



COUNTY OF DARE PUBLIC SERVICES

www.DareNC.gov

Dare County Public Services Department CODE OF CONDUCT

Includes:

Parks and Recreation Department
Older Adult Services
Thomas A. Baum Center
Virginia S. Tillett Community Center
Fessenden Center

Original 3/7/17
Revised 2/20/2020
Revised 5/4/2026

It is our expectation that every citizen of the Dare County community will contribute to and accept responsibility for an orderly and respectful climate. The following set of rules and regulations are intended to help ensure the safety and security of all. This Public Services Code of Conduct will supersede any and all local rules which do not address certain unacceptable behaviors.

Dare County Public Services Department welcomes everyone to use the County Public Services facilities as resources for social, educational, leisure and recreation uses. Dare County recreational facilities accommodate a wide variety of activities varying from indoor meeting and conference rooms to noisy playgrounds and athletic fields. An individual or group whose conduct is disruptive, compromises safety, damages/destroys property, or is otherwise incompatible with the intended use of a facility that prevents others from enjoying and using the facility will not be tolerated.

Responsibilities for All Persons

1. To be aware of, have a full understanding of and to abide by county wide policies, regulations and Dare County Public Services Department guidelines regarding acceptable behavior.
2. To be responsible for one's own behavior. Be considerate and treat others with kindness, courtesy and respect. Be calm and patient and refrain from using abusive, obscene, threatening, harassing, insulting, or suggestive language.
3. To behave responsibly as determined by law and community practice and to assume legal responsibility for the behavior of one's child(ren); to be familiar with the discipline policy and regulations and to ensure one's child(ren) are familiar with them as well.
4. To behave in a manner that does not interfere with Dare County Public Services Department activities, the staff's tasks and responsibilities to supervise, or the participation of others.
5. To respect the personal, civil and property rights of all members of the Dare County Public Services Department community.
6. To refrain from the use of physical force, verbal abuse or harassment, blackmail, stealing, vandalism and other illegal activities.
7. To seek clarification from the Dare County Public Services Department personnel concerning the appropriateness of any action or behavior.
8. To know all drop off/pick up times for operating hours, events and scheduled activities and to abide by them.
9. To maintain communication with the Dare County Public Services Department and provide the administration with a current, accessible telephone number where an adult may be reached during program participation of a minor.
10. To know and to follow the policies and regulations for every event considered part of the Dare County Public Services Department programs regardless of the time or place.
11. To immediately comply with any staff member's reasonable request to carry out Dare County Public Services Department rules.

12. Be able to care for themselves while partaking in Dare County Public Services activities. Individuals needing assistance (memory impairment, incontinence, wheelchair bound, etc.) may conditionally participate in activities with the aid of a self-provided attendant.

Discipline Policy

This policy applies to all Dare County Public Services facilities and programs, including off-site and staffed events. Dare County, by and through its Dare County Public Services Department, reserves the right to have any individual removed from Dare County Public Services facilities and/or programs if there are any discipline issues. **Refund(s) will not be given for anyone asked to leave any facility or program for disciplinary reasons.** Dare County reserves the right to suspend future access to facilities in cases of disciplinary actions.

Notification will be given to a participant's parents or legal guardian upon issuance of disciplinary action if that individual is under 16 years of age. All suspensions begin immediately; however, the next business day will be considered day one of the suspension.

When the participant has served suspension time, upon return to the facility or program, he or she will have a meeting with the Leisure Programs Supervisor/Center Director about behavior expected in the future. It will be mandatory for a parent or guardian to be in this conversation if the individual is under 16 years of age. The County reserves the right to make a parent conference mandatory before the participant will be allowed to return to any Dare County recreational facility or program.

The Public Services Director may review any suspension and may overturn a suspension if special circumstances warrant a participant's return before the participant's suspension has been served.

Each site coordinator or staff member will document each incident and records will be kept at each corresponding division office. Staff members will complete a referral sheet for each different occurrence. Any complaint received by a participant, spectator, coach, or official should be documented and investigated by staff and reported to the Leisure Services Supervisor/Center Director. Severe or multiple offenses will be punished accordingly, at the discretion of the Leisure Services Supervisor/Center Director.

Any participant suspended from a County Public Services facility or program is suspended from all Dare County Public Services facilities and programs. Suspensions shall be immediately reported to the Public Services Director, and a current list of suspensions and dates of reinstatement will be shared amongst all facility supervisors on a regular basis.

