

Diocese of Cleveland CYO

Charter and Bylaws

Giving the Very Best of Yourself!

2025-2026





DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND

CYO CHARTER AND BYLAWS 2025-2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHARTER FOR THE DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND CYO

		Table of Contents	2
Article	1	Name and Purpose	3
Article	2	Catholic Charities and CYO Mission and Values	3
Article	3	Philosophy	4
Article	4	Membership	4
Article	5	Governance and Organization	5
Article	6	CYO Administration and Governance	5
Article	7	CYO Member Administration and Governance	6

BYLAWS FOR THE DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND CYO

Bylaw	1	Coverage	8
Bylaw	2	Coaches	8
Bylaw	3	Athlete Eligibility	9
Bylaw	4	General Rules	10
Bylaw	5	Team Entry and Eligibility Roster Requirements	12
Bylaw	6	Team and League Formation	14
Bylaw	7	Preseason Meetings	16
Bylaw	8	Officials and Site Staff	16
Bylaw	9	Code of Conduct	17
Bylaw	10	Penalties for Violation of Rules	18
Bylaw	11	Protests, Grievances and Appeals Process	18

CHARTER FOR THE DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND CYO

Yellow highlights are new changes this year 2025-26.

This Charter defines the organizational framework of the Diocese of Cleveland Catholic Youth Organization (CYO). CYO, administered by Catholic Charities, is rooted in a mutual partnership between parents and families, Member organizations, and CYO administration. The foundational components are as follows:

- The CYO Charter & Bylaws requires an annual choice by parishes and schools to be part of the Diocese of Cleveland CYO. Choosing to be a Member indicates full and active support and adherence to the spirit and letter of the CYO Charter & Bylaws.
- CYO Members and Athletic Administration work together to further the mission of CYO: *CYO inspires young people to know God, to love God, and to serve God through athletics.*
- Member programs are an extension of the parish, school or Catholic organization. CYO athletics is most effective when integrated into the life of the Christian community.
- The Charter clarifies the primary roles and relationships into 3 areas:
 1. Diocese Athletic Administration – Governance, Organization and Oversight of CYO diocesan sports programs performed by Catholic Charities.
 2. Sports Program Operation - Program personnel who manage sport programs.
 3. Member Administration - Organization of CYO sports programs at the Member level (Parishes and Schools).

ARTICLE 1 - NAME and PURPOSE

1-1-1 The name of this organization is the Diocese of Cleveland - Catholic Youth Organization (CYO). The purpose of CYO athletics is to provide athletic competition for the youth of the Diocese of Cleveland. This is accomplished by:

- A. providing an organizational structure for athletic competition;
- B. establishing regulations for athletic governance for team and individual sports;
- C. establishing and monitoring standards for individuals, coaches, volunteers, and contest officials;
- D. providing information and program materials to facilitate communication among Members;
- E. establishing and monitoring standards for sportsmanship, fair and equitable competition, and risk management;
- F. preventing the exploitation of Members, athletes, coaches, officials, and,
- G. providing an opportunity for as many eligible young people as possible to experience spiritual, physical, mental, and emotional growth through participation in CYO sports.

ARTICLE 2 - CATHOLIC CHARITIES and CYO MISSION AND VALUES

2-1-1 Mission: Under the leadership of the Bishop of Cleveland and inspired by the Gospel, Catholic Charities continues the mission of Jesus by responding to those in need through an integrated system of quality services designed to respect the dignity of every athlete and build a just and compassionate society.

2-1-2 Catholic Charities Vision: Catholic Charities envisions a world touched by God's love: where we alleviate poverty and need, and all people share justly in the blessings of creation.

2-1-3 CYO Mission Statement: *CYO inspires young people to know God, to love God, and to serve God through athletics*

2-1-4 CYO Vision Statement: CYO envisions young people actively practicing their faith on their teams and in their families, schools, parishes, and in the world.

2-1-5 CYO Administration aims to:

- A. ORGANIZE CYO to provide fair and equitable athletic opportunities and administration of contests and events
- B. COMMUNICATE the mission, vision, values, and goals of CYO to all persons in CYO;
- C. SUPPORT CYO Athletic Directors, Coaches, Leaders, Athletes, and Parents to further the mission of CYO;
- D. OPERATE tournaments and events that demonstrate the mission and values of CYO;
- E. PARTNER with mission aligned organizations to increase resources for CYO programs.

2-1-6 Catholic Charities and CYO Values

- A. Dignity of Person: In the Genesis story of creation, we are told that human beings are created in the very image and likeness of God. (Genesis 1:27) The Scriptures further reflect that as God created all the aspects of the universe, along with man and woman, God looked upon creation and noted that it was "good." In fact, God ultimately proclaims that all God had created was indeed "very good." (Gen. 1:31)
- B. Concern for the Poor: "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me...In so far as you did this to one of the least of these sisters and brothers of mine, you did it for me." (Matthew 25)
- C. Justice: "God asks of you only this, to act justly to love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God." (Micah 6:8)
- D. Hope: "I came that they may have life and have it more abundantly." (John 10:10)
- E. Stewardship: "As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace." (1 Peter 4:10)

ARTICLE 3 - PHILOSOPHY

- 3-1-1 CYO Athletics endeavors to help young people be more Christ-like in the way they live. CYO programs focus on the total development of children to influence the formation of Christian values in a Member's ministry to young people. CYO athletics therefore requires the Member to provide the support, leadership, and supervision such a program needs.
- 3-1-2 The development of the young person, not the athletic activity, is the primary focus of CYO Athletics. Therefore:
 - A. all athletic programs should be well organized and maintain standards of high quality;
 - B. all athletes have the right to participate in every contest - mandatory playing time; and,
 - C. all athletes have the opportunity to participate at appropriate grade and competition levels.
- 3-1-3 All CYO volunteers are serving in a program of the Catholic Church. They must strive to always demonstrate Christ-like behaviors in their actions at all times. They are responsible to teach that success in CYO is striving to achieve individual and team goals while respecting athletes, coaches, teammates, opponents and officials.
- 3-1-4 CYO volunteers are essential and provide time, energy, resources, and expertise. They must complete required training to provide a safe environment and develop the knowledge and skills to serve young people effectively.
- 3-1-5 CYO programs are most effective when used to invite, welcome, and engage children into the life of the Catholic community. The dynamic relationship between athletics, family life, and parish life is essential for quality CYO programs.
- 3-1-6 Competition is an opportunity to demonstrate athletic skills while striving to bring out the best in all participants. CYO aims to build Christian fellowship before, during and after competition to uphold the dignity of all persons.
- 3-1-7 CYO Athletics is committed to the acceptance of, and love for, people of all nationalities, races, physical abilities, and economic resources. CYO is committed to building an environment where all children are valued as having been made in God's image and likeness. There is no place in CYO for structural, institutional, or systemic racism, including racist behavior or racist language. We are compelled to build a Christian community that demonstrates caring for one another in the ways that Jesus taught. Pope Francis reminds us *"to work together to ensure that all children can take up sport in circumstances of dignity, especially those who are excluded due to poverty."*

ARTICLE 4 - MEMBERSHIP

- 4-1-1 Membership in the Diocese of Cleveland CYO is voluntary and is determined annually. Each May, eligible Member organizations submit a signed membership agreement that identifies the leadership of the Member administration and states their commitment to follow the letter and spirit of the CYO Charter and Bylaws. CYO administration consults annually with the Diocesan Office of Catholic Education to determine the placement of Catholic educational organizations in CYO. CYO has the following membership categories.
 - A. **Parish CYO** - A Catholic parish in the Diocese of Cleveland with or without a school.
 - B. **School CYO** - An independent Catholic Educational Institution in the Diocese of Cleveland containing a combination of grades one (1) through twelve (12) that operates outside the authority of a parish. School CYOs may request a written waiver from CYO Administration seeking permission for eligibility for athlete participation from nearby parishes. Athletes outside of School CYO members may not participate on a school CYO team without written CYO Administration approval.
 - C. **HS CYO** - Catholic High Schools in the Diocese of Cleveland.
 - D. **Independent Schools** - A non-parochial grade school or high school containing a combination of grades one (1) through twelve (12) that operates outside the authority of the Catholic Church. Independent School Members must apply to CYO administration to be considered as a CYO Member organization. CYO Administration retains the authority to deny or approve applications for membership. Applicants must commit to follow the letter and spirit of the CYO Charter and Bylaws and abide by the rules of CYO programs.
 - E. **Unified Parish CYO** - When Catholic parishes request and receive permission from CYO Administration to join with other parishes for a one-year membership term. Unified CYO Members must request written approval from CYO Administration by June 1 of the upcoming program year. (Is this happening at all right now)?
- 4-2-1 Procedures for Initial Membership
 - A. The Member application for the upcoming year must be signed and completed by the Member Administrator and submitted to CYO Administration by June 15.
 - B. The Member must identify the Member Administrator and name an Athletic Director (AD) who will serve as the official Member contact person.
 - C. CYO Administration will approve or disapprove the application as submitted or modified.
 - D. Once membership has been approved, all new ADs must participate in the New CYO Athletic Director orientation before the start of the athletic season.
 - E. Member Applicants will be notified of their status in writing by June 30 of that year.
 - F. Updated information must be provided to CYO administration as soon as possible if there is a change in the Member Administrator or Member Athletic Director during the Membership Time Period.

