

## **Long Hill Township Recreation Travel Basketball Policies**

The Long Hill Township Recreation Dept. provides the opportunity for competitive basketball teams to play in the Jersey Basketball League (JBL). These teams are selected through the try-out process (see below). Cuts are made as necessary. Travel Basketball is a big commitment. These are competitive teams and are run separately from the Recreation Basketball Program. (In Recreation Basketball, there are no cuts and everyone plays!)

Players should anticipate 2 practices per week, and at least one game per week once the season starts. As part of the participation fees, the Long Hill Recreation Dept. will cover the costs for each team to enter one tournament. Teams may enter additional tournaments at their own expense beyond that during the season. The winter Travel Basketball season will begin with practices as soon as try-outs are completed in October. Games will start the end of November or beginning of December and go through mid-March. (Some teams may choose to do a pre-season tournament in November before the official season starts.)

The Travel Basketball teams will play home games at either Central School (primarily) or Millington School (rarely) and will play AWAY games at the facilities used by other teams within the JBL and those where tournaments are played. It is the responsibility of the player's parents/guardians to make travel arrangements to take their child to and from both HOME and AWAY games/tournaments.

All Travel Basketball players are also allowed and encouraged to play Recreation Basketball.

The Recreation Department's goal is to field one boys' and one girls' team at each of the following grades: 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> (total 10 teams). However, if at any grade level, there exists the desire, players, coaches, and talent to entertain two teams who can compete competitively in the league, the Recreation Department will consider making a second team at try-outs. The age restrictions set forth by the JBL will be adhered to. Specifically, their rules for the winter season state:

### **1.1.1 Grade and Age Requirements**

- Players on 8th Grade teams must be in the 8th grade or below.
- Players on 7th Grade teams must be in the 7th grade or below.
- Players on 6th Grade teams must be in the 6th grade or below.
- Players on 5th Grade teams must be in the 5th grade or below.
- Players on 4th Grade teams must be in the 4th grade or below.

If a coach questions the grade level of an opposing player, the opposing team must provide proof of grade (i.e. report card).

The teams are coached and managed by parent volunteers in conjunction with the Long Hill Recreation Department. The Travel Basketball fee charged by the Recreation Department will cover membership team fees in JBL, standard equipment (excluding personal equipment), gym time at Millington/Central Schools for practices/games during the season, one (1) tournament during the season, and ref fees for the games. Any additional costs are the responsibility of the team players/parents. Players will purchase their uniforms (both tops and shorts). We will use the same uniforms each year, so players may wear uniforms from prior years.

### 1) Try-Out Process

**Pre-registration on Community Pass prior to the first try out night is required to be considered for a team's try out. Registration "at the door" will only be accepted on an exception basis.**

**If your child is sick or injured and will miss the first night of try-outs, you must still register your child for try-outs so that we know your child is interested in the team. If we know your child is interested and has an excused absence from the first try-out, we will hold the second try-out. If we do not have your child in the system; and we decide to cancel the second try-out and name the team after the first try-out, it is difficult/not possible for us to go back and hold the second try-out. Communication here is key. There are places on the online registration form to explain any issues/concerns.**

Try-outs will be held through the Recreation Department prior to the start of the winter basketball season. These will be announced in advance, and try-outs are required for all ages and all teams. There will be two try-outs per group unless stated otherwise. The Recreation Dept. reserves the right to decide whether or not the second try-out date is needed after the conclusion of the first try-out.

If a player has another commitment on one of the try-out nights, and it is not an excused absence; then that player will still be permitted to attend the other try-out date—PROVIDED ONE IS SCHEDULED. In the event that a decision is made to only hold one try-out for a particular age group, no additional accommodations for a player missing a try-out with an unexcused absence will be made. In the event that a player does not attend one of two try-outs held—whether their absence is excused or not, the only rating to be considered in the determination of the team selection will be the rating that player received when at the one try-

out. Absences from try-outs may be excused by the Recreation Director only in the following circumstances and with notice:

- a) In the event of an **illness** on the night of try-outs, a player may be excused with a note from the doctor and/or notification to the Recreation Director in a timely fashion.
  - i) With an approved excuse, the child will be invited to attend the second try-out (provided there is one) to be evaluated. In this case, the child will only be evaluated one time. If only one try-out is held, and the child is excused with Recreation Director approval due to illness, the process below for handling someone with an injury will apply.
  - ii) In the event that the child misses all try-outs scheduled due to illness and with approval of the Recreation Director, the process outlined below for handling someone with an injury will apply. Any child missing both try-outs due to illness will be required to submit a doctor's note to the Recreation Director, or the absence(s) will not be excused.
  
