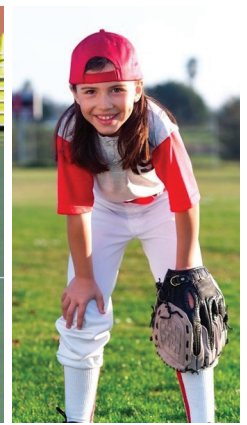


# Fair Play in Community Sports Act

## Compliance Toolkit



“A whopping 82% of female business executives played sports, with the majority saying that lessons learned on the playing field contributed to their success.”

National Coalition for Women & Girls in Education,  
Title IX at 40: Working to Ensure Gender Equity  
in Education 11 (2012)

### GIRLS' YOUTH SPORTS

Girls who play sports have higher self-esteem, greater physical fitness, and make healthier life decisions. Studies have shown that high school girls who are involved in team sports are significantly more likely to graduate from high school and college, and more often experience employment success and higher wages later in life. Despite these benefits, many girls in California do not have the same access to community-based youth sports programs that boys do. This, however, should not be the case under the law.

### THE FAIR PLAY ACT

AB 2404, the Fair Play in Community Sports Act (“Fair Play Act”), is a California law that prohibits gender discrimination in community youth sports programs. The Fair Play Act requires that girls be provided opportunities for participation in community sports programs that are equal, both in quality and scope, to those provided to boys. The Act allows community members to file suit against local agencies (such as park and recreation departments) that do not comply with the law. Each and every department is highly encouraged to read carefully through the law in addition to this Toolkit.<sup>1</sup> Although the Fair Play Act was passed in 2004 and has been in effect since 2005, many park and recreation departments (“departments”) are not aware of the law and many are not in compliance.

This Toolkit is designed to increase awareness of the Fair Play Act among departments and improve understanding about the law’s requirements. The Toolkit also contains ideas for park and recreation departments on how to expand girls’ participation in an effort to help departments comply with the Fair Play Act. Many of the strategies in this Toolkit come from park and recreation departments in California that are working to become compliant with the Fair Play Act. While there is no one-size-fits-all strategy for complying with the Fair Play Act, this Toolkit can provide you and your staff with a range of ideas and strategies proven to work for other departments.



# Fair Play in Community Sports Act

## Compliance Toolkit

### WHAT PROGRAMS ARE COVERED BY THE FAIR PLAY ACT?

The Fair Play Act applies to all community youth athletic programs. Whether the law applies to a certain program depends on three things:

- 1. Community:** The law applies to programs that are run or supported by local park and recreation departments. This includes sports leagues run by outside organizations that use park and recreation property and facilities.
- 2. Youth:** The Fair Play Act only applies to sports programs in which most of the participants are under the age of 18. It does not apply to adult athletics programs.
- 3. Athletics Programs:** The Fair Play Act applies to programs that involve athletic competition. This includes youth sports leagues such as baseball, football, soccer, basketball, etc. The Fair Play Act is not limited to team sports. Swimming, gymnastics, track, and other individual sports are covered so long as there is some competition involved. Based on Title IX law, cheerleading is not considered a sport because it lacks uniform rules and competitive guidelines. Its participants should not be counted in your department's participation numbers. In addition, sports clinics and summer camps are not considered athletic programs under the law if no sustained competition opportunities are offered.

### WHAT DOES THE FAIR PLAY ACT REQUIRE?

The Fair Play Act requires that park and recreation departments provide male and female athletes with equal opportunities and equal treatment in their youth sports programs.

#### Equal Opportunities

Your department must provide youth sports programs for girls and boys in numbers that reflect the percentages of girls and boys in the community. A typical community has roughly the same amount of boys as it does girls (i.e., 50% girls and 50% boys). Thus, the number of sports opportunities (i.e., slots on teams) offered to each sex should be more or less equal (i.e., 50% of athletic program participants should be girls and 50% should be boys).

If the opportunities for girls and boys are unequal, a department will be in violation of the Fair Play Act unless the athletic interests and abilities of the underrepresented gender have been fully accommodated. Often, girls have not been offered the appropriate sports opportunities or recruited in the proper ways. Thus, their interests and abilities have not been accommodated.