- 4-3-1 Procedures for Continuing Membership
 - A. The Member Administrator must sign and submit the completed membership application form annually by June 15.
 - B. Failure to file an application for membership by June 15 may preclude the Member from participating in CYO programs.
 - C. Any significant Member's organization changes must be provided when submitting the annual Member application.
 - D. Exceptions will be considered only when requested in writing to CYO Administration.
- 4-4-1 Membership Time Period
 - A. The membership period begins June 1 and continues until May 31 of the following year.
 - B. Membership must be renewed by the Member Administrator prior to June 15.
- 4-5-1 Unified Members are comprised of more than one Catholic parish who enter into a one-year agreement as a single CYO Member organization. Parishes seeking to join a Unified Member must submit a request in writing to CYO Administration no later than July 1. Unified Members will combine all sports for the entire membership period. A Unified Member can only be part of one unification at a time. Contact CYO Administration for further information.
- 4-5-2 If the sponsor of a Unified Membership does not offer a specific sport, the Unified Members are obliged to assist with helping the athlete participate according to the individual eligibility policies of Bylaw three (3).

ARTICLE 5 - GOVERNANCE and ORGANIZATION

- 5-1-1 CYO Administration operates within Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Cleveland.
- 5-1-2 CYO Roles, Relationships, Responsibilities, and Operations
 - A. CYO operates in a shared partnership between athletes and families, Members, and CYO Administration.
 - B. All members of the shared partnership are rooted in the CYO mission, values and philosophy and are bound to administer and follow the letter and spirit of the CYO Charter & Bylaws.

ARTICLE 6 - CYO ADMINISTRATION and GOVERNANCE

- 6-1-1 CYO Administration is responsible to manage the following organizational responsibilities at the diocesan level. These include but are not limited to the following:
 - A. Governance, oversight, and general administration of the Diocese of Cleveland CYO Program;
 - B. Organize competition via leagues, tournaments, and events; select game sites, coordinate site staffing;
 - C. Establish and assign Sections to meet the geographic, administrative and competition needs of diocesan and Member programs. Requests for section placement will be considered before CYO Administration makes the final decision and informs ADs of their sections in June. CYO Football and Spring Sports sections are separate and are established annually based on actual and projected registrations.
 - D. Review and update the CYO Charter and Bylaws annually in partnership with CYO Members.
 - E. Determine standards and procedures for determining athlete and coach eligibility and team placement.
 - F. Determine sport options, set sport rules, and identify site operation standards for every sport.
 - G. Organize coaches' meetings and trainings for Coaches, Athletic Directors and Volunteers.
 - H. Provide support resources and services for Member organizations.
 - I. Retains the right to perform random audits virtually and in person to review adherence to the Charter and Bylaws, including but not limited to, DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND CYO PRE-PARTICIPATION FORMS, Emergency Forms, and essential documentation in hard or electronic copies.
- 6-1-2 CYO Administration is responsible to manage the finances of the CYO program at the diocesan level. Responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:
 - A. Administer financial administrative and budget processes according to Catholic Charities Finance Office requirements;
 - B. Set CYO program and administrative fees for programs and services;
 - C. Administer the Bishop Roger Gries Good Shepherd Fund to provide grants to support CYO program operations;
 - D. Form mission based external partnerships with organizations to provide benefits and resources to CYO Members;
 - E. May organize and implement fundraising for dedicated purposes or projects; and,
 - F. Responsible to coordinate special events as identified.
- 6-1-3 CYO Administration is responsible for management of CYO Office volunteers. This includes recruiting, screening, training, and supervising staff and volunteers according to Catholic Charities and CYO policies to assure quality program operations.
- 6-1-4 CYO Administration is responsible for management of sports programs and tournament operations at the diocesan level. These include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - A. coordinate league composition, program schedules, sanctioned events, tournament competitions, and related logistics;
 - B. coordinate the assigning of officials and the administration of sport-specific rules at contest sites; and,
 - C. manage CYO Office equipment and material resources used in program operations.

- 6-1-5 CYO Administration is responsible for management of communications at the diocesan level.
- Use multiple communication forums and platforms to communicate with all Members in a timely manner.
 - Convene Member ADs in person or virtually for two CYO Conferences, in June and January, for the purpose of program review, dialog, professional development, and networking.
 - Establish and coordinate the work of Task Groups.
 - Establish and coordinate special events such as Team Mass Sunday, Sportsmanship Celebrations, Hall of Fame Celebration, Parent's and Grandparent's Day and other events as identified.
- 6-1-6 Social Media Usage for CYO requires upholding the dignity of all children, coaches, volunteers, officials, families, CYO administration and members of the CYO community. CYO leaders, coaches, parents, and members of the CYO community may only communicate on social media for appropriate ministry reasons. They may not use social media or texting to form inappropriate relationships with minors or any children in CYO. They may not disparage members of the CYO community. Persons who violate CYO social media standards are subject to disciplinary actions in accordance with the CYO Charter and Bylaws and possible consequences with civil authorities. Social media violations will result in a three week suspension. The violator must meet with the member administrator who will decide whether or not to request their reinstatement and complete the code of conduct video. In some cases the individual may be suspended for the remainder of the season.
- 6-1-7 CYO Administration is responsible to manage safety and risk management at the diocesan level in accordance with the risk management processes and protocols of Catholic Charities.
- Provide protocols and procedures to ensure the safe operation of programs.
 - Establish and monitor incident procedure protocols for a preventive and responsive system for handling incidents.
 - Work with Catholic Charities and the Diocese of Cleveland risk management personnel to operate in accordance with the best practices of a Catholic youth sports program.

ARTICLE 7 - CYO MEMBER ADMINISTRATION and GOVERNANCE

- 7-1-1 The Member Administration of CYO Athletics is managed and operated under the direction of the Member Administrator and Member Athletic Director.
- The Member Administrator is the Pastor, President, Principal, or Agency Director of a Member organization. The Member Administrator is responsible for the direction and supervision of the Member program. The Member Administrator chooses and authorizes only one (1) person as the Member AD to act on their behalf. The Member Administrator may not serve as the Member Athletic Director.
 - The Member Administrator assures that the Member AD or a designated representative will be present the entire time at the CYO Member Leadership Conference in June and January each year. Member programs without a representative present the entire time may not participate in or host a CYO sanctioned event.
 - The Member Administrator will meet with the Member AD quarterly to oversee CYO Member program operations.
 - The Member Administrator selects and/or removes the Member AD on an annual basis or at other times as required;
 - The Member Administrator will supervise the Member AD's performance to assure there are no conflict of interests related to the roles of persons or for the operation of the Member CYO program;
 - The Member Administrator in the case of a school may appoint the following Athletic Director positions:
 - Grade School Athletic Director – Responsible to administrate the Charter & Bylaws for the grade school teams.
 - High School Athletic Director – Responsible to administrate the Charter & Bylaws for the high school teams.
 - Assistant Athletic Director – Responsible to assist administrating the CBL for grade school and /high school teams.
- 7-1-2 A. Duties of the Member Athletic Director include:
- administering the Charter and Bylaws for the Member and organize the Member CYO leadership structure;
 - acting as the final authority related to Member internal athletic issues;
 - assuring that financial obligations and payments are made in a timely manner with transparency & accountability;
 - reviewing and approving Member appeals and special requests made to the CYO Administration;
 - meeting with the Member Administrator on a quarterly basis to oversee Member CYO program operations;
 - establishing and administering a process for handling internal Member grievances and impose penalties and disciplinary action when violations occur; and,
 - must lead or designate someone to lead preseason coach and parent meetings to ensure that the mission, values and goals of the CYO program are communicated to those in attendance.
 - must represent the program at required member meetings with CYO Administration (or send a representative).
 - cannot make mutual agreements with other Member Athletic Directors outside of the CYO Charter and Bylaws or sport specific rules. This includes rescheduling games, approving non-eligible athletes, agreements to sponsor a team unless authorized by the CYO Administration

