

# Welcome to the Metrowest Basketball League



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## League Introduction

Welcome to the Metrowest Basketball league. The Metrowest basketball league is a service provider to member towns in the suburban Boston area in support of their winter youth basketball travel teams grades 4 to 8, boys and girls. We do not manage towns or individual teams and/or the day to day operations of individual member towns and how they conduct business. We do encourage each town to constantly be reviewing their policies and procedures to ensure the highest quality of integrity and fairness in their town and teams. We encourage each coordinator to embrace the power to lead and share the Missions and Goals of the league.

## Mission Statement

The mission of Metrowest Basketball is to provide a competitive league for many different levels of play while creating an environment in which children and adults can have fun with basketball. We constantly review rules and procedures to provide the best experience for the players.

## League Goals

1. Model and teach competitiveness with an emphasis on good sportsmanship.
2. Promote increased self-esteem among our children and adults.
3. Safety is of utmost concern to Metrowest. Coordinators, Coaches and Referees should strive to avoid injury whenever possible.
4. Constantly strive to be ahead of the curve with enhancements and improvements to the league procedures, technology and rules.
5. Actively interact with Coordinators to ensure a league with a voice.

## League Responsibility

Organize competitive playing divisions in each grade/gender to ensure each team has an opportunity to compete at their own highest level. We re-align teams for both the regular season and post season yearly. The teams are aligned with the help of town Coordinators to ensure competitive divisions with the goal of competitive play throughout both.

1. Scheduling of Regular Season Games.
2. Scheduling and overseeing tournament Play-off games.
3. Assigning official coordinators to each member town. They are responsible for assigning officials to each game.
4. Monitoring various policies decided upon by the member communities: Including Rosters, Code of Conduct, and Game Rules.
5. Hold yearly meeting to allow town an opportunity to vote on key issues to ensure the league is running at its highest level.

# Code of Conduct and Members Responsibilities

## ***Code of Conduct:***

The Metrowest League has always promoted good sportsmanship among coaches, players and spectators. The majority of participants have adhered to this Policy. However, in recent years there have been a small number of incidents reported where behavior has been unacceptable. In order to better identify those abusers of the code of conduct and to resolve these nuisances, a new set of procedure was adopted in 2008.

ALL PARENTS, COACHES AND PLAYERS ARE ASKED TO REVIEW THIS POLICY IN DEPTH (PLEASE NOTE THAT SOME TOWNS HAVE POLICIES THAT ARE MORE STRICT THAN THE METROWEST POLICY. THIS POLICY DOES NOT REDUCE OR ELIMINATE LOCAL TOWN POLICIES IN ANY WAY.) HOWEVER, THE METROWEST POLICY IS THE MINIMUM AND MUST BE ENFORCED.

Part of the code of Conduct is the understanding that a coordinator/coach/player/parent/spectator or anyone else involved in a game is not allowed to approach the official at the conclusion of the game for anything other than positive remarks/handshake. This includes asking officials to clarify a call/rule that was made that you disagreed with and want more clarity. We have a process in place if you feel the official did something wrong, please respect and follow the process. If one of the people above approaches the official it is a no questions ask 1 game suspension for the first offense and the remainder of the season for a 2<sup>nd</sup> offense. This is a NO TOLERANCE policy that will be strictly enforced.

## ***Official Coordinator:***

Assign quality officials to games.

### ***Official Coordinator Responsibility:***

Review and monitor the stable of officials to ensure the highest quality.

Address and mediate between any possible discrepancy with a coordinator and an official. The official coordinator is not and will not address an issue with a coach, player or spectator. Please respect chain of command.

Ensure all officials are up to date with current rules and policies of Metrowest Basketball along with those in MIAA and Federation rules.

Review rules, point of emphasis and game management yearly with your stable.

## ***Game Officials:***

Officiate the game with the highest amount of effort and integrity.

### ***Game Officials Responsibility:***

Fill out necessary paperwork for code of conduct or rejections.

Ensure a game does not start any earlier than 5 minutes before scheduled time, unless weather is an issue. Coaches cannot overrule this.

Do your best to ensure a safe and competitive environment.

Follow and enforce all rules set forth by Metrowest Basketball, MIAA and National Federation rules.

Show up on time. Remember it's not your game; it's the player's game.

Provides feedback on the participating coaches and spectators

### ***Town Coordinators:***

Handle all day to day operations of your individual town.

#### ***Town Coordinators Responsibility:***

Oversee coaches, players and parents of your town to ensure the league mission and goals are being upheld.

