



COACHES HANDBOOK

| | |
|---|-----------|
| SECTION A - INTRODUCTION | 4 |
| BECOMING A CMCSS COACH | 4 |
| PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT / TRAINING | 4 |
| COMMUNICATIONS WITH MEDIA | 5 |
| TRANSPORTATION | 5 |
| ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY | 6 |
| GENERAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES..... | 7 |
| SECTION B - PROPERLY PLAN ACTIVITIES | 8 |
| INTERACTING WITH PARENTS | 8 |
| BOOSTER CLUBS..... | 9 |
| SECTION C - PROVIDE APPROPRIATE SUPERVISION..... | 9 |
| GUIDELINES FOR APPROPRIATE SUPERVISION..... | 9 |
| OVERNIGHT TRIPS..... | 10 |
| RESPONSIBILITY | 11 |
| RESPECT | 11 |
| OFFICIALS | 11 |
| APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR..... | 11 |
| LANGUAGE | 11 |
| SECTION D - PROVIDE PROPER INSTRUCTION | 12 |
| SECTION E - PROVIDE ADEQUATE & PROPER EQUIPMENT | 12 |
| SECTION F - EVALUATE FOR INJURY AND INCAPACITY | 14 |
| Return-To-Play Guidelines: | 14 |
| SECTION G - PROVIDE SAFE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT | 16 |
| GUIDELINES TO PROVIDE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT..... | 16 |
| INCLEMENT WEATHER / HEAT STRESS PROCEDURES AND POLICY..... | 17 |
| SEVERE STORM | 17 |
| LIGHTNING | 18 |
| SECTION H - MATCH ATHLETES ACCORDINGLY..... | 18 |
| SECTION I - WARN OF INHERENT DANGERS | 19 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| SPORTS INJURIES..... | 19 |
| INFORMED CONSENT..... | 20 |
| SECTION J - INITIATE MEDICAL RESPONSE | 20 |
| FIRST AID KIT | 20 |
| HEAT-RELATED EMERGENCIES..... | 20 |
| Signals of heat-related illnesses: | 21 |
| Early stages of heat illness:..... | 21 |
| Later symptoms of heat exhaustion: | 21 |
| Symptoms of heatstroke: | 21 |
| Response:..... | 21 |

SECTION A - INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the CMCSS Coaches Handbook! Whether you are a new coach or a veteran, head coach or assistant coach, this handbook will provide an outline of the general duties and responsibilities of a coach and provide valuable information and ideas on how you can manage your coaching program and team to minimize risks. CMCSS believes that athletics can be a vital part of a student's educational process, and as such coaches play an integral role in this process. Coaching a CMCSS team offers great opportunities to be a positive influence in a child's life, teach meaningful lessons through sports, and have fun! At the same time, coaching comes with significant responsibility. The great thing is that, although we all know that there are inherent risks in sports and students may get hurt, we all share the same goal of providing athletic opportunities to our students while minimizing those risks to the best of our ability. In all cases of emergency, please contact the Building Administration and the School Support Coordinator. In the event that you are unable to reach anyone, please contact the High School Level Director.

BECOMING A CMCSS COACH

All practices, conditioning, open facilities, and games are to be held under the supervision of CMCSS-approved and Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association (TSSAA) listed coaches.

- CMCSS follows the TSSAA requirements for its coaches. They must be in one of the following categories: Teacher, Retired Teacher, Classified Employee or Non-Faculty. (Please review <http://tssaa.org/>)
- All coaches must meet the criteria established by the TSSAA and complete the hiring process conducted by CMCSS' Human Resources Department regardless of whether the coach is paid or unpaid. Anyone with an association with the student athletes on behalf of CMCSS must have a background check conducted by CMCSS. (Former athletes cannot come back and work with, coach or instruct student athletes unless he/she has completed the required process.)
- If a CMCSS coach wants to retain non-CMCSS personnel as a coach, he/she should contact his Athletic Director. The CMCSS & TSSAA processes must occur prior to said person having interaction with student athletes.
- Coaches who receive a supplement must go through the application process and will be considered an employee, less the benefits. This process takes several days depending upon the time of year. Do not expect to request the use of a person as a coach and he/she is available the next day.
- Coaches who are paid by a booster club still must have a background check. Coaches paid in this manner must also sign a Professional Services Contract ([BUS-F006](#)) prior to beginning their duties. The monies provided by the booster club MUST be in the school account prior to signing the contract.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT / TRAINING

All coaches and assistant coaches are to conduct themselves in a manner to represent the school and school system with the utmost dignity. This includes refraining from the use of profanity or abusive language at all times when fulfilling the role of coach.

Any fines incurred by a coach as a result of disregard of TSSAA rules or of being ejected from a contest shall be paid by the coach, not from the sport's account.

All coaches will take the TSSAA online coaches training when hired. All coaches will take all CMCSS training for coaching personnel.