Discipline Levels & Consequences

Level 1

Offenses to include but not limited to:

- Inappropriate language/actions
- Violation of Rules
- Disrespectful Behavior
- Violation of Parental Code of Conduct

Staff to enforce consequences: Any staff member may enforce 1st and 2nd offenses. For the 3rd offense suspension, the Leisure Services Supervisor/Center Director shall impose the consequence.

Consequence:

1st offense: verbal warning and correction of behavior and possible multiple day suspension up to 7 days

2nd offense: 7 day suspension

3rd offense: 14 day suspension

4th offense: 30 day suspension (Level 2 1st offense)

Level 2

Offenses to include but not limited to:

- Roughhousing/horseplay, wrestling or verbal fights
- Severely inappropriate language/actions (continuous cursing)
- Severe violation of rules (such as tobacco use by a minor)
- Fourth or greater Level 1 offense

Staff to enforce consequences: Leisure Services Supervisor/Center Director shall impose the consequence.

Consequence:

1st offense: 30 day suspension

2nd offense: 90 day suspension

3rd offense: 180 day suspension (Level 3 1st offense)

Level 3

Offenses to include but not limited to:

- Fighting that does not require police involvement
- Minor cases of vandalism or theft that do not warrant police involvement
- Severely disrespectful behavior (refusal to follow staff instructions)
- Fourth or greater level 2 offense

Staff to enforce consequences: Leisure Services Supervisor/Center Director shall impose the consequence.

Consequence:

1st offense: 180 day suspension

2nd offense: 365 day suspension from all programs and facilities (Level 4 1st offense)

Level 4

Offenses to include but not limited to:

- Misdemeanor, such as theft or vandalism of less than \$500.00, simple assault, or violation of weapon, drug or alcohol policies. Offender does not have to be arrested, charged or convicted of the misdemeanor to be subject to discipline pursuant to this policy.

Staff to enforce consequences: Police will be called to the scene and proceed with normal protocol. Additionally, the Leisure Programs Supervisor/Center Director and Public Services Director shall impose the consequences.

Consequence:

1st offense: 365 day suspension from all programs and facilities

2nd offense: Indefinite suspension (2 year minimum)

Level 5

Offenses to include but not limited to:

- Felony, such as theft or vandalism of \$500.00 or more, or aggravated assault (serious bodily harm or use of a weapon). Offender does not have to be arrested, charged, or convicted of the felony to be subject to discipline pursuant to this policy.

Staff to enforce consequences: Police will be called to the scene and proceed with normal protocol. Additionally, the Leisure Programs Supervisor/Center Director and Public Services Director shall impose the consequences.

Consequence:

1st offense: Indefinite suspension(2 year minimum)

2nd offense: Permanent ban from all Public Services programs and facilities

General Rules

Rule 1: Check in/out and open use: All persons must be pre-registered and must sign in and out of the facility they are registered to use. For afterschool open gym use children must be in 6th grade or higher to participate in open gym without a supervising adult. Youth in 5th grade and under must be supervised by an adult . Adults are not allowed during the after school hours of 3-6. ***This is the only rule for which one will be given 2 verbal warnings before assigning disciplinary action.***

Rule 2: Food/Beverages: A person will not eat/drink in unauthorized areas of any Dare County Public Services facility.

Rule 3: Misuse of Equipment & Facilities: A person shall not display improper use of any Dare County Public Services Department equipment including, but not limited to: dunking, hanging from the basketball rims, sitting/standing/climbing on rolled mats, unauthorized use of gymnastics equipment, sitting/standing on tables or desks, lying down or sleeping on furniture, unauthorized use of facility telephones, computers or other office equipment including unauthorized entry into staff office space. Blatant misuse of any electronic device (lights, TV, VCR, etc.), sporting equipment, either indoors or outdoors, game/entertainment equipment, etc.

