

## Decatur Park District Youth Baseball/Softball Waiver & Release

### **Important Information**

The Decatur Park District is committed to conducting its recreation programs and activities in a safe manner and holds the safety of participants in high regard. The Decatur Park District continually strives to reduce such risks and insists that all participants follow safety rules and instructions that are designed to protect the participants' safety. However, participants and parents/guardians of minors registering for this program must recognize that there is an inherent risk of injury when choosing to participate in recreational programs/activities. You are solely responsible for determining if you or your minor child/ward is physically fit and/or adequately skilled for the activities contemplated by this agreement. It is always advisable, especially if the participant is pregnant, disabled in any way or recently suffered an illness, injury or impairment, to consult a physician before undertaking any physical activity.

### **Warning of Risk**

Baseball is intended to challenge and engage the physical, mental and emotional resources of each participant. Despite careful and proper preparation, instruction, medical advice, conditioning and equipment, there is still a risk of serious injury. All hazards and dangers cannot be foreseen. Certain risks include, but are not limited to, the acts of pitching, throwing, fielding and catching the ball, the swinging of the bat, being struck by errant balls, being struck by another player's bat, running, jumping, stretching, sliding, diving, collisions with other players and with stationary objects, acts of God, inclement weather, horseplay, unsportsmanlike conduct, dangerous playing conditions, poor field conditions, defective equipment, equipment failure, premises defects, slip and falls, failure in supervision and officiating, and all other circumstances inherent to the sport of baseball. In this regard, it is impossible for the Decatur Park District to guarantee absolute safety.

### **Waiver and Release of All Claims and Assumption of Risk**

Please read this form carefully and be aware that in signing up and participating in this program/activity, you will be expressly assuming the risk and legal liability and waiving and releasing all claims for injuries, damages or loss which you or your minor child/ward might sustain as a result of participating in any and all activities connected with and associated with this program/activity (including transportation services and vehicle operations, when provided). I recognize and acknowledge that there are certain risks of physical injury to participants in this program/ activity, and I voluntarily agree to assume the full risk of any and all injuries, damages or loss, regardless of severity, that my minor child/ward or I may sustain as a result of said participation. I further agree to waive and relinquish all claims I or my minor child/ward may have (or accrue to me or my child/ward) as a result of participating in this program/activity against the Decatur Park District, including its officials, agents, volunteers and employees.

**I have read and fully understand the above important information, warning of risk, assumption of risk and waiver and release of all claims. If registering electronically, my electronic signature shall substitute for and have the same legal effect as an original form signature.**

### **Photo Waiver**

I understand that my child/ward or I may be photographed or videotaped while participating in a Decatur Park District program. I give permission for photos and videotapes of my child/ward or me to be used to promote the Park District. Such photos and videotapes will remain the property of the Decatur Park District.

**By signing this waiver, I also agree to the Youth Baseball & Softball Code of Conduct.**

Child (1) Name: (PRINT) \_\_\_\_\_

Child (2) Name: (PRINT) \_\_\_\_\_

Child (3) Name: (PRINT) \_\_\_\_\_

Child (4) Name: (PRINT) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Player and Parent Agreement

I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care and encouragement for my participation in the Decatur Youth Baseball & Softball program by following these guidelines:

- I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my athlete ahead of my personal desire to win.
- I will finish the season with the team, my athlete will participate fully in all games, practices, tournaments, and team activities.
- I will support the coaches and officials working with my athlete in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
- I will require myself and my child to treat other players, coaches, fans and officials with respect, regardless of race, sex or ability.
- I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every tournament and in every game and practice. Verbal assaults on referees or coaches will not be tolerated. The Umpire has the power to "expel" an unruly person, coach, or player from the game.
- I will demand a sports environment for my athlete that is free of improper language, drugs, tobacco and alcohol and will refrain from their use at all YBBSB events.
- I will do my very best to make YBBSB fun for all by committing my athlete to go to practice, games, and tournaments with a positive attitude and a willingness to learn.
- I understand that every athlete is guaranteed practice time, but *equal playing time at games is not guaranteed*. Playing time is earned during practice. Coaches will determine playing time based on each player's skill level, position, and work ethic.
- If we have concerns or questions about our athlete's playing time, we will first discuss it with the athlete to determine if they share our concern and wants to address it with the appropriate coaching staff and/or Director. If they do, we will follow the process described below, in order to have the concern addressed:

1. We will encourage our athlete to discuss the concern with their coach in an attempt to resolve the issue.

2. If the issue persists, we and our athlete will request a meeting via email with the Coach before or after a practice. NO discussions will take place during practice times or on days of games.

