagues will use the size ball designated as follows:
 - (a) 3rd grade boys and 3rd grade girls will use 27.5 size ball
 - (b) Other than 3rd grade, all girls teams will use 28.5 size ball
 - (c) Boys 4th, 5th and 6th grades will use 28.5 size ball
 - (d) Boys 7th, 8th grades will use 29.5 size ball

VIII. Basketball Rim Height

- A. For 3rd grade leagues, the height of the rim shall be (8) feet from the playing surface. For 4th-8th grade leagues, the rim shall be regulation (10 feet) from the playing surface.

IX. Uniforms

- A. Shoes.

1. Players must wear tennis or other athletic shoes that are in good condition to ensure safety of the youth and protection of the gymnasium floors. Old worn shoes may not provide proper support or traction and may collect dirt or gravel that may scar and damage the floors, especially hardwood floors. No one may wear street shoes while performing on playing surfaces.

B. Jerseys.

1. Players shall be uniformed and have identifiable numbers.
2. Uniforms may include non-standard basketball numerals (6, 7, 8, 9).
3. The league does not have a regulation on the width of the uniform trim. However, every effort should be made to conform to the standard rules for uniforms made by the Federation. No uniform shall be worn in such a way as to attempt to confuse an official or the opposing team.
4. Any shirt worn beneath the game jersey must be similar in color to the predominant color of the body of the jersey and must be unadorned and of a single solid color. Exception: If a team wears reversible jerseys and must reverse their jersey color at a particular game, players may wear undershirts that are not of a similar color to the reversed color of the jerseys. As an example, if a team wears red undershirts with a red jersey color, and needs to reverse their jersey to white for a game, they may continue to wear the original red undershirt with the white jersey color. Notwithstanding the above exception, any player in violation of the rule will not be permitted to play until the uniform meets the above standards.
5. Reversing jerseys are preferred instead of using pull-over jerseys.
6. Players should also be prepared with a second shirt that is similar in color to the reversible side (if available) of their team's jersey. If requested to reverse the jersey by the officials and the proper color shirt worn beneath the game jersey is not available, then the players will be allowed to play.
7. Teams should have pull-over jerseys at a game in case the two opposing teams have the same or nearly the same color schemes. When there is a color scheme conflict, the visiting team will wear the pull-overs.
8. All jerseys must be tucked into uniform shorts. The only exception will be the girls uniform where the jersey is made to be worn outside the uniform pants. Normally this type of jersey has trim all the way around the jersey.

C. Shorts/other. The only garment that may extend below the game short is "compression" pants. Boxer type shorts and/or sweatpants will not be acceptable at any time. Any player in violation of this rule will not be permitted to play until the uniform meets the above standards.

D. If, for medical reasons, an exception must be made to the rules regarding clothing under the jersey or shorts, a signed note from the player's medical professional must be presented to the Commissioner prior to scheduled game play.

E. Wearing of jewelry during games is not permitted. This includes pierced earrings. Consistent with VHSL rules, the wearing of band aids to cover the earrings on the ear is prohibited. No bobby pins or any metal or hard substance will be worn in the hair. Wrist bands other than sweat wrist bands of any kind are prohibited. Exception per NFHS rules: Religious and medical-alert medals are not considered jewelry. A religious medal

must be taped to the player and worn under the uniform. A medical-alert medal must be taped to the player with the medical information visible.

- F. A guard, cast or brace made of a hard and unyielding substance, such as, but not limited to, leather, plaster, plastic or metal shall **not** be worn on the elbow, hand, finger/thumb, wrist or forearm; even though covered with soft padding.

SECTION: THE GAME

I. Time

A. Length of Game—Regulation Play

1. 3rd Grade will play two (2) 20-minute halves, with a running clock. The clock will run continuously during each half, except for the following situations:
 - a. An official timeout, to include for injuries, disciplinary or administrative matters.
 - b. A timeout called by either team.
 - c. During the last minute of the second half.
2. 4th thru 6th grade leagues will play two (2) 14-minute halves, with the clock stopping on all whistles.
3. 7th & 8th grade leagues will play two (2) 15-minute halves, with the clock stopping on all whistles.
4. There will be a three (3) minute break between halves for all ages/grades.