Rule 4: Personal Dress & Hygiene: *Unless a uniform has been issued by and/or approved by Dare County Parks and Recreation Department, a person should dress in a manner that reflects a respectful demeanor toward the positive environment at any of Dare County Public Services facilities and grounds. Any type of dress which is considered to be revealing, derogatory, disruptive, or distracts from routine operations and/or special events or constitutes a threat to the safety, general well being, and/or health of another person will not be permitted.*

- a) **Footwear:** For health and safety reasons footwear shall be worn at all times. Bare feet are unacceptable. NO COLORED SOLED OR HARD SOLED SHOES ARE ALLOWED ON THE GYM FLOORS.
- b) **Headwear:** No hoods are permitted while inside Dare County Public Services facilities.
- c) **Gang-related Apparel:** Wearing of any gang symbols are prohibited. Gang-related items include, but are not limited to: any article of clothing, badge, sign, lettering, back pack, gym bag or personal adornment that is intended or is recognized or acknowledged by others to designate a gang symbol or color to signify affiliation with, participation in or approval of a gang.
- d) **Undergarments:** Undergarments must NOT BE SEEN or worn inappropriately.
- e) **Clothing, jewelry, buttons and personal belongings that display slogans, pictures or words, which are offensive or vulgar, will not be allowed.**
- f) Maintain personal cleanliness and good hygiene. Properly utilize public restrooms and refrain from using the public restrooms for bathing, grooming, or dressing.

A person who is not dressed appropriately will be referred to the Leisure Services Supervisor/Center Director and will be handled as discipline referrals. Persons who do not dress appropriately will not be allowed to participate in any Dare County Public Services Department activity nor will the presence of an inappropriately dressed person be tolerated.

Rule 5: Personal Property: A person will not bring or possess any object that may distract from the staff's tasks and responsibilities to supervise or would cause disruption within the Public Services Department environment. (Items may include: toys, laser pointers, cigarette lighters, matches, etc.)

Rule 6: Taking Videos/Pictures of others: A person will not take a video/picture of another individual. Persons will not video or take a picture of staff. Persons will not post on social media pictures or videos of anything taking place at any Dare County Public Services activity or facility.

Rule 7: Significant Amount of Money: Persons need only enough money to meet Dare County Public Services Department obligations (registration fees, admission fees, vending machines, etc.).

Rule 8: Selling Items on Property or at Functions*: Persons are not to sell any objects on property or at functions that are not authorized through the Dare County Public Services Department as an organized, approved Dare County Public Services Department activity. *The first violation will result in confiscation with the item returned at the discretion of the facility supervisor. The second and succeeding violation(s) will result in confiscation and the item will not be returned to the person. Parents may pick up item(s) after speaking with the facility supervisor.

Rule 9: Misrepresentation: A person will not lie or cheat. Including but not limited to:

Altering Identification Cards or Documents: Tampering with identification cards, official passes, or other Dare County Public Services Department documents in any manner.

False Information: Making false statements, written or oral, to anyone in authority.

Rule 10: Disrespect: A person will behave in a respectful manner. Examples of disrespectful behavior are: Walking away, talking back, rolling of the eyes, hand or facial gestures, etc.

Rule 11: Insubordination: A person will obey the lawful direction of any authorized staff member during the time the person is in any Dare County Public Services facility, participating in a Dare County Public Services Department activity, or on Dare County Public Services Department property.

Rule 12: Profanity/Obscenity: A person will not use profane or obscene language or make obscene gestures. Including but not limited to:

Offensive Language: Cursing, or saying anything that conveys offensive, racial, obscene or sexually suggestive messages.

Obscene/Offensive Gestures: Making any sign or gesture that conveys offensive, racial, obscene or sexually suggestive messages.

Derogatory Written Materials: Having any written material or pictures that convey offensive, racial, obscene or sexually suggestive messages.

Directed at Staff Member: Writing, saying, or making gestures that convey offensive, racial, obscene, or sexually suggestive messages to or about any person.

Rule 13: Disruption: No person may ~~not~~ disrupt Dare County Public Services Department programming or events. Including but not limited to:

Verbal Harassment: Name-calling, teasing, or bullying

Throwing Objects at Someone: Willfully throwing anything that could serve to harass or harm another.

Hitting, Biting, Spitting, Which Causes Harassment on Another Person: Hitting, biting, spitting at a person or adult for the purpose of harassment or which could cause harm.

Horseplay: Excessive pushing, shoving, aggressive behavior, etc.

Public Displays of Affection: Hugging, kissing, sitting in another's lap, etc. are not acceptable behaviors and will not be tolerated.

Other: Any other action that disrupts or interferes with events and activities or the Parks and Recreation Department environment.

