

ATHLETE CONCUSSION POLICY FOR THE TOWN OF MARION RECREATION DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS

The Town of Marion desires the safe return for all athletes participating in Recreation Department programs following an injury, but particularly after a concussion. The goal of this policy is to ensure (i) that Recreation Department staff, volunteer coaches, athletes, and their parents or guardian are aware of the short-term and long term effects of concussions; (ii) that concussed athletes are identified and removed from play immediately while letting the parents or guardian know immediately; and (iii) that concussed athletes are returned to play only after receiving appropriate medical care, given adequate time to heal, and are symptom free.

DEFINITIONS

Concussion

A brain injury that is characterized by an onset of impairment of cognitive and/or physical functioning, and is caused by a blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body that causes sudden jarring of the head (i.e., a helmet to the head, being knocked to the ground). A concussion can occur with or without a loss of consciousness, and proper management is essential to the immediate safety and long term future of the injured individual.

Licensed Health Care Provider

A physician, physician assistant, osteopath or athletic trainer licensed by the Virginia Board of Medicine; a neuropsychologist licensed by the Board of Psychology; or a nurse practitioner licensed by the Virginia State Board of Nursing.

Return to Learn

Instructional modifications that support a controlled, progressive increase in cognitive activities while the athlete recovers from a brain injury allowing the student-athlete to participate in classroom activities and learn without worsening symptoms and potentially delaying healing.

Return to Play

To participate in a non-medically supervised practice, game, or athletic competition.

I. Concussion Management Team

A. A Concussion Management Team shall be appointed by Marion Town Council and shall consist of the Recreation Director, Assistant Recreation Director, a licensed health care provider, a coach, a parent of an athlete, and any other person the council determines will assist the Concussion Management Team in its actions.

B. The Concussion Management Team shall develop concussion training materials for Recreation Department staff, volunteers, parents, and athletes. The Concussion Management Team shall develop concussion reporting, management, and review protocols for the Marion Recreation Department. The Concussion Management Team shall maintain a record of all incidents where a athlete has been removed from a practice or game because he/she has been suspected of sustaining a concussion.

C. The Concussion Management Team shall meet at least once every quarter and shall evaluate the division's training materials, concussion reporting, management, and protocols.

II. Physicals for all Recreation Department Participants

Anyone participating in any program offered by the Marion Recreation Department must have a physical before they are allowed to play. The physical must be signed by a licensed health care provider and turned into the Marion Recreation Department before the child will be allowed to practice or play in a game. The physical will be valid for one full year (12 months) from the day of the physical. The physical must also contain a brain function assessment to be used in determining if a athlete has fully healed from a concussion.

III. Distribution of Training Materials to Parent/Guardian of Participants in All Programs

A. When registering a child for a program offered by the Recreation Department, the parent/guardian of the child will be given a copy of the Town of Marion's Concussion Policy. The parent/guardian will also receive information containing signs and symptoms of a concussion and an action plan the Recreation Department will use when a child is suspected of having a concussion. The permission slip each parent/guardian signs will acknowledge they have received this information and understand the procedures in place if their child is suspected of having a concussion.

B. The signed permission slip acknowledging the receipt of the concussion training materials will be valid for one calendar year and will cover all programs that child may participate in.

IV. Required Concussion Training for all Recreation Department Staff, Referees/Umpires, and Volunteer Coaches

A. Every Recreation Department staff member, referee or umpire, and all volunteer coaches that serve in supervisory roles during games and practices shall receive training in the signs and symptoms of concussions, strategies to reduce the risk of concussions, proper procedure to follow if a child is suspected of having a concussion, and the process by which a child with a concussion may safely return to practice or play in a game.

B. The Town of Marion Recreation Department shall maintain a written record of the names and dates of completion for all persons completing the concussion training through the National Federation of High School Associations (nfhslearn.com).

C. The Town of Marion Recreation Department shall ensure that no person is allowed to supervise any practice or game who has not completed the concussion training within the previous twelve months.

V. Removal from Practices or Games for a Athlete Suspected of Having a Concussion

A. A athlete suspected by Recreation Department Supervisor of sustaining a concussion or brain injury in a practice or game shall be removed from the activity immediately. The child's parent or guardian will be immediately notified and the child will not be allowed to return to play that same day.

B. A parent/guardian may not overrule the Recreation Department Supervisor that believes a child may have a concussion. A licensed health care provider will be the determining decision on if the child has a concussion or not.

VI. Return to Play Protocol

A. No athlete shall be allowed to return to practices or games until the parent/guardian presents a written medical release from the athlete's licensed health care provider. The written medical release shall certify that (i) the provider is aware of the current medical guidance on concussion evaluation and management; and (ii) the athlete no longer exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion at rest or with exertion.

B. The Marion Recreation Department Supervisor may elect not to allow an athlete to return to activities, even after the production of a written medical release from the athlete's licensed health care provider, if they observe, or if a volunteer coach reports, signs and symptoms of a sports-related concussion. If the Recreation Department Supervisor makes such a decision, the parents/guardian shall be notified immediately.

VII. Communication with Schools to Make Them Aware of a Athlete With a Suspected Concussion

The Town of Marion Recreation Department shall alert the principal of the school the athlete with the suspected concussion attends as soon as possible. Communication with the schools is vital to ensure the athlete is placed in the Return to Learn Protocol. By making the administrators aware of the child's condition the school and the athletes licensed health care provider can make adjustments academically for that child to help them heal quicker.

VIII. Helmet Replacement

All helmets used in Town of Marion Recreation Department activities must conform to the National Operations Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) and certified as conforming by the manufacturer at the time of purchase.

IX. Athletic Activities Conducted by Non-Recreation Department Organizations or Individuals on Leased Property

The Town of Marion will not enforce compliance, nor be held liable, by organizations or individuals that conduct athletic activities on property that is leased by the Town of Marion, whom are not associated with the Recreation Department.