

ESKO YOUTH BASEBALL ASSOCIATION
POLICY DOCUMENT

Version 3

Approval Date: Approved April 9, 2025

MISSION STATEMENT: Esko Youth Baseball Association (EYBA) program constitutes a youth athletics program designed to build, develop, and nurture young athletes' abilities and love of the game of baseball.

Registration:

- Registration will be completed for a set time, sometime in February or March.
Suggested dates: February 15 – March 1. This allows time to complete evaluations, draft teams, order jerseys, and start practices before play begins in May.
 - Registration for Fun League and Development leagues will be left open longer, potential dates: Feb 15 – March 31.
- Registration will be done by age based on the MYAS guidelines for levels.
 - Fun League: Girls & Boys - Ages 4 & 5 (by April 30th)
 - Players who are not 4 by April 30th, will not be allowed to play.
 - Developmental: Ages 6 & 7 - Most Kindergarten & First Graders at the time of registration. Must be 6 by April 30th.
 - Rookies: players ages 8 & 9 - Most Second & Third Graders at the time of registration. Must be 8 by April 30th.
 - Majors: Players ages 10 & 11 - Most fourth & fifth graders at the time of registration. Must be 10 by April 30th.
 - Intermediates: Players ages 12 & 13 - Most sixth & seventh graders at the time of registration. Must be 12 by April 30th.
 - Bantams: Players in 8th and 9th grades during the registration process.
- Players must be a student in Esko Schools or reside in Esko to be eligible to play.
Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the board.
- Players who fall into the May 1 – late summer birthdays may move up a level with the rest of their grade if they would like. They may also elect to stay within their age-appropriate level, if desired.
 - If these players choose to move up, and they've registered at the lower level, any increase in fees will be adjusted and invoiced to the player.
- Registration will establish a deadline. Registrants after that deadline will be assessed a \$75 late fee. Late registrations will be allowed up until the start of the first evaluation (or if no evaluations, teams are made). After that, no additional registrations will be taken.
 - One exception to this bullet point of the policy is if someone new is moving into the community. No late fees will be assessed in this situation.
- Refund Policy:

- Esko Youth Baseball Association has a no-refund policy. All registration fees and associated costs are non-refundable upon payment. This policy ensures that resources are effectively allocated for program planning, field maintenance, equipment, and other necessary expenses that support a quality experience for all players.
- Exceptions to this policy may be considered on a case-by-case basis in extreme or unforeseen circumstances, such as a significant medical issue, at the discretion of the Esko Youth Baseball Association Board. However, refunds are not guaranteed and will be evaluated individually.
- By completing registration, you acknowledge and agree to this no-refund policy.

Volunteer Coaches:

Esko Youth Baseball is dependent on the dedication of volunteer coaches, making leagues possible for area youth. We truly appreciate our community members who choose to be volunteer coaches. We see the service as a direct and positive investment upon the youth of our community.

- All potential volunteer coaches must undergo a background check each season.
 - Volunteer coaches are not allowed to start practice/games until their background check is cleared.
- Each team will have one head coach and one assistant coach.
- It is mandatory that all coaches conduct themselves in a manner appropriate for a youth league. Having fun and encouraging sportsmanship should be the goal of all coaches. Coaches need to keep this in mind when conduct is concerned.
- Coaches serve as the role model for the players in demonstrating good sportsmanship, maturity, and respect for the officials.

Player Draft

- Players at the Fun League and Developmental levels will be divided up equally onto teams.
- Players are not to be placed on a team, or with a coach, for the convenience of the parents. This includes carpooling, location in the city, or for any other reason. This rule is not intended to cause inconvenience, but to ensure the league maintains its recreational philosophy.
- Only one head coach and one assistant coach per team will be allowed. Additional parents may help on the field, but their children must be drafted in the normal drafting process.
- The draft order will be determined by a random draw among the coaches, onsite, before the draft begins.

- The volunteer coaches will select players in a “snake” style draft based on evaluation ranking (if available) i.e. selecting 5’s/4’s/3’s/2’s/1’s until all participants that are eligible to be drafted are selected.
- Coaches must select their own children as their first pick when they reach the evaluation ranking that their child is rated.
- Teams will be immediately communicated to the board and a 24-hour waiting period will be in effect after teams are drafted, until they are publicized to make sure there were no issues with the draft.

Player Move Up Policy & Procedure

Timeline: Any move up request must be made prior to the start of evaluations.

Summer Birthdays: Esko Youth Baseball will allow players with birthdays from May 1st through Aug 31st to move up a level in order to play with their current grade level. This can be accomplished by selecting the chosen level during registration, or if not available, parents can request the move manually to the registrar. The registrar will be given the authority by the board and this policy to make level adjustments for players in this category.