Rule 14: Animals: No person may bring an animal/pet on Dare County Parks and Recreation property. This rule does not apply to animals trained to provide assistance as aid to disabled persons.

Rule 15: Fighting: The exchange of mutual physical contact between persons by pushing, shoving, or hitting with or without injury is prohibited.

Rule 16: Blatant Disregard for Parks and Recreation Department Rules: Receiving multiple separate violations of the Dare County Public Services Department Code of Conduct.

Rule 17: Gambling: A person will not play games of skill or chance for money or property.

Rule 18: Disorderly Conduct: A person will not disrupt, disturb or interfere with any Dare County Public Services Department activity or engage in conduct which disturbs the peace, order, or discipline at any Dare County Public Services Department or grounds adjacent thereto.

Rule 19: Registered Sex Offenders in County Public Service facilities: Registered sex offender shall mean any person who is required to register in any sex offender registration program or similar registration program by the law of the State of North Carolina, the law of any other state, or the law of the United States of America, or any person whose name is published on any state or federal registered sex offender listing, including, but not limited to the sex offender registry established in G.S. Chapter 14, art. 27A.

It shall be unlawful for any person(s) registered as a sex offender to knowingly enter any county Public Services facility except when the facility is used as a polling place and recreational activities are suspended.

Rule 20: Substance Abuse Policy and Procedure: Persons are prohibited from possessing, using, transmitting, selling or being under the influence of any of the following substances: narcotic drugs, hallucinogenic drugs, amphetamines, barbiturates, marijuana or any other controlled substance, any alcoholic beverage, malt beverage or fortified wine or other intoxicating liquor, or any chemicals or products with the intention of bringing about a state of exhilaration or euphoria or otherwise altering the person's mood or behavior. Persons are also prohibited from possessing, using, transmitting, or selling drug paraphernalia or counterfeit (fake) drugs.

In all circumstances in which persons must comply with Dare County Public Services Department policies, persons may not in any way participate in the selling or transmitting of prohibited substances, regardless of whether the sale or transmission ultimately occurs on Dare County Public Services Department property. Including but not limited to:

Use/Under the Influence: Using any alcoholic beverages, narcotics, illegal or controlled drug, anabolic steroids or any illegal substance, on Dare County Public Services Department property, to and from Dare County Public Services Department, on Dare County Public Services Department vehicle, field trips, or at any Dare County Public Services Department function, or coming to Dare County Public Services Department or Dare County Public Services Department activities after consumption.

Possession/Attempt: Possessing, or attempting to possess any alcoholic beverage or any illegal or controlled substance, or any action that contributes to the possession of any alcoholic beverage or any illegal or controlled substance. Possession of quantities large enough to indicate use by more than one individual may be considered a violation of Sale/Distribution.

Paraphernalia: Possessing, distributing or using any drug related paraphernalia.

Inhalants: Possessing, distributing or inhaling any substance/product (off-the-shelf, over the counter, controlled or illegal) that is intended to bring about a temporary change in the person's mind, mood, or behavior.

Sale/Distribution (Attempt or Actual): Distributing or selling any illegal or controlled substance, attempting to sell or distribute any illegal or controlled substance or any action that contributes to the sale or distribution of any illegal or controlled substance or the giving or offering to give any illegal or controlled substance to another individual. This prohibition will include sale/distribution of tobacco products to underage person(s).

Rule 21: Ejected Player/Coach/Spectator: In regards to participant, coach and spectator ejections: Anyone ejected from a game/facility will be required to: 1. Leave the premises and must be out of sight and sound; 2. Miss at a MINIMUM the next scheduled game with possible longer suspension levied depending on the severity of actions at the discretion of the Leisure Services Supervisor and/or Director of Parks and Recreation.

Rule 22: Threatening: A person will not threaten another person or staff member of the Dare County Public Services Department. Persons who verbally threaten another person may be charged with a criminal violation. In a case where charges are not filed with the police for verbal threats and the threat of violence is minimal, the discipline level would be at minimum a Level 2 offense.

Rule 23: Trespassing: A person will not enter any Dare County Public Services Department property or Dare County Public Services facility without proper authority which includes entering any Dare County Public Services facility during a period of suspension or when a field/facility is closed for repairs or maintenance.

Rule 24: Reckless Vehicle Use: A person will not operate any motorized or self-propelled vehicle on Dare County Public Services Department in a manner that is a threat to health, safety, or a disruption to routine operations and/or special events.

