



# Houston Homeschool Athletics

HHA is a 501(c)3 organization

May, 2017

## Program Information, Policies, Codes of Conduct

### Introduction

Houston Homeschool Athletics (HHA) was formed to provide amateur competitive sports for homeschooled children, ages 8 to 18. Under Christian leadership and guidelines, HHA will provide competition with teams from other homeschool, private school, and public-school programs.

### Statement of Belief

HHA is a Christian organization. All directors, coordinators, administrators, coaches and selected team parents shall agree to and sign the statement of faith, and are expected to follow Biblical guidelines for personal behavior. HHA Statement of Belief:

- The Bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God and constitutes completed and final revelation. The Bible, in its original autograph, is without error in whole and in part, including theological concepts as well as geographical and historical details.
- God has existed from all eternity in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ was God come in human flesh being fully God and fully man, except without sin.
- All men are in violation of God's righteous requirements and His holy character both by nature and by act, and are therefore under His wrath and just condemnation. The purpose of the coming of Jesus Christ was to pay the penalty for man's sin through His death on the cross and His subsequent visible, bodily resurrection.
- Salvation is offered as a free gift to the sinner. This gift must be responded to in individual faith, not trusting in any personal works whatsoever, but in the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus Christ alone.

### Mission Statement

HHA's mission is to compete in amateur sports at the highest level and be a witness for our Lord Jesus Christ. We are a parent run, family oriented and volunteer powered organization that wants to encourage and develop kids, of all levels, not only in their athletic endeavors, but in their overall development as young men and women.

### Forming Teams/Coaching

A team for a age group will be formed when we have the appropriate number of children of the same age/gender, a coach, and a team parent. Participants will be required to sign approval forms for HHA to conduct a background check on the coach and other HHA designated positions.

Coaching requirements: While knowledge of the sport is important and prior experience playing the sport is a plus, neither quality is essential to be considered for a coaching position. What is essential is for the coach to be encouraging and supportive of the children. For those that have limited to no prior experience or that want to grow their coaching skills, we will conduct or find coaching clinics to teach fundamentals, practice routines and recommended best practices of the sport. Coaches will also be trained on the program's policies, procedures and code of conduct. Suggested prayers and bible verses may be broadcast by HHA Sports Directors for sharing with their teams. Our desire is to have consistency among all teams in the specific sport, both in teaching the fundamentals, and the overall game approach.

### Playing Time, Team and Individual Practice

The mission of HHA is to train and compete in a youth sports at a high competitive level, all in a Christ-like atmosphere. HHA's goal is to provide all team members ample opportunity for training to develop their individual talents and achieve strong team performance. Individual practice is also critical and encouraged to grow the athlete's capabilities. In many instances, HHA teams will be competing against teams that practice daily. Your coaches and teammates are counting on

you to train at home to hone skills, in addition to team practices. Coaches will consider faithful practice attendance when weighing the merits of game playing time. Participants must realize that in competitive play, there is no guarantee for a minimum amount of playing time, particularly at the high school level.

All participants are expected to attend all scheduled practices and games. If extenuating circumstances occur, or you are aware of planned absences (vacation, etc.), you are expected to notify your coach as soon as you know you will be absent.

### **Facilities: Gyms, Fields, Meeting Rooms**

If you have access to a gymnasium, field, or other facility that we might use for free or low-cost practices or for meeting locations, please let us know.

### **HHA Board of Directors**

Reagan Reeves  
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Lori Miller  
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### **Financial Policies**

#### **Operating Budget:**

HHA is a volunteer based organization. Operating expenses are incurred for team training and games/meets such as gym/field fees, game/meet entry fees, referees, etc. Additionally, administrative costs are incurred to support program management including expenses such as website, accounting, insurance, income tax returns, advertising, state/federal documentation, etc. Currently, these expenses are shared among sport programs as necessary.

HHA operates mostly with volunteer positions to run the organization; however, we may pay coaches, administration, accountants, and other professional positions to facilitate a professional and competitive atmosphere. Any paid positions would be disclosed in the company financials.

#### **Operating Funds:**

HHA relies on several funding areas to operate the sports programs - fundraising, donations, player participation fees, tournament/meet team entry fees and fan attendance fees, and volunteers.