- B. The Member Athletic Director (AD) is the official and authoritative liaison with CYO Administration on behalf of the Member Administrator. The Member AD is responsible to the Member Administrator and is designated for a one-year term. The Member AD is responsible for the administration, direction and supervision of the Member program according to the CYO Charter & Bylaws. The Member AD may be a veteran coach, teacher, staff member or parent who animates the philosophy of CYO Athletics and the Catholic Church while possessing the administrative skills needed to manage a large program. The Member AD may not coach in another CYO Member program in which both programs have the same sport, due to a conflict of interest. If the Member AD is not a certified CYO Coach, they are required to complete certification by December 31, of the sports year in which they are designated a Member AD. It is the duty of the Member AD to oversee the following areas:
1. Registration and Eligibility – The Member AD is required to offer registration for all CYO team sports in all seasons, whether or not the Member intends to have a team in every sport. This follows eligibility standards for fair and equitable competition among and between all CYO Members;
 - A. Organize and maintain electronic and/or physical records on Member campus for Rosters, Team Entry Forms, Pre-participation Forms, and all required forms to meet current requirements;
 - B. Follow timelines and deadlines for team, athlete, and coach's registration according to sport season deadlines;
 - C. Assure that teams only participate in programs and sports approved by the CYO administration.
 2. When a CYO Member has enough children to field their own team, the Member is strongly encouraged to do so. ADs may contact CYO Administration for assistance when adding a sport to their program.
 3. Finance Management
 - a. Account for all program fees, payments and accounting at the Member level according to the Diocese of Cleveland financial protocols and records requirements.
 - b. Work with the Member Administrator to prepare a CYO Budget and pay registration and Member fees by declared deadlines.
 4. Volunteer and Personnel Management
 - a. Recruit, screen, train, supervise, and evaluate all Member CYO volunteers and coaches.
 - b. Set up a Member volunteer management system.
 5. Sport Program and Tournament Operations
 - a. Coordinate practice schedules, team composition, tournament or event participation, and program logistics according to the CYO Charter and Bylaws.
 - b. Assure that all practices, games, sanctioned events and competitions have appropriate adult supervision according to the standards of CYO.
 6. Direct and coordinate all Member Site and Equipment Management - Order, distribute, and collect uniforms and equipment and assess safety and suitability for use.
 7. Communications
 - a. Communicate accurate CYO information to parents, athletes, coaches, staff, etc. in a timely manner.
 - b. Communicate CYO Administration program information to Member children, parents, and coaches via internal and virtual communications channels.
 8. Safety and Risk Management
 - a. Follow and implement CYO Administration safety protocols related to the current program year;
 - b. Check facility and equipment for safe use for athletes and teams;
 - c. Implement preventive and responsive protocols for injuries and/or incidents at CYO practices and games;
 - d. Complete and submit CYO Incident Reports on-line within 48 hours of an incident. Incident Reports will only be officially recognized when the incident report form has been submitted on-line;
 - e. Review program operation to promote player safety; and,
 - f. Complete CYO Facility Inspection Form as required to promote facility safety.
 9. Fundraising and Event Coordination
 - a. Organize and implement fundraising events to raise funds to support Member CYO programs.
 - b. Coordinate special Member CYO events.
 10. CYO Sports Minister - The CYO Member organization will designate at least one person to serve as the Member CYO Sports Minister to prioritize and integrate the faith formation of children, parents, and families into CYO Member programs. This person shall:
 - a. meet in July or August with the Member Administrator and Athletic Director to identify goals and expectations for faith formation in the CYO program and to schedule CYO Masses and parent meetings for the year;
 - b. meet in July or August with the Catechetical Leader and Athletic Director to build a supportive relationship and an effective partnership regarding the formation of children through Catechetical and CYO programs. Together they will identify critical programs and dates to be supported by all parties to further the mission of the Church and the mission of CYO;

- c. support CYO teams by providing prayer resources for practices and all CYO meetings;
- d. be present and assist with integrating Christian faith into coach's meetings, parent meetings, CYO leadership meetings, and meetings that address conflicts or issues in the CYO program;
- e. work to build a CYO culture that is rooted in the sacraments, Christian community, and loving service within and beyond CYO to include everyone in the community;
- f. communicate parish liturgy, faith formation, and service information and opportunities to coaches, children, and parents to seek their full and active participation in parish life; and,
- g. be a model of Christian behavior in faith, word and action.

BYLAWS FOR THE DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND CYO

BYLAW 1 - COVERAGE

Section 1 - Application of Bylaws and Sports Regulations

- 1-1-1 The CYO Bylaws and Sports Regulations apply to all athletes in CYO Member programs and includes matters of eligibility, sanctioning, qualifications, responsibility and the establishment and monitoring of program standards.
- 1-1-2 The CYO Bylaws cannot be waived, modified or amended by mutual consent between or among Members.

Section 2 - Competition

- 1-2-1 Teams may only compete against other CYO teams in recognized sports, tournaments, and competitions during the season.
- 1-2-2 CYO Teams are expressly forbidden to use their CYO team name or wear CYO uniforms or use the CYO logo to compete in any non-CYO youth sports program or competition outside of CYO Member programs and Diocesan CYO programs.
- 1-2-3 CYO Members may not use any CYO administrative or registration processes (virtual or in-person), promotional materials, or program resources to facilitate Member children to participate in non-CYO programs.
- 1-2-4 All competitions involving CYO teams shall be conducted using only CYO approved contest rules. Changes in sport rules between Member programs are not permitted unless approved in advance by CYO Administration.
- 1-2-5 An athlete on a CYO team shall not participate in a contest on any other CYO team in the same sport during that sport's season unless stated otherwise in the CYO sport specific rules.

Section 3 - Recognized Sports

- 1-3-1 A recognized sport is one adopted and operated by the Diocese of Cleveland CYO. Baseball, Coach Pitch Baseball, Boys and Girls Basketball, 3 on 3 Basketball, Cheer, Boys and Girls Cross Country, Football, Flag Football, Rookie Tackle Football, Lacrosse, Boys and Girls Soccer, Softball, Boys and Girls Tennis, Track and Field, Boys and Girls Volleyball, Girls High School Volleyball are recognized sports. Sports may be added or removed by CYO administration.

BYLAW 2 – COACHES

- 2-1-1 The CYO Coach is a leader in athletics who serves the Church, young people, and families as a compelling witness of the love, mercy, and compassion of Jesus Christ.
- 2-1-2 Pope Francis reminds us: *"How important it is that a coach be an example of integrity, of coherence, of good judgment, of impartiality, but also of the joy of living; of patience, of capacity to esteem and of benevolence to all, especially the most disadvantaged. And how important it is that he or she be an example of faith!"*

Section 2 - Age Requirement

2-2-1 Head Coaches

- A. Any person, 19 years or older, approved by the Member Administrator and Athletic Director of the Member, may be a head coach in CYO Grade School Programs.
- B. Any person, 25 years or older, approved by the Member Administrator and Athletic Director of the Member, may be a head coach in CYO High School Programs.

2-2-2 Assistant Coaches

- A. Any person, 16 years or older and approved by the Member Administrator and Athletic Director of the Member, may act as an assistant coach in CYO Grade School Athletic Programs.
- B. Any person, 18 years or older and approved by the Member Administrator and Athletic Director of the Member, may act as an assistant coach in CYO High School Athletic Programs.

Section 3 - Head Coach of Multiple Teams

- 2-3-1 A Coach is permitted to be the head coach or assistant coach of two teams in the same sport during the same season. No special contest scheduling privileges are given when a coach is coaching more than one team.

Section 4 - Responsibilities and Supervision

2-4-1 Coaches are responsible to do the following:

- A. know and demonstrate the CYO philosophy and conduct themselves in a Christian manner at practice & competitions;
- B. have immediate access at practices and games to every child's contact details and medical information;
- C. wear their own CYO credentials to all contests;

- D. any coach who has lost or forgotten their credentials on game day is eligible to coach if they provide the site director with a photo ID and proof of their certification via phone, tablet, etc. or by providing their name from the CYO's Certified Coach's List found on the CYO Website.
- E. if a team is found to have been coached in a contest by an individual who has not completed the CYO Coaches Development Program or is not certified by CYO, that contest will be forfeited;
- F. participate in the pre-season coaches meetings and mandatory trainings. Every team must be represented by a coach from their team. Coaches who do not participate are required to take the Catholic Coaching Essentials online course at their own expense and provide CYO Administration a record indicating that they have completed the course before their first game. Tackle football coaches must attend a Level I and/or Level II and/or Level III course and the "Heads Up" certification to have a current and recognized CYO football coaching credential;
- G. teach sport rules and the proper skills, techniques, strategies, and tactics for the sport in an age appropriate manner;
- H. supervise their teams before, during and after all practices and competitions and supervise the conduct of their spectators at competitions; and,
- I. manage blow-out contests with grace while upholding the dignity of players on both teams, according to ethical standards and methods provided by CYO.

2-4-2 CYO Team Practice Protocols

- A. A registered coach or Member AD, age 19 or older, must be present at all scheduled practices, games and team events;
- B. When a girls' team is coached by men only, it is required to have a woman 18 years of age or older present at all practices and games. The woman need not be a certified CYO coach.
- C. When a boys' team is coached by women only, it is required to have a man 18 years of age or older present at all practices and games. The man need not be a certified CYO coach.
- D. Coaches may not have closed practices. Parents and CYO leaders may attend practices and contests. All persons present are expected to demonstrate behaviors that uphold the values of CYO.

Section 5 - Registration and Training of Coaches

2-5-1 The Member Athletic Director must register all coaches associated with a team on the eligibility roster of the team.