#### Equal Treatment

Your department must allocate resources such as money, coaching, officiating, locker rooms, athletic fields, and equipment to girls' and boys' sports programs equally. The Fair Play Act does not require your department to provide these resources to your youth sports programs. However, if you do provide these resources to your programs, you must do so equally as to girls' and boys' sports. Unequal treatment can take many forms. Some examples include:

- Consistently giving boys' sports priority when scheduling access to fields;
- Providing inferior sporting equipment, facilities, or fields to girls' sports;
- Providing fewer coaches to girls' teams in comparison to boys' teams;
- Publicizing sports programs for boys and not for girls; or
- Not providing enough umpires or referees to girls' sporting events.

These are only meant to be examples of possible violations. If you are uncertain whether a violation has occurred, use your common sense. If it seems to you that your department is treating girls' sports unfairly, you are likely violating the Fair Play Act. If you would like to discuss general equity issues with a lawyer, contact Legal Aid at Work's Fair Play for Girls in Sports Project at 877-593-0074 or [fairplay@legalaidatwork.org](mailto:fairplay@legalaidatwork.org).

*Note: Fair Play for Girls cannot advise a department regarding legal compliance.*



# Fair Play in Community Sports Act Compliance Toolkit

## WHEN DOES OUR DEPARTMENT NEED TO COMPLY WITH THE FAIR PLAY ACT?

The Fair Play Act went into effect in 2005 and it required immediate compliance. There is a common misconception that departments are not required to comply with the law until 2015. This is false. Rather, the law's existing requirements become even more stringent in 2015 because a potential defense against a lawsuit will no longer be available. The defense permits departments who face a lawsuit or complaint between January 1, 2005 and December 31, 2014 to show that the department is steadily and consistently increasing the number of girls participating in sports, even if the department fails to fully accommodate female participants from its community. As of January 1, 2015, that provision of the law goes away and a department challenged for a violation of the Fair Play Act can no longer argue that its girls' participation numbers are improving incrementally. By 2015, departments will have had ten (10) years to work on ensuring that the participation of girls in department sports programs is proportionate to the number of girls in the community (i.e., roughly 50%). Because of this, your department should address its Fair Play Act compliance immediately.

## WHY SHOULD OUR DEPARTMENT COMPLY WITH THE FAIR PLAY ACT?

Making your department compliant with the Fair Play Act may seem like a daunting and confusing task. However, your department should take the time to comply with the Fair Play Act for a number of reasons, including:

**It's the Right Thing to Do:** There is no reason why girls should be treated as second-class citizens in their youth sports programs. Girls should have the same athletic opportunities and get the same treatment that boys do when participating in youth sports.

**It's the Law:** Whatever your thoughts on the Fair Play Act might be, it is the law in California and your department is required to comply and provide gender equitable athletic programming for youth.

**Complaints & Lawsuits:** Proactively complying with the Fair Play Act can help your department avoid complaints and costly lawsuits. The law allows community members to file suit against park and recreation departments that violate the Act. While no lawsuits have been brought under the law as of the publication of this Toolkit, this will likely change as community members become more aware of the law's requirements. For park and recreation departments that have been hit hard by recent budget cuts, the expense of defending against a lawsuit under the Fair Play Act could be devastating.

**Revenue:** Complying with the Fair Play Act can generate revenue for your department. Girls in your community may be an untapped market. By increasing the number of girls participating in youth sports, departments may potentially increase the number of paying "clients."

“Girls' participation in sports reduces the risk of developing illnesses such as obesity, heart disease, osteoporosis and breast cancer.”

*National Coalition for Women & Girls in Education, Title IX at 40: Working to Ensure Gender Equity in Education 7 (2012)*

“Studies have shown that female athletes are significantly less likely to use illicit drugs.”

*Ellen J. Staurowsky et al., Women's Sports Foundation, Her Life Depends on It II: Sport, Physical Activity, and the Health and Well-Being of American Girls and Women 3 (2009)*

# Fair Play in Community Sports Act

## Compliance Toolkit

### WHAT CAN OUR DEPARTMENT DO TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH THE FAIR PLAY ACT?

As a park and recreation department, there are several steps you can take now to ensure you are following the law. The best way to avoid complaints and lawsuits is to be proactive in identifying problems and taking steps to fix them.

#### Self-Assess

Complete the attached assessment tool (Appendix A) to determine if your department is complying with the Fair Play Act and to identify areas that need improvement.