Most of each sport's expenses occur within the first 1 or 2 months of the season; therefore, timely payment of fees is required. **Completion of all participant obligations (fees, fundraising, volunteering) is required and enables player to continue participation in team training and games/meets. There will be no refund of fees after the first week of game/meet play.**

#### **Fundraising:**

In order to keep fees as low as possible, we organize fundraising opportunities for our players and their teams. Each player family is required to raise the minimum amount indicated each season for their sport, and is encouraged to raise over and above the requirement.

**Donations:**

HHA is a 501(c)3. Any individual or company may make a monetary or in-kind donation and receive a tax deduction. A receipt will be provided if requested. Many companies provide matching funds to their employee donations. If your company has a program like this, please let us know what information we need to provide.

**Volunteering:**

Volunteer supporters are critical to make HHA a success each year. Players and their families are the vital resource for the volunteer effort. Each player family will be required to volunteer in the following areas – games, tournaments, meets. For basketball, parents and age-appropriate players must support at least three games in areas such as time keeping, score keeping, court monitoring and gym gate entry. Sport Directors will discuss volunteer requirements with parents at orientation. HHA will conduct short training sessions to ensure that the volunteer effort is stress free. Being a volunteer gets you closer to the action and the knowledge gained will enhance your enjoyment as a fan. Parents and age-appropriate players must also support the end of year HHA sponsored tournament/meet. Basketball requires at least four (4) hours in areas such as time keeping, score keeping, court monitoring and gym gate entry per player.

Many companies sponsor the volunteer efforts of their employees by making monetary donations to the charitable organization. If your company has a program like this, please let us know what information we need to provide.

Scholarships are available for player families that can demonstrate financial need, and HHA is required to follow judicial guidelines when appropriating them. In general, a family will not be able to receive more than 1/2 of the player fee as scholarship and all players MUST pay the registration fee before being considered for a scholarship. HHA asks that scholarship recipients take a more active volunteer role in the sport from which they receive scholarship funds. The administrator for your sport always needs help with many tasks that support the organization.

**Participant Code of Conduct**

All players, coaches, parents and fans must abide by the following code of conduct when attending or participating in any HHA event. The actions of each person reflect on the entire homeschooling community.

**Coaches and Parents:**

1. Can readily serve as role models to the players and other fans. The players will benefit the most from your encouragement and cheering.
2. Accept the referee decisions without argument, grumbling, booing, or gesturing of any kind. HHA will counsel offenders and remove repeat offenders from games and practices, if necessary
3. Cheer the performance of visiting teams.
4. Get players to attend all practices on time.
5. Leave the coaching to the coaches.
6. 24 hour wait rule: Parents will not approach a coach with a complaint or concern immediately before or after a game or practice, but instead wait 24 hours. A parent must then set up a specific time to speak with the coach about their concern. If the concern must be addressed immediately, the parent should call the appropriate sports director.
7. Playtime: When questions about playtime arise, parents should encourage their player to speak directly with the coach regarding their concerns. Playtime in games is not guaranteed.

**Players must:**

8. Demonstrate Godly character qualities at home or away from HHA functions.
9. Strive to develop their God-given gifts in character, academics, and athletic skill.
10. Maintain a “C” or better school grade average for each course during each month that they participate in the regular season for their sport for HHA. Parents are expected to monitor school performance and notify coaches if their child is not maintaining their grades.
11. Honor those in authority including coaches, parents, and officials by accepting at all times their decisions without argument, grumbling, booing, or gesturing of any kind.
12. Honor their teammates by submitting to the greater good of the team at the expense of their own ambitions.
13. Honor their teammates by giving them encouragement and by trying to develop an attitude that places others’ needs before their own.
14. Use wholesome language, and not maliciously talk to or about teammates, parents, coaches or officials. Treat others as they wish to be treated.