- A. Head Coaches must be identified by the published team entry deadline.
- B. Assistant Coaches must be identified by the published team eligibility roster deadline.
- C. If there is a coaching change during the season, the Member Athletic Director is required to inform CYO administration in writing to report the change.
- D. Persons not registered with the CYO Athletic Office may not coach, represent a team, sit on the team bench or be in the competition area during an athletic contest.
- E. Coaches may only wear their own coaches' credential which must be worn visibly at all games.
- F. Specific CYO sports may require additional training and re-certification to be eligible to coach. Coaches must complete the coaching requirements as identified in the CYO Charter and Bylaws AND in the sport specific requirements.

2-5-2 Each Member must assure that a volunteer who seeks to coach has completed the following requirements before they are permitted to begin coaching a team. Failure to complete the requirements will result in the coach's ineligibility until requirements have been completed.

- A. Read and acknowledge Diocese of Cleveland, "Policy for the Safety of Children in Matters of Sexual Abuse."
- B. Read and acknowledged Diocese of Cleveland, "Standards of Conduct for Ministry."
- C. Completed a parish application.
- D. Complete the Virtus Abuse Prevention Program.
- E. Attended a CYO Coaches Development Program.
- F. Complete the required background check.
- G. Complete the Concussion in Sports: "What You Need to Know" on-line training.
- H. Complete the state required Lindsey's Law on-line training.
- I. Complete other sport specific requirements as determined by CYO administration.

BYLAW 3 - ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY

3-1-1 The Member agrees to implement and uphold the eligibility standards that determine who may participate in what CYO Member programs. The goal of eligibility standards is to maintain fair and equitable competition with the inclusion and full participation of as many children and as many teams as possible. CYO Administration retains the right and responsibility to make final eligibility decisions based on the CYO Charter and Bylaws.

3-1-2 Every athlete eligible to participate in CYO must first register in their CYO Member Program. CYO Member Programs must operate their own athlete registration process for every CYO sport. Team placement for CYO Members who do not have teams registered for a sport is determined by CYO administration according to the CBL and established eligibility sections.

- 3-1-3 All grade school and high school athletes are eligible to participate on the teams of a CYO Member if they meet at least one (1) of the following requirements:
- If a Member organization has a team in a sport where a child's family is a Member, the child must play there.
 - If a child attends a Catholic school with a CYO program, the child must play on the team where they attend school.
 - If the parent(s)/guardian(s) are registered members of more than one parish, the athlete must designate the one Member organization for which they will play for the year. When a clear declaration is not made, the child will play the entire year for the Member for whom they first play.
 - If an athlete moves within the Diocese of Cleveland, they have the option to play with the previous Member's team or with the new Member's team, with written approval from CYO administration.
 - The child is registered and regularly attends the Member PSR program or RCIA in the current program year.
 - Neighborhood children living in the diocesan geographical boundaries of a CYO Member are eligible to play in that Member program when that Member program has informed CYO administration in writing by June 30th that they will accept neighborhood children to play. **Eligibility is for grade school through high school parish teams.** When a Member program does not offer a sport, neighborhood children who are otherwise not eligible may not participate in that sport in any CYO Member program. **This applies to parishes only.**
- 3-1-4 If an athlete's disability, as defined by 42 USC Section 12102 (ADA), has contributed significantly to the athlete's inability to participate, the CYO administration will determine the athlete's eligibility and placement.
- 3-1-5 If an athlete has repeated any grade, CYO Administration will determine the athlete's eligibility and placement.
- 3-1-6 If a Parish CYO or School CYO does not have enough athletes to field a team, eligible athletes may compete:
- for another CYO Member within their designated CYO section only;
 - CYO Administration will organize Football sections annually based on Member input, participation data, and current year projections. Athletes are only eligible to play on teams within their assigned football sections.

Section 2 - Competition Division Grade and Age Limitations

- 3-2-1 Eligibility exceptions for individual sports will be identified in the sport specific rules. Grade level requirements are not the same for all sports. Sport specific eligibility requirements supersede the requirements below.
- 3-2-2 Whenever possible, CYO will offer leagues by the divisions listed below. In each case, the athlete must meet the age requirement on August 1 before the school year starts. Divisions are:
- High School - Grades 9 to 12 and ages 19 and under
 - 12th Grade - Individuals in grades 12, 11, 10 and 9; ages 14-19
 - 11th Grade - Individuals in grades 11, 10, and 9; ages 14-17
 - 10th Grade - Individuals in grades 10 and 9; ages 14-16
 - 9th Grade - Individuals in grade 9; ages 13-15
 - Grade School - Grades 1 to 8 and ages 5 to 14
 - 8th Grade - Individuals in grades 8, 7, 6; ages 10-14*
 - 7th Grade - Individuals in grades 7, 6, 5; ages 9-13
 - 6th Grade - Individuals in grades 6, 5, 4; ages **8-12***
 - 5th Grade - Individuals in grades 5, 4; ages 8-11
 - 4th Grade - Individuals in grade 4, 3; ages 7-10
 - 3rd Grade - Individuals in grade 3, 2; ages 7-9
 - 2nd Grade - Individuals in grade 2, 1; ages 6-7
 - 1st Grade - Individuals in grade 1; ages 5-6

* In the sport of Cheer, athletes may be comprised of grades 1-3, 3-5 or 5-8. See Cheer sport specific rules for details.

In Track and Cross Country, 5th graders MAY NOT compete in the Diocesan Championships.

3-2-2 Athletes are eligible to participate according to the sports and age ranges available.

3-2-3 The division a team enters is determined by the oldest member of that team.

Section 3 - Recruiting

- 3-3-1 Any attempt to recruit an individual to play for a CYO Member or team is strictly prohibited. "Recruit" constitutes use of influence by any person to secure transfer or registration of an individual not already eligible to participate for the Member.
- 3-3-2 If an ineligible player is accepted and participates in a Member program where they are not eligible, the player must immediately stop participating and be placed on a team with a Member program where they are eligible.
- 3-3-3 If a Member program permits ineligible players to practice or play when the player is ineligible, the Member program will be placed on administrative watch and the Coach will be suspended for the first game of the season.
- 3-3-4 If an ineligible player participates in more than one game on a team for which they are not eligible, the Coach will lose their coaching privileges for the remainder of the season.

BYLAW 4 - GENERAL RULES

Section 1- Classification of Members & Teams

- 4-1-1 All Members must be classified and named according to the sponsoring Member.
- 4-1-2 Teams competing in CYO grades 1 -5 will be placed by CYO Administration in conferences and divisions according to the following goals and principles:
 - A. The goal is to maintain fair, fun and equitable competition with the inclusion and full participation of as many children and as many registered teams as possible;
 - B. Team placement will consider travel time of 30 minutes or less as a high priority when possible for grades 1 -5.
- 4-1-3 Teams competing in grades 6-8 will be placed by CYO Administration in conferences according to the following principles:
 - C. The goal is to maintain fair, fun and equitable competition with the inclusion and full participation of as many children and as many registered teams as possible;
 - D. Travel time is a lower priority for Grades 7 and 8 and for elite competition conferences;
 - E. Team strength as defined by available analytical information, including but not limited to:
 - 1. Member Athletic Director input;
 - 2. Member size and enrollment in school and religious education programs, and neighborhood children participation;
 - 3. Results and historical performance data, and point differentials in past contests (basketball);
 - 4. sanctioned tournament performances; and,
 - 5. CYO Staff input.
 - F. The Member AD may petition CYO Administration to request their team to be moved up or down by the deadline identified in the CYO sport season packet;
 - G. Team placement in conferences, tiers and championship tournaments will be identified and shared in the sport specific information at the beginning of each sports season;
 - H. The privilege of team participation in season ending CYO tournaments is determined solely at the discretion of CYO Administration. Team and Coach Code of Conduct violations during the season will be a determining factor.
 - I. Final decisions on team placement in all CYO sports are the responsibility of CYO Administration.
 - J. If you have a team and adequate facilities for games, you must provide your facility for your CYO games for all your teams before usage for sanctioned events.

Section 2 - Player Participation

- 4-2-1 The CYO philosophy aims to have all athletes participate in competitions at all divisions of play to receive the physical, mental, and spiritual benefits of CYO sports. CYO strongly discourages declaring an athlete ineligible as a form of punishment. A coach or Member Administration may deem an athlete ineligible for reasons of discipline. In these cases, the coach must inform the Site Director and the opposing coach of the athlete's ineligibility before the contest. The cause of not participating must be marked on the game score sheet or line-up participation form.
- 4-2-2 Sport specific rules that define the implementation of the participation rule must be followed.
- 4-2-3 CYO prohibits "cutting" athletes from a team. Tryouts may be held to assess athlete's skills to determine team placement. Tryouts may not be held for cutting players.
- 4-2-4 An athlete on a CYO team may participate on other non-CYO teams in the same sport during that sport season.
- 4-2-5 Athletes must make their CYO team participation a priority over their membership on travel teams or Recreation Department teams. CYO will not move or reschedule games to accommodate CYO teams with player or coach schedule conflicts due to schedules in other programs.