Encourage coaches to use the feedback forum for game officials and spectators.

Update computer system with team information, including teams, division request, coaches, and gym time for home games.

Ensure roster deadline has been met.

Operate a budget to ensure officials, Metrowest Basketball, insurance and other fees are paid.

Review and enforce code of conduct with coaches, players and parents.

Review and place teams accordingly to ensure a competitive season. Playing a team up or down to ensure wins or play against tougher talent does not benefit the league. Review placements with coaches prior to meeting.

### ***Coach Behavior and Responsibility:***

Coaches are responsible for ensuring that all members of the team and their fans practice good sportsmanship before, during and after the game.

Support the referees and refrain from making derogatory comments towards them.

Refrain from actions or words that undercut the self-esteem of players from their own team and opposite teams.

Do not allow your players to make derogatory comments towards other players/officials.

Coaches are NOT allowed to cancel or change a game. Town administrator must do it. If a coach does this without town administrator's guidance he/she will be suspended for one game.

NO trash talking.

Support post-game nice game exchange between players and coaches.

Good sportsmanship includes avoidance of unnecessary rough and dirty play. Players, coaches and referees should all strive in this regard. Dirty play will not be tolerated.

Record all games results online, and provides feedback on the game officials and spectators at the end of the game

Update all rosters prior to the start of the season. Understand the consequence if this is not done.

Notify your team of any schedule change.

### ***Player Code of Conduct:***

Treat your teammates and your opponent as you would like to be treated.

Be a good sport at all times and remember you represents your parents, your team, and your team.

Play by the rules.

Control your behavior at all times. Use of bad language is unacceptable.

Don not do anything that would endanger your opponents, your teammates, your coaches, yourself, or officials.

Compete and prepare to win, never cheat to win.

***Parent/Spectator Code of Conduct:***

Always keep in mind that the players are grade school children trying to learn a game, the team concept, improve their skills, and learn life lessons. They are NOT playing for the entertainment of the spectators.

Applaud good performances from both teams. Congratulate all players regardless of the outcome.

Never ridicule or scold a child for making a mistake during competition. Be positive.

Condemn the use of violence in any form, be it by spectators, coaches or players.

Be part of the solution NOT the problem when it comes to criticism and possible violence.

Show respect for your teams' opponents. Encourage players to obey the rules and decision of officials.

Demonstrate appropriate social behavior by not using foul language, harassing players, coaches, or officials.

Calmer head always prevail.

**Game Procedure for Dealing with Unacceptable Behavior!**

The game referees will monitor the conduct of coaches, players and fans with the following procedures in place.

***Coach Misconduct:***

If a referee determines that a coach is in violation of proper behavior, both referees will stop play and inform the coach that he/she is not in line with proper conduct. The referees will continue to utilize technical fouls for inappropriate behavior, and all rules pertaining to coach suspension for two technical fouls will be in effect, officials will enforce Federation Rules when a coach or assistant coach receives a technical foul.

If, in the judgment of the officials, a coach's conduct is extremely out of line, they will file a report to the head of referees who in turn will contact the league commissioner to review the situation. The town coordinator will be consulted and a determination will be made whether further action needs to be taken.

Coaches should not contact league officials, game officials, opposing coaches or players. Please contact your town administrator.

***Spectator Misconduct:***

If, in the judgment of the referees, spectator behavior is out of line with respect to the code of conduct, the referees will call a stoppage of play, and confer with the game coaches. The coach will in turn be responsible to contact the spectators for the purpose of correcting the inappropriate.

If the inappropriate conduct is not corrected, the offending spectator may be asked to leave the gym. Failure on the part of the spectator(s) to comply may result in the referee calling a premature end to the game.

If the inappropriate behavior is not readily resolved, the game referees will file a report to the head of referees who, in turn, will contact the league commissioner. The town coordinator (s) will be contacted, and a determination will be made whether further action is necessary.

Spectators should not contact league officials, game officials or opponent coaches and players. Please contact your town coordinator.

**Player Misconduct:**

If a referee determines that a player is exhibiting inappropriate behavior, the referees will stop play and confer with the coach to correct the inappropriate behavior. The use of technical fouls will continue as in the past, including mandatory suspension of a player for game ejection.

If, in the judgment of the officials, a player’s conduct is extremely out of line, they will file a report to the head of referees who in turn will contact the league commissioner to review the situation. The town coordinator will be consulted and a determination will be made whether further action needs to be taken.