15. Honor their opponents by playing their best while not engaging in taunting, baiting, or ridiculing of any kind.
16. Submit to HHA and team rules for travel, dress, and behavior.
17. Be on time at all practices and games, and notify the Coach as soon as possible if they will miss. Players understand that missing a game or practice without notice or without reasonable explanation is grounds for discipline.
18. Not initiate physical violence or contact with another when the player knows or should reasonably believe the other will regard the contact as offensive or provocative.
19. Not use performance-enhancing drugs (PED), tobacco, alcohol or any other controlled drug in an illegal manner.
20. Not post, submit, send, or publish inappropriate, slanderous, derogatory, sexually suggestive, sexually explicit, or any form of negative comments, photos, texts, etc. to any electronic, public or private entity which includes, but is not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Snap Chat, Instagram, YouTube, personal emails, personal web pages, personal or private chatrooms, personal texting/cell phone numbers or accounts. Sending any form of inappropriate item as enumerated above will not be tolerated regardless of the intended recipient. Once sent, consequences designated by the coach in conjunction with HHA Board will occur
21. Understand that all players are subject to disciplinary action for violating this code of conduct (up to and including permanent suspension from HHA) at the discretion of the HHA director of the sport and/or the HHA Board of Directors.

### **Player's Dress Code**

The dress code is for all HHA functions including games/meets, practices, tournaments, parties, and other miscellaneous activities (except as noted). The dress code is designed to promote teamwork, to minimize individual attention, and to minimize safety issues with certain accessories. The main goal is not legalistic, or attempting to create laws for the sake of the laws. The codes are meant to prevent provocative clothing that would cause another to stumble, to create an atmosphere of program unity, and to help prevent injuries from hair and other jewelry. Also, we must follow UIL and TAPPS and other organization dress codes, as we typically play teams that are in those leagues. Items not listed do not mean license for the player to dress inappropriately--*the Sport Director's or Head Coach's decision regarding the dress code is final.*

- No jewelry of any kind at games or practices.
- No radical hair coloring or hairstyles unless approved (spirit hair may be allowed).
- No droopy shorts or pants.
- No advertising on any clothing that depicts alcohol, drugs, tobacco, violence, sexual innuendo, profanity, mysticism, the occult, evil, gangs, or worldly personalities or themes.
- No visible mid-drifts.
- Modest dressing at all functions: no see-through clothing, or short shorts.
- Jerseys tucked in for all games (basketball).
- Matching navy blue or white short-sleeve t-shirt allowed under HHA uniform game jersey.

For boys:

- Modest facial hair; No piercing jewelry at practice/games.

For girls:

- Ear-piercing jewelry allowed at functions other than practices/games.
- No hair hardware at practices or games (safety issue).

### **Parental Involvement**

HHA is reliant on family involvement and participation, and we encourage our families to get involved where they have gifts and abilities. Volunteerism is critical to the organization's success, so please let leadership know where you can serve, whether it is to help with scorebook or game night set-up, or help organize various sports tournaments or meets, such as Space City Jam, or take pictures for the organization, or any other areas that you can think needs attention. We appreciate your willingness to serve!!!

Areas where we need volunteers include the following:

- Coaching
- Fundraising
- Help coordinate for Space City Jam basketball tournament
- Help coordinate for Space City Jam cross country meet
- Spirit Wear
- Uniforms
- Scorebook or keeping times and distances for track and field and cross country
- Assist coaches or directors at practices

- Photographer/Social Media Postings
- Website maintenance and updates
- Posting announcements on homeschool sites
- Represent HHA at homeschool events: expos and conventions
- Provide Spirit Support for your son's or daughter's team
  - Plan social gatherings for the team, spirit items like posters, pom poms, stick horses, and more
- Be the Team Parent for your son's or daughter's team
  - Help with directions and carpooling
  - Work with the Coach to oversee the logistics of the team
  - Collect and hold players' cell phones (if necessary)
  - Help confirm games with schools
- Spiritual leadership team

### **Homeschool Definition and Minimum Grade Performance**

- HHA requires that all player participants are homeschooled. A student should be homeschooled for the entire year in which they participate in HHA sports, from October 1.
- "Homeschooling" is defined to mean that a student's education is parent-directed. The parents shall be involved in their child's education, assuming the role of principal or headmaster and (1) setting the date and requirements for high school graduation; (2) selecting and approving course materials and study schedules; and (3) selecting tutors, correspondence courses, videos, computer courses, and similar resources for their child's education.
- Players do not have to be only homeschooled, but for basketball there is a minimum 51% Rule. For clarification purposes, a normal course load for a full-time homeschool student is six (6) core courses; therefore, if a student-athlete is taking more than three (3) courses at a public, private, vocational, or college institution, he/she is not considered 51% homeschooled. If there are special circumstances, a student may apply for a hardship exemption.
- HHA requires that each student maintains a grade C or better average (2.0 on a 4.0 scale) for each course to be allowed to play in upcoming games. Parents, however, are the ones who determine academic eligibility.