Section 3 - Competition and Practice

- 4-3-1 Competition & Practice Limitations
 - A. Competition, tryouts, assessments and practice may not begin until the published first day of practice and must conclude by the published end of season date.
 - B. Competition and practice will not begin on Sunday before 1:00 p.m.
 - C. Competition will not start after 8:00 p.m., except during Easter and Christmas vacation when it will not start after 9:00 p.m. This includes Sanctioned Events.
 - D. All practices must end for grade school teams by 9:00 p.m. and for high school teams by 10:00 p.m. The recommended practice duration is ninety (90) minutes and may not exceed two hours.
 - E. CYO does not permit closed practices. Parents and CYO leaders may attend practices and must demonstrate behaviors that uphold the CYO mission and values.
 - F. Member teams are permitted to practice or scrimmage against CYO Member and non-member teams.
 - G. CYO teams are not permitted to play in tournaments or contests with non-member teams.
 - H. Each player must play in at least 50% of regular season games to be eligible for tournaments, except if due to injury or illness. If there are an odd number of games, the 50% number will be rounded down. If there is an injury or illness, the Member Athletic Director must provide a medical release for the player before the first tournament game.

4-3-2 Practices, open gym times or player assessments with coaches, commissioners, or Athletic Directors present are not permitted prior to the published season start dates.

Section 4 - Day and Season Competition Limits

4-4-1 Game and tournament limit rules are published in the CYO sport specific rules and vary according to grade levels. All CYO Members are required to follow game limits to reduce the risk of athlete injury.

4-4-2 Violation of the game limits outlined in the sport specific rules will result in the following penalties:

- A. When a team enters one tournament or sanctioned event over the allowed number, the coach will face a **two-game** suspension and is required to attend and pass the CYO Coaches Development Program.
- B. When a coach enters a team in two or more tournaments or sanctioned events over the allowed number, the coach is suspended from coaching for one year, must submit their coaching credential, must re-attend and pass the CYO Coaches Development Program, and must submit a letter to CYO Administration requesting reinstatement.
- C. When a team enters two or more tournaments or sanctioned events beyond the allowed number, the Member will be placed on Administrative Watch.
- D. The following games do not count toward the season game limit:
 1. Pre-season scrimmages
 2. League play-off games
 3. CYO Qualifier/CYO Tournament Games
 4. CYO Diocesan Tournament

Section 5 - Equipment

4-5-1 Each Member is to ensure that the use of proper equipment and safety precautions are stressed to coaches, athletes, and parents. Equipment must be properly fitted, conditioned with protective items worn as outlined in the sport specific rules.

4-5-2 Each Member is to ensure that each athlete is issued a game uniform with the registered sponsor team name that meets the requirements outlined in the sport specific rules and comply with National Federation High School rules. **See sport specific rules for penalties.**

Section 6 - Sanctioned Events

4-6-1 The CYO Member organizations, Catholic high schools, colleges or community centers that wish to host a tournament or competition must:

- A. Complete and submit to CYO Administration a Sanctioned Event Application **and fee at least thirty days prior to event start date. A written financial report is to be submitted at the end of the event to the CYO office.**
- B. **The tournament director or representative must attend one mandatory pre-season meeting before their sanctioned event application is approved.**
- C. Meet the requirements in the CYO Site Application and follow CYO individual and team eligibility requirements.
- D. Guest Players cannot participate in sanctioned events. **Violation of the guest player rule will result in the head coach being suspended for two weeks.**
- E. Submit an Event Completion Report to CYO Administration within ten days of the completion of the event. Failure to complete and submit the completion report will result in the Member sponsoring organization getting charged a \$100 late fee and not being permitted to sponsor another event for 365 days from the date the completion report was due.
- F. Sanctioned events may take place between the beginning and ending dates identified in the sport specific planner to prevent scheduling and facility availability conflicts with CYO scheduling.
- G. Sanctioned Event staff must be trained and organized to run events in accordance with CYO policies and procedures.
- H. **If the sanctioned event violates any CYO rules, including usage of guest players, the tournament may be immediately suspended for the violation and the Tournament Director may receive further consequences as identified in Bylaw 10.**
- I. **All sanctioned events must follow all CYO sport and contest rules for the sport event.**

BYLAW 5 - TEAM ENTRY AND ELIGIBILITY ROSTER REQUIREMENTS

5-1-1 In order to provide the best possible experience for athletes, CYO Members will administer the following standards which define how teams are entered and how rosters are created and submitted. Having a standard process by which teams are registered and athletes are placed creates the fairness and consistency that families are looking for in CYO. The team entry and rostering process below provides the best opportunities for the development of children.

Section 2 - Team Entry

5-2-1 Completion of the team entry is a critical responsibility of the Member Athletic Director to avoid contributing to circumstances that may be detrimental to the experiences of the athlete. The Member Administration must fulfill the following responsibilities for team registration:

- A. Complete general team entry by the published deadline. The team must be registered in the league of the highest age/grade of any team member to meet the grade and age requirements by August 1 before the school year starts. See Bylaw 3-3-1 for the description of leagues;
- B. May not include any athletes who do not meet CYO eligibility requirements;
- C. Must identify neighborhood children eligible to participate in CYO because they reside in the Member boundaries;

- D. Provide accurate team member information and submit by the team entry deadline;
- E. Provide current and accurate head coach contact information by the team entry deadline.
- F. Submit team entry fees payment to CYO administration by the published deadline or pay late fee.
- G. Be responsible for issues that arise by conflict "blackout" dates not submitted by the team entry deadline and communicate that responsibility to the Member Administration.

5-2-2 Team Blackout Date Requests must be submitted by the team blackouts deadline. Member programs will be allowed a limited number of blackout dates for Member religious conflicts only. Examples include Sacramental celebrations, Retreats, and Parish Festivals. It is the ADs responsibility to check the parish and school calendars for potential conflicts. Submitted requests must identify the date, time, and a detailed reason for the request. Submitted requests must reflect the minimum dates needed and the maximum amount of time needed, with a detailed reason for the request. Blackout requests must fit into one of two categories for consideration:

- A. Religious events for athletes – Sacraments, Rehearsals, Retreats, and Catechetical Sessions;
- B. Academic events for athletes – Science Fair, and Music and Writing Competitions;
- C. School trips will be considered.
- D. If the conflict is for an entire weekend, CYO administration will not be able to schedule around your conflict and you will lose a regular season game.
- E. BLACKOUT DATE submissions WITHOUT A DESCRIPTION or AFTER the BLACKOUT DEADLINE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

5-2-3 CYO Administration has the following responsibilities to facilitate efficient team registrations:

- A. Distribute details of entry deadlines, fees and relevant information to Member AD at least 60 days prior to the close of the team entry process;
- B. Determine and communicate acceptance or rejection of a team entry based on the CYO Charter & Bylaws;
- C. Communicate the dates, locations, and access to meetings for all registered coaches;
- D. Review blackout date requests according to bylaw 5-2-2 to determine which requests will be honored or denied; and,
- E. Communicate to Member Administration when submitted requests cannot be honored.
- F. Athletic Directors and Coaches are not allowed to postpone or reschedule their games on their own initiative, except as stated in the baseball sports specific rules. CYO Administration alone has the responsibility and authority to reschedule the game. The penalty for such an action will be forfeiture or double forfeiture.
- G. If your team refuses to play a certain opponent, your tournament invitation will be revoked or other penalties as described in Bylaw 10.

5-2-4 Team and Athlete Withdrawals and Forfeits

- A. If the Member Administration withdraws a registered team, it forfeits the team entry fee as follows:
 1. A team withdraws after the published entry deadline and before the published roster deadline will forfeit 50% of the team entry fee.
 2. A team withdrawing on or after the published roster deadline will forfeit 75% of the team entry fee.
 3. A team withdrawing may also be assessed additional fees associated with game officials or facilities if those fees cannot be eliminated.
- B. For sports that charge an individual athlete fee, a refund will be issued for dropped athletes when it has been communicated to the CYO administration by the published "deadline to register athletes."
- C. In Cross Country and Track and Field, the Member AD is responsible to submit the Dropped Athlete Form by the published deadline. The individual fee is forfeited for those do not submit this form to CYO Administration by the deadline.
- D. Member teams failing to appear with the required number of players within 15 minutes after the scheduled starting time of a contest shall forfeit the game as declared by the assigned contest official.
 1. Any team forfeiting a tournament game must submit the predetermined forfeit fee to the CYO Administration before the Member is permitted to enter teams for the next season.
 2. When tournament forfeit fees are not paid, the site rental fee for that Member will be reduced by the amount of the forfeit fee or by other means as determined by the CYO Administration.