B. Timeouts in Regulation Play

1. 3rd-6th Grade: four (4) one-minute time outs per game shall be allotted each team.
2. 7th-8th Grade: five (5) one-minute time outs per game shall be allotted each team.

C. Overtime

1. In the 3rd grade leagues, there will be no overtime play.
2. In 4th and 5th grade there will be a maximum of one overtime period, consisting of three minutes. If after that overtime period the teams are tied then the game will be considered a tie.
3. In the 6th-8th grade leagues, one three-minute overtime period shall be played. If the score is tied at the conclusion of the one 3-minute overtime period in a 6th, 7th, or 8th grade game, the clock will be reset to zero time allotted, the ball should be tipped off at center court, and the first team to score any legitimate point (free throw, 2-point, or 3-point shot) wins the game.

D. Timeouts in Overtime

1. One (1) extra time out per overtime period shall be allotted each team
2. All unused time outs from regular scheduled playing time will be advanced to the overtime period(s).

II. Pressing

- A. In the 3rd, 4th & 5th grade leagues, there will be no defense in the back court.
 1. When a team secures a defensive rebound, the opposing team must immediately fall back to a position that is 3 feet past the half court line without applying any defensive pressure in the backcourt, to allow the team in possession to advance the ball past the half court line.

2. The defensive team must remain 3 feet from the half court line to allow the offensive team room to cross half court.
3. Once the offensive player with the ball completely crosses the half court line or passes the ball over the half court line to a teammate in the 3 foot zone and the player in the 3 foot zone has control, then the defense may advance to try to apply defensive pressure to the offense.
4. During the last 10 seconds of the 2nd half or during the last 10 seconds of any overtime period, for a team that is ahead in the score, during all inbounds situations resulting from a stoppage of play, the team inbounding the ball must inbound the ball into their own frontcourt from the foul line extended in their own frontcourt, regardless of where the ball was at the time of the play stoppage. During this situation, if the ball is inbounded into the backcourt, then it is a backcourt violation. This rule does not apply to any sudden death period. [The intent of the rule is to prevent a team from inbounding the ball into the backcourt and running out the clock if there are 10 seconds or less time remaining. Basically, if there are 10 seconds or less remaining, and the team that is leading in the score has to inbound the ball for any reason, the referee should move the inbounds spot to the frontcourt and require the leading team to inbound the ball into the frontcourt only.]

B. In the 6th grade leagues, there will be no press in the back court by a team leading by ten (10) or more points.

C. In the 7th grade leagues, there will be no press in the back court by a team leading by fifteen (15) or more points.

D. In the 8th grade leagues, there will be no press in the back court by a team leading by twenty (20) or more points.

E. Sanction:

- a. First violation of a pressing rule will result in a warning to the offending team.
- b. Subsequent violations will result in the assessment of technical fouls.

III. Fouls

- A. In the 3rd and 4th grade leagues, all free throws will be taken two feet in front of the regulation free throw line. If there is no line present, the officials will estimate the location of the line for the shooter. The shooter will be allowed to jump from behind the line (marked or estimated) and land in front of the line. The shooter will not proceed forward to attempt to secure a rebound before the ball hits the rim. Illegal contact with the free throw shooter will constitute a foul. The officials will have sole judgment regarding free throw violations and fouls. **EXCEPTION TO THE RULE:** In the 3rd grade league, where "hanging" style 8-foot baskets are in use, free throws will be taken from the regulation free throw line, and the shooter will be allowed to jump from behind the line and land in front of the line. (Justification: The "hanging" style 8 foot baskets already move

the basket approximately 2 feet in front of the regulation hoop, so no "taped" free throw line should be necessary.)

- B. In the 5th grade league, all free throws will be taken from behind the regulation free throw line, but shooter will be allowed to jump over the line and land in the lane. The shooter will not proceed forward to attempt to secure a rebound before the ball hits the rim. Illegal contact with the free throw shooter will constitute a foul. The officials will have sole judgment regarding free throw violations and fouls.
- C. All second half team fouls carry over into overtime period(s) and sudden death.

