CITY OF TALLAHASSEE

2026-2027

YOUTH BASKETBALL MANUAL

2026-2027 YOUTH BASKETBALL PROGRAM

LIST OF FACILITIES

Cobb Middle School
915 Hillcrest Street

Deerlake Middle School
9902 Deerlake West

Jack L. McLean Jr. Community Center
700 Paul Russell Road
(850) 891-2505

Jake Gaither Community Center
801 Bragg Drive
(850) 891-3940

Lawrence-Gregory Community Center (Dade Street)
1115 Dade Street
(850) 891-3910

Montford Middle School
5789 Pimlico Dr.

RAA Middle School
401 West Tharpe Street

Sue Herndon McCollum Community Center
501 Ingleside Avenue
(850) 891-3946

Swift Creek Middle School
2100 Pedrick Road

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. **League**
   Teams will practice at the location they register to play, providing there is enough space to accommodate the number of teams at the location. If needed, alternate gyms as close as possible will serve as overflow gyms. Games will be played at multiple locations throughout the City.

2. **Number of Players per Team**
   Each team will ideally have a maximum of ten (10) players.

3. **Number of Coaches per Team**
   Each team will have two (2) coaches, a head coach, and a primary assistant coach, if possible.

4. **Player Eligibility**
   JUNIOR: 8 – 10 years of age
   INTERMEDIATE: 11 – 13 years of age
   SENIOR: 14 – 17 years of age

September 1 of the current year is the age determining date for all leagues.

5. **Proof of Age**
   Tallahassee PRNA reserves the right to request proof of age at any time. Proof may be a birth certificate or school records, if signed by a school official. If proof of age is requested, a player will not be allowed to participate until proper records have been submitted to the program supervisor.

6. **Team Pictures/Trophies**
   Tallahassee PRNA cannot endorse or take responsibility for team activities beyond what is established as standard procedure in conducting this program. For parents choosing to participate in activities such as photography sessions, etc., these activities are based on personal choice and the parent is ultimately responsible. If parents choose to undertake additional activities, asking for mandatory donations from team members is prohibited. All donations must be voluntary and cannot affect a participant's rights to any benefits afforded to other participants.

7. **Post-Season Tournament**
   There will be single elimination tournament at the end of the season. Please see rule 8 below regarding tournament eligibility.

8. **Eligibility for Tournaments**
   Junior League*: player must play in at least five (5) regular season games to be eligible for the tournament.*
   Intermediate League*: player must play in at least six (6) regular season games to be eligible for the tournament.*
   Senior League*: player must play in at least eight (6) regular season games to be eligible for the tournament.*

II. UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

1. **Shirts**

Each player will be furnished with a team jersey. Team jerseys must be visibly worn during games and may not be altered in any way. The head coach and primary assistant coach will be furnished with a team jersey as well. Jerseys must be tucked into the shorts.

2. **Shorts (No pants allowed)**

Shorts **CANNOT** have pockets or belt loops. This is a safety rule. Players wearing shorts with pockets or belt loops will not be allowed to play. Turning shorts inside out or duck taping the pockets closed is not allowed. Shorts of any color may be worn during practices and games. A player's shorts may not be worn in a manner that exposes any type of undergarment or skin. In addition, the top of the shorts may not be worn low on the hips.

3. **Shoes**

Players must always wear sneakers or gym shoes.

4. Additional Uniforms/Equipment

Uniform items or equipment, in addition to what the city provides and requires, is optional. Coaches should not ask/require players or parents to purchase additional uniform or equipment items.

III. RULES & REGULATIONS

The following are specific rules and regulations of the Tallahassee PRNA Youth Basketball Program. The Official National Federation of State High Schools, current rule book, governs all other official rules of this program. Any situations requiring rule interpretations and other occurrences not specifically covered in the manual will be ruled on by the gym supervisor at that time.