Esko Youth Baseball will not allow any players to move up beyond their grade level unless one of the rare situations occurs:

1. Esko Youth Baseball Board agrees by a majority vote that additional players are needed to fill teams at the level above and by moving players up, the level below will not be negatively impacted. The previous year’s level coordinator will make a recommendation to the board on which players should be considered to move up, the board will seek input from the parents, previous years coaches and vote on a final decision.
2. The player’s previous year coach and the previous year’s level coordinator both communicate to the board in writing, stating that the child will not gain anything from playing at the age-appropriate level. This must be done after the previous season is complete and prior to the start of evaluations (or teams being picked, in the event that there are no evaluations). If the player’s parent was their coach, the petition will need to come from another coach on the team. The final decision will be made solely by the board. The decision to move a player up will need to pass by a majority vote by the board. The board will take into consideration the following criteria when making their decision, note these criteria are listed in order of importance:
 - a. Moving the player up to the next level is in the best interests of the association and will not have a negative impact.

- b. The rosters sizes of the teams at the losing and gaining levels will not be adversely impacted by losing or gaining the additional player(s).
- c. Player, Parents, Coaches, & Level Coordinator are all supportive of the decision and agree that the player has nothing left to gain by playing at their current age-appropriate level.
- d. It is understood that moving players up is always the exception and will be reserved for the truly exceptional players & circumstances.
- e. It is expected that most years, no players will move up.

Player Code of Conduct:

Each player must be read, or read themselves, the Player Code of Conduct during the registration process. They must agree to follow the below:

PLAYER CODE OF CONDUCT

- Player's responsibilities are simple; be respectful of others, be responsible, play fair, and always do your best, and always exhibit good sportsmanship.
- As an Esko Youth Baseball participant I hereby pledge that I will:
 - Encourage good sportsmanship from fellow players, coaches, officials, and parents.
 - Be a team player and support my teammates.
 - Be on time and attend every practice and game that I can, and will notify my coaches if I cannot.
 - Work hard to improve my skills.
 - Do my best to listen and learn from my coaches.
 - Encourage my parents to be involved with my team and League in some capacity.
 - Congratulate the other team after each game as a demonstration of sportsmanship.
 - Refrain from using violence, unfriendly language, or insults to others.
 - Be generous when I win and gracious when I lose.
 - Obey the rules of the game and always work for the good of the team.
 - Accept the decisions of the officials with grace and never challenge or question calls. Refrain from challenging or questioning on-field calls by officials and/or managers and coaches.
 - Conduct myself with honor and dignity.
 - Applaud the efforts of my teammates and opponent.

I also agree that if I fail to abide by the aforementioned rules and guidelines, I will be subject to disciplinary action to be determined by the Esko Youth Baseball Board.

Parent Code of Conduct:

Parents must read and agree to the following Parent Code of Conduct during the registration process:

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

As a Esko Youth Baseball parent/family member, I WILL:

- Remember that children participate to have fun
- Be a positive role model for my child and encourage sportsmanship
- Teach my child to play by the rules and resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence
- Demand that my child treats coaches, officials, and other players with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex, or ability
- Teach my child that doing one's best is more important than winning
- Praise my child for competing fairly and trying hard
- Promote the emotional and physical well being of athletes ahead of my personal desire to win
- Respect the officials and coaches and their authority during games

As a Esko Youth Baseball parent/family member, I WILL NOT:

- Force my child to participate
- Engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, coach, player, or parent
- Boo, taunt, refuse to shake hands, or use profane language
- Encourage any behaviors or practices that would endanger the health and well being of athletes
- Ridicule or yell at my child or other participants for making a mistake or losing a game
- Use drugs, tobacco, or alcohol at any league event
- Coach my child or other players during games and practices, unless I am a coach.

Complaint Policy & Procedure:

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear, fair, and respectful process for addressing complaints related to coaches, players, umpires, or fans. This policy applies to all participants and attendees involved in Esko Youth Baseball Association activities.

- **Scope:** Complaints may be filed by players, coaches, parents, or spectators about inappropriate or unethical behavior, including but not limited to disrespect, unsportsmanlike conduct, harassment, abuse, or safety concerns. Complaints should be factual, not retaliatory, and relate specifically to incidents observed during Esko Youth Baseball Association events or practices.
- **Filing Procedure:**
 - **Step 1:** Discuss the issue directly with the person involved, if appropriate and safe.
 - **Step 2:** If unresolved, report the issue to the team coach (if the complaint is not about the coach).

