

Mandatory Background Checks for Coaches

Effective March 1, 2013, all coaches and assistant coaches for every program offered through the Old Saratoga Athletic Association (OSAA) will be required to submit to a confidential background check prior to every season, or if coaching more than one sport, at least once every twelve (12) months. Failure to comply with the background search will automatically disqualify said applicant from a coaching or assistant coaching position with OSAA.

The background searches will be conducted by KidSafePlus through the OSAA affiliation with SportsSignup. All coaches and assistant coaches (hereinafter referred to as “applicants”) shall submit an online application at the time the applicant volunteers for a coaching or assistant coaching position. KidSafePlus will access public repositories, registries and other public records as part of the background search. Applicants should be aware that there may be instances of false positives based upon common or similar names in the search. Any reports of convictions will be separately assessed by the Review Board, as described below.

It is the intent of OSAA to deny a coaching/assistant coaching position to anyone convicted of a crime of violence or a crime against the welfare of a child. OSAA is committed to providing a safe and fun experience to all of the participants involved in the OSAA programs and is sensitive to the vulnerability of children in the OSAA programs. While OSAA does not anticipate that every parent that “helps out” on occasion with running practices or at games will have a background check completed, the intent is to screen those individuals in a “position of trust” on each team. Any adult who is provided with a team shirt or otherwise assigned regular duties shall be considered a coach or assistant coach and will be required to submit to the background search.

If an applicant is found to have been convicted of any of the following offenses, no matter when, he or she will not be allowed to work with the children in the OSAA programs:

- Felony assault – against a child or adult
- Any sex-related offense (pursuant to PL §130) including rape, sexual abuse, etc.
- Homicide or manslaughter, including attempted
- Any felony conviction related to domestic violence
- Felony possession or sale of controlled substances and/or marijuana
- Kidnapping charge or conviction
- Felony burglary, robbery or theft
- Arson
- Felony conviction involving Animal cruelty
- Felony weapons-related conviction

Pending Charges or new arrests:

An applicant will be disqualified for the season if they have any pending charges or arrests prior to the season for any of the above-defined offenses.

In the event that an approved coach is arrested or charged during a season with any of the above-defined charges, said coach shall be immediately suspended from their position pending the final disposition of the charges.

If the charges are resolved by acquittal or dismissal, the applicant may be reinstated to coaching.

Review Process:

There shall be a designated member from the OSAA Board who will be the Contact Person for the background check results. The Contact Person will be appointed each year by the President of OSAA. The Contact Person shall maintain a log of people who have complied with the application process and have been authorized to participate. The various commissioners shall also provide the Contact Person with a list of potential coaches/assistant coaches prior to the commencement of each season.

The OSAA President shall also designate a Review Board of three OSAA Board members, which shall include the Contact Person. The Review Board shall meet, as necessary, to review the results of any application that reveals a possible criminal history.

The Contact Person for background checks, as well as the Review Board shall sign a confidentiality agreement to maintain the confidentiality of every application and will not further disseminate the information outside the Review Board, the appropriate Commissioner(s) and the Executive Committee of the OSAA Board, if necessary. Additionally, no personal information shall be communicated electronically (computer, email, text, etc.) to maintain privacy and confidentiality. The Contact Person shall maintain records in a locked fire proof safe.

Upon receiving negative results from the background check and upon discussion by the Review Board, the applicant shall be contacted by a member of the Review Board or the President. The applicant shall be given an opportunity to explain the circumstances of a conviction or provide further relevant information regarding same or provide evidence the information is false. The Review Board shall then make a recommendation to the President regarding the status of the applicant. The final determination shall be made by the President of OSAA. In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall make the determination.

The foregoing policy shall not be construed as a waiver or limitation of the discretion of the OSAA Board of Directors to disqualify any applicant for a coaching or assistant coaching position. In addition, when in the best interest of the program, the OSAA program reserves the right to decline to accept any application for coaching/assistant coaching services with or without cause.