Section 3 - Team Rosters

5-3-1 Completion of the team roster is a critically important process for Member ADs at the start of each season. Failing to accurately complete all aspects of the team roster process may contribute to athletes/coaches being declared ineligible to participate. Member Administration is required to do the following when creating rosters:

- A. Create team rosters according to the policies of Bylaw six (6), TEAM AND LEAGUE FORMATION;
- B. Submit individual rosters for all Member sponsored teams to CYO Administration in advance of the published deadline.
- C. Enter complete and current information for all eligible athletes, assistant coaches, and head coaches no later than the published due date for each sport;
- D. Assure that all persons identified as coaches have fulfilled Bylaw Two (2) regarding COACHES.
- E. Enter current physical exam information and dates for all eligible athletes (Bylaw 3);

- F. The Member AD gives each Coach a copy of the final “CYO Eligibility Roster” by the start of the competition season.
- G. Roster corrections and deletions may be made until the published deadline date, or the day before the first scheduled CYO competition for the season.

5-3-2 Modifications/Additions to the Roster of a Team in CYO

- A. Athletes may be added to the team roster for 14 days after the first scheduled regular season competition. If a team does not have the “minimum” number of young people on the roster, additions are permitted after the 14-day period.
- B. Roster Minimum - If a team has at least the number of athletes on the roster noted below, the 14-day period stated in Bylaw 5-3-2 will be in effect. If a team has fewer than this number, it can add athletes that meet the general and sport eligibility rules at any point until the roster reaches the following threshold:
 - 1. Baseball – 13 per team
 - 2. Basketball – 8 per team
 - 3. Cheer – 8 per squad
 - 4. Cross Country – 7 per competition division
 - 5. Football – Flag – 10 per team
 - 6. Football – Rookie Tackle – 14 per team
 - 7. Football – Tackle – 20 per team
 - 8. Lacrosse – 12 per team
 - 9. Soccer – 9v9 – 12 per team
 - 10. Soccer 8v8 – 11 per team
 - 11. Soccer 6v6 – 9 per team
 - 12. Softball – 13 per team
 - 13. Track & Field – 7 per competition division
 - 14. Volleyball – 8 per team
- C. Guest Player Rule - If a team does not have enough rostered players to play a game, Guest Players may be used. The Guest Player:
 - 1. must be currently rostered on a CYO team;
 - 2. guest players are not allowed in tackle football, rookie tackle, cross country, and track and field.
 - 3. may play on a higher division team (6th grader can play on 7th grade team); or within the same division;
 - 4. cannot play on a lower division team (a 6th grader cannot play on a 5th grade team);
 - 5. may play on another Member team in no more than two (2) games during the season, including sanctioned events in order to rotate guest players of different skill levels; and,
 - 6. see sport specific rules for further information on the maximum number of guest players and eligibility.
 - 7. cannot compete in sanctioned events.

Section 4 – DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND CYO PRE-PARTICIPATION FORMS and Medical Expenses/Insurance

- 5-4-1 Each athlete on a CYO team roster must complete a DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND CYO PRE-PARTICIPATION FORM in order to participate in practice, scrimmage or competitions. Athletes are ineligible to participate without a completed Pre-participation Form signed by the athlete and the athlete’s parent or legal guardian.
- 5-4-2 The DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND CYO PRE-PARTICIPATION FORM must be submitted annually to the Member Administration by each athlete in the Diocese of Cleveland CYO. This form provides demographics, residence, waiver, medical history, emergency authorization information and medical provider’s certification of the athletes’ physical fitness for participation in CYO. The completed DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND CYO PRE-PARTICIPATION FORM is valid for thirteen months from the date of the medical provider’s signature. Prior to participation in practice or competition, the Athletic Director will verify:
 - A. The Pre-participation Form information and medical history section is complete.
 - B. The waiver section is complete and signed by the athlete and by a parent or legal guardian.
 - C. The physical exam section is signed and dated by a Medical Provider.
 - D. The DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND CYO PRE-PARTICIPATION FORM is required to be kept on file until the age of majority, age eighteen (18) with the CYO Member Administration.
 - E. Rosters must contain current physical exams for participating athletes at all times. CYO Member Organizations are responsible to ensuring that physical exams are current for all participating athletes. CYO Member Organizations are required to obtain a DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND CYO PRE-PARTICIPATION FORM for any athlete who was previously assigned to participate on another CYO Member Organization’s team because the “home” CYO Member Organization did not have a team in that sport.
- 5-4-3 Medical Expenses/Insurance – Athletes must have their own health insurance coverage and all medical and insurance expenses incurred while participating in CYO activities are the sole responsibility of athletes and their parents or legal guardians. The Member Administration, CYO and Diocesan Administration and agents in no way assume liability for any injuries that occur on the way to scheduled games, events or practices, at said events, or after departure from the activities.

The Member Administration and Diocesan Administration assume no responsibility for providing for and the expense of Life, Accident, Medical and Hospitalization insurance. This responsibility is solely that of the athlete's parents and legal guardian.

BYLAW 6 - TEAM AND LEAGUE FORMATION

6-1-1 The goal of team and league formation is to maintain fair and equitable competition with the inclusion and full participation for as many children as possible. CYO Administration retains the right and responsibility to determine final team and league formation based on the CYO Charter and Bylaws.

6-1-2 CYO Members will strive to achieve high standards when forming teams. Team formation aims to provide the best opportunities for athlete development through their multiple years of participation in CYO.

6-1-3 CYO Members will comply with the minimum/maximum number of athletes on a team as identified in sport specific rules.

Section 2 - Team Membership, Competition, and Gender

6-2-1 Every athlete who fulfills eligibility requirements is entitled to be placed on a Member team when available. Ineligible athletes may not be placed on a team or participate in any team practices, scrimmages, or games.

6-2-2 An athlete who participates in a sport organized primarily for the opposite gender is not eligible to compete with their own gender in the same sport during the same program year.

6-2-3 An athlete who participates with their own gender in any sport is not eligible to compete with the opposite gender in the same sport during the same program year.

6-2-4 Teams composed of athletes of the opposite gender shall not participate/compete in any inter-Member competition.

Section 3 - Team Formation

6-3-1 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th Grade Divisions

A. CYO Members are not permitted to split athletes into multiple teams divided by team strength. Teams in these levels must be split as evenly as possible according to the following criteria:

1. Every athlete has access to the same level of coaching and curriculum.
2. Every athlete has access to quality practice facilities and the same quantity of practice days/hours.
3. At the start of each season, player assessments for all of the athletes in the division are held on at least two (2) dates prior to determining the split of the group into multiple teams.
4. At the start of each season, player assessments are developed, lead and made by at least two (2) individuals that will not be coaching the athletes during the season.
5. Final rosters are approved by the Member Athletic Director prior to announcement of team placement.
6. The Member Athletic Director makes the final announcement in a manner that is consistent to the level of dignity and respect owed to every athlete.

B. The rationale for this position is based upon the Long-Term Athlete Development Model (LTAD).

6-3-2 6th, 7th, and 8th Grade Divisions

A. CYO Members are permitted to split athletes into multiple teams determined by team strength.

B. CYO sport specific rules will identify the factors and structure for team placement in divisions, conferences, and CYO tournaments. CYO Administration makes the final determination for team placement.

C. CYO Teams in these levels must be split according to the following criteria:

1. Every athlete has access to the same level of coaching and curriculum.
2. Every athlete has access to quality practice facilities and the same quantity of practice days/hours.
3. Every athlete has access to the same quantity of competitive opportunities throughout the season.
4. At the start of each season, player assessments for all of the athletes in the division are held on a minimum of two (2) dates prior to determining the split of the group into multiple teams.
5. At the start of each season, player assessments are developed, lead and made by at least two (2) individuals that will not be coaching the athletes during the season.
6. Final rosters are approved by the Member Athletic Director prior to announcement of team placement.
 - o The Member AD informs athletes in a manner that upholds the level of dignity owed to every person.

6-3-3 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th Grade Divisions

A. CYO Members may form teams in these divisions providing that the Member takes full responsibility for the support and supervision of the team according to CYO Charter and Bylaws procedures and policies.

B. Members sponsoring HS teams must advertise their program within the parish/school and must accept any athlete from their own organization who registers to play before accepting athletes from other Members.

C. If a Member sponsors multiple teams in the same division, the Member AD must approve the method used to split the athletes among the teams.

D. CYO Teams in these levels must be formed according to the following criteria:

1. Every athlete has access to the same level of coaching and curriculum.
2. Every athlete has access to quality practice facilities and the same quantity of practice days/hours.

3. Every athlete has access to the same quantity of competitive opportunities throughout the season.
4. Final rosters are approved by the Member AD prior to announcement of team placement.
5. The Member AD informs athletes in a manner that upholds the level of dignity owed to every person.