- b) In the event of an **injury** at the time of try-outs, a player may be excused with a note from the doctor at the time of the try-out. This note should state when they anticipate the player's ability to return to athletics.
  - i) The injured child will be given an individual try-out provided the child will be cleared to return to normal activities at least 2 weeks prior to the start of the first season game. This try-out will be held at one of the respective team's practices, and this player will be evaluated against the players that made the team initially. If this player is ranked to be a competitive player with the current roster, he/she will be offered a spot on the team and will begin practicing with the team immediately. This evaluation once again will be done by independent evaluators assigned by the Recreation Dept.
  - ii) In order to try-out at the later date, the child will need to present the Recreation Dept. with a physician's note stating that the child is cleared to return to normal activities.
  
- c) The preceding procedures will be followed for an excused absence in the event of a planned family vacation that cannot be changed or for the bereavement of a family member. The Recreation Dept. should be

advised of the absence ahead of time. The player will only be evaluated once in this case.

Try-outs will be conducted by the Long Hill Recreation Dept. The Long Hill Recreation Dept., in conjunction with the Long Hill Recreation Advisory Committee will assign the evaluation team to handle the judging at the try-outs. Neither the personal identities of the evaluators nor the sheets being used to judge the participants will be made public prior to the day of try-outs.

- a) All evaluation sheets will be retained by the Recreation Dept. and be kept confidential.
- b) At the try-out, each player will register and be assigned a number to be pinned on during try-outs. Any player who knowingly and deliberately changes numbers with another player during the try-out process will be disqualified and not allowed to try-out for the team.
- c) It is the responsibility of the player to maintain that number and bring it with them to successive try-outs.
- d) Parents should refrain from discussing the try-out process, the evaluations, and/or any particular child's performance/previous playing experience during the try-out process with the evaluators.
- e) Try-outs are closed to parents and previous/potential coaches.
- f). Players will try out for only one team during try-outs—their age/grade/gender appropriate team. Trying out for multiple teams without an exception being granted by the Recreation Dept. ahead of time will disqualify a child from being placed on a team.
- g). There is no set number of players for each team that will be selected. However, most teams will roster between 10-12 players on average. In determining the number of players on a team, the following factors will be considered:
  - i. The number of kids that came to the try-outs
  - ii. The playing abilities of the kids that came to the try-outs
  - iii. The age of the players
  - iv. Input from the team's coach if already determined
  - v. Input from prior year's coach when one of the prior year's starters (top 5 players) is not rated high enough to make the team

\*Note: JBL limits roster size to a maximum of 15 players. In the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades, JBL recommends teams have a minimum of 10 players each team. There are Minimum Player Rules for a game to take place.

h). Once a team is selected, the team will be posted through the Recreation Department. The players will have a stated window of time to decide whether or not they want to accept the invitation. Once they accept the invitation, they will be directed to complete the sign-up paperwork. Players will not be permitted to play until their registrations are complete.

## **2. Coaches, Assistant Coaches, and Team Parents**

The Recreation Department relies on volunteer parents to help run the Travel Basketball Programs. Without our volunteers, we would not be able to offer the program as it is today.

During the try-out process, we will also seek parents that wish to volunteer as Coaches, Assistant Coaches, and Team Parents. When the team is selected, we will also name the Head Coach as long as we have a volunteer. We will provide the Head Coach with the names of other volunteers that have shown a willingness to help out as Assistant Coaches and Team Parents. We will ask the Head Coach for a recommendation for Assistant Coaches and Team Parents. We will ask the Head Coach to apply the same selection criteria in choosing the Assistant Coach(es) and Team Parent(s) as we have used in selecting the Head Coach.

NOTE: JBL has a limit for “Coaches on the Bench”—JBL limits each team to one Head Coach and two Assistants on the bench for games.

In the selection of the Head Coach, the Recreation Dept. will consider the following criteria:

- a. Prior coaching history for the Recreation Dept.
- b. Whether or not the person has a child on the team. Those volunteers with a child/children on that team will be considered first.
- c. The ability and willingness of the person to closely align their coaching methods with the values of the Recreation Dept.
- d. The person’s experiences with basketball and knowledge of the game.

- e. The Recreation Dept. would prefer each Head Coach to only coach one team. Only in the situation where another volunteer does not exist will the Recreation Dept. consider an exception to this rule. A Head Coach on one team may be an Assistant Coach or Team parent on another team.
  
- f. All coaches (Head Coaches and Assistant Coaches) MUST: complete a background check, have completed the Rutgers S.A.F.E.T.Y. training course, and annually review the “Heads Up” online materials and take the safety quiz regarding concussions at [www.cdc.gov/concussioninyouthsports](http://www.cdc.gov/concussioninyouthsports).