Non-Faculty coaches will be required to pay any fees associated with taking the coaches education courses, but may be reimbursed (if they provide a receipt or proof of purchase) by the respective sports' athletic account. This agreement must be made by the non-faculty coach, the head coach, athletic director and bookkeeper prior to paying the fees and taking the courses.

Coaches are responsible for their athletic areas at all times, including supervision, safety, and cleanliness. Head coaches are to maintain the grounds/playing area pertaining to your sport to keep a professional appearance. Please coordinate with the field maintenance positions on maintenance of the grounds. Please communicate to the lead custodian concerning athletic areas so work orders can be submitted.

Keys should not be given to students or any other individual such as a booster parent to open any door or facility. Make arrangements with the lead custodian to have areas open for meetings, practices, games, concessions, etc.

COMMUNICATIONS WITH MEDIA

It is the head coach's responsibility to build a working relationship with the local media. This responsibility includes the reporting of scores after each contest regardless of the outcome. The CMCSS communications policy must be followed when giving interviews. (Please review [HUM-A034](#)). A student athlete's performance can be part of the conversation and student athletes enjoy receiving publicity when done in an appropriate manner. Pursuant to the law, a student athlete's confidential educational information shall not be discussed by a coach. For example, if a student does not participate in a game because he/she was assigned to ISS, such information is protected confidential educational record and may not be discussed by the coach with the media or anyone else other than the student's parents/guardians or the appropriate school personnel.

TRANSPORTATION

It is the policy of CMCSS that students who are authorized CMCSS transportation will be transported to and from the extracurricular activities via CMCSS vehicles. However, it is not the intent of the policy to prevent parents/guardians from providing transportation. It is a violation of CMCSS policy for coaches and CMCSS employees to transport student athletes using their personal vehicles unless the student athlete is the child or legal ward of the coach/employee.

Emergency exceptions to this policy require the approval of the student's Principal, or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. In the event that an emergency exception is approved, verbal approval from the student's parents/guardians is recommended if possible, to obtain in a timely manner. See [TRN-A016](#) and [HUM-A072](#).

In the event an athlete remains at an event/practice waiting for transportation, the coach should wait with the athlete to guarantee the athlete's safety and well-being. (Coaches should stress to the parents the responsibility for safe and timely transportation to and from the athletic practice or event.) Head

coaches will designate a supervised area after practice/games for athlete pickup. The head coach or his/her designee must stay to supervise pick up until all his/her athletes have been picked up.

All trips outside the county must be on the CMCSS trip planner program, including rental vehicles. Coaches may see your Athletic Director regarding the process of adding trips to this program. All trips must be entered at least 10 days prior to departure. Check all trips within 5 days for correct dates, times, and assigned driver. The coach will be responsible for checking trip planner on a regular basis for correct dates, times, and that bus / driver has been assigned. It will be the Coach's responsibility to inform the Athletic Director regarding any cancellations. If a trip is cancelled late and the driver arrives at your campus, your program will be billed for two hours so that the driver will be paid for their time. All trips have a minimum billing drive time of two hours. For example, if you request a bus to go across town and drop your team off and it takes thirty minutes, you will be billed for two hours. After each trip, sign and write total time on trip sheet from driver.

All athletic trips need to be requested to leave no earlier than 4:30 PM. The exception to this will be tournaments and games at schools with no lights. Any trips deviating from this time must be requested early and approved by the Director of Transportation or his designee.

Travel Logs MUST be used on all bus trips. The Travel Log indicating who is on the bus must be submitted to the AD before leaving and to the bus driver(s) upon loading the bus. If multiple buses are used, a Travel Log must be done for each bus.

Rental vehicles larger than (9) passenger capacity may not be rented. The law limits the size of the chassis, not the number of occupants. Thus, you cannot rent a 12-passenger van and simply put 9 passengers in it because the vehicle is out of compliance.

In addition, coaches must complete [INS-F028](#) for all trips/excursions wherein overnight stays will occur.

ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY

Coaches will furnish the Athletic Director a list of all students planning to participate in their respective sports. Included must be:

1. student name;
2. if the student participated in athletics during the last 12 months;
3. if the student has been enrolled in the same school for at least 12 months; and
4. if the student has changed guardianship in the last 12 months.

Eligibility Forms are due to the Athletic Director by the Monday following your first practice date. If you have student athletes who have transferred from another school, the head coach needs to obtain all information needed to submit a transfer form on the TSSAA portal. This information should be turned in with the eligibility forms. The athletic director is responsible for verifying the information before submitting the transfer form on the TSSAA portal.

To maintain eligibility, a student may not have reached his or her 19th birthday by August 1 of the school year. He or she must have received at least 5 credits during the previous school year and must

have attended the current school for 12 months unless he/she has moved into the zone with his/her parents. If there are any questions about eligibility, please see the Athletic Director or the School Support Coordinator.