1. **Game Length**
   Each quarter will be eight (8) minute running quarter except for the last two (2) minutes of each half (2nd and 4th quarters). The running clock will stop for the following reasons: all fouls in which free throws are administered (the clock will stop when the players are lined up for the free throw), timeouts and all official timeouts.

2. **Timeouts**
   Each team will receive five (5) timeouts per game, each lasting one (1) minute. Timeouts may be taken at any point during the game.

3. **Injury Timeouts**
   In the event of an injury, an official may call an injury timeout. The injured player must come out of the game until the next dead ball.

4. **Overtime**
   There will be one (1) overtime period during a game, if needed. The clock will be a regular clock for the entire overtime period. Overtime is three (3) minutes in length. Each team will receive an additional timeout for the overtime period. Please note: Juniors no pressing during overtime / Intermediate/Senior may press if the regular press rule applies. If teams are tied at the end of overtime, the game will result in a tie.

5. **Adding Players**
   Coaches may not add players. Players will be assigned by PRNA. If a team adds a player without the Department's knowledge, all games that player participated in will result in a forfeit.

6. **Playing Teams Outside of the PRNA League**
   PRNA does not endorse or permit playing teams outside of the PRNA league. The department will not accept the liability involved. Therefore, only league play is permissible.

7. **Gym Rules**
   Players and parents should abide by the gym rules and the requests of the gym supervisor.

8. **Early Arrival at the Gym**
   Because of the lack of supervision, players should not arrive at the gym more than fifteen (15) minutes before the first game time. The gym will NOT be open prior to this scheduled time. Please remember that some facilities may have programs occurring prior to the athletic contest which means teams may not be able to enter the gymnasium prior to our scheduled times.

9. **Jewelry**
   In accordance with the rules, a player may not wear any jewelry during practices and games. This includes metal/plastic barrettes/clips in the hair. Athletic sweatbands on the arms, legs or head are allowed.

10. **Protests**
    Games cannot be protested. Under no circumstance will a game be played over.

11. **Duplicate Playing Shirts**
    If there are duplicate shirt colors, a coin toss will determine who will wear the reversible gym jerseys.

12. **Starting Lineup**
    Coaches should turn in the starting line-up to the scorekeeper before game time. The official form must be used. Coaches should write the names of all players present beside their number and check the

quarter the player will be starting. The scorekeeper will turn in these forms to the basketball supervisor who will keep a record of all participants. A team will not play unless the form is completed.

13. **Grace Period**
    There will be no grace period. A team must have at least three (3) players to begin the first game. For the second and third games, a team must have at least four (4) players to begin the game.

14. **Bench Rule**
    One coach will be allowed to stand, and coach provided he/she is not blocking the view of the scorekeeper. Coaches must stay off the court and within the designated "coaches' area" which the gym supervisor will designate for each gym. At no time will a coach be allowed to address an official during a live ball situation. If a coach wants to address an official, he/she may do so only during dead ball situations such as a time-out or between quarters. Coaches must speak to officials in a polite manner and always demonstrate respect and sportsmanship. Players must remain seated unless going into the game.

15. **Taunting Rule**
    Disrespectfully addressing, baiting, or taunting an opponent will result in a technical foul. Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated.

16. **Criticism of Officials**
    As you are doing your best as a coach, and the players are doing their best, so too are the officials working to officiate the game. Basketball is a difficult game to call but appears easy from the sidelines. Be considerate and show reserve. Constant criticism will not be tolerated. Remember a referee doesn't care who wins. A coach will not constantly be reminded of this. The basketball coordinator and gym supervisors will be observant of the officials and will talk with them as necessary. You, as the coach, set the example for your team…always act with sportsmanship.

17. **Back Court Interference – Press Rule**
    Junior League: Defense cannot guard at any time in the back court. Once the offensive player crosses over half court the defender can start playing defense. The defender must start at the bottom of the half court circle before engaging with the offensive player.
    Intermediate League: Last two minutes of each half. Until the last 2 minutes of each half, the defender must start at the bottom of the half court circle before engaging with the offensive player.
    Senior League: This does not apply – Teams may press at any time during the game.