Rule 25: Vandalism: A person will not willfully or maliciously damage or destroy property belonging to another, or participate in a plan with others to damage or destroy property, i.e. Dare County Public Services Department property, at a Dare County Public Services Department sponsored or a Dare County Public Services Department related activity on or off Dare County Public Services Department property or property belonging to a Dare County Public Services Department employee. Vandals (or parent/guardian) will be held financially responsible, as allowed by North Carolina Law, for willful or malicious destruction of property.

Rule 26: Theft: A person will not steal or possess stolen property, or participate in a plan with others to do so.

Rule 27: Sexual Offenses: A person will not engage in sexual misconduct or sexual harassment. Including but not limited to:

Sexual Harassment: Any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct or a sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

Deliberate, unwelcome touching; Suggestions or demands for sexual involvement accompanied by implied or overt promises or preferential treatment or threats; Pressure for sexual activity; Continued or repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances or propositions; Sexually degrading words used toward an individual or to describe an individual; The display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures.

Rule 28: Serious Threat, Assault and/or Intimidation: A person will not assault, seriously threaten or intimidate another individual. Persons should be cautioned that all verbal or written statements threatening racial violence, the health and/or safety of persons, Dare County Public Services Department personnel, and/or Dare County Public Services Department facilities will be considered serious. Such statements will not be tolerated or dismissed as idle comments or jokes. Including but not limited to:

Against Any Person: Unlawful threatening or any physical force or violence, to include tearing clothes, striking, or threatening to seize or strike another person, either alone or in combination with another person(s), or making one fearful by intimidation.

Rule 29: Weapons and Dangerous Instruments/Objects: A person will not possess, handle, transport, or use any weapon, dangerous object, object that can be reasonably considered a weapon, or substance that could cause harm or irritation to another individual. Including but not limited to:

Bomb/Explosive*: Any device containing combustible material and/or a fuse.

Knife*: Simple Possession - Blade 2.5 inches or smaller: A knife brought accidentally, without intent, will result in the knife being confiscated and a suspension may be imposed. Any subsequent incident will result in confiscation and progressive suspension.

Simple Possession Blade greater than 2.5 inches: Possession of any knife longer than 2.5inches, regardless of intent.

Camouflaged Weapon i.e., knife blades, or other sharp devices, camouflaged as tubes of lipstick, ink pens, hair combs, etc.

Anti-personnel Spray*: Possession of chemicals such as Mace, or pepper sprays, tear gas, etc.

Possession of an instrument or device that resembles or looks like a knife, pistol, revolver or any type of weapon or explosive not capable of propelling a missile*: May include, but not be limited to, a cap pistol, water pistol or any look-alike gun.

Object(s) Thrown From a Dare County Public Services Department Vehicle: Any object thrown from a Dare County Public Services Department vehicle will be considered extremely dangerous, as a missile and will be treated as a weapon.

Other: Possession of any object or substance that could cause injury including, but not limited to, slingshots, ice picks, multi-fingered rings, metal knuckles, nunchucks, bowie knife, dirk, dagger, leaded cane, switchblade knife, razors and razor blades, clubs, stun guns, and/or the use of any object or any substance that will potentially cause harm, irritation, or bodily injury to persons or any other persons.

Rule 30: Firearms: A person will not possess, handle, or transport any handgun, rifle, shotgun or any other weapon which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by action of an explosion. (Class 1 Felony Weapon). Including but not limited to:

Possession of a pistol, revolver, or any other firearm*(loaded or unloaded).

Possession of any other weapon or device other than a firearm*. Examples may include but are not limited to starter pistol, BB gun, air rifle, air pistol or stun gun.

Code of Conduct Agreement

I have read and fully understand the Dare County Public Services Department Code of Conduct, explaining the policies and procedures that shall be used in all County recreational buildings and County-owned property and at all Dare County Public Services events, regardless of when and where the activity takes place.

By signing this document I enter into an agreement with the Dare County Public Services staff, volunteers and County government to uphold these rules and regulations and fully understand the consequences, if I fail to comply.

Also by signing I acknowledge that I am responsible for guests and visitors that I bring to facilities and events. I will ensure they fully understand the rules and regulations and understand the consequences, if they fail to comply.

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name _____

(If Minor Child)
Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name _____