

Lightning Lacrosse Coaching Policy

Purpose

This policy establishes consistent expectations for coaching within Lightning Lacrosse to ensure player development, safety, sportsmanship, and a positive experience for all participants.

Lightning Lacrosse is committed to providing youth in the region an opportunity to learn and play lacrosse in a structured and supportive environment.

Coaching Eligibility Requirements

All coaches must meet the following minimum requirements prior to participating:

- **USA Lacrosse Certification**
 - Maintain a current USA Lacrosse membership.
 - Complete applicable USA Lacrosse coaching certification level in order to progress to the next level yearly. Bronze>Silver>Gold>Platinum
- **SafeSport Training**
 - Complete SafeSport training as required by USA Lacrosse.
 - Maintain current SafeSport certification and renew as required.
- **Background Screening**
 - Successfully complete a background check through USA Lacrosse or an approved provider.
 - Remain in good standing with no disqualifying findings.
- **Club Compliance**
 - Adhere to all Lightning Lacrosse policies, bylaws, and code of conduct
 - Report certification status to the **Coaching Director**, who is responsible for ensuring qualified coaches are appointed and follow a structured development approach.

Coaching Commitment

Coaches shall:

- Commit to the mission and values of Lightning Lacrosse
- Provide a safe, organized, and positive environment
- Emphasize development, effort, and enjoyment.

Sportsmanship

Coaches are responsible for:

- Teaching, modeling, and enforcing proper sportsmanship
- Promoting respect for teammates, opponents, officials, and the game
- Ensuring adherence to the Lightning Lacrosse Sportsmanship Policy
- Addressing unsportsmanlike behavior immediately

Rules of the Game

Coaches must:

- Teach age-appropriate rules and strategies
 - Reinforce respect for officials and game integrity
 - Ensure players understand both rules and game intent
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Playing Time

- Coaches shall provide **fair and meaningful playing time**, particularly at youth levels
 - o 10U and under as equal as possible
 - o 12U as equal as possible with minor differences based on game situational needs
 - o 14U Merit based
 - Emphasis shall be on participation and development
 - Playing time may consider:
 - o Attendance
 - o Effort and attitude
 - o Adherence to team expectations
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Equal Opportunity at Positions

- Coaches shall provide players opportunities to play multiple positions, especially at younger levels.
 - o 10U and under should have the opportunity to play every position including goalie.
 - o 12U - players may play multiple positions, ultimately working toward specialization.
 - o 14U - players should be specializing in a position.
 - Assignments should balance development and team needs
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Discipline and Accountability

Coaches shall apply progressive discipline when players fail to adhere to sportsmanship or team expectations. Coaches retain the discretion to advance immediately to any step based on the severity of the behavior, player safety concerns, repeated misconduct, or the timing and circumstances of the infraction. Violations may result in:

1. **Immediate Correction** – Verbal instruction, redirection, and, when appropriate, age-appropriate team conditioning activities (such as short-duration running, push-ups, or similar physical exercises) intended to reinforce accountability and focus. Conditioning activities shall never be excessive, demeaning, or compromise player safety.
2. **Warning** – Clear explanation of unacceptable behavior. Parents are notified of this step and any after either by phone or in person¹.
3. **Disciplinary Action** – Reduced playing time or removal from activity based on severity. The Coaching Director shall be notified.
4. **Repeated Infraction** - Suspension or Expulsion. The Coaching Director shall be notified.
5. **Escalation** – Coaching Director and Coach give recommendation to Executive Board to make a decision within 1 week.

¹Parent notification is not required to occur immediately following an infraction; however, when notification is warranted under this policy, it should occur as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than 24 hours after the incident.

- All actions shall align with Lightning Lacrosse policies

Oversight and Accountability

- The **Coaching Director** shall oversee coaching compliance, development, and adherence to this policy. The Executive Board shall be notified of any issues.
- Coaches who fail to meet requirements or expectations may be subject to:
 - o Corrective action in form of written warning from Coaching Director
 - o Suspension - minimum of 72 hours. Coaching Director to give recommendations to the Executive Board to discuss official reprimand.
 - o Removal from coaching duties

Acknowledgment

All coaches must review and comply with this policy as a condition of participation in Lightning Lacrosse.

Coaches (Print): _____ **Signature:** _____