#### Monitor

The only way to know if your department is actually in compliance with the Fair Play Act is to monitor participation in your community youth sports programs. You should begin to monitor and keep records of:

1. Programs offered directly by your department: Keep records of the programs offered to each gender and track the number of participants in your youth sports programs by gender.
2. Programs offered by third-party youth sports organizations: Collect gender data from third-party youth sports leagues using your department's athletic facilities. Require that these leagues provide gender data as a condition of using your facilities. A model data collection form can be found in Appendix B.
3. Community interest in new sports programs: Solicit feedback from community members about what new sports programs they would like offered. A model community survey form can be found in Appendix C.

#### Implement and Distribute a Gender Equity Policy

A gender equity policy will ensure that everyone in your department and community is aware of the Fair Play Act. This policy should describe your department's commitment to achieving gender equity in youth sports programs. A model gender equity policy can be found in Appendix D.

Once your department adopts a gender equity policy, begin to distribute the policy to your staff and to the public. Post the policy around your offices, facilities, in your mailings and brochures, and on your website. Notify coaches, volunteers, local schools, and independent youth sports organizations about the policy. Distribute a press release or place an article in your local paper. Publicizing the policy will ensure that your community is aware of your department's efforts to comply with the law. A model press release can be found in Appendix F.

#### Designate a Fair Play Act Compliance Coordinator

This individual is responsible for coordinating the department's Fair Play Act compliance efforts. The compliance coordinator should train department staff on the requirements of the Fair Play Act. This person will also be in charge of investigating and responding to any Fair Play Act complaints against the department. The coordinator's name, mailing address, e-mail address, and phone number should be communicated to staff, coaches and participants. Contact information should also be posted on your website and in your community newsletters.

#### Establish Grievance Procedures

Departments should adopt and implement grievance procedures to promptly address complaints from the community alleging violations of the Fair Play Act. These procedures should describe how complaints are submitted, and how complaints are resolved. Sample grievance procedures and a sample grievance form can be found in Appendix E. If your department already has grievance procedures in place, make sure they are updated to route all gender-based complaints to your Fair Play Act Compliance Coordinator.

#### Reporting Compliance Efforts

Regularly publish reports outlining your department's continuing efforts to comply with the Fair Play Act. These reports should include data about the gender of youth sports participants, a description of revisions being made to your youth sports programs, and a description of your department's plans to accommodate and cultivate female athletes.



# Fair Play in Community Sports Act

## Compliance Toolkit

### WHAT CAN OUR DEPARTMENT DO TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH THE FAIR PLAY ACT?

As a park and recreation department, there are several steps you can take now to ensure you are following the law. The best way to avoid complaints and lawsuits is to be proactive in identifying problems and taking steps to fix them.

Many park and recreation departments offer sports leagues that are run by outside organizations such as Little League, American Youth Soccer Organization, and Pop Warner Football. If these leagues use your department's facilities, equipment, and/or are conducted with the support of your department, they are included within the scope of the Fair Play Act. This usage has several important implications for park and recreation departments.

**Participation Numbers:** Youth who participate in sports leagues run by outside organizations using department property, facilities and/or resources are counted towards your department's compliance numbers. For example, if your department provides fields to a third-party youth football organization with 90 male participants and 10 female participants, those numbers would be used when calculating whether your department is providing equal opportunities to girls and boys. In this scenario, your department would need to balance these numbers by providing other programs with high numbers of female participants.

**NOTE: Participation numbers are assessed as a whole. Thus, all of the department's sports offerings (through the department and through third parties), across various leagues and teams, should be considered when determining whether girls and boys have equal opportunities. For a survey to help your department collect data for participation rates in Third Party Leagues, see the Appendices at the end of this toolkit.**

**Allocation of Resources:** Facilities and equipment cannot be allocated to third-party sports leagues in a discriminatory manner. Third-party sports organizations that cater to boys cannot be given priority when scheduling access to fields or equipment. Third-party sports leagues, whether they cater to girls or boys, must be given equal opportunities to schedule practices and games and to use park and recreation resources. This covers the time of day that practices and games are held and also the timing of the sport's season. For example, girls' sports practices cannot always be late at night while boys' practices are immediately after school. Nor can girls' sports that are traditionally played in the summer only be offered in the winter.