Penalty: After second backcourt violation, it's a 1 shot bench technical

18. **Technical Fouls (against a coach or player)**
    There are no excuses for technical fouls – on either a coach or a player. Therefore, if a coach is charged with two (2) technical fouls during a game, they will no longer be allowed to coach that game. They must leave the bench and sit on the opposite side of the gym. In addition, they will be suspended for one game. If a coach, who has been ejected, continues to coach their team from the other side of the gym or continues to harass the officiating staff, the gym supervisor will ask them to leave the gym entirely. At this time, the coach will have one (1) minute to leave, or a forfeit will result.

19. **Player Participation Rule**
    All players must play 1 full quarter and sit 1 full quarter if at least 7 or more players are present at the game. If a team has only 6 players present at the game, a different player must sit each quarter (2 players will not have to sit at all). And if only 5 players are present at the game, they will all play the entire game (no one will have to sit a quarter). This rule is in place to try to even out playing time for the players and to make games fairer when teams have different number of players show up for a game. There will be a lineup form to fill out prior to game time and submitted to the scorekeeper indicating which quarter each player will play and sit for the game.

20. **Dunking is Allowed**
    Dunking is allowed in ALL Leagues

21. **Lane Violation**
    Junior: Five (5) second violation
    Intermediate & Senior: Three (3) seconds allowed in free-throw lane.

22. Personal Fouls

Junior: Six (6) personal fouls.

Intermediate & Senior: Five (5) personal fouls.

23. Shooting Fouls

Junior: Nine (9) or fewer team fouls per half, the ball is taken out of bounds by the non-offended team, except for shooting fouls in which free throws will be awarded. Ten (10) or more team fouls per half is an automatic two (2) shot foul (there will not be any one and one shooting fouls).

Intermediate & Senior: Six (6) or fewer team fouls per half, the ball is taken out of bounds by the non-offended team, except for shooting fouls in which free throws will be awarded. Seven (7), eight (8) or nine (9) non-shooting team fouls per half will result in a one and one free throw(s). Ten (10) or more team fouls per half is an automatic two (2) shot foul.

24. Ball Size

Junior Coed and All Girls Leagues will use the women's official sized ball. (28.5)

Intermediate & Senior Coed Leagues will use the men's official sized ball. (29.5)

IV. PURPOSE OF THE BASKETBALL PROGRAM

We believe that through good leadership our program will ensure successful experiences for all participants. It should encompass all the benefits listed below:

1. Participation should develop and keep a healthy mind in a healthy body.
   Certain physical results are considered desirable and can be attained, subject to the differences in individual ability. These are: speed, strength, endurance, coordination, flexibility, and agility.

2. Self-reliance and emotional stability can be developed through athletics.
   A. Making decisions and accepting responsibilities.
   B. Developing and exercising leadership.

3. Social growth is enhanced by athletics.
   A. Appreciating what other people are really like.
   B. Learning to get along with people - a living laboratory of democracy in action.
   C. Learning to cooperate— "Teamwork".
   D. Learning to compete— self-discipline, emotional balance.
   E. Making new friends.
   F. Learning respect for rights of others.

4. Sportsmanship is an immediate and long-range goal.
   A. Being responsible to law (rules) and order.
   B. Observing fairness and custom.
   C. Treating others with consideration.
   D. Recognizing and applauding fine play and sportsmanlike acts of opponents.

5. There are other goals and values:
   A. To develop initiative, willingness to try new things
   B. To encourage intelligent use of leisure.
   C. To have a fun and satisfying experience.
   D. To participate in a wide variety of activities.
   E. To obtain recognition, respect in the community.
   F. To promote mental alertness.

   Together, these will help make our children become better all-around citizens.