IV. Three Point Rule

- A. The high school three-point shot rule will be in effect for the 6th, 7th, & 8th grade leagues and only in the gyms where the three-point line is clearly established.
- B. If a gym does not have a three-point line clearly established, coaches, players or officials will not attempt to use tape or other temporary markings to attempt to establish such a line. The lack of a three-point line will not have an effect on whether or not a game will be played at a particular gym.

V. Bench Decorum

- A. For many reasons, including player and official safety as well as coaches who stand may obstruct the view of the scoring table, coaches must remain seated on the bench at all times during the game. The Head Coach may stand momentarily during the game **only** during the following situations:
 - 1. To enter the court by permission of an official to attend to an injured player.
 - 2. To request a time-out or signal his/her players to request a time-out.
 - 3. To confer with personnel at the side of the scorer's table to request a time-out for a correctable error.
 - 4. To confer with personnel at the side of the scorer's table to request a time-out to prevent or rectify a timing or scoring mistake or an alternating possession mistake.
 - 5. To spontaneously react to an outstanding play by a team member or to acknowledge a replaced player(s) but must **immediately** return to his/her seat.
 - 6. To replace or remove a disqualified/injured player or player directed to leave the game.

7. To confer with bench personnel and players within the confines of the bench area during a charged time-out or the intermission between halves and extra periods.
- B. Assistant coaches and other adults in the bench area may not stand except for an injury or during time-outs.
- C. Violations of A or B will result in a technical foul. If an acting commissioner witnesses violations that are not called by the officials, the coach must be asked to abide by the rule, and further action may be taken by the league.
- D. If a head coach, assistant coach, or bench receives a technical foul the head coach must then be seated the remainder of the game.
- E. Coaches and bench personnel are expected to adhere to all bench decorum rules as outlined in NFHS Rules 10-5 and 10-6, as well as all rules specified in the Diocese of Arlington Code of Conduct.
- F. Any coach or player who is ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be automatically suspended from the team's next game.

SECTION: POST GAME

I. Handshake

- A. All coaches and players must participate in team handshake with opponents. Failure to do so—or inappropriate or unsportsmanlike behavior—will result in a minimum of an automatic one game suspension.

II. Prayer and Departure

- A. Due to time constraints related to gym space, coaches and players should immediately clear the benches after the handshake.
- B. Coaches must ensure that their players AND spectators stay off the court after a game so the other teams may warm up.
- C. If there is a game after, post-game wrap-up talk should be held either outside or in a hallway—not in the gym.
- D. Post-game wrap up must close with a prayer.

III. Score Reporting

- A. The coach of the winning team shall post the score into the online system, or—based on the guidance by the commissioner—text or email the score to the commissioner.

IV. Protests

- A. A game may be protested in a case of a rule discrepancy, but not in the case of a judgment call. An official protest shall be made at that point in the game when the discrepancy occurred, not at a later time, and shall be designated clearly in the official score book by the scorekeeper and referee at that point in the game. The protesting coach must present his/her protest to the Commissioner in a written statement within 24 hours of the game's end. The Commissioner will confer with the basketball commissioner and the Office of Youth, Campus and Young Adult Ministries before a decision is made.

V. Forfeits

- A. If a team forfeits two games in the regular season, then the team is not eligible to play in the tournament.

SECTION: FACILITIES/BEHAVIOR/DISCIPLINE

I. Acting Commissioner

- A. The League Commissioner will appoint an Acting Commissioner for all of the games. Acting Commissioners may do more than one game in a row as determined by the League Commissioner. Duties of an Acting Commissioner will be provided prior to the start of the season.
- B. If an AC does not perform his/her assigned times:
 - 1. First Infraction – One game suspension of the coach and make up the number of AC games missed
 - 2. Second Infraction – Three (3) game suspension of the coach and make up the number of AC games missed
 - 3. Third Infraction – The coach will be suspended indefinitely

II. Christian Sportsmanship Liaison

- A. Each team must have a Christian Sportsmanship Liaison at each game for the entire duration of the game.
- B. The Christian Sportsmanship Liaisons from each team should introduce themselves to each other and to the Acting Commissioner prior to the start of the game.
- C. Duties of the Christian Sportsmanship Liaison will be provided to teams prior to the start of the season.
- D. Failure to have a Christian Sportsmanship Liaison will result in suspension of the coach for one game.

