



845 West Chester Pike, Suite 20
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www.wclax.net

Child Abuse Prevention

Policies & Procedures Manual

West Chester Lacrosse Association

Updated January 1, 2026



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Overview

Child/Sexual Abuse Prevention Statement

As a youth-serving organization, West Chester Lacrosse Association (WCLA) prioritizes the safety and well-being of the youth participants in our programs through our Child Abuse Prevention Policies and Procedures. Our organization prohibits and has zero tolerance for child abuse, sexual abuse, and any other violence. The WCLA Board of Directors will proactively strive to address reports of this type of conduct and will act in a fair and balanced manner in accordance with our policies.

In the event that volunteers or staff members observe any inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations) or suspected abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) it is their responsibility to immediately report the observations to the appropriate program director.

The West Chester Lacrosse Association has developed and implemented the following policies and procedures in an effort to provide a safe environment for our youth program participants, staff members, coaches, and volunteers. The Board of Directors shall annually review our policies and update it as needed, including the defining of prohibited and discouraged behaviors. Failure to follow or violation of these policies may result in disciplinary action and removal from our programs.

Volunteer/Coach Application and Screening Process

Volunteer Sign-Up

Every coach and volunteer over 18 years of age working with WCLA youth participants (this includes program directors, head coaches, declared assistant coaches, and any adult who is on the field at any time) is required to apply and provide necessary



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information via [Coach Sign Up](#). This form must be filled out on an annual basis, even if the coach/volunteer is returning from a prior year.

We follow the background/clearance check procedures that West Chester Area School District (WCASD) implements for their volunteers.

Background/Clearance Check

All WCLA coaches must follow our download current clearances as set forth by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in order to work with children. These clearances are good for 5 years once they are completed. If you are a returning coach, please verify your clearances are up to date with Logistics Director, Michele O’Kane (michelewclax@gmail.com). Directives on the clearance process can be found on our website, <https://www.wclax.net/volunteer-clearances>.

- PENNSYLVANIA CHILD ABUSE HISTORY CLEARANCE
- PENNSYLVANIA STATE POLICE CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK
- DISCLOSURE STATEMENT APPLICATION FOR VOLUNTEERS Required by the Child Protective Service Law 23 Pa. C.S. Section 6344.2 (relating to volunteers having contact with children)
- Additionally, depending on certain conditions, some of you will need to complete an FBI fingerprint background check. (PA RESIDENT FOR LESS THAN 10 CONSECUTIVE YEARS must obtain a FBI Criminal History Report - Click here to go to the IdentoGO Fingerprinting Online System. You will need to register and make an appointment at a nearby service center. The following code will be required to register -Volunteer Registration Code - 1KG6ZJ. Your clearance will be mailed to you.)
- You are required to disclose any prior claims or allegations of child and/or sexual abuse or any other inappropriate conduct. If criminal charges are pending against you, or you are charged at any time before or after you fill out the required clearances for the season, you are required to contact WCLA Executive Director, Gina Colley-Holgate (ginawclax@gmail.com), immediately.



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Abuse Prevention Orientation/Required Training

- Prior to the spring season commencing, the Executive Director or a representative of the Board of Directors will hold a mandatory Abuse Prevention Training sessions. During these sessions, the Executive Director will extensively review the coaching policies and procedures with the directors, divisional directors, and coaches during the coaches' meeting. All coaches will certify that they have reviewed and accepted our policies with respect to abuse prevention by signing our Coaches Policies. If the coach is unable to attend the coaches meeting, they will be required to coordinate with the appropriate director to review and sign the policy.

Required Guidelines for Volunteer/Coach Interactions

- A volunteer/coach/employee should **never** be in a one-on-one interaction with a youth participant with no other adults and/or teammates present.
- **Interaction between a staff member or volunteer and a child should be EASILY OBSERVED BY OTHERS**
- 2 cleared adults (coach and assistant) **must be on the field with the team at all times**. As the majority of our teams/clinics practice in a large group, this goal is attainable. For instances of only one team practicing, if only one coach can be in attendance, please contact the appropriate program director. The director will then ensure that the practice is combined or will attend the practice so more than 1 adult is present.