- **Step 3:** If the complaint involves a coach or remains unresolved, escalate it to the Level Coordinator.
- When informal resolution is unsuccessful or inappropriate, a formal complaint may be submitted in writing by submitting the complaint form on our website. The complaint should include:
 - Date, time, and location of the incident
 - Names of individuals involved
 - Description of the incident and any evidence (e.g., explanation, witness statements, etc.)
 - Contact information of the person filing the complaint
- **Investigation Process:**
 - Upon receiving a complaint, the designated administrator will conduct a fair and confidential investigation. This may involve interviewing witnesses, gathering evidence, and consulting relevant policies.
 - The investigation should be completed within a specified timeframe (e.g., 7-10 business days), with reasonable efforts to maintain confidentiality for all parties involved.
- **Resolution and Disciplinary Action:**
 - After the investigation, the administrator will determine appropriate actions, which may include warnings, mandatory training, suspension, or other disciplinary measures.
 - The complainant and the person(s) involved will be informed of the resolution in a manner that respects confidentiality.
- **Appeal Process:** If any party is dissatisfied with the resolution, they may appeal the decision to the EYBA President or another senior administrator. The appeal must be filed within 5 business days of receiving the resolution.
- **Retaliation Prohibited:** The Esko Youth Baseball Association prohibits retaliation against anyone who files a complaint or participates in an investigation in good faith. Retaliation may result in disciplinary action.

Travel Team Policies (Esko Freeze):

Esko Freeze Baseball is a group of traveling teams run under the Esko Youth Baseball Association (EYBA) umbrella. Esko Freeze is in place to help give Esko baseball players who are interested in competing at a higher level of baseball, the opportunity to do that. Players at this level should be more serious about the game and more driven to improve. This higher level of competition will help push your son or daughter to improve their own skills. EYBA intends to utilize these travel teams to develop our players to be successful at the high school level and beyond. As such, travel baseball coaches should be better qualified, more knowledgeable, and better-connected.

Esko Freeze Oversight:

1. Esko Freeze will be governed by the EYBA board.
2. Esko Freeze activity will be coordinated by the Esko Freeze Coordinator who will be elected annually at the EYBA annual meeting.
 - Duties of the Esko Freeze Coordinator:
 - a. Organize coaches: Advertise for coaches. Collect coach applications. Review coach applications with Esko Freeze Subcommittee and bring a recommendation to the EYBA Board of Directors for approval.
 - b. Coordinate tournament selection with newly selected coaches and register for tournaments.
 - c. Coordinate jersey / apparel orders.
 - d. Track financial costs by team.
 - e. Coordinate with EYBA Treasurer to invoice players for yearly fee.
3. The Esko Freeze Subcommittee will consist of a member of the high school coaching staff, the Esko Freeze Coordinator, and 3 other at large members. The EYBA board will appoint 1 member, and the remaining 2 members will be voted in by all members of the EYBA at the annual meeting. Term length will be two years on members and three years for the coordinator.
4. Head coaches will be nominated by the Freeze Coordinator & Freeze Subcommittee and will be voted on by the EYBA Board of Directors prior to tryouts. Coaches will be selected based on past history as a player and a coach, baseball knowledge, and commitment to the organization.
5. Finances will be run through EYBA, in a separate account titled "Esko Freeze".
 - a. The Esko Freeze account will be used to pay for Esko Freeze Baseball up-front costs, including: registration fees for tournaments, jerseys and hats, equipment deemed necessary, and any cost incurred for paid coaches.
 - b. Actual costs per level (per team) will be tracked and players will be billed for the actual cost of play prior to the first tournaments of the season.
 - c. Fundraising is allowed and money earned will stay with each year group as they progress through the Esko Freeze organization.
 - Fundraising intended to be applied to current year player fees must be turned in by June 1 to be applied. Fundraising money turned in after

June 1 will be kept for that year group and will be applied to the following year's player fees.

- Once the teams age out, any left over money for that age group will be returned to the Esko Freeze general fund.

Esko Freeze Play:

1. Players must participate in EYBA recreational baseball to be eligible for Esko Freeze travel baseball.
 - a. All of the above-mentioned Esko Youth Baseball Association policies and codes of conduct apply to Esko Freeze players and coaches, with the exception of the "player draft" and the general process on how teams are formed.
2. Players will indicate interest in being evaluated for travel ball during the recreational baseball registration process.
3. Players will be required to try out, will be evaluated, and will be placed on the age-appropriate team according to ability and commitment to the schedule.
4. Evaluations:
 - a. All participants shall wear clothing that has no affiliation with travel baseball teams, including the Esko Freeze..
 - b. Tryouts will consist of drills to showcase various skills. Skills include but are not limited to: hitting, infield, outfield, situational fielding, running speed.
 - c. Catchers and Pitchers will have the opportunity to demonstrate their positional skills as well.
 - d. Teams will be evaluated by the coaching staff and at least one independent evaluator.
 - e. Final rosters will be sent to the Esko Freeze Committee for review and EYBA Board approval.
5. Players will not move up beyond their age-appropriate level or their current grade in school.
6. Playing time is looked at differently and requires a balance of ability, commitment, and hard work. There is NO guarantee on playing time. The coach will determine line ups that best suit the competition.
7. Player fees must be fully paid prior to the first tournament of the season.