III. Game Facilities

- A. Coaches, players, cheerleaders, and spectators shall abide by the diocesan, parish, school and gym rules set forth at venues/facilities used by the league. This includes the following rule among others: **NO FOOD, NO CHEWING GUM, NO DRINKS, AND NO SMOKING** in the gyms. Water bottles should be left in safe foyer areas.
- B. Each head coach is expected to see that the team adheres to the facility rules and to oversee any other aspect of the behavior of the team. Each head coach is expected also to advise the team's supporters of the rules of facilities and to take an active part in preventing or stopping any misbehavior (including abusive language) by the team's supporters. Spectators, participants and coaches are expected to abide by the Diocese of Arlington Code of Conduct. Any spectator, participant, or coach exhibiting misbehavior or any breach of the Code of Conduct shall be subject to suspension or expulsion by the League Commissioner, Acting Commissioner, Basketball Program Manager or the Diocese of Arlington Office of Youth, Campus and Young Adult Ministries.
- C. If coach, player or spectator is ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct from a game, the coach, player or spectator will be suspended, at minimum, for the team's next scheduled game. If the player, coach or spectator is ejected a second time the player, coach or spectator will be suspended for the rest of the season. Any coach, player or spectator that has been suspended for a game may not attend that game, nor any other Diocese of Arlington league game regardless of league, while serving the suspension.
- D. All sanctions for any rule or policy in this document or inappropriate behavior not delineated in this document are at the sole discretion of the Diocese.

SECTION: PLAYING TIME POLICY

I. **Requirements:**

- A. **Grade 3:** 13 minutes of playing time during running clock is required. However, the league strongly recommends roughly equal playing time throughout the game.
- B. **Grade 4 & 5 & 6:** 9 minutes of playing time is required. However, the league strongly recommends roughly equal playing time throughout the game.
- C. **Grade 7 & 8:** 7.5 minutes is required. However, the league strongly recommends roughly equal playing time throughout the game.
- D. Any violation of these requirements must be brought to the attention of the Acting Commissioner by a coach.
 1. Spectators may not approach the Acting Commissioner on the topic. Any discussion must be between the spectator/parent and their coach—preferably after the game.
 2. The Acting Commissioner will report all circumstances surrounding the situation to the League Commissioner. After investigation and in consultation with league officials, if a violation is found, the Commissioner will enforce the following:
 - (a) 1st Infraction: written warning to the offending coach and notify NVJCYO parish representative.
 - (b) 2nd Infraction: Suspension of coach for one game and notify NVJCYO parish representative.
 - (c) 3rd Infraction: Additional 1 game suspension of coach and notify NVJCYO parish representative.
 - (d) 4th Infraction: Suspension of coach for remainder of season (if fewer than 3 games remain, the coach will be suspended for the remainder of the season and first two games the following season if applicable.) Any subsequent infractions in later seasons by this coach will result in immediate suspension for remainder of season.

II. **Beyond the Requirements/Viewing as a Ministry**

- The league requirements above are a MINIMUM. Parishes are encouraged to review the philosophy of their own programs with parish leaders and within the context of being a ministry to each and every youth on the team and, if the parish chooses, it may set its own minimum playing time requirements to exceed those indicated.
- For all of the age groups comprising this league (3-8) the Office of Youth, Campus, and Young Adult Ministries recommends that playing time be as equal as possible.

III. **Reasonableness, Interpretation, Exceptions and Enforcement of Requirements**

Spirit of the Policy

It is important to note that this league relies primarily on the good will of those involved adhering to the principles of the league. It is not feasible for the league to be the primary enforcer of playing time or many other policies.

Rather, the responsibility falls on each coach to live within the spirit of the policy and on the parish to ensure its

coaches do so. As such, the primary, most effective, and most Christian enforcement of playing time policies will fall to an individual parent and an individual coach sitting down to discuss any issues in a respectful way. If that conversation bears no fruit then the parent and/or coach should meet with the parish representative to discuss.