No student may try out, practice, or participate in any athletic contest until he/she has provided a physician's report of physical examination and a parent consent form to the Athletic Director. These are to be kept on file in the Athletic Director's office. The exam form must state that the student is fit for athletic participation and must be signed by a physician, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant. The exam must have been completed no earlier than April 15th of the previous school year.

Forms may be obtained from the Athletic Director, school front office, or at <http://tssaa.org/>.

All original copies of these forms must be on file in the guidance office / Athletic Director's office before the student may take part in any practice or tryout.

Coaches are to make copies for their files and be able to obtain immediately at all events (practices and games) under their direction.

GENERAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This handbook provides materials and information that you can easily and directly incorporate into your coaching program to increase success and safety. The constitutional by-laws of the TSSAA will be observed and will be considered as the minimum rules, regulations and standards governing athletic programs. See [INS-A005](#). Coaches are responsible for knowing and understanding all TSSAA rules pertaining to your sport. Go to www.tssaa.org and print the TSSAA handbook and other items necessary for your sport. In addition, coaches are responsible for knowing, understanding, and following CMCSS policies. If there is a not a policy for the situation, then the school's Administration/ Athletic Director or School Support Coordinator should be contacted. The handbook is organized to highlight your responsibilities and duties as a coach, and those responsibilities and duties are as follows:

Responsibility 1 - Properly Plan Activities

Responsibility 2 - Provide Appropriate Supervision

Responsibility 3 - Provide Proper Instruction

Responsibility 4 - Provide Adequate and Proper Equipment

Responsibility 5 - Evaluate for Injury and Incapacity

Responsibility 6 - Provide a Safe Physical Environment

Responsibility 7 - Match Athletes Accordingly

Responsibility 8 - Warn of Inherent Dangers

Responsibility 9 - Initiate Medical Response

Please review, understand and carry out these responsibilities and duties for everyone's best interests, including your own. Have a great season!

SECTION B - PROPERLY PLAN ACTIVITIES

In order to comply with CMCSS rules and to provide a safe environment for the athletes, it is essential to plan activities for practice in advance and to document the time spent and the techniques taught. Advanced planning will result in a more organized and effective practice that will also decrease accidents.

CMCSS requires that coaches schedule a pre-season orientation meeting with student athletes and parents to provide information about your athletic program. Information that should be covered at the meeting includes, but is not limited to the following:

1. Rules and policies (of CMCSS, of the sport, and specific to your program) (Please review [STS-M001](#), Student Code of Conduct, regarding athletics).
2. Discussion of risks inherent to the sport (see also [Section I](#) below)
3. Concussions (see also Sections [F](#) and [J](#) below)
4. Insurance (see Medical Payments Policy, [RSK-A007](#) and TSSAA Catastrophic)
5. Physicals and Informed Consent (see attached)
6. Requirements for Lettering
7. Schedules of practices and games
8. Player expectations both academically and behaviorally (See attached)
9. Player discipline
10. Communication with parents and student athletes.

Coaches should be consistent in enforcing these policies, CMCSS policies and team rules.

All practices shall be scheduled outside the regular school day. Practice sessions shall not exceed two hours. There shall be no Sunday practice without prior approval from the Principal or Athletic Director. Parents should be advised of practice schedules and any changes that occur. Provide a written copy of the schedule of all events including practice dates and times two weeks prior to starting.

INTERACTING WITH PARENTS

At the first meeting of the season, Coaches should make clear guidelines for acceptable interaction and communication. Coaches should never argue with a parent or exhibit any hostility. If a situation with a parent becomes difficult, the coach should document all communications by himself/herself and the parent(s) and copy their Administration/ Athletic Director.

Coaches' communication with parents and student athletes via social media, electronically, text messaging, in person, or in writing, must comply with CMCSS policies and procedures. (Please review [HUM-A034](#), [TCH-A002](#), [TCH-P026](#).)

It is the requirement of every Head Coach to prepare a communication letter to send home to each player and parent / guardian that makes the final roster prior to the first official practice. The information within this letter will be vital to Administration when parents protest or wish to challenge a coach's decision about suspension or termination of an athlete. Make sure each player and parent / guardian sign and date this contract. The signed letter / contract should be kept on file in the coach's office and available to the Athletic Director or Administrator at any time.

BOOSTER CLUBS

Coaches should communicate with their booster club and attend ALL meetings. If the head coach can NOT attend, an assistant should be there in his/her place. Coaches are there for consultation and may be asked to speak about certain subjects, but should not be in "charge" of meetings.

Coaches should advise and provide dates to the Athletic Director of all booster club meetings at least 2 weeks in advance. This is to coordinate the use of the facility by scheduling the dates, times and location and communication with all employees involved.

All money spent on athletes must be approved by the Principal or Athletic Director, regardless of the source.

Boosters do not determine gate fees, season pass fees, or facility use.

Season passes are considered gate money and must be deposited into the program's school account.

SECTION C - PROVIDE APPROPRIATE SUPERVISION

Coaches are responsible for providing appropriate supervision.