V. BILL OF RIGHTS FOR YOUNG ATHLETES

1. Right of the opportunity to participate in sports regardless of ability level.
2. Right to participate at a level that is compatible with each child's developmental level.
3. Right to have qualified adult leadership.
4. Right to participate in safe and healthy environments.
5. Right of each child to share in the leadership and decision making of the sport in which he/she is participating.
6. Right to play as a child and not as an adult.
7. Right to proper preparation for participation in the sport.
8. Right to an equal opportunity to strive for success.
9. Right to be treated with dignity by all involved.
10. Right to have fun through sport.[1]

[1] Youth Sports Guide for Coach and Parents AAHPER Publication, 1201 16th St., N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036

VI. ROLE OF THE VOLUNTEER COACH

The Tallahassee Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Affairs (PRNA) would like to thank you for accepting the responsibility of coaching one of our youth football teams. No program can be a success without good leadership.

The hours will be long, and you are serving without pay, but your job is most important. You will be building the moral fiber, mental health, and physical strength of young boys and girls who will be the citizens of tomorrow.

These athletes are at a most impressionable age and the training you give them, good or bad, will have a lasting effect on their young lives.

For some, playing on your team may be their only contact with organized sports. We know you will want them to remember it as a pleasurable and meaningful experience.

Without your help, this program would not be possible. For the players, parents, and the Tallahassee PRNA, THANKS!

VII. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VOLUNTEER COACH

Background Check

All head coaches and primary assistant coaches must complete a National Background Screening Consent/Release Form. Coaches must be cleared before coaching any Tallahassee PRNA program, this includes practices. Any team assistants or team parents are encouraged to complete a Tallahassee PRNA Volunteer Information Sheet.

Parents Meeting

All coaches must have a preseason meeting with team parents to discuss the purpose and scope of the program, code of conduct, rules and regulations, and other necessary information.

Player Supervision

To ensure the safety of all players, Tallahassee PRNA is asking each coach to stay with their players after practices and games until all players have been picked up. If the same parent(s) are consistently late, please let your park supervisor know. The park supervisor will talk to the parent(s) regarding the issue. If the issue continues, a player may be dismissed from the league. Under no circumstance shall a coach leave a player unattended.

Parent/Spectator Control

A team is responsible for its parents and spectators. Officials may penalize a team for the behavior of its parents and spectators. Please read through the Code of Conduct and the definition and penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct.

Reporting Injuries

During games, park supervisors are responsible for filling out the Accident Report Form for any injury that requires medical attention, or for any injury that may potentially require medical attention. During warm-ups or practices, coaches are responsible for filling out the Accident Report Form. A copy of the report should be turned into Tallahassee PRNA within 24 hours.

VIII. CODE OF CONDUCT

Tallahassee PRNA directs many youths' athletic recreational programs. We are committed to creating opportunities and experiences that will foster the development of positive moral and ethical values, and we strive to promote good sportsmanship among all participants. As a volunteer coach, I hereby pledge to live up to the following code of conduct:

1. I will abstain from using any tobacco or alcohol products in or around the playing field, or the sports complex in which the field is located. I will also refrain from participating in any practice or game activity when it is apparent that I have consumed alcohol prior to arriving. ____ Initials

2. I will refrain from using abusive or profane language in or around the playing field or the sports complex in which the field is located. ____ Initials

3. I will refrain from permitting a player to participate in a practice or game when in doubt as to the player's health or physical condition, and I will abide by a doctor's decision in all matters relating to a player's health or physical condition. ____ Initials

4. I will provide equal opportunities for all players regardless of race, color, ethnicity, religion, age, or otherwise qualified characteristic. ____ Initials

5. I will refrain from accepting any gift, gratuity, or favor that might influence my judgment. I will refrain from offering any gift, gratuity, or favor with the intent of obtaining special privileges, and will not exploit any relationship with a player for personal gain or other advantage. ____ Initials

6. I will strive to promote good mental and physical health in all aspects of participation and refrain from any type of verbal or physical abuse of any players. I will make any criticism "constructive" in nature and reserve it for private moments. ____ Initials