Implementation

- It is up to the coach to implement playing time based on the coach's overall game plan. There is no requirement that the playing time be contiguous (e.g., a full quarter at a time); however, as many coaches know, players at these ages may need time to get into the flow of the game so ample blocks of time to do so are encouraged.
- Coaches are strongly encouraged to have an assistant coach (or 2) who, among other roles, has the primary responsibility of tracking playing time. (There are apps and other programs available to help schedule playing time, rotations, etc.)
- The intent is for the fairness or equality of playing time to occur during each game—not to be compensated for over the course of the season based on allotting playing time based on easier or more difficult opponents. This will also provide a clearer picture of appropriate placement for the team at tournament time.

Reasonableness and Interpretation

- “Equal” should be interpreted as roughly equal.
- A parent with “stopwatch evidence” of being shorted 1:29 seconds here or there or claiming unfairness may not appreciate how difficult it is to substitute players (which can only be done during dead ball situations). As important, that parent may not be entering into a discussion giving the coach the benefit of the doubt and honoring the coach's contributions. It is nearly impossible to get playing time to be “equal” and in some instances even “roughly equal” is very difficult.

Exceptions to Playing Time Policies

- A coach is not required to play a youth the required amount of time if the youth suffers an injury, becomes ill, is incapable of continuing to play, fouls out of the game, or disciplinary or attendance issues are involved.
 - If, prior to the start of a game or during, a youth is not able to play, the coach is responsible for informing the opposing coach and Acting Commissioner that such youth will not be playing as well as the reasons why. Acceptable reasons are illness, injury or disciplinary or attendance reasons.
 - Disciplinary reasons may also include a lack of commitment to the team (e.g., a player who regularly misses practice for no acceptable reason); however, the coach should have a written policy that is shared with families prior to the season about the policy and the policy should be implemented evenly. (For example, if you are going to have a policy, make certain that you apply it to the star player who, for example, is missing due to a travel or AAU practice as well as to everyone else.)
- If it is clear that certain player(s) contribute to a lopsided victory for the coach's team then a coach may limit the playing time of those player(s) on occasion. (For example, highly skilled player(s) may get less playing time if the coach feels that the score might be uncompetitive/too lopsided with player(s) in the game.)

Enforcement

- Violations of the policy should be handled between the parent/guardian of the youth who is alleged to have been shorted playing time and the youth's coach. If the coach and or parent/guardian feels that no resolution can be reached, they should discuss the matter with the parish's representative.
- If an opposing coach feels that there has been a serious violation of the playing time rule, they should bring the matter to the attention of the Acting Commissioner during the game. The Acting Commissioner will speak with both coaches during the game so that the situation may, preferably, be resolved during the game. The

Acting Commissioner will report all circumstances surrounding serious violations to the League Commissioner.

SECTION: PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

A primary goal of the diocesan youth ministry sports program is to foster Christ-centered relationships within the *parish* community. As such, all programs are designed to revolve around the parish; youth should participate with their respective parishes. Research shows that the more positive interactions young people have with multiple faithful and appropriate adult role models throughout their parish community, the more likely it is that they will remain in the faith. If done properly and under the oversight of the pastor, the program can truly become a ministry of the parish rather than simply one of a dozen sports options available in the larger northern Virginia area.

Principles and Requirements of Participation

1. The spirit of the eligibility rules is as important as the letter of the rules. Violations may affect a parish's ability to continue participation. Be vigilant as the consequences may not simply impact an individual or a team but multiple teams and the entire parish.
2. The program is only a ministry if each person involved treats it as such. If you, as a parent, coach, or participant, do not feel like a focus on ministry is appropriate or can be your focus, please take advantage of one of the scores of other leagues available in Virginia.
3. The league is parish-based—not school-based.
4. There should be ZERO active recruitment of individuals outside of your parish's boundaries (e.g., you or your youth asking a friend from your youth's neighborhood/community, AAU, travel or various other leagues to play in this league).
5. Team shopping is not permitted (e.g., playing for one parish's basketball team and another parish's track team) unless a given sport is not offered by the youth's parish. (Even then, the preference is that the parish without a team begins one.)
6. No one is guaranteed participation. Parish and diocesan resources including gym space, volunteers, and staff are finite which may influence the level of participation for individual parishes.

In addition to other requirements for eligibility stipulated in this section...