General - General supervision is the oversight of all areas and events taking place during the session, whether training or competition.

Specific - Specific supervision is the oversight of specific elements or skills being performed.

For the coach, balancing supervisory responsibilities is important for protecting the well-being of athletes, since as the level of specific supervision increases while the level of general supervision often decreases. The coach must continue to be aware of the activities of all athletes present.

GUIDELINES FOR APPROPRIATE SUPERVISION

A coach's supervisory responsibilities start when the first athlete arrives at the facility and do not end until the last athlete leaves. It is imperative that the coach implement a contingency supervision plan in the event that he/she needs to step away from the activity site, and is no longer in the position to observe, instruct, correct or supervise. There should always be a coach present at practices and athletic events.

1. Supervise athletes in all activities related to the sport including:
 - Dressing areas, assembling equipment, and otherwise preparing for training and competition
 - Warming up
 - Training and competing
 - Weight room(s) and other conditioning areas
 - Cooling down
 - Putting equipment away and otherwise concluding training and competition
 - Receiving treatment for injuries
 - Maintaining equipment
 - Traveling to and from training and competition, when appropriate
 - Eating meals
2. Act quickly and decisively to correct conditions and actions that could lead to injury or damage.
3. Plan and direct activities.
4. Insist that athletes use appropriate training techniques.
5. Ensure that athletes use equipment in accordance with its intended use.
6. Make sure that athletes use facilities, fields, and courses as they are intended to be used.
7. Be alert to conditions that require additional supervision.
8. Be alert to changing conditions that could increase the risk of injury.
9. Document and investigate accidents or injuries. (Please review and use [SAF-F001](#) Student Injury Form for documentation)
10. Check all facilities and equipment for noticeably dangerous conditions and/or defects and report your findings immediately to those responsible for maintaining.

OVERNIGHT TRIPS

Overnight hotel trips for athletic events occasionally occur. As with all athletic events, coaches are responsible for providing appropriate supervision for the students at the hotel.

Upon arrival at the hotel, coaches should check the assigned rooms to make sure none are adjoining rooms. Ensure students are advised and aware of their assigned room number. Coaches should maintain a list of the students assigned to each room.

Prior to entering the hotel, coaches should ensure students are aware of rules of conduct for hotel stays. In addition, they should adhere to all hotel rules/requirements. Students are not allowed in the hotel rooms of students of the opposite sex at any time and students are only allowed in their own hotel room and shall not go into the hotel room of other students. Students should only be allowed inside of a coach's room if there is another adult coach/chaperone present as well; otherwise, any team or player meetings need to occur in the hotel lobby area.

Students should be given an appropriate curfew to be inside their hotel rooms for the night. Prior to curfew, the coach(es) should make periodic checks to ensure that students are acting in accordance with the rules of conduct.

At the assigned curfew time, at least two coaches/adults shall go room to room to ensure that all students assigned to that room are inside the room. Thereafter, tape shall be placed on the door frame of all students' rooms each night. Students should be advised that if they leave or attempt to leave their rooms after curfew, they will face both team and school discipline. Each morning coaches are responsible for awakening early enough to ensure that the tape on all students' doors has remained intact throughout the night and to remove the tape. This is used to help assure students remain in their rooms during the night, but does not prevent the students from exiting the rooms in case of an emergency.

RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of the coaches to set the standard of behavior for the team/squad. Additionally, it is the Head Coach's responsibility to control the actions and attitudes of the athletes, coaching staff and parents.

RESPECT

Coaches must always show respect for athletes, Officials, parents and other coaches.

OFFICIALS

Coaches must respect the integrity, judgment and objectivity of the Officials. Coaches must always demonstrate appropriate, respectful behavior toward Officials.

APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

The following guiding principles should be upheld:

1. Abuse of any kind is not permitted in CMCSS. Abuse may consist of physical, sexual, emotional or verbal abuse, and is not tolerated in CMCSS by coaches and / or staff.
2. Physical and sexual abuse, which may include, but is not limited to, striking, hitting, kicking, biting, indecent or wanton gesturing, lewd remarks, indecent exposure, unwanted physical conduct, any form of sexual conduct or inappropriate touching, are expressly forbidden within our organization. Coaches must be aware that any physical contact may be misinterpreted. Physical contact should be limited to only that necessary and appropriate to teach a skill, treat an injury, or console or congratulate an athlete. In teaching a skill, minimal physical contact should take place, and none which places the coach in a position of power or intimidation.

Physical intimidation, corporal punishment and threats are inappropriate and forbidden.

LANGUAGE

Offensive and insulting language by coaches or administrators is prohibited. Language that is demeaning and language that references gender, race, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or religion is forbidden. Please review [SLT-A001](#).

SECTION D - PROVIDE PROPER INSTRUCTION

Sports coaches are responsible for instructing athletes on sport-specific techniques and skills, game rules, safety rules, and sportsmanship.