7. I will consistently display and demand good sportsmanship in practice and in games, including but not limited to accepting decisions of the officials in a professional manner; refraining from criticizing opposing coaches, players, and spectators; refraining from "running up the score" and congratulating opposing teams following a game. ____ Initials

8. I will conduct myself in accordance with all rules, regulations, and determinations of the particular league or program in which I am volunteering. ____ Initials

9. I will hold a pre-season parents' meeting and maintain open communication with parents relating to all aspects of participation, including conduct of both spectators and players. ____ Initials

10. I will consistently act in the best interest of all players and the particular program in which I am volunteering, so as to provide a positive experience for all players and to promote a positive image of the program. ____ Initials

_____ _____

Coach Signature Date

IX. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

We want to emphasize the importance of conducting yourselves properly in dealing with medical emergencies at your facilities. Realizing we are not empowered or trained to "treat" victims, we still have the responsibility to render front line aid and supervise the situation. This may involve discussing the situation with the victim, coach, or parent, or to call in the Ambulance Service. Listed below are some guidelines to follow, which should always be coupled with good common sense.

In the event of an accident or emergency:

1. Try to determine the extent of the injury. If in doubt as to the seriousness of the accident, do not move the patient. Keep him comfortable and reassured and call an ambulance. If the situation calls for it, apply ice or keep the patient warm and comfortable.

2. Front line care of an accident would include use of ice, stoppage of bleeding, restoring breathing, and treatment for shock, heat exhaustion or stroke.

3. Be sure victim is as comfortable as possible. If it's cold, cover them. If it's hot, loosen equipment, etc. USE GOOD COMMON SENSE!

4. Call for additional support. Use other adults to secure necessary materials and never leave the patient alone with other players.

5. If an ambulance is called, be sure you have someone to direct it to the site. Assist paramedics in any way you can.

6. Always prepare an accident report that will be turned in to the supervisor who will then get the information to the Parks and Recreation Dept.

7. Be sure you have access to a phone within a short period of time.

8. Submit a follow up report of the injured person. Call to find out the extent of the injury and how he is doing.

Above all, supervisors and coaches are to take charge during these incidents and must coordinate aid rendered.

Please advise all your coaches of the importance of being sure all aspects of an accident are handled properly and expeditiously.

X. MEDICAL ISSUES/CARE

Heat Related Emergencies

Heat related emergencies usually result from loss of fluids and electrolytes (salts) from heavy sweating. As a person continues to lose fluids through sweat, the blood volume is decreased. Blood flow to the skin increases, reducing blood flow to the vital organs. The circulatory system is affected; therefore, the person goes into mild shock. If treated immediately, heat cramps and heat exhaustion can usually be reversed with prompt care.

Heat Cramps – Loss of fluids and electrolytes can begin to produce painful spasms of skeletal muscles, generally in the legs and abdomen. Skin is moist. Body temperature is usually normal.

Treatment – Have person drink cool water and rest in a cool place.

Heat Exhaustion – Cool, moist, pale, clammy, or ashen, headache, nausea, dizziness, weakness, exhaustion.

Treatment –Have person drink cool water and rest in a cool place.

Heat Stroke – Red, hot, dry. Body temperature continues to climb. Person may vomit and begin to show changes in level of consciousness. Sweating may stop because body fluid levels are low. When sweating stops, the body cannot cool itself effectively and body temperature rapidly rises. Soon the brain and other vital organs, such as the heart and kidneys begin to fail. Convulsions, coma, and death will result.

Treatment for Heat Stroke

- Check ABC's
- Call 911
- Remove person from the hot environment.
- Have the person lie down in a cool or shady area. Elevate the legs slightly.
- Loosen or remove clothing.
- Apply cool, wet towels or sheets or cold packs to the body.
- Fan the person to help increase evaporation.
- If you only have ice or cold packs, place them on the person's wrists and ankles, in each armpit, and in the groin to cool the large blood vessels.
- Give small amounts of water to a fully conscious person.
- Do not apply rubbing (isopropyl) alcohol. The alcohol may cause poisoning through the skin or through inhalation.
- Monitor vital signs.

