

# Centralized Youth Sports Registration

## Frequently Asked Questions

1/15/2025

### Why is the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board moving to centralized youth sports registration?

Centralized youth sports registration offers many benefits, including equity, inclusivity, safety, and ease of registration:

#### Equity

- Centralized registration will provide fair competition. Allowing outside groups or coaches to create their own teams and enter MPRB sports programs is not equitable.
  - Youth Sports staff receives dozens of complaints every year across multiple sports regarding lopsided competition and outside groups selectively showing up or not showing up to games and using MPRB sports programs as practice for tournaments and to participate in more competitive leagues.
  - Players and families can have vastly different experiences based on who they know and where/how they sign up. This includes competition level, but also coaching standards, uniforms, equipment, and opportunities for additional practices, games and tournaments.
- Outside groups are still welcome to apply to rent space for their own leagues or practices and this option for outside leagues will continue.

#### Inclusivity

- **Everyone who signs up is guaranteed to be placed on a team.** That is not currently the case.
- **No one – players or coaches – is being excluded, kicked out, or banned.** We want players from outside groups to continue to participate in MPRB youth sports programs.
- All we're asking is that if you participate in MPRB youth sports programs, you must sign up through the same MPRB-led process and follow MPRB rules and standards.

- If you have a group of kids who want to play, you can still register all those kids through the MPRB centralized youth sports registration process. We just no longer guarantee all the kids will be on the same team.

### Ease of registration

- The registration process is being drastically streamlined for the vast majority of Youth Sports participants who already sign up individually. Instead of scrolling through a haphazard list of dozens of listings on ActiveNet, you simply pick a sport, age/division, and three preferred locations.
- Practice/game days and sites are set when registration opens, making it much easier for families to plan their seasons.
- Anyone can sign up online, in-person at 47 recreation center locations, Mary Merrill MPRB Headquarters Building, 2117 West River Road, Minneapolis or by calling Customer Service at 612-230-6400.

### Safety, standardization and efficiency

- Centralized registration ensures that all background checks are completed before adults are in contact with youth.
- All coaches will be using the same coaching instructions, standards, etc.
- The new process will result in more efficient referee and facility scheduling.

### Who initiated the change in youth sports registration?

This was initiated by Park Commissioners based on comments from the public.

- Commissioners have heard complaints from constituents for decades about the lack of equity in youth sports registration. A 2024 youth sports parent survey showed support for centralized youth sports registration.
- No players or coaches are being banned, excluded, or kicked out. We are only requiring that all players sign up using the same process.

### How was the new centralized sports registration process shared with the community?

- Commissioners, MPRB coaches and coaches from outside groups that previously registered teams were notified of the new centralized youth registration process in December 2024.
- All families who registered for youth sports through the MPRB registration process were notified by email in December 2024. (Email addresses were not available for

families of players who played on outside group teams and did not register through MPRB.)

- Online community meetings to explain the new process will take place in January and February 2025.
- Registration for 2025 summer youth sports begins March 5, 2025.

## How is Youth Sports registration changing?

Previously, MPRB youth sports were offered through individual parks, resulting in a long, confusing list full of dozens, or even hundreds of registration options across the park system, where not every park offered options for every age group. If a park didn't offer a specific age group or have enough participants signed up to create a full team, park staff would work to find spots on teams at other nearby parks.

Now, youth and families will go through a much easier and streamlined process. Simply choose a sport, age division, and three preferred sites. Then after registration closes, Youth Sports staff will review all registrations and create teams based on people's preferred sites to form teams into citywide leagues.

Replacing a decentralized approach with a more efficient and organized process helps ensure every child or teenager who signs up to play a sport is placed on a team. Everyone plays!

## How do I sign up?

Go to [minneapolisparcs.org/youthsports](https://minneapolisparcs.org/youthsports).

1. Choose a sport
2. Choose an age division
3. Choose three sites in prioritized order
4. Complete the registration online. People can also register in-person at any recreation center or call 612-230-6400 during regular business hours, Monday-Friday, 8 am-4:30 pm.

## What happens after I sign up?

1. People will be emailed a receipt immediately following online registration.
2. After the registration deadline, MPRB Youth Sports staff will assemble teams, assign coaches, and create league schedules for each sport and division.
3. When teams and leagues are finalized, park staff and coaches will email team information to families.

## How will park staff and coaches communicate with families?

The primary communication method will be through the email address families list on the registration form. Individual coaches or park staff may choose to use texts or calls. The MPRB is working on developing a communications system through the registration software, ActiveNet.

## Can I still sign up through my school, religious institution, or youth-serving organization?

Everyone participating in MPRB youth sports programs must register individually through the new central registration process. No pre-existing teams will be allowed.

All volunteers and staff from athletic councils, schools and youth-serving organizations in Minneapolis are deeply appreciated, and everyone is encouraged to participate in this new process.

Associations and groups that organize their own teams are welcome to apply to rent space at MPRB facilities for their own practices, games, and leagues, but in order to participate in an MPRB sports program, everyone must follow the MPRB registration process.

## Can youth request to play on a team with a sibling?

Siblings will be placed on the same team if requested during the registration process. Email [youthsports@minneapolisparcs.org](mailto:youthsports@minneapolisparcs.org) to make the request following registration.

## Can youth request to play with a friend?

Youth can sign up to play with one friend during the registration process. The request must be reciprocal, friends must choose each other.

## Can youth request to play for a specific coach?

Requests for specific coaches will not be granted, except for children of coaches.

## Can coaches sign up to coach a team together?

Yes, most sports have a maximum number of two official coaches per team. Baseball and Softball can have a maximum of three official coaches.

## What if I have a concern or a complaint regarding a coach?

If there's an immediate concern, contact the Recreation Supervisor for the park where the team is based. Every parent/guardian who completes a youth registration is sent a post-season evaluation form with room for feedback on coaches.

## How does age verification work?

Parents or guardians must show a full-time Recreation staff member an official document with the youth's birth date. Examples of accepted forms of birth date verification: birth certificate, baptismal certificate, immunization card, certificate from school administration or hospital birth record. Players will not be allowed to play in a league game until their age is verified.

## What equipment is provided by the MPRB?

**Baseball/Softball:** Jerseys, pants, hats, and catcher's gear are provided. Gloves and cleats are not provided.

**Track and Field:** Uniforms and all field equipment (shotput, javelin, etc.) are provided. Track shoes are not provided.

**Flag Football:** Uniforms and player flags are provided. Gloves and cleats are not provided.

## Will MPRB Youth Sports staff work with youth, families and coaches?

- Youth sports staff will work with youth, families and coaches.
- We're not going to move kids across town to locations they didn't request. Everyone can choose up to three parks and you'll be placed at one of them.
- In the rare event none of your preferred locations work out, Youth Sports staff will call you and work with you to find something that works.
- If you want to continue to coach, please continue coaching! We just are no longer allowing coaches to handpick their teams.
- If you're a great coach, the new process is a wonderful opportunity for you to reach new kids. Mixing up teams and experiences will promote growth for everyone involved.
- Youth can sign up with one friend, but it must be mutual during the registration process.
- If access to online registration is a problem, paper registration forms are available [online](#) at or at any recreation center, once registration opens on March 5, 2025.