7. A Roman Catholic youth who wishes to request to participate in the league **must be:**
 - a. **registered** in a Catholic Diocese of Arlington parish
 - b. **attending Mass regularly** (at minimum Sundays, Holy Days of Obligation)
 - c. **registered by October 1, regularly attending, and actively participating in religious education within:**
 - **a Catholic Diocese of Arlington school; OR**
 - **a non-diocesan Catholic school of the Latin Rite; OR**
 - **a religious education program of a parish of the Diocese; OR**
 - **a home-schooling Roman Catholic religious education curriculum** approved by the youth's Catholic Diocese of Arlington pastor or pastor's designee.
- i. A youth who is attending a Catholic Diocese of Arlington school or religious education program at the youth's home parish must play for that home parish if they have a team.
- ii. A youth who is attending a Catholic Diocese of Arlington school outside of the youth's parish and wishes to play for that school's parish may do so as long as the youth's home parish does not object.
- iii. A youth of a Catholic Diocese of Arlington parish who is attending a Roman Catholic school but not a Catholic Diocese of Arlington school (e.g., a Roman Catholic school in Washington, DC or a non-diocesan Catholic school in northern Virginia) must play for his or her home parish unless that parish does not participate in the league.

8. All participation must be in accordance with diocesan and parish guidelines related to child protection and other guidance.
9. Youth must play for teams of their biological sex and in alignment with the intent of Bishop Burbidge’s “A Catechesis on the Human Person and Gender Ideology” and the Catholic Diocese of Arlington’s Policy for Schools & Ministries Related to the Human Person and Gender Ideology.
10. A youth of a Catholic Diocese of Arlington parish who has already received Confirmation in another diocese must still be participating in religious education prescribed by the pastor (e.g., further youth ministry participation, etc.)
11. A youth who is not Roman Catholic who wishes to request to participate must be taking Roman Catholic religious education (at a Catholic Diocese of Arlington parish school or, if actively seeking initiation into the faith, other education approved by his intended Catholic Diocese of Arlington parish’s pastor).
12. Requests for a waiver to the eligibility requirements must be submitted to the league through the parish representative to the league.
13. All inquiries related to eligibility must come through the respective parish representative. (If more than one parish is involved, the requesting parish representative should communicate with the other parish prior to inquiry to the league.)
14. An individual parish may have guidance that is more strict or restrictive than these guidelines for participation in/from their parish.
15. The parish must approve (via the official roster submission with appropriate signatures) each coach and participant’s eligibility prior to consideration by the league. The parish or Diocese has the discretion to rescind those approvals at any time before or during the season.
16. A youth who registers for religious education and agrees to attend—but then does not do so—automatically forfeits his or her ability to continue to play in the league for the current year as well as the subsequent year. Extenuating circumstances may be considered by the league but they must be fully supported by the evidence and receive permission of the Pastor or Director of Religious Education or Director of Youth Ministry prior to the request being made to the league.
17. 9th graders are not eligible to participate even if he or she meets the age criteria.
18. Boys may only play on boys teams and girls may only play on girls teams.
19. All approvals of participation or waivers are subject to the discretion of the diocesan Office of Youth, Campus, and Young Adult Ministries.
20. All approvals of league participation are subject to being rescinded at the sole discretion of the Catholic Diocese of Arlington and the Diocese reserves the right to change eligibility at its discretion at any time.

Steps Required for a Youth to Participate for a Parish Other than The Youth’s Home Parish When the Home Parish Does NOT Have a Team:

1. By October 1, the youth must be actively participating in the parish school or religious education program at the youth’s home parish.
2. The youth’s parents/guardians must demonstrate that they have attempted to get their home parish to begin a team (currently or for the future). This requirement is an attempt to further the goal stated at the beginning of the eligibility section related to fostering parish community. The family should work with the parish representative to seek out other youth from their own parish to begin a team(s).
3. The youth’s home parish must share at least one common boundary with the parish for which the youth wishes to participate.
4. The youth’s parents must contact the parish representative for the parish for which the youth wishes to play and ascertain whether there are any openings on teams. As long as all other Catholic education, age, and other requirements are met it is as the discretion of the parish whether the parish permits the youth to play.