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- Using foul or degrading language towards referees, players, parents, or other coaches is unacceptable. Coaches are responsible for stopping disrespectful language, including sexual jokes or harassment, between players.
- Please be respectful of referees. For the younger age groups, please acknowledge that the referees are our former players and are in-training.
- For safety purposes, no children/younger siblings are allowed with you on the field or on the sidelines unsupervised at any time.
- Please refrain from scrimmaging with players as coaches. If you need to demonstrate a skill, demonstrate said skill with your son/daughter on the team or another coach.
- Please refrain from physically touching players.
- Parental/Guardian permission must be obtained if parent volunteer coaches provide a youth participant transportation to and from games and/or practices.

Prohibited Behaviors

- No alcohol, tobacco, vaping around players, on the field, or in the parking lot at any time.
- It is prohibited to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while volunteering/coaching.
- Physically threatening or intentionally inflicting physical injury on a youth participant is prohibited.
- Committing any sexual offense against a minor, or engaging in any sexual act against a minor is strictly prohibited.



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- Making a sexual advance, or request for sexual favors; including any verbal, physical, or visual conduct that is sexual in nature.
- Grooming behaviors are prohibited. Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child's trust (and the trust of the child's parent/guardian/or gatekeeper'), manipulate the child into sexual activity and keep the child from disclosing the abuse. Because sexual abusers 'groom' the children for abuse, it is possible a staff member or volunteer may witness behavior intended to 'groom' a child for sexual abuse. Coaches/volunteers are required to report 'grooming' behavior, any policy violations to the appropriate staff member listed under the Reporting section on page 8.

Policies and Procedures

Restroom Policies

- Please note the following bathroom locations:
 - **West Chester Area School District (WCASD) fields**- Typically, there are no accessible bathrooms at WCASD fields and there is no access to the building bathroom. There may be a port-a-potty near Rustin Field 310.
 - **Kelly Field**- A Port-a-Potty is located near the player entrance of Kelly Field and near the Pavilion.
 - **West Goshen Park**- There is a bathroom building behind the West Goshen Community Park Field.
- As our practices and/or games range from 1 hour to 1 and ½ hour sessions and restrooms may not be available at certain facilities, we highly encourage all players to use the bathroom before leaving home for practice or games. If bathrooms are available, the appropriate procedures are listed below.



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- Age groups 1st-8th grade - players are permitted to use restroom facilities on their own or guided by a parent/guardian/family member if he/she is on the premises.
- For an indoor clinic, if necessary, the player will be escorted by a coach to the bathroom. The Coach will wait outside of the bathroom and escort the player back to the gym.
- Age groups Kindergarten and younger (Futures)- A parent/guardian is required to remain on the premises for our Futures program.
- If a Futures participant indicates they need to use the bathroom, the player will be escorted to their parent/guardian who will take them to the bathroom.

Reporting of Suspected Child Sexual Abuse

If there is a reportable incident involving an incident or suspected incident of abuse, for girls lacrosse please immediately contact Amanda Gionfriddo (coachgwclax@gmail.com), For boys lacrosse, please contact Michele O'Kane (michelewclax@gmail.com). For field hockey, please contact Kim Marsh (wcfieidhockey@yahoo.com). Volunteers, parents, and program participants may also notify proper law enforcement. These directors will immediately contact Executive Director, Gina Colley-Holgate (ginawclax@gmail.com), to determine course of action.

Response of Suspected Child/Sexual Abuse

- **Every state has legal reporting requirements for reporting sexual abuse. Pennsylvania State law requires mandatory reporters to report all allegations and reasonable suspicion of child sex abuse.**



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- After an incident is reported to the above-mentioned directors, depending on the report, the director and Executive Director may first notify law enforcement and then call an emergency Board of Directors meeting. The Executive Director/Board of Directors Representative will notify the proper law enforcement agency that an incident of possible abuse has been reported. All suspicions or allegations of abuse will be reported.
- In the event that a suspected incident of abuse is reported, the coach/volunteer will be temporarily suspended from their duties while an investigation, lead by law enforcement, takes place.
- If law enforcement conducts an investigation and determines abuse has taken place, the coach/volunteer will be immediately terminated from their role in the organization.
- When appropriate, the Board of Directors may communicate reports of child abuse/ sexual abuse to league registrants. Confidentiality of the reporter will be protected.



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Statement of Acknowledgement

I have reviewed and completed West Chester Lacrosse Associations Child Abuse/Sexual Abuse policies and procedures training and understood the material and agree to comply with the policy requirements.

Name (print)

Signature

Date

Team Name/Grade/Age Group

Full policy information can be found on our website:

Concussion Policies and Protocols- <https://www.wclax.net/concussion-information>

Child Abuse Prevention Policies- <https://www.wclax.net/abuse-policy>