Concussions

After recent discussion of concussions, our program has adopted recommendations each coach will follow for the season. The following guidelines were established by the CDC.

1. Every coach will receive "A Fact Sheet for Coaches" provided by the CDC at the beginning of the season at a coaches meeting. We will also explain signs and symptoms a coach will look for at the coaches meeting.
2. Every coach will also receive a couple copies of "A Fact Sheet for Parents" that will be distributed to a parent of a child that shows signs and symptoms of a concussion.
3. Review the four steps in an action plan with each coach if they suspect a child has a concussion:
    a. Remove athlete from play.
    b. Ensure that the athlete is evaluated by an appropriate health care professional. Do not try to judge the seriousness of the injury yourself.
    c. Inform the athlete's parents or guardians about the possible concussion and give them the fact sheet on concussion.
    d. Keep the athlete out of play the day of the injury and until an appropriate health care professional says they are symptom-free and it OK to return to play. A player must bring a written clearance to the main office before the player can start back playing. League supervisor will notify the coach when a player is cleared to play.

XI. PREVENTING PROBLEMS

Develop Policies and Procedures: *Clearly defined organizational policies and procedures help* clarify the rights and responsibilities of parents and how they should behave with the confines of the youth sports environment. Without boundaries and guidelines for behavior it is difficult to hold individuals accountable for their actions later. Often, parents are out of control because no one has ever told them they are not supposed to be out of control!

Communication: Communication is the key to so many things a youth sports administrator is responsible for and dealing with parents is no exception! Policies and procedures will have no effect unless all involved, including the parents, are made aware of them and understand them. This is where communicating with the parents is vital. Parents must be acknowledged for the important role they play. There are several opportunities for the administrator to communicate with parents effectively: Registration, orientation, and parent meetings.

Registration: Provide parents with important information in the following areas following, or during registration:

- Organizational philosophy and goals
- Season schedule
- Maps to fields or other facilities
- Policies and Procedures Manual
- Safety information about equipment
- Information about areas for parent involvement
- Details about the orientation meeting
- Parents' Code of Ethics
- The coaching approach and philosophy to be employed.
- Team goals

Orientation Meeting: A parents' orientation meeting is a vital tool in developing a positive youth sports experience for children. Orientation meetings can be held on a league wide basis, on an individual basis with each coach meeting his/her team's parents, or both. The orientation meeting allows parents to raise questions and concerns while coaches and administrators are both present. It also allows the coach to get to know the parents he/she will be dealing with during the season. A healthy two-way communication process should be encouraged and initiated at the orientation meeting. Time should be left at the end of the meeting for questions from parents.

Topics to be discussed at this meeting should include:

- Structure of the league – who should parents contact with concerns or questions.
- Philosophy of the league – equal play, skill development, FUN, etc.
- Program specifics – rules, location, times, etc.
- Season specifics – duration, special events, etc.
- Equipment specifics – what is needed, what is optional, etc.
- Transportation guidelines
- Health & safety guidelines – inclement weather policies, etc.
- How parents can get involved
- The rights & responsibilities of the youth sports parent
- Parent's Code of Ethics

Get to Know the Parents Informally: The administrators and coaches of each team should make a point of getting to know the parents of the children. The coach should be aware that all families are different and the motives for children being involved in sports will vary. It may be useful for the coach to have the parents complete a simple questionnaire, asking them specifically what they want their child to get out of the youth sports experience. This questionnaire can be completed at the time of registration and then given to each coach.

By informing each parent know of the organizational philosophy many problems may be prevented in the future. Also, if the parents feel comfortable, it is more likely that youth sports administrators will have an open, constructive relationship with them. Coaches may make the effort to contact each of his/her players' parents on an individual basis or simply spend time talking to each parent at the orientation meeting. What is important is that during and after practices and games the coaches and administrators acknowledge the parents as a valued part of the youth sports experience. If ignored or shown any disrespect, parents feel less secure and are less likely to be supportive.