Training methods and type, frequency, duration, and intensity of practices should vary among athletes, depending on the athlete's age, experience, physical conditioning, mental state, and training goals. The purpose of training is to prepare for competition. Training is not to be used as a disciplinary activity, unsupervised play, or competition itself. We expect coaches, at their discretion, to conduct the appropriate training with their athletes.

It is important that coaches comply with the following responsibilities when providing instructions to the athlete:

- Follow the accepted practices for teaching sport specific skills.
- Follow the drills and other methods that are considered standard for the sport.
- Maintain familiarity with trends in the sport.
- Provide instructions that focus on the more hazardous areas of a particular sport and/or techniques that are counter-intuitive such as certain blocking/tackling techniques and stunts.
- Be familiar with the venue surroundings and instruct athletes to do the same.
- Maintain records of instruction and training.

While it is important to understand the rules, skills, and strategies of the sport, it is equally important to know how to teach the rules, skills, and strategies. The following is a helpful guideline for successful coaching.

1. Introduce the skill to your athletes.
2. Demonstrate the skill.
3. Explain the skill.
4. Supervise athletes practicing the skill.

SECTION E - PROVIDE ADEQUATE & PROPER EQUIPMENT

It is very important to inspect equipment prior to each practice and game. Proper equipment can protect athletes from injury or reduce the severity of injury if an incident occurs. Conversely, improper equipment can create vulnerabilities and increase the risk of injury. In football, for example, protective pads tend to wear down and pants can lose their stretch allowing thigh pads to slip. This could leave a player vulnerable to a severe thigh bruise.

To maximize injury prevention, equipment must be:

- Available and used by athletes
- Appropriate
- High-quality
- In good condition

- Sized properly
- Fitted correctly
- Maintained
- Repaired or replaced when damaged.

Head coaches are responsible for completing and filing with the Athletic Director a complete inventory at the end of the sports season.

The condition of all equipment must be evaluated before and after each season to ensure the equipment is safe for student use.

Safety or health concerns/hazards must be reported to the Athletic Director immediately.

The coach is responsible for:

- Determining what equipment will be used in training and competing, regardless of the supplier.
- Ensuring that equipment is available.
- Overseeing the use of equipment, and ensuring that equipment is properly maintained and replaced when needed.
- Establishing procedures to inspect athletes' equipment before they engage in the activity to ensure that they are using proper and non-defective equipment.

Coaches should never modify equipment without consulting with and obtaining written consent from the manufacturer. Any modifications to equipment may void equipment warranties and create liability.

Recommended Guidelines for Equipment Selection and Use

1. The purchaser of equipment should:

- Be knowledgeable about the different types of equipment available, including new developments in equipment material and design.
- Deal only with reputable suppliers and authorized dealers. It is recommended for the coach to check references.
- Provide quality equipment that is appropriate for the sport and size, strength, and skill level of the user.
- Recommended that equipment is reconditioned annually by a reputable re-conditioner.
- Recommended to re-certify helmets every two years.

2. Recommended the use of helmets, eye protection, mouth guards, and other critical safety equipment where appropriate.

3. Inspect all equipment at the beginning of each season for quality and defects before use and periodically through the season for wear and tear. Be cautious of hand-me-down equipment.

4. Always follow manufacturers' recommendations for sizing equipment.

5. Instruct athletes on the proper use, fit, cleaning and maintenance of equipment.

6. Warn athletes about any dangers associated with equipment use and misuse.
7. Instruct athletes and parents to report equipment damage.
8. Direct athletes and parents to repair or replace their personal equipment when necessary.

Coaches have a duty and a right to prohibit players from participating if they do not have the proper equipment.

SECTION F - EVALUATE FOR INJURY AND INCAPACITY

Sports injury care consists of two basic elements - prevention and recognition/treatment. Coaches must include both elements in their coaching programs.

1. Prevention – Coaches should incorporate methods for preventing injuries and illnesses in their coaching programs including pre-participation screening, strength training, conditioning, and awareness of the nature, cause, and mechanisms of sport specific injuries.
2. Recognition and Treatment – Once the coach realizes that an injury or illness has occurred, the magnitude must be assessed and appropriate care initiated.

Return-To-Play Guidelines:

The severity of an injury or illness is not easily determined. An injury or illness that is incorrectly identified and for which the athlete does not receive medical attention may become worse. Recovery time may be longer if proper care is delayed, and the athlete could experience increased or permanent damage.

Students must be in attendance the entire school day to participate in an extracurricular activity unless permission is obtained from an Administrator or they have a doctor's note. If injured or ill, the student should not be participating unless the doctor has released the student to return to play. Keep all medical providers' notes on file and follow doctor's orders on player participation and return.

1. CMCSS rules require athletes that have been removed from a game because of injury may not re-enter the game without approval of attending medical personnel or if one is not available, it will be at the discretion and judgment of head coach.
2. The absence of pain does not signify that the injury is not serious. Do not return an athlete to play simply because he or she says the pain is minimal.
3. With an injury causing pain, swelling, or redness, Coaches should assess on an individual basis. Consult the Athletic Trainer if available.
4. Do not let the athlete move at all with any suspected injury to the head, neck or back. Do not let others touch the athlete or roll him or her over. Call EMS immediately.