### **The Role of Outside Institutions**

- **College Classes:**

A student may have the opportunity to take dual-credit college courses, particularly in his/her junior or senior year. Such enrollment is encouraged, and the definition above shall not be construed to mean that such students are not homeschooled if the participating college admitted the Homeschool student as a high school student. However, the student may not take enough courses to be deemed a "Full-Time Student" by the college or university. HHA will abide by the rules of homeschool championships in which they compete. Directors will keep parents abreast on these guidelines.

- **Private and Public Schools:**

Full-time enrollment in a traditional public or private school is not homeschooling because the child's education in such schools is not parent-directed. A player that attends a private, public, charter, or university-model school full-time is not eligible in Homeschool divisions. For part-time students at these types of schools, the student must be considered "homeschooled" as defined by the State of Texas. HHA will abide by the rules of homeschool championships in which they compete. Directors will keep parents abreast on these guidelines.

- **Co-op and Umbrella Schools:**

The participation in a cooperative school, and/or an umbrella school can create some questions. In some states, "Homeschool students" are required by law to attend a private school and, in such cases, cooperative or umbrella schools are formed for this purpose. These schools, whether called cooperative, umbrella, or "private," are characterized by significant and direct parental involvement, often simply representing different forms of homeschooling within a group of like-minded families. In such cases where the student-athlete meets the definition of Homeschooling and is involved in a coop and umbrellas school, he/she is deemed eligible.

- **Vocational Classes:**

In some states, "Homeschool students" are permitted to take classes at vocational schools. A student may take classes at such schools as long as he/she meet the homeschooling definition. However, the student may not take enough courses to be deemed a "Full-Time Student."

## Co-Ed Teams

Co-ed teams are not allowed for basketball or volleyball.

## Transfer Students

Any student who transfers from a public school, Christian/private School, or another Homeschool team and is under disciplinary action(s) may have to wait one (1) year before he/she is eligible to participate in any NCHBC activity or play against other Homeschool teams. Houston Homeschool Athletics will keep a close watch on any new guidelines which NCHBC or TSHC implements and inform the families with all relevant changes.

## Additional Educational Requirements

- A player that has participated in a graduation ceremony is not eligible to participate at the National Christian Homeschool Basketball/Volleyball Championships.
- To be eligible for participation in the National Christian Homeschool Basketball/Volleyball Championships, a player must be homeschooled continuously from October 1st to the beginning of this year's tournament.

## Additional Non-Educational Requirements

- A player must live at home with his/her parent, legal guardian, or legally responsible person (in the case of foster children or other family hardships) to be considered Homeschooled.
- A player cannot be married.
- A player must live within a 100-mile radius of the team's practice facility.

## Eligibility for Regular Season/Grade Declaration

A homeschooled boy or girl that is at least the minimum age allowed by the HHA sport he/she is participating in, but not older than 18 years of age on September 1, is eligible to play that sport during the upcoming regular season. A copy of each player's BIRTH CERTIFICATE must be provided the first time the child plays for HHA and will be kept on file until child graduates or discontinues playing for HHA.

## Grade Declaration Guidelines

HHA requires that parents declare a grade for their children according to the following guidelines:

AGE ON SEPTEMBER 1:			
Ages 13 and younger	Age 14	Ages 15 to 18	Age 19
Player must declare 8th grade or younger	Player can declare 8th grade or 9th grade	Player must declare 9th through 12th grade	Player is over age limit and cannot play.
A player that declares 9th grade may not play in a game against a Junior High team.			
A player that declares 9th grade has 4 years of high school eligibility. Once a player has declared 9th grade, he/she cannot, in the future, declare a grade lower than 9th grade.			
A player that is 13 or 14 and declares 8th grade or below may be allowed, at the discretion of the Director for that sport, to participate on a high school team without sacrificing a year of eligibility. Once a player participates in a high school graduation ceremony of any kind, he she/ can no longer compete in HHA sports, regardless of age.			
For more information, please refer to UIL Constitution Section 1478(b)(1)-(4). <a href="http://www.uil texas.org/files/constitution/uil-ccr-section-1478.pdf">http://www.uil texas.org/files/constitution/uil-ccr-section-1478.pdf</a>			