Section 4 - Conferencing of teams for the regular season

- 6-4-1 Teams in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade divisions will be placed into conferences for scheduling based upon their geographic location. Team strength will not be considered at these levels. Reasonable efforts will be made by CYO Administration to limit teams from the same CYO Member from playing each other during the regular season. This effort may result in teams traveling further distances to play games. Regular season standings will not be kept and playoffs will not be held. Members may sponsor sanctioned events for these levels, provided that team strength and record are not utilized for placement or grouping for the games in the division of play.
- 6-4-2 Teams competing in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade divisions will be placed in conferences tiers, and championship tournaments by CYO Administration according to the following goals and principles:
- A. The goal is to maintain fair and equitable competition with the inclusion and full participation of as many athletes and as many teams as possible.
 - B. The goal is to place teams in conferences where they will contribute to competitive balance and will have fewer experiences of being involved in a blow-out contest.
 - C. The number of teams registered for the sport and grade levels of that sport.
 - D. Team conference placement will consider the priority of travel time to games of 30 minutes or less when possible. Travel time is a lesser priority in grades 6-8 and a low priority for elite competition conferences.
 - E. Team strength as defined by available analytical information, including but not limited to:
 1. Member size and enrollment in school and religious education programs;
 2. Member Athletic Director input;
 3. historical performance data, including point differential of 20 points or less (basketball);
 4. sanctioned tournament performances;
 5. CYO Staff input.
 - F. Member Athletic Directors may petition CYO Administration to request a team to be moved up or down by the established deadline.
 - G. Members may sponsor sanctioned events for these levels that consider team strength and record for placement or grouping for the games in the division of play.
 - H. Team placement in conferences and divisions will be identified and shared in the sport specific information at the beginning of each sports season.
 - I. Regular season standings will be kept in grade 6 - 8 divisions of play.
- 6-4-3 Playoffs for Grades 6, 7, and 8
- A. Tournaments will be held at the 6th grade level and will be organized by grouping conferences of similar levels of play and geography. A limited number of teams may qualify and be invited to playoffs due to facility and volume limitations.
 - B. Tournaments will be held at the 7th & 8th grade level. All 7th grade teams may be invited to compete in a championship tournament. All 8th grade teams may be invited to compete in a diocesan championship tournament. Teams will be placed into competitive tiers based on analytics determined by the CYO Administration.
 - C. All Teams, Parishes and Schools must be in good standing to participate in post season competition. Good standing is defined as adhering to the rules, guidelines and financial requirements of the CYO organization.
 - D. A team with two or more forfeits may be declared ineligible for post-season competition, including high school.
- 6-4-4 Teams in the 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th Grade divisions will be placed into conferences based upon team composition, grade levels, and the geographic location of the CYO Member. Regular season standings will be kept and playoffs may be held. Members may sponsor sanctioned events for these levels and team strength and record may be utilized for placement or grouping for the games in this division.
- 6-4-5 The Member Athletic Director has the final approval regarding submissions for conferencing Member teams.

BYLAW 7 – PRE-SEASON MEETINGS

- 7-1-1 Each Member is required to hold a mandatory pre-season meeting with all head and assistant Coaches no later than 3-7 days before the start of the upcoming practice season. The agenda and resources for the Coaches meeting are provided by CYO Administration. CYO Administration requires Members to provide the dates, times, and agenda of the Coaches meeting and may be present at the meeting. CYO Member programs who fail to have this meeting will be automatically placed on Administrative Warning as described in Bylaw 10.
- 7-1-2 Each Member is required to hold a mandatory pre-season meeting with all parents 3-7 days before competition begins for the upcoming season. This meeting may be done by Zoom, Microsoft Teams or in person. The agenda and resources for the CYO Parent meeting are provided by CYO Administration. CYO Administration requires Members to provide the dates, times, and agenda of the parent meeting and may be present at the meeting. CYO Member programs who fail to have this meeting will be automatically placed on Administrative Warning as described in Bylaw 10.

BYLAW 8 – OFFICIALS & SITE STAFF

Section 1 - Officials Assigned

- 8-1-1 The CYO Administration shall assign Officials to regular season and tournament competitions. All contest Officials assigned to regular season and tournament competitions must be certified by an organization approved by CYO Administration.
- 8-1-2 Sanctioned Event sponsors shall assign certified Officials to event competitions. All contest Officials assigned to sanctioned event competitions must be certified by an organization approved by CYO Administration.

Section 2 - Officials Decisions and Conduct

- 8-2-1 Decisions made by Contest Officials related to interpretations on the contest playing rules are final and will not be considered for appeal.
- 8-2-2 If an official scorekeeping error is discovered, a review may be done & corrections made as outlined in sport specific rules.
- 8-2-3 Contest Officials are to be knowledgeable of all CYO sport rules and apply competition rules appropriately.
- 8-2-4 Contest Officials are to respect the mission, values and philosophy of CYO in their professional attire, presence and interaction with athletes, coaches, staff and spectators.
- 8-2-5 Video will not be considered for any decision made by officials during contests. Video may be considered for safety purposes to evaluate intentional fouls, flagrant fouls, personal fouls, taunting or when determined by CYO administration.

Section 3- Game and Contest Assigners of Officials

- 8-3-1 Assigners for CYO games and contests may only be appointed by the CYO Athletic Administration.
- 8-3-2 Assigners will assure that all officials wear the proper uniform, according to NFHS guidelines.
- 8-3-3 Assigners and officials are responsible to represent the mission, values, philosophy and culture of CYO Athletics.
- 8-3-4 Assigners and Officials should not officiate contests involving their Member organization whenever possible.
- 8-3-5 Assigners are to implement a fair and equitable process in the distribution of assignments to include as many officials as possible who are qualified and would like to officiate in the CYO program.

Section 4 - Site Staff

- 8-4-1 The Site Director must submit a Site Director Application Form to the CYO Administration. Each person who will serve as a Site Director must submit an application. Site Directors appointed by the facility must be at least 21 years-old or be approved by the CYO Administration.
- 8-4-2 All site staff must complete required background check, Virtus, and scorer/timing/volunteer training.
- 8-4-3 All site staff must read and acknowledge the Diocese of Cleveland, "Policy for the Safety of Children in Matters of Sexual Abuse" and the Diocese of Cleveland, "Standards of Conduct for Ministry" as required.
- 8-4-4 All Site Directors must complete the NFHS Concussion in Sports – "What You Need to Know" training program and submit the certificate of completion to the Diocesan Administration or Member Athletic Director.
- 8-4-5 All Site Directors must complete state required Lindsey's Law training.

BYLAW 9 - CODE OF CONDUCT

- 9-1-1 CYO is dedicated to fair play and Christian behaviors. All CYO athletes, coaches, parents, spectators, administrators, officials and the greater community are required to contribute to the Christian culture of CYO.
- 9-1-2 Athletes are expected to compete within the spirit and letter of the rules. Athletes are to demonstrate good behavior toward opponents, officials and teammates. They are to uphold the dignity of site personnel and to be a positive influence on relationships with their team, with opponents, and with officials.
- 9-1-3 Coaches, Officials and Administrators are to conduct themselves in a Christian manner. They are to administer the program within the spirit and letter of the rules and demonstrate good behavior toward athletes, opponents, officials and administrators at all CYO venues. They will uphold the dignity of every CYO athlete.
- 9-1-4 Parents and fans are to act as Christian role models. They must follow decisions made by site directors and officials, remain in the spectator area and may not enter the playing or coaching areas. Any parent/fan who enters into the playing contest space is subject to disciplinary action. They may not make abusive or demeaning comments or act in an abusive manner toward officials, athletes, coaches, site personnel or fans.
- 9-1-5 CYO is dedicated to the safety of every child, parent and adult. We will not tolerate any form of aggressive or abusive behavior in the CYO community. Examples include: yelling at officials or site personnel; physical intimidation or threatening behavior; verbal or physical harassment; and any disruptive behaviors. If any of these behaviors occur, consequences will be assessed that include the following:
 - A. Athletes, coaches, parents and fans who have been ejected, asked to leave, or removed by Officials or CYO personnel must depart immediately. If they refuse to leave the premises immediately, one week is added to their suspension. Their suspension begins the next day, with no option to appeal. There may be additional consequences and disciplinary actions for those individuals as stated below and in Bylaw 10.
 - B. Anyone besides the coach or athlete on the team that enters the court or field of play is immediately suspended for one week and may be suspended for a longer time as determined by CYO Administration.