5. An athlete exhibiting any of the following signs needs immediate medical care:

- Deformity of limb.
- Any extreme localized pain.
- Altered level of consciousness, including drowsiness, disorientation, seizure, unconsciousness.
- Repeated vomiting or diarrhea.
- Unequal pupil size.
- Severe bleeding.
- Breathing difficulty or breathing irregularly.
- Fluid leaking from nose or ears.
- Any eye injury affecting vision.
- Chest pain.

6. If an athlete reports any pain, or there are other symptoms, or signs of a potential head or neck injury, do not let the athlete return to play. When in doubt, play it safe.

7. Following a serious injury or illness, return to play should be guided by a medical provider's recommendation and release. These include injuries that have resulted in unconsciousness, concussion, surgery and/or missing several consecutive days of training.

- In April 2013, Tennessee became the 44th state to pass a sports concussion law designed to reduce youth sports concussions and increase awareness of traumatic brain injury.
- T.C.A § 68-55-501-502, has three key components:
 1. To inform and educate coaches, youth athletes and their parents and require them to sign a concussion information form before competing.
 2. To require removal of a youth athlete who appears to have suffered a concussion from play or practice at the time of the suspected concussion.
 3. To require a youth athlete to be cleared by a licensed health care professional before returning to play or practice.
- Note: The law does not direct schools to administer baseline concussion screens. The screening is a recommendation but not required.
- Click on the link to review TSSAA's Concussion Policy. Here, you will also find signature pages for coaches and parents and student athletes. <http://tssaa.org/compliance-publications/concussion-policy/>. Please complete this signature page and ensure that parents and students athletes complete and turn in their portion.

9. Any time an athlete's injury requires transportation from the contest to a medical facility, the athlete's parent is to be contacted immediately. If there are two coaches at the contest, one should accompany the athlete to the medical facility until parents/family members have arrived. In all cases, the head coach should check on the athlete and his condition at the earliest feasible time. The coach is also to notify the principal by phone **immediately**.

SECTION G - PROVIDE SAFE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Coaches are responsible for inspecting all areas to be utilized in practice and competition to identify hazards. This includes locker rooms, workout rooms, gymnasiums, equipment and fields. Coaches also should ensure that proper emergency care and safety equipment is available and accessible. In addition, please note it is not sufficient simply to identify a hazard. You should take action by having the item corrected, posting warning signs, and/or keeping athletes/spectators away from the hazard.

GUIDELINES TO PROVIDE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

1. Regularly and thoroughly inspect all building areas, equipment, fields, courses and other playing surfaces used by the athletes.
2. Inspect potentially dangerous equipment, heavy-use equipment and protective equipment frequently.
3. Ensure that unused equipment is not stored in or dangerously close to a playing area.
4. Ensure that wall-mounted devices that could cause injury are padded and light bulbs have protective coverings.
5. During extreme weather, inspect equipment and fields, courses, and other outside playing surfaces, including support structures that could become unsafe.
6. Ask athletes to report any unsafe conditions related to the facility, equipment, fields, courses, and other playing surfaces.
7. Report (in writing) damage to the facility, fields, and courses, and request to have it repaired. Include photos of the damage with the written report if possible.
8. Prevent athletes from using known unsafe building areas, equipment, fields, courses, and other playing surfaces. In particular, remove unsafe equipment immediately to prevent inadvertent or prohibited use.
9. Ensure the facility provides access to water for adequate fluid replacement for athletes during all practices and competitions, or provide a separate source. Report any water quality problems to those responsible.
10. Coaches must submit an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) to their Athletic Director, District Programs and Activities Coordinator, and Safety Department each year.
11. Ensure that the EAPs are practiced at least once per season.
12. Ensure easy access to emergency equipment and first aid supplies.
13. Ensure telephone or radio access to enable contact with emergency medical services.
14. Ensure, if possible, telephone contact with parent or guardian if not present.
15. All doors and gates must be kept secured and locked including dressing rooms during practice times. Remember do not give your keys to students or other individuals such as booster club parents.

16. Coaches are responsible for the security of the building during use with your sport when custodians are not present. This includes keys, secure exit doors, gates and alarm codes with signature of log in and out dates and times.

INCLEMENT WEATHER / HEAT STRESS PROCEDURES AND POLICY

(Refer to and review <http://tssaa.org/> regarding heat guidelines. Also review [OPS-A004](#) and [OPS-P007](#))

Monitoring weather conditions is the responsibility of the game officials, coaches and administrators. All should be aware of the potential dangers posed by different weather conditions and work together to keep the athletes and other participants as safe as possible. Coaches should monitor weather conditions including warnings and watches issued by the National Weather Service. According to the National Weather Service, a “watch” means severe weather is possible during the next few hours, while a “warning” means that severe weather has been observed or is expected soon.