3. If concerns still exist from either party, we may request, through email a meeting involving the program Supervisor (chenderson@decparcs.com), Coach, our athlete and ourselves. Whatever decision is made to resolve the matter by the end of this meeting will be accepted by all parties and considered closed. The program supervisor will have final say over all matters.

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Player name

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Signature

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Date

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Parent (1) name

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Signature

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Date

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Parent (2) name

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Signature

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Date

## **Decatur Youth Baseball & Softball Code of Conduct**

### **PARTICIPANT CONDUCT**

Players participating in the Decatur Park District's Youth Baseball and Softball League represent their community, team, family, and themselves to others. Therefore, the player should represent the highest moral, emotional, and physical values set forth by the Decatur Park District and adhere to the following rules:

- A. All participants are expected to dress appropriately when representing the Decatur Park District (as designated by using an approved uniform handed out or approved by the Decatur Park District).
- B. Participants and Spectators will be expected to show good sportsmanship on and off the athletic field.
- C. No smoking or vaping is allowed on Park Property during Youth Baseball and Softball events, this includes parking lots.

### **PRACTICE SESSIONS/GAMES**

- A. The coach will provide practice times; the participants are expected to be dressed and ready to participate at the proper time. Coaches will determine appropriate dress code for practices.
- B. The coach must be notified at least 48 hours in advance (when possible) if a participant misses practice or a game.
- C. Coaches will not tolerate profane language during a practice session, game, or program activity. Players and spectators are expected to follow this condition.
- D. No horseplay (as interpreted by the coach) will be allowed in the practice or game area.

### **PARTICIPANT CONDUCT CONSEQUENCES**

Any violation of the above policies will result in disciplinary action taken by the coach and/or Youth Baseball and Softball Supervisor and can result in a minimum of a one-to-five-day suspension from the program. Repeated violations can be cause for ejection from the program and revoked access to park district events and facilities.

### **UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT POLICY PLAYERS/PARENTS/SPECTATORS**

This rule is in conjunction with IESA Bylaw 2.090 and IHSA Bylaw 6.011 & 6.012.

Unsportsmanlike conduct is defined as and will include fighting, verbal abuse/dissent directed toward an official or opponent, racial or ethnic slurs, profanity/obscene gestures, flagrant/violent fouls, taunting, trash-talking/baiting, cheating, throwing, abusing equipment, physical intimidation, or abuse of an official or opponent, and unauthorized leaving of the team bench area.

Anyone found in violation of this rule could face penalties up to and including a permanent ban from the program depending on severity.

### **SPORTSMANSHIP AT THE DECATUR PARK DISTRICT**

Doing the right thing can be challenging. In most cases, it is easier to ignore poor sportsmanship than to confront it. But if we are going to improve sportsmanship in our activities, we must have the courage to act. As participants, fans, and parents, we should all do the following:

1. Positively support your team! Please do not taunt or show lack of respect for the opponents.
2. Respect officials and the difficulty of their tasks.
3. Comply with local regulations concerning conduct at activities.
4. Remember that the game is a learning experience for the young involved, and mistakes will happen.
5. Remember, a ticket to a game is a privilege to observe a game and not a license to be obnoxious to players, coaches, and officials!
6. Encourage other fans to be positive in their support for their team.

Many of the character traits required to be a successful participant are precisely those that will promote a successful life after childhood. We hope to provide a program that makes the athlete and guardians' experience with the Decatur Park District more enjoyable.

