

CENTRAL CONNECTICUT COAST YMCA

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS EFFECTIVE DATE: 1 JANUARY 2004

This code of conduct is a guideline for YMCA employees and volunteers. It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to follow and enforce the behaviors expected in order to protect them as well as the members of the YMCA. Employees are also responsible for following YMCA policies and procedures as detailed in the Personnel Policy and Employee Benefit Handbook, as well as those guidelines specific to their Branch and position. A violation of this code of conduct or YMCA policies and procedures may place an employee into the progressive discipline process or may be grounds for immediate suspension or dismissal.

Personal Conduct and Values

- Staff shall respond to members, guests and colleagues in a caring, respectful manner and treat all people equally regardless of gender; race, color, ethnicity or culture; orientation; religion; educational, economic, marital or veteran status; or disability.
- Staff will serve as positive role models by exemplifying the values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility in all relationships.
- Staff must appear clean, neat and appropriately attired. Refer to the staff manual of the Branch for any specific dress code standards.
- Acts or threats of physical violence will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- Using, possessing or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during working hours is prohibited.
- Smoking is prohibited in YMCA buildings or property and use of tobacco in the presence of children or parents during working hours is prohibited. Refer to the local staff manual for information regarding any designated smoking areas.
- Profanity, inappropriate jokes, sharing intimate details of one's personal life and any kind of harassment at the workplace is prohibited.
- Use of cell phones, YMCA phones or computers for personal business during work hours is strictly prohibited while employees are engaged in supervision of members, staff or volunteers in programs, activities and/or meetings. Excessive or unreasonable use of cell phones, YMCA phones or computers for personal business during work hours may be grounds for disciplinary action.
- To protect the personal privacy of members, participants, staff and volunteers, the use of cell phones, cameras, PDAs or any electronic photographic device is strictly prohibited in specified locations of YMCA buildings and program sites. The specified locations include but are not limited to all restrooms, locker rooms, changing areas and drying areas
- At no time may an employee through any action, inaction or relationship bring the mission, goals or community standing of the YMCA into disrepute.

Supervision of Members and Guests

- All staff are expected to follow and enforce all safety rules and guidelines especially with respect to supervision of activities, teacher/student ratios, equipment use, etc. Incidents, accidents and repair issues must be reported immediately to the supervisor or director in charge. Report forms are provided.
- Staff must know and enforce emergency procedures in accordance with the local plan. In the event of an emergency, all staff should assist members, guests and colleagues.
- In order to protect YMCA staff, volunteers and program participants, staff and volunteers should refrain from being alone with a single child where they cannot be observed by others while conducting YMCA programs. As staff supervise children, they should space themselves in a way that other staff can see them.
- Whenever possible, staff should not leave a child unsupervised.
- Restroom/Locker Room Supervision: Staff will make every effort to ensure that restrooms or locker rooms are not occupied by suspicious or unknown individuals before allowing children to use the facilities. Staff will stand in the doorway while children are using the restroom. This policy allows privacy for the children and protection for the staff (not being alone with a child). If staff is assisting younger children, doors to the facility must remain open. No child, regardless of age, should ever enter a bathroom alone on a field trip. Always send children in pairs and whenever possible, with staff or volunteer.
- Staff should conduct or supervise private activities in groups of individuals, i.e. diapering, putting on bathing suits, taking showers, etc. When this is not feasible, staff should be positioned so that they are visible to others. At no time should children see staff unclothed.
- Staff may not date program participants under the age of 18. Relationships between staff and participants that are of an appropriate age are not encouraged due to the “teacher/student relationship” that exists in many YMCA programs.
- Staff will refrain from intimate displays of affection towards others while at work.
- Staff will respect children’s rights to not be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable, and their right to say “No”. Other than diapering, children are not to be touched on areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit.
- Staff and volunteers are not to transport children in their own vehicle except for the designated emergency vehicle and/or per approval of supervisor.
- Staff may not be alone with children they meet in YMCA programs outside the YMCA. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, and inviting children to your home.
- Day Camp/Child Care Staff/Volunteers: Under no circumstances should staff release children to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian, or other adult authorized by the parent or guardian. Written parental authorization must be on file with the YMCA.

Discipline of Members and Guests

- Staff must immediately report violations of the Member Conduct Policy to their supervisor or designated staff. Hostile, abusive or threatening members or guests will not be tolerated and the YMCA reserves the right to remove, suspend or terminate members per its policies and procedures.
- Staff shall not abuse members or guests in any of the following ways:
 - Physical Abuse – strike, spank, shake, pinch or slap
 - Verbal Abuse – humiliate, degrade, or threaten
 - Sexual Abuse – inappropriate touching or verbal exchange
 - Mental Abuse – shaming, withholding love, or cruelty
 - Neglect Abuse – withholding food, water, medical or legal help, basic care, etc.

- Staff must use positive techniques of guidance including redirection, positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison and criticism. Staff will have age appropriate expectations and set up guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline. Physical restraint is to be used for the express purpose of preventing bodily harm to the child, staff or other program participants. Any incident where restraint was necessary must be documented by the staff.
- The YMCA is obligated to report suspected child abuse and/or neglect therefore, staff and volunteers should note any obvious signs of illness or injury and address appropriate questions to the parents in a non-threatening manner. Any questionable marks on the child, ongoing untreated illness or questionable response from the parents must be documented and brought to the immediate attention of supervisor.
- Staff shall follow all State and Federal, laws and/or regulations, as well as any licensing standards as may be specified.

Staff Supervision

- Employees are responsible for communicating directly with their supervisor on all matters, including but not limited to any issues related to performance, conduct, safety, attendance, policies or procedures.
- Supervisors reserve the right to coach and discipline staff in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Association, branch and department. This discipline may include verbal or written warnings, suspension and terminations.
- Employees may appeal a disciplinary action through the appropriate chain of command at the branch. Please consult the Personnel Handbook and branch manual for specific guidelines and procedures.

Attendance

- Staff and volunteers are expected to work their assigned schedule unless changes are approved by the supervisor.
- Time off must be requested and approved in advance except in the case of an emergency or illness. In the event of an emergency or illness, the employee must contact their supervisor as soon as possible. Please refer to the local staff manual for specific procedures for the branch or department.
- Excessive absences may result in disciplinary action. Three consecutive absences without notice or authorization is considered a “voluntary resignation”.