**Lease Agreements:** Some cities have long-term lease agreements with sports organizations. For example, a boys' soccer league might have a ten-year lease with a city that guarantees the league access to a certain soccer field every year. This lease can remain in place so long as the city can provide comparable fields to its girls' soccer leagues. If not, this lease will need to be renegotiated to allow for access by girls' sports organizations. Alternatively, the league itself could provide a girls' soccer league on that field. Simply put, the best fields cannot be reserved exclusively for boys' sports based on historical leasing arrangements or outdated, gender-inequitable practices.

“ Studies have found that female participation in sports offers a range of academic benefits. Young women who play sports are more likely to graduate from high school, have higher grades, and score higher on standardized tests than non-athletes.”

National Coalition for Women & Girls in Education, Title IX at 40: Working to Ensure Gender Equity in Education 10 (2012)

# Fair Play in Community Sports Act

## Compliance Toolkit

### Coaching Corps

Coaching Corps is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the health, educational and social outcomes for kids living in low-income communities through the power of coaches. Coaching Corps pairs volunteer coaches with sports programs in low-income areas of California. For more information, visit [www.coachingcorps.org](http://www.coachingcorps.org)

### HOW DOES THE FAIR PLAY ACT AFFECT BOYS' SPORTS?

The goal of the Fair Play Act is to increase athletic opportunities for girls; not to reduce opportunities for boys. In some situations, however, boys' sports may be affected. One likely effect is boys' teams having to share access to certain fields with girls' teams. Departments must be resourceful, creative, and open-minded regarding ways to maintain boys' sports programming while ensuring girls are provided equal opportunities, benefits, and treatment.

### HOW CAN OUR DEPARTMENT INCREASE THE NUMBER OF GIRLS PARTICIPATING IN OUR YOUTH SPORTS PROGRAMS?

If you determine that your department is not providing enough athletic opportunities for girls, there are a number of ways in which you can increase the number of girls participating in your youth sports leagues.

**Develop a Targeted Girls Recruitment Plan:** Girls respond to more active recruitment strategies. Sports demonstrations, follow-up phone calls to girls, and talking to parents are just a few strategies that can catch girls' interest. Encourage girl athletes to invite their friends to join a team. These strategies may take more time and effort, but will likely prove much more successful than traditional modes of recruiting female athletes.

**Reach out to Girls' Sports Leagues:** Contact girls' sports leagues operating in nearby cities and talk to them about adding a league in your community or adding teams of girls from your community. Allow these leagues to use your facilities.

**Partner with your Local School District:** Ask your local schools to distribute information about your youth sports programs. Put on assemblies at schools showcasing local female athletes as a means of recruiting students into your youth sports programs.

**Create a Girls' Sports Fund:** Implement a fee on all teams (youth and/or adult teams) to create a fund for female athletes. For example, by imposing a \$10 or \$20 fee on all teams, your department can fund some of its efforts to attract more female athletes. The money generated from this fee could be used to help subsidize girls' sports teams by purchasing equipment or uniforms for the teams. It could also be used to market youth sports programs to girls.

**Form a Girls' Sports Focus Group:** A focus group can include members of the park and recreation staff, parents, girls, coaches, as well as volunteers who are interested in expanding girls' sports programs in your city. This group can develop strategies for marketing sports to girls and can discuss ideas or concerns from the community. It can also help track your department's progress in meeting the requirements of the Fair Play Act. This is an inexpensive way for your department to target female athletes and to start a dialogue with staff and community members about girls' sports.

**Incentivize Outside Organizations:** Provide incentives to outside youth sports organizations to increase the number of female participants. As you begin tracking participation by gender, keep track of the organizations that are increasing their number of girl participants. Give a discount to these organizations on their registration fees. Give them first priority when scheduling fields. Publicize these incentives to your leagues. Hopefully, this will encourage them to try to bring more girls into their organizations.

**Cultivate Female Coaches and Officials:** Provide clinics to train mothers, guardians, female college students, and high school athletes to coach girls' sports teams. Clinics could also be held to train women to officiate girls' athletics. These clinics could involve more women in girls' sports programs. With more female coaches and officials acting as role models, girls will be more likely to participate in youth sports. If your sports program serves low-income youth, reach out to Coaching Corps to see if they can recruit, train, and place volunteer coaches with your girls' teams.