**Subsequent Action Penalties:**

If it is determined by the league officials, head of referees, and the town coordinator that misconduct is of such a severe nature that a meeting is required to determine if further penalties or sanctions should be imposed on the offending parties, the league commissioner will call a meeting of involved parties to review the incident. Failure of involved parties to attend the meeting may result in suspension of play by the team(s) involved until the issue is resolved.

**Social Media guideline**

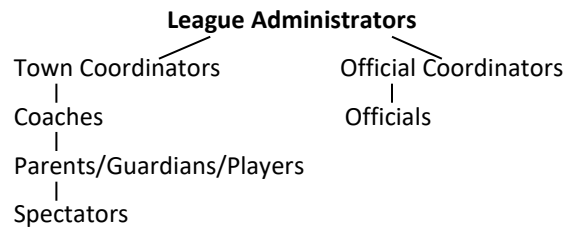
**Social Media Policy:**

Coaches, Players, Parents, Officials and Coordinators are prohibited from posting anything on social media – direct or implied– that could be implied as negative, critical, or derogatory in reference to any specific Metrowest affiliated individual/teams other than his or her own self or children. Positive comments are of course fine.

Posting critical comments on officiating on a social media platform is prohibited by anyone affiliated with a Metrowest team. Much like professional sports, college sports, or MIAA (Massachusetts HS sports), commenting on officiating via any media platform (print, electronic, social or otherwise) is not allowed. And suspensions are giving for any such activity.

Any offensive of this guideline will result in a game suspension for the first offense and removal from the league for a 2<sup>nd</sup> offense. This includes spectators, parents, coaches, coordinators, and players.

**Chain of Command**



**Please follow chain of command**

# Team Responsibilities

## **Home Team:**

The home team is responsible for providing:

Timely access to gym, game ball, scorekeeper for official scorebook, and the time keeper.

## **Arriving On Time:**

Each team shall be prepared to play at the scheduled start of the game. A grace period of 10 minutes is allowed, after which the delinquent team shall forfeit the game. Town Coordinators can delay games based on weather conditions.

## **Playing Referees:**

The HOME team is responsible for paying each of the two referees at each game. Referees should be paid prior to the start of each game. Each is paid \$40.00 per game, cash, check or money order is acceptable. If only one referee is present for the game, he/she is paid \$60.00. In the event that a team cancels or forfeits a game, that team is responsible for paying for both referees. Referees are paid even if the game is not played! For a single game an official is Paid \$50.00. The only exception would be for a made up game due to acts that are beyond the control of the home team.

See rules about cancelled games. If an official declines a check please notify town coordinator so they can notify us.

### **REVISED 2016**

If it becomes necessary to postpone a game (other than game day weather or facility related cancellations), a coach must contact their town coordinator at least **9** days prior to the originally scheduled game. The coordinator will make provisions to adjust the home schedule for that day to avoid any gaps in a gym schedule. Town Coordinator will go into the system and cancel and/or reschedule the game. Please note that if the home team request a notice will be sent to the away team coordinator verifying the canceled game prior to any announcement being sent to the additional people attached to that game. The system creates the official DATE, coordinators please make the changes as SOON as you know about them to avoid a penalty that otherwise could have been avoided.

**NOTE: 9 day postponement notification policy is both adequate and realistic. A 9 day notice must be given to postpone games to avoid any penalty. Additionally, Metrowest assigners are NOT expected to schedule officials for any make up games where the 9 day notice was not given, unless the postponement occurred due to weather related or gym availability issues! THE NEW PENTALTY TO CANCEL A GAME WITHOUT 9 DAYS NOTICE IS \$80.00 fee to cover the cost of the assigned officials, \$40.00 fee to cover the admin cost to the league, and if away team cancels the home team can charge an additional \$80.00 to cover the cost of the home gym time. Any cancelations that are done less than 9 days notice and are for a reason not related to weather/things beyond our control would pay a fee of between \$120 and \$200. No exceptions. IF the fee is not paid the entire town will be removed from the play-offs.**

### **REASONS YOU WOULD BE REQUIRED TO PAY THE FEE**

**Less than 9 days' notice & any of the following**

**Feb Vacation and half your team is traveling.**

**Patriots are in a play-off game at the time you are scheduled to play**

**Religious party that your team is attending**

**School play**

**High school team is playing and your kids want to watch.**

**Any other reason not related to weather or gym/booking issue.**



**Eligibility:**

Coaches are responsible for ensuring that all members of the team are eligible players.