### **UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT CONSEQUENCES**

Any coach, player, parent, or fan ejected from a game or practice will result in the following disciplinary action:

First Offense\*:

1. A one-game suspension from participation in the program, whether held on the same day or subsequent days. If the season does not allow the player, coach, parent, and/or fan to complete the suspension successfully, the rest will carry over to the next season.
2. The athlete, coach, and or parent must submit in writing a statement of the incident within 48 hours after the incident took place to the Youth Baseball and Softball Supervisor.

Second Offense:

1. Player, Coach, parent, or fan will be removed from the team and/or Decatur Park Districts' ball fields for the remainder of the season, including all season and post-season activities.

\*Note: The Decatur Park District/Youth Baseball and Softball Supervisor reserves the right, given the severity of an offense, for immediate and/or permanent suspension from the program or all Park District activities and/or facility access, without prior consequences and/or warning.

### **PARENT/COACH RELATIONSHIP**

Both parenting and coaching are challenging vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefits to our student-athletes. As parents, when your athlete becomes involved in our program, you have a right to understand the expectations. This begins with clear communication from the coach concerning their program.

### **COMMUNICATION YOU SHOULD EXPECT FROM YOUR SON'S/DAUGHTER'S COACH**

1. Philosophy of the coach.
2. Expectations the coach has for your athlete as well as all the players on the team.
3. Location and times of all practices and contests.
4. Team requirements, fees, special equipment, and special team rules.
5. Procedure should your athlete be injured during participation.
6. Discipline that results in the denial of your student's participation.

### **COMMUNICATION COACHES EXPECT FROM PARENT(S)**

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach.
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
3. Specific concern regarding a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

As your athlete becomes involved in the program, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. At these times, I encourage you to talk with the coach.

### **APPROPRIATE CONCERNS TO DISCUSS WITH COACHES**

1. The treatment of your athlete mentally and physically.
2. Ways to help your athlete improve.
3. Concerns about your child's behavior.

Accepting your child is not playing as much as you may hope is complicated. Coaches make decisions based on what they believe is best for all athletes. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with your son's/daughter's coach. Other things must be left to the discretion of the coach.

### **SOME SITUATIONS MAY REQUIRE A CONFERENCE BETWEEN THE COACH AND THE PARENT(S)**

These are to be encouraged. Both parties involved must have a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.

#### **If you have a concern(s) to discuss with a coach, this procedure is to be followed:**

1. Call/Email and set up an appointment with the coach.
2. If the coach can't reach you, please email the Youth Baseball and Softball Supervisor, and a meeting will be arranged for you.
3. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before, during, or after a game or practice. These can be emotional times for the parent(s) and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.

#### **What can a parent do if the meeting with the coach does not provide a satisfactory resolution?**

1. Email and set up an appointment with the Youth Baseball and Softball Supervisor to discuss the situation. The Youth Baseball and Softball Supervisor will set up an appointment to meet with **BOTH** the coach and athlete present.
2. At this meeting, the appropriate next step will be determined, the Youth Baseball and Softball Supervisor will make the final ruling.

*Our goal at the Decatur Park District is to foster an environment in which players can develop a love and understanding of the game, develop their skills, learn to be good teammates, and practice good sportsmanship. Most importantly we want players to play the game and have fun.*