Coaches should be familiar with conditions that may predispose an athlete to heat illness. The coach or athletic director will check the heat index in hot conditions. If the heat index is 104 degrees or higher practice and games will be cancelled or moved to another time and place. Outside sports will use a heat index meter to measure and document the heat index.

Water must be readily available to athletes at all times. Coaches will check to ensure all athletes are drinking on a periodic basis.

All coaches and coaching staff should become familiar with the articles regarding heat stress which are referenced within this handbook.

Prior to a game, coaches and game officials should discuss the procedures they will follow if inclement weather becomes an issue.

In the case of inclement weather a game may be called for two reasons:

- Condition of the playing field

- Weather at game time

Coaches and referees must exercise their best judgment to determine whether or not a field is in playable condition. If the area has had a large amount of rain and the fields are not in playing shape, games should be called as early as possible. If there is any lightning in the area at game time, the game administrator, coaches or officials are to delay the game immediately. In addition, if it is raining heavily at game time, the game administrator can delay or postpone the game.

SEVERE STORM

Severe storms can produce damaging high winds, hail, heavy rain, lightning and/or tornadoes. If a severe storm approaches the playing area, the safety of the players may require that the game be suspended and immediate shelter sought. Coaches should always err on the side of caution when considering whether to call a game or cancel a practice for weather concerns.

LIGHTNING

Lightning is the second leading cause of storm related deaths (flooding is first). Lightning can strike up to 10 miles outside of a thunderstorm, literally a bolt from the blue. The danger from lightning can persist for at least 30 minutes or more after a thunderstorm has passed. The National Weather Service does not issue watches or warnings for lightning by itself.

If a person can hear thunder, or see lightning, the danger is already present. A clear, sunny sky overhead with storm clouds nearby can still be dangerous.

The following guidelines are recommended to determine if hazardous conditions exist:

- If you see lightning, the game should be suspended.
- Know the availability and location(s) of nearby shelter(s) in advance.
- Shelter should be in larger, enclosed structures. Do not stay in open, unprotected areas. Smaller, open structures such as tents, trees, and isolated areas should be avoided. Cars, with windows rolled up, or buses can provide good shelter. Avoid contact with metal or other conducting materials to the outside surfaces.
- Games should not be restarted for at least 30 minutes after the last roll of thunder is heard.
- The team(s) should be advised of notification and evacuation plans and places to seek shelter near practice and competition sites.

Coaches should discuss methods for notifying athletes of cancelled events (competition or practice) at the beginning of the season.

SECTION H - MATCH ATHLETES ACCORDINGLY

CMCSS requires its coaches to appropriately match players to reduce the risk of injury and avoid unfair competitive advantage. Coaches have a duty to exercise reasonable care to prevent foreseeable risks of harm to others which includes a duty to match athletes of similar competitive levels.

The following factors should be considered when matching athletes:

- Skill
- Experience
- Height and weight
- Injuries or incapacitating conditions
- Age
- Maturity
- Mental state
- Gender

It is important to:

1. Have knowledge of the skill and experience levels of the athlete prior to performing a skill
2. Understand the physical and emotional conditions of an athlete that may restrict participation.

SECTION I - WARN OF INHERENT DANGERS

CMCSS requires that its coaches advise and inform athletes and their parents of the risks of participation in the specific sport in which the student athlete is participating.

An effective method of advising athletes and their parents of the dangers associated with playing a specific sport is through the required pre-season Orientation Meeting. This is also a good time to receive an acknowledgement from the athletes and their parents that they agree to participate with full understanding of the risks by reading and signing an Informed Consent Form which is required by CMCSS as well as the TSSAA in order for a student to participate in a sport.

The Orientation Meeting should include the following information regarding understanding and minimizing the risk of injury:

1. Inform athletes/parents what injuries can be expected
2. Inform athletes/parents of the required medical exam prior to participation.
3. Explain injury prevention measures that are commonly used for games and practices
4. Provide information on your plan for checking playing/practice areas and equipment
5. Explain what equipment the athletes need and where it can be purchased if CMCSS does not provide the equipment. Be clear that CMCSS does not endorse a specific brand of equipment. Be prepared to provide tips on the proper care, inspection and maintenance of equipment although the manufacturer's guidelines should be followed by the purchaser.
6. Describe procedures that will be used in case of an emergency

Following is a sample script that you might utilize for this portion of your Orientation Meeting.

SPORTS INJURIES

As athletes and parents, you may be concerned about possible injuries that could occur. As in any sport, you could get hurt during a practice or game. It is a part of sports. We need to work together during the season to do everything we can to prevent injuries, especially serious injuries. How can we do this? First of all, we will have a warm-up and cool down, including flexibility exercises whenever we practice or play. If you are late to a practice or need to leave early, you need to take the time to do this on your own. This is one of the most effective methods for preventing sports injuries. In addition, coaches will instruct athletes on proper techniques.