**Uniforms:**

Each team is strongly encouraged to use reversible jerseys or have "Home" and "Away" jerseys. Home team wears white or light color. The digits 6, 7, 8, and 9 are not to be used in uniform numbers (e.i., 19 is an illegal number). Any incidence of the use of illegal numbers should be reported to the league commissioner for resolution. No technical foul or other penalty will be imposed at the game!

**Game Times:**

The times listed on the league schedule are the game start times. Teams can expect to have approximately 5-15 minutes to warm-up prior to the start of the game. Teams should arrive at the game site 20 minutes prior to the start of the game. Games will not start more than 5 minutes prior to scheduled times unless weather could be an issue.

**Inclement Weather:**

In the event of inclement weather it is up to the coaches to determine whether or not to postpone the game, provided the home facility remains open. Driving safety of the visiting team must be the primary consideration. Away team has final say for making determinations.

In the event the game is postponed the following must be done:

Make determination as early as possible.

Post online at [metrowestbball.com](http://metrowestbball.com)

Town Coordinators should use the cancel game feature and have the game canceled.

Reschedule contest for mutually agreeable time.

Reschedule referees.

In the vast majority of "make up" situations, the make up games are scheduled such that at least two games are being played "back to back". When a team of referees is scheduled for more than one game at a time, the normal fee of \$40.00 per referee applies. If a single game is scheduled \$50.00 is received by each official. Unless discussed prior to with the Assignor.

In general, coordinators try extremely hard to insure that make ups are not scheduled for one game at a time only. However, circumstances may be such that the only way to schedule a game is to schedule it "by itself".

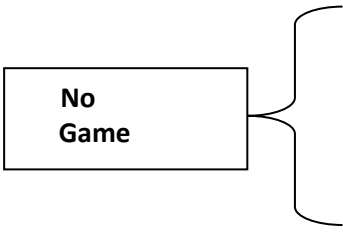
IF BOTH COACHES DO NOT AGREE TO PAY THE PREMIUM, DO NOT SCHEDULE THE REFEREES OR THE GAME! ONCE THE REFEREES ARE SCHEDULED AND ARE PRESENT AT THE MAKE UP GAME, THE COACHES ARE RESPONSIBLE TO PAY THEM.

If coaches cannot agree on referee payment, or if A MUTUALLY AGREEABLE TIME CANNOT BE MADE, THE GAME WILL SIMPLY NOT BE PLAYED AND THE GAME WILL BE CONSIDERED A "NO GAME". **THIS IS NOT A FOREIT!**

Home team should cancel and reschedule gym time.

## Forfeits/Make Up Games:

### *Regular Season:*



**No  
Game**

1. The result of any game not played for the reason other than a forfeit will not be included in the standings and will be considered a “no game”, subject to the following guidelines.

A. A “no game” situation results when a game is not played due to factors other than a team not showing up on time for a game. Examples of this are: inclement weather, gyms not available (power loss, heat loss, town ‘preempts’ the use of the gym).



**Forfeit**

A forfeit occurs when one team fails to field a team in time to play a scheduled game at the scheduled site.

2. In a forfeit situation, the non-offending team may agree to make up the game with the offending team. In this case the offending team will be responsible for payment of the referees for the originally scheduled game. Then non-offending team must also agree to the financial arrangements for the make-up (i.e. who pays for the refs, who provides the gym).

### *Playoffs:*

The intent of the playoffs is to play the game, not forfeit. Circumstances may be such that it is logistically impossible or impractical to make up the game. Therefore, all decisions on forfeits in the playoffs will be deferred to the league commissioner.

## Eligibility

Boys and girls resident in the member community and currently enrolled in the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades are eligible. Additionally, students participating in the METCO program will be allowed to participate on a team from the town in which they attend school. Players may play up with a higher grade team but are not allowed to play on a lower grade team. Players may NOT participate on more than 1 Metrowest Team (i.e. a player in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade may play up on the 8<sup>th</sup> grade team but may NOT also play on the 7<sup>th</sup> grade team). For special circumstances town administrators can apply for a waiver agreed on by the town coordinator.

## Metrowest Age/Grade Eligibility

Beginning with 2012-2013 season Metrowest will implement an age eligibility requirement to go along with its already existing grade requirement.

In order to participate on a town travel team a player must first meet the grade requirement; that is, the player must be in the grade associated with that team. A player may play 'up' one grade, but they may NOT play 'down', no matter what the age. Simply stated, as an example, a 5<sup>th</sup> grader can play on a 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> grade team, but could NOT play on a 4<sup>th</sup> grade team even though he or she would qualify based on the age requirement.