### **3. Players Playing on Multiple Teams**

- a. The Recreation Dept. realizes that some players, especially in the upper grades, may choose to play on more than one team. For example, a Travel Basketball player may also be on another team outside of Recreation such as an AAU team or a school team.
  - i. In those situations, the Recreation Dept. Head Coach should be made aware of the situation so that an agreement can be reached with regard to the player’s availability to make the practices and games of the Recreation Dept. Travel Basketball Team. This agreement should also include discussions related to playing time in games.
  - ii. Once an agreement has been reached, the player will still be charged the full cost of participating on a Recreation Dept. Travel Basketball Team.
  
- b. In the event that a team does not have enough rostered players available to play in a scheduled game, and there is a strong possibility the team will have to forfeit the game; that team may pull up other Travel Basketball Players from the grade below provided:
  - i. The team that the player normally plays for agrees to this.
  - ii. The player’s parents/guardians also agree to this.

\*Note: The Recreation Dept. will adhere to JBL rules regarding a player being rostered on more than one team within the town's JBL rosters.

#### **4. Secondary or "B Teams"**

The Recreation Dept. will consider the possibility of having a second team in a group, ie., 2 – 4<sup>th</sup> grade boys' teams. The Recreation Dept. feels it is consistent with their philosophy to develop the program and support the needs of the community. However, this is an exception to the rule. The following criteria will be considered:

- i. The talents of the players that came out to the try-out and their abilities to compete at the level of the Travel Basketball league.
- ii. The viability of having enough players to comfortably field 2 or more teams at that age group.
- iii. Having enough Coaches to be able to support 2 or more teams.
- iv. The ability of the league to accommodate the request.
- v. Gym Availability.

#### **5. Players Not Residing in Long Hill**

The Recreation Dept. Travel Basketball program is reserved for Long Hill residents. The Recreation Dept. will follow the rules Jersey Basketball League issues for non-residents. Long Hill students who do not reside in Long Hill Township are permitted to play if selected to a travel team as long as they are not also playing on another travel team in their own home town within the league. Residents of local Watchung Hills sending district towns are permitted to join a Long Hill Travel Team only in the following circumstances: the age-appropriate team has an open slot to accept an additional player (not recommended to exceed 12 players for grades 4 & 5, not recommended to exceed 10 players for grades 6-8), Recreation Director approval has been given to allow for the try-out, a Long Hill resident is not being denied the spot in order to allow a non-resident player to join the team, the addition is allowed by our League (JBL), and this player is not playing on any other travel basketball team offered in their respective town.

\*Note: Non residents will be charged the non-resident fee established by the Recreation Dept and the Recreation Advisory Committee and adopted by the Long Hill Township Committee.

## 6. Travel Basketball Players and Discipline

- a. It is the expectation of the Recreation Dept. that all Travel Basketball players will respect their coaches on the basketball court and keep an open line of communication with the Coach to ensure that he/she is aware of the player's availability to make practices and games.
- b. During the games, players will behave in a manner that is respectful of their own teammates and coaches, the opposing team's players and coaches, and all property belonging to both. Players should represent Long Hill appropriately.
- c. When disciplinary action is necessary, the Coach will advise the Recreation Dept. An appropriate response will be discussed with the Recreation Director and the Recreation Advisory Committee and will be reviewed with the parents/guardians of the player. Disciplinary actions may include: verbal reprimand, written reprimand, suspension from game(s), payment for damages incurred and assessed to parents/guardians, and ultimately removal from the team. In addition, the JBL may choose to administer their own set of disciplinary actions which we will respect and adhere to.
- d. During the Try-Out process, the evaluators will also be judging the players on their "coachability"—their ability to handle constructive criticism, respect for their teammates, evaluators, and all others associated with the process, as well as respect for the facility, equipment, and the rules of the game. Players must understand that this factor alone or with a history of discipline issues from prior seasons in the program, may prevent even the most physically talented player from making the team.
- e. As part of the registration process for Travel Basketball, all parents, coaches and assistant coaches will be required to accept the terms of the "Youth Sport Code of Conduct". In addition, all players, coaches, and fans will abide by the JBL Code of Conduct.

**\*\*\*The Recreation Dept. and the Recreation Advisory Committee reserve the right to adjust the policies contained herein as they deem necessary.\*\*\*  
These rules may change to remain in compliance with the JBL. We will**



**follow all NJDOH, NJDOE, and NJ Executive Orders for youth sports and school policies.**

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