Steps Required for a Youth to Participate for a Parish Other than The Youth's Home Parish When the Home Parish DOES Have a Team:

1. By October 1, the youth must be actively participating in the parish school or religious education program at the parish for which the youth wishes to play.
2. The youth must demonstrate via some correspondence approved by the Pastor, the Director of Youth Ministry or the parish's representative to the league that the youth's home parish does not object to the youth playing for the parish where the youth attends a Catholic Diocese of Arlington school or religious education program.

FAQs

1. Q: Does the parish's representative to the league need to fill out waiver form if...:
 - ❖ ...a youth's parish does not have a team and the youth wishes to play for the youth's school or adjoining parish?
 - A: **NO. All other requirements must be met.**
 - ❖ ...a parish wishes a youth to "play up" a grade or more?
 - A: **NO** (Keep in mind that there may be size, skill, and maturity differences so parents and a parish should be aware of the various concerns involved and the parish representative to the league should consult with parish staff.)
 - ❖ ...a youth transferred into the parish's school or religious education program after the October 1 deadline but meets all other requirements?
 - A: **It is at the discretion of the parish of whether to allow participation of this individual. NO, a waiver is not required (but an amended roster must be submitted for approval).**
2. May a youth who is a parishioner of **parish A** (who has a team) but is homeschooled and participates in home-school religious education with a homeschool group centered around and made up primarily of families from **parish B** play on a team with parish B?
 - A: The strong preference is that the youth participates with the youth's home parish in order to foster that parish community. However, in this circumstance, as long as the youth meets all other requirements and the pastor or his designee at parish A indicates his approval to the parish representative at parish B then this will be permitted.

Other Eligibility Criteria

1. A player must meet the following age/grade criteria:
 - 8th grade leagues: 8th grade or below and will not have reached his/her 15th birthday prior to the next June 1.
 - 7th grade leagues: 7th grade or below and will not have reached his/her 14th birthday prior to the next June 1.
 - 6th grade leagues: 6th grade or below and will not have reached his/her 13th birthday prior to the next June 1.
 - 5th grade leagues: 5th grade or below and will not have reached his/her 12th birthday prior to the next June 1.
 - 4th grade leagues: 4th grade or below and will not have reached his/her 11th birthday prior to the next June 1.
 - 3rd grade leagues: 3rd grade or below and will not have reached his/her 10th birthday prior to the next June 1.
 - No more than (1) 2nd grader may be on any 3rd grade team. (2nd graders cannot participate in higher grades).

SECTION: ROSTERS

I. Coaches.

- A. The parish representative and coaches are responsible for ensuring that each roster includes at least two unrelated responsible adults, 21 or older, who meet all the child protection and other requirements of the Diocese and parish prior to being placed on the roster as the coaches (or assistant coaches) of the team. These are the legally responsible adults/chaperones.
- B. All coaches and other persons with substantial contact with youth must be approved by the parish's liaison for youth and child protection prior to participation in any practices, games, or other activities.
- C. All coaches and other persons with substantial contact with youth must register using the league-designated registration system.
- D. All coaches and other volunteers must sign the Volunteer Risk Awareness Agreement and provide to the parish representative for the parish to retain.

II. Players.

- A. A player may not be rostered on—or play on—more than one NVJCYO team (per sport).
- B. Each player shall have a completed official NVJCYO Permission Slip/Medical Release Form before participating and will provide that completed and properly signed form to the coach.
- C. A new completed Permission and Release form shall be submitted for each NVJCYO sport.
- D. Parents/guardians of each rostered player must sign the Concussion Awareness form and provide it to the coach who will compile and give to the parish representative.

III. Submission and Retention of Forms.

- A. The coach should retain a copy of the NVJCYO Permission Slip/Medical Release Form during all practices, games and other activities.
- B. The NVJCYO Permission Slip/Medical Release Form must be kept on file at the parish and is subject to review by league/Diocesan officials.
- E. The NVJCYO Roster must be signed by the appropriate individuals (i.e., Pastor, Principal, or Director of Religious Education, depending on the circumstances) by the deadline established by the Diocese. The signed rosters are retained by the parish. The league and Diocese will use the rosters submitted electronically; however, the league also has the right to check the signed form at any time. The oversight of the parish representative is important. Any paper rosters that differ from electronic submissions by the parish are not considered official.

IV. Team Size.

- A. Each team must roster a minimum of 8 players. No exceptions.