For the 2017-2018 season, the following age limits apply, by grade.

8<sup>th</sup> Grade – Must be born on or after September 1, 2002

7<sup>th</sup> Grade– Must be born on or after September 1, 2003

6<sup>th</sup> Grade– Must be born on or after September 1, 2004

5<sup>th</sup> Grade– Must be born on or after September 1, 2005

4<sup>th</sup> Grade– Must be born on or after September 1, 2006

The date September 1<sup>st</sup> is used to be consistent with the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) Rules and Regulations Governing High School Athletics (Page 55, Article 60, Handbook July 1, 2009-June 30, 2011).

**Note:** This rule will be enforced by the honor system. Birth certificates are not required as a prerequisite to play. However, if an age challenge is made by an opposing coach, the player MUST provide proof of age prior to the next scheduled game. IT IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED THAT FOR PLAYERS THAT APPEAR OLDER, THAT THE COACH OBTAIN PROOF OF AGE IN ADVANCE AND HAVE THE DOCUMENTATION READY IF AN INFORMAL INQUIRY IS MADE BY AN OPPOSING COACH AT GAME TIME. This is just a common sense recommendation that will avoid controversy and additional leg work in follow up.

### **ROSTERS**

Rosters are an important part of the integrity of the game. Players, coaches, and parents want to know if the team they are playing was formed under the same playing field as everyone else. They also want to ensure that a team doesn't bring in new players for the "BIG GAME" to gain a competitive advantage. 99% of all roster issues are created because of an adult being sloppy with paper work and updating. Starting in 2015-16 we are enforcing the rules of roster as follows.

If a challenge is properly filed and a player is not listed on the active roster after Jan 15<sup>th</sup> or has not been granted a waiver by the league to fill in player for a week, regardless if the player in question played in a previous game or not, the game will count as a forfeit. NO EXCEPTIONS. This includes players that return from injury.

Rosters are due to be updated by Jan 1<sup>st</sup>. After Jan 1<sup>st</sup> coordinators will have 15 days to ensure their coaches have completed their roster. Any roster that is deemed incomplete as of Jan 15<sup>th</sup> will be removed from play-off participation.

Roster changes and updates can still be made until play-off time, those changes will be OK'd by the league and then updated on the site.

### **Challenge Process:**

If a coach would like to file a challenge they must do so prior to the game being played. Either make a note in the official scores book or notify the official to do so. The note must be acknowledged by either official. The game goes on as normal. After the game please notify your town coordinator who will contact the league.

The coach/coordinator of the team being challenged must produce birth date evidence or any other evidence needed prior to next game.

Failure to produce appropriate documentation by the challenged player/coach/town will result in the player becoming ineligible to participate in Metrowest games.

**Note: The player will be allowed to play in the game when the challenges is made;** however, if it is subsequently determined the player was ineligible; the game(s) in which he/she participated will be forfeited.

## **Scores, Standings, Metrowest Playoffs**

### **Scores:**

Each coach is responsible to report their team's game scores on a weekly basis. Scores need to be posted by logging in to the web site at [www.metrowestbball.com](http://www.metrowestbball.com) using the coaches user name and password. Each town coordinator is responsible to verify coaches are reporting the scores in a timely fashion. Once signed in, simply click on the 'scores' tab. Click on the game in question and at the bottom add the score. The home team score over rides the away team, but it is important to enter all scores.

Once you have entered the score for each team, click on save. The standings and scores are then immediately updated on the website.

### **Standings:**

Standings are automatically posted on the web site as scores are recorded. Any issue please contact town administrator, not league commissioner.

### **Tournament Playoffs and Pairings:**

All teams will qualify for the playoffs.

Although every attempt is made prior to the season to group teams into divisions according to skill level, inevitably there are situations where teams are either overmatched during the regular season or placed in a division where they are simply too strong. Therefore, at playoff time, playoff brackets are formed according to competitive level, using regular season results to better balance the competition.

A rating system has been established that adds a 'strength of competition' and 'quality of wins' factor into a team's overall rating. These factors are combined with a team's record to come up with an overall 'rating' score. This score will be used to:

1. Break ties within a division/and or playoff group for the purpose of seeding.
2. Place teams within their playoff group if the 'move up' or 'down' at playoff time.
3. Assist Metrowest in the nomination of teams for the year end 'state wide' tournament following the Metrowest playoffs.