Parents, it is also essential that your kids are fed and hydrated when they arrive at practices and games. Lack of proper hydration and improper diet can provide inadequate fuel for athletes, induce fatigue, and enhance the risk for injury. Finally, encourage activity year-round so students are in shape when we begin practice each year.

The bottom line is, we all need to be aware that injuries can and do happen, and then work together to prevent them wherever possible.

INFORMED CONSENT

Although you will do everything you can as a coach to prevent injuries, there are inherent dangers in sports and athletes may get hurt while participating. In today's litigious society, you may be named in a lawsuit resulting from an incident that takes place while you are coaching. (Please refer to www.tssaa.org —“Consent”).

You must collect these forms prior to allowing an athlete to participate in practice or games and submit them to your Athletic Director for retention purposes. Duplicate copies of these forms should be made and retained at the school. Athletic Directors must keep files of the current year plus two years.

While these forms do not prevent lawsuits, they may be a valuable tool in providing a defense as they show that the athlete and athlete's parents were aware of and consented to the risks of participation.

SECTION J - INITIATE MEDICAL RESPONSE

As a head coach it is your responsibility to make sure the rules are followed. CMCSS is working to insure that at least one coach certified in basic first aid and CPR be present at all practices and competitions. The coach should follow the scope of his/her training in administering first aid and not exceed the scope of that training. The purpose of first aid is to stabilize the situation by preventing it from worsening. Once the situation has been stabilized, all other treatment should be provided by a doctor. Coaches should renew their training in accordance with certification guidelines to ensure they remain current on the changes in procedures and nature of treatment. In addition, all coaches are expected to have a thoroughly planned and well-organized emergency medical plan.

The basic duties of first aid are:

- Check the scene for safety.
- Check the injured athlete and protect the athlete from further harm, following universal precautions when appropriate. Assume that all blood, body fluids and any other potentially infectious materials are infected with a blood-borne pathogen. Use latex gloves and sterilized bandages to administer first-aid. All bleeding must be stopped prior to re-entering the practice or competition. All uniforms, bandages and other materials must be properly disposed of.
- DO NOT MOVE THE ATHLETE.
- Activate the emergency medical plan.
- Care for the injured or ill athlete until EMS personnel arrive.

FIRST AID KIT

Keep a first aid kit nearby during all coaching and sporting activities in order to be prepared for an emergency. Whenever possible, have a second kit for multiple injury situations at a practice or competition site.

HEAT-RELATED EMERGENCIES

Heat-related emergencies are progressive conditions caused by overexposure to heat. Heat emergencies fall into three categories of increasing severity: heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heatstroke. Heat illnesses are easily preventable by taking necessary precautions in hot weather. If recognized in the early stages, heat-related emergencies can usually be reversed.

Without intervention and resolution of the problem, heat cramps (caused by loss of salt from heavy sweating) can lead to heat exhaustion (caused by dehydration), which can progress to heatstroke, a life-threatening condition. Heat related emergencies can be avoided by canceling practice or competition in extreme weather (high temperature and/or high humidity) and taking frequent breaks for water.

Signals of heat-related illnesses:

Early stages of heat illness:

- Profuse sweating
- Fatigue
- Thirst
- Muscle Cramps

Later symptoms of heat exhaustion:

- Headache
- Dizziness
- Weaknesses and light-headedness
- Cool, moist skin
- Nausea and vomiting
- Dark Urine

Symptoms of heatstroke:

- Fever (body temperature above 104 degrees F)
- Irrational behavior
- Extreme confusion
- Dry, hot, and red skin
- Rapid, weak pulse
- Seizures
- Unconsciousness

Response:

1. Follow the basic duties of first aid.
2. Move the athlete to a cool place.
3. Loosen tight clothing.
4. Remove perspiration-soaked clothing.
5. Fan the athlete.
6. If conscious, give cool water to drink.
7. If unconscious, call EMS personnel (911) immediately. If the athlete refuses water, vomits, or starts to lose consciousness –
 - a) Send someone to call EMS personnel (911).
 - b) Contact parent or guardian if not already present
 - c) Place the athlete on his or her side.
 - d) Immediately decrease body temperature by hosing the athlete down with cold water or placing them in an ice bath.

- e) Continue to cool the athlete by using ice or cold packs on the wrists, ankles, groin, and neck and in the armpits.
- f) Continue to check breathing and pulse.

RECEIPT OF CMCSS COACHES HANDBOOK

I have received a copy of the CMCSS Coaches Handbook, and I understand that I am responsible for reading the rules and practices described within it.

I agree to abide by the rules and practices contained in the Coaches Handbook. I understand that I am responsible for reading and familiarizing myself with the information and recommendations contained in the Handbook.

I understand that if I need clarification of any information contained within this book, I am to contact my Administrator, Athletic Director, and / or School Support Coordinator immediately.

Signature _____

Printed Name _____

Position/Location _____

Date _____