- C. Athletes who are ejected, asked to leave, or removed from an athletic event are automatically prohibited from attending any practices or CYO games for **seven days** including sanctioned events. **They may not be on the premises of the next CYO scheduled game of any grade and may not attend or participate in any sanctioned event games during the seven day period.** They must meet with the Member Administrator and obtain a signed letter from the Member Administrator requesting permission from CYO Administration to attend future competitions. **They must complete the Code of Conduct online session and worksheet to be reinstated.**
- D. Coaches who are ejected, asked to leave, or removed from an athletic event are automatically prohibited from attending any practices or CYO games for **fourteen days** including sanctioned events. **They may not attend or be on the premises of the next two CYO scheduled games of any grade and may not attend any sanctioned event games during the fourteen day period.** They must meet with the Member Administrator and obtain a signed letter from the Member Administrator requesting permission from CYO Administration to attend future competitions. **They must complete the Code of Conduct online session and worksheet to be reinstated.**
- E. Parents or fans who are ejected, asked to leave, or removed from an athletic event are automatically prohibited from attending any practices or CYO games for **twenty-one days** including sanctioned events. **They may not attend or be on the premises of the next three CYO scheduled games of any grade and may not attend any sanctioned event games during the twenty-one day period.** They must meet with the Member Administrator and obtain a signed letter from the Member Administrator requesting permission from CYO Administration to attend future competitions. **They must complete the Code of Conduct online session and worksheet to be reinstated.**
- F. In order to be reinstated, athletes, coaches, parents and fans must:
 - 1. complete their suspension period,
 - 2. meet with Member Administrator and request a letter of reinstatement,
 - 3. complete online code of conduct session and worksheet,
 - 4. get final approval by CYO Administration.
- G. Athletes, coaches, parents, or fans who are ejected, asked to leave, or removed from an event for a second time are not permitted to attend any competitions for the remainder of the season, including tournaments. The individual must meet with the Member Administrator and obtain a signed letter from the Member Administrator only requesting approval from CYO Administration. **They must also complete the Code of Conduct online session and worksheet to be permitted to attend events in the next season.**
- H. Coaches ejected, asked to leave, or removed from an event for the second time in the same season will immediately surrender their coach's credential to the Site Director or Member Administration. They must attend a Coaches Development Program, meet with the Member Administrator and obtain a signed letter requesting permission to coach in the subsequent season.
- I. **Any individual who in any way threatens, attempts to intimidate, or attacks a CYO staff member or any person verbally, physically, or by social media post will be suspended for a period determined by the CYO Administration.**
- J. A team that accumulates a total of three (3) ejections, being asked to leave or removals of a coach, athlete or spectator during the same season is immediately suspended for the remainder of the season and is subject to further penalties.
- K. Actions by athletes, coaches, parents, or fans that conflict with the behavior standards of the Diocese of Cleveland CYO may be assessed consequences as outlined in Bylaw 11, even when the persons involved were not ejected, asked to leave, removed or addressed at the time of the event.

9-1-6 General Diocesan Rule on Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms

- L. Coaches, athletes, spectators, site personnel, commissioners and contest officials in CYO athletic programs are prohibited from using any form of alcohol, illicit drugs, tobacco products, or from carrying a firearm or deadly weapon at CYO athletic competitions, practices, or events.
- M. Alcohol, illicit drugs, tobacco products, or firearms and weapons are not permitted anywhere on the premises of a CYO event. Penalty for violation is disqualification from that contest and possible legal action.
- N. CYO contest sites are drug, alcohol, tobacco and firearm free zones.

BYLAW 10 - PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION OF RULES

10-1-1 CYO Administration requires the CYO Member to take action and assess penalties at the Member level when behavior violations occur. CYO Administration may also assess penalties or a combination of penalties at the same time or later to Member programs or individuals that include, but are not limited to the following:

- A. no further action;
- B. warning and/or probation;
- C. assignment to attend further training or to achieve identified tasks as conditions to return;
- D. forfeiture of playoff, tournament, or sanctioned event participation privileges;
- E. forfeiture and suspension of a game or a set number of games or for the season;
- F. temporary or permanent suspension or removal of an athlete, coach, Athletic Director, parent or spectator;
- G. suspension of current/future privileges to participate in or host CYO sanctioned events;

- H. suspension of athletic contests when the relationship between two or more teams has become so quarrelsome and unsportsmanlike as to jeopardize the Member and public welfare;
- I. suspension of the Member organization from participation in CYO for a time period determined by CYO Administration.
- J. suspension of a coach or individual for an identified period of time, up to and including a lifetime ban from CYO.
- 10-1-2 CYO Administration reserves the right to assign multiple penalties to occur simultaneously upon Members for violation of the CYO Charter and Bylaws according to the nature of the violation.
- 10-1-3 Any violations at a CYO event that violate civil law will be reported to civil authorities for an investigation and further actions by civil authorities and/or CYO as deemed necessary.
- 10-1-4 CYO Member Programs will be assigned the following penalties in these categories for Member Administrative Violations:
 - A. Administrative Watch – The following violations fit within this category:
 - 6. Lack of communication, i.e. not responding to emails/calls in a timely fashion, not giving information to coaches.
 - 7. Lack of registration oversight for member families or individuals who are not from the Member program.
 - 8. Non-compliance or violation of Athletic Director's responsibilities and duties as described in Article 7 of the CBL.
 - B. Administrative Warning - The following violations fit within this category:
 - 1. Not having pre-season parent meeting and pre-season coaches meeting
 - 2. Pattern of missing CYO administrative deadlines and payment deadlines
 - 3. Violating eligibility rules (Bylaws 3 and 4) of the CBL when registering individuals and teams
 - 4. Not following through with administrative steps required when dealing with a CYO Member program Incident.
 - C. Administrative Suspension - The following violations fit within this category:
 - 1. Not collecting and maintaining required medical participation forms and giving required information to coaches.
 - 2. Lack of registration oversight for individuals/teams regarding: player or coach eligibility; blackout date requests; accurate and full registration information and payment deadlines.
 - 3. Not offering registration for all CYO sports.
 - 4. Accepting and allowing ineligible children or coaches to participate in practices or scrimmages while ineligible.
 - 5. Late addition or dropping of CYO teams after team registration deadline.
 - D. CYO Administration may assess the following penalties or combination of penalties at the same time or later to Member programs that have been placed on administrative watch, warning or suspension:
 - 1. A team or teams in the Member program suspended for the remainder of the season and tournaments.
 - 2. A team or teams in the Member program having one or two fewer games due to late registration and scheduling.
 - 3. Any CYO Member teams that are suspended forfeit all outstanding paid fees for CYO registrations for that season.
 - 4. Athletic Director and/or Coaches suspended for a set period of time or a set number of games.
 - 5. Athletic Director and/or Coaches suspended for the remainder of the CYO program year through June 30.

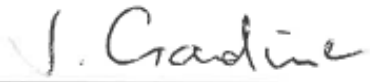
BYLAW 11 - PROTEST, GRIEVANCE AND APPEAL PROCESS

- 11-1-1 Definitions
 - A. A grievance is a written concern or disagreement with the administration of the Catholic Youth Organization athletic program, including eligibility of an athlete or conduct of an individual involved in a CYO competition.
 - B. A protest is a written objection directly associated with sport rules and/or athletic contests. Protests involving disputed calls by game officials will not be considered. The decisions and interpretations of rules by contest officials are final.
 - C. An appeal is a written request for reconsideration of the decision rendered by CYO Administration in response to a protest or grievance.
- 11-1-2 Protest and Grievance Process
 - A. Within three (3) days of the incident or before the next scheduled game, the initiator of the grievance/protest must submit the issue in writing to the CYO Athletic Administrator along with a \$50.00 filing fee. The document must be signed by the Member Athletic Director and Member Administrator.
 - B. The CYO Athletic Administrator will notify all parties of interest in the grievance or protest.
 - C. The CYO Athletic Administrator will gather and determine pertinent facts via phone interviews, consultations, written reports or other means. The CYO Athletic Administrator may convene a small group of persons with CYO experience and expertise to recommend a response to the grievance.
 - D. The CYO Athletic Administrator will issue a written decision resolving the issue.
 - E. If the CYO Athletic Administrator is involved in the grievance, it will be reviewed by the CYO Director.
- 11-1-3 Appeals Process
 - A. An appeal of a decision by the CYO Athletic Administrator related to a protest or grievance must be filed with the CYO Athletic Administrator within five (5) days following the release of the written decision.
 - B. An appeal of a decision related to eligibility must be filed with the CYO Athletic Administrator within five (5) days following the release of the oral or written decision.

- C. The initiator of the appeal must submit the issue in writing to the CYO Athletic Administrator along with a \$50.00 filing fee. The Member Athletic Director and Member Administrator must sign the appeal.
- D. The CYO Athletic Administrator will notify parties deemed to have an interest in the grievance or protest.
- E. The CYO Athletic Administrator will gather and determine pertinent facts via phone interviews, consultations, written reports or other means.
- F. The CYO Athletic Administrator may invite the parties involved to present their case to a Mediation Committee selected by CYO Administration to assist in deciding upon the issue. In this procedure, no more than three (3) people directly related to the issue may offer presentations **within an identified time period.**
- G. A written decision shall be issued no later than three (3) days after the Athletic Administrator's review.
- H. If the Athletic Administrator's decision is in favor of the appealing Member, the filing fee will be refunded.

END OF BYLAWS

The foregoing Charter and Bylaws for the Diocese of Cleveland CYO have been duly promulgated by the Bishop of the Diocese of Cleveland and are effective as of the first day of July, **2025**. Any prior bylaws, statutes, guidelines, procedures, or similar documents for the governance of the Diocese of Cleveland CYO are hereby entirely suspended and abrogated effective **July 1 2025**.



Mr. Vincent Gardiner, JCL, Chancellor
Diocese of Cleveland



Bishop Edward Charles Malesic, Bishop
Diocese of Cleveland

May 2025