## Decatur Youth Baseball & Softball Frequently Asked Questions

1. When will my child be contacted with his/her coaches' information?
  - a. -Once teams are selected, parents will be notified via email, with their coach's name and contact information. You should expect to see this email by April 17th. If not, please contact us at [baseball@decparcs.com](mailto:baseball@decparcs.com). Parents are **required** to list an email address on registration form.
2. When does the season begin?
  - a. -Individual team practices can begin as early as the first week of April. Your child's coach will contact you regarding specific practice plans.
  - b. -Opening Day is Saturday, May 3rd at Rotary Park. Younger players will have their 1<sup>st</sup> games.
  - c. -T-ball, Shetland, Pinto, & Mustang will begin regular season games the week of May 5th.
  - d. -The Bronco, Pony, HS, and all Girls softball divisions will begin regular season games the second or third week of May.
  - e. **-Coaches will distribute game schedules to players when they are available, they will also be updated on TeamSideLine.com/Decatur**
3. When are team pictures taken?
  - a. -Pictures will be taken for teams on Opening Day, Saturday, May 3rd. Please be ready for pictures at least 30 minutes prior to your game. (Pictures for Bronco, Pony, Palimino, and Girls Divisions will be taken later in May or June TBD).
  - b. -Picture price packets or online links will be distributed to each coach approximately two weeks prior to Opening Day.
  - c. -We do not offer a make-up picture day.
  - d. -In case of rain, pictures will be moved to the DISC.
4. When will the season schedule be released?
  - a. -The schedule for Opening Day will be released by April 17th on [www.teamsideline.com/Decatur](http://www.teamsideline.com/Decatur)
  - b. -The season schedules for T-ball, Shetland and Pinto will be made available on [www.teamsideline.com/Decatur](http://www.teamsideline.com/Decatur) on/by April 19th.
  - c. -Peanut, Pee Wee, Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Mustang, Bronco, Pony, and both HS, check with your coach *opening day*.
5. How do I find out game cancellations due to inclement weather/field conditions or check on field changes?
  - a. **Game/Field Status is updated at 4 p.m.**
  - b. Check one of the following **after 4 p.m.:**
  - c. -Call Rainout Line 217-427-3488
  - d. -Sign up for text alerts at [www.decatur-parks.org](http://www.decatur-parks.org) > Cancellations & Closures
  - e. -[www.facebook.com/DecaturYouthBaseballSoftball](http://www.facebook.com/DecaturYouthBaseballSoftball)
  - f. -[www.teamsideline.com/Decatur](http://www.teamsideline.com/Decatur)
  - g. Please utilize one of the above options **before** calling the DISC.
6. What equipment is provided to my child by the Park District?
  - a. -The Park District provides all players in the league with a uniform shirt and hat. We supply each team manager with game balls, bats, catcher's equipment, and batting helmets.
7. What equipment do I need to purchase for my child?
  - a. Players are responsible for providing their own glove, pants/shorts, socks, belt, protective cup (males) and shoes. We recommend players to have cleats but they are not required. Due to sanitary reasons, we strongly recommend each player purchase their own batting helmet. We do provide helmets to be shared by all members of the team. Equipment can be purchased at Play It Again Sports 217-872-2434. We encourage all players to have a fielder's mask.
  - b. **NEW THIS YEAR: Softball infielders and Pitchers are required to have an infielder's mask to participate in Decatur Youth Softball.**

8. Will we have an All-Star game this year?
- Unfortunately, our leagues will not be participating in Little League, therefore we will not be holding All-Star games.
9. What parks are the games played at?
- Decatur based games are played primarily at Graceland Baseball Park, Rotary Park, and South Shores Park. Other neighborhood parks may be used as needed. Please check Team Sideline for field locations in other towns.
10. What are the raffle tickets that I was given at registration?
- In an effort to minimize costs to families, the raffle tickets are a way for the parents to recoup some of the cost of registration fees by selling the tickets to co-workers, friends, and family members. Tickets should be returned to the Decatur Indoor Sports Center (DISC), 1295 W. Wood Street, Decatur, IL 62522 or turned in Opening Day. Drawing will be held on Opening Day, May 3rd at Rotary Park.
11. I want to purchase a bat for my child. What are the regulations regarding legal bats?
- For up-to-date information on legal bats and equipment for Baseball, please refer to [www.ieso.org](http://www.ieso.org) or [www.ihso.org](http://www.ihso.org)
  - For up-to-date information on legal bats and equipment for Softball, please refer to [www.ussoftballofillinois.org](http://www.ussoftballofillinois.org).
12. I am in need of financial assistance for Youth Baseball/Softball, who do I contact?
- The Decatur Park District does have limited scholarship opportunities available for families who qualify. These are awarded on a first come, first serve basis. Please email [GCliff@DecParks.com](mailto:GCliff@DecParks.com) for more information



**BASEBALL**  
**AND SOFTBALL**  
DECATUR PARK DISTRICT