**Target Dads who have Daughters and Female Relatives:** As you try to increase girls' sports programs, you will find that some of your greatest allies are men with daughters, granddaughters, nieces, and female relatives interested in sports. Give presentations about the Fair Play Act and your girls' sports programs to men's organizations in the community. Include information about the Fair Play Act in your materials for men's sports leagues. Inform fathers in your community about the benefits girls receive from playing sports. More importantly, make sure local fathers are aware of the athletic opportunities available to their daughters and female relatives.



**Provide Resources to Coaches on Working with Girls:** Coaching Corps has developed fact sheets with age-appropriate tips and strategies that address the specific needs of girls, and resources to help male coaches feel more comfortable when coaching girls' teams. These fact sheets can be found on the Coaching Corps website.

**Use your Connections with Local Athletes:** Ask local high school, college, or professional athletes to put on demonstrations and clinics for the girls' youth sports teams in your community. With more athletic role models, whether male or female, girls will be more likely to participate in youth athletics.

**Consider Providing Single Sex Leagues:** Many park and recreation departments offer coed sports leagues for children. This sometimes results in negative experiences for girl athletes who play on predominately male teams. Girls often receive less playing time or feel isolated from their teammates. To counter this, keep sports leagues for children single sex starting in middle school. This will ensure that girls get ample playing time and have positive interactions with their teammates. Providing enjoyable experiences for young girls in youth sports programs increases the odds that they continue to play sports as they get older.

**Implement a Buddy System for Young Children:** Under a buddy system, children have the option of requesting to be on the same team as another girl in her community. Girls have demonstrated greater openness and willingness to play sports if they can request to be on the same team as a friend, cousin, or neighbor.

**Honor Female Athletes:** Designate one girl and one boy as your athletes of the week or month. This will help to provide positive reinforcement for female athletes and create some publicity within the community about girls' sports. To publicize these athletes, put up posters in the park and recreation offices and facilities; put the athletes' names on your website and in your newsletter; or see if the local newspaper will print something about the athletes.

**Use Social Media:** Start a Facebook page and get a Twitter account for your department. Use these outlets to publicize your youth sports programs. Tout the benefits of girls participating in sports. Retweet posts from female athletes and about female sporting events. Solicit feedback from community members. This is an inexpensive way to market girls' sports to your community. Notably, research shows that women use social media more frequently than men so this is a good way to target mothers and women who are interested in getting their relatives and female contacts into sports.

“Research demonstrates that early exposure to sports and physical activity increases the likelihood of continued participation. For example, if girls do not participate in sport by the age of 10, there is less than a 10% chance that they will be participating at age 25.”

Women's Sports Foundation, *Benefits – Obesity and Physical Activity*, [https://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/home/advocate/foundation-positions/mental-and-physical-health/benefits\\_obesity\\_and\\_physical\\_activity](https://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/home/advocate/foundation-positions/mental-and-physical-health/benefits_obesity_and_physical_activity) (last visited Mar. 27, 2014)

## Fair Play in Community Sports Act Compliance Toolkit

# Fair Play in Community Sports Act

## Compliance Toolkit

### HOW CAN OUR DEPARTMENT ACCOMMODATE INCREASED NUMBERS OF YOUTH ATHLETES?

Your department may find that it needs to add girls' sports programs in order to comply with the Fair Play Act. This raises the question of how to accommodate these new athletic programs using your existing park and recreation facilities and staff. There are several things your department can do to accommodate these new programs.

#### To increase the field space available for youth sports:

- 1. Partner with Local School Districts:** Enter into a joint-use agreement which allows your department to use school facilities for its youth sports programs. This will increase the number of facilities available to your department for its youth sports games and practices.
- 2. Partner with Neighboring Cities:** Enter into joint-use agreements with neighboring departments. You may find that there are athletic fields that are not being used by that department. For example, there may be high demand for basketball courts in your city while there is little demand in a neighboring city. Through a joint use agreement, your department may be able to use these courts for its youth sports programs.
- 3. Use Existing Facilities:** If your department needs to add girls' sports programs, use existing city facilities that aren't used by other sports programs. If your city has tennis courts, create a tennis program. If your city has a community pool, add a swim team. Take stock of the facilities available to your department and design new sports programs around these underutilized facilities.

#### To increase youth sports programs using existing resources:

- 1. Add Sports that are Inexpensive and Adaptable:** Add sports that require minimal equipment and can be played in a variety of facilities. For example, a cross-country running team requires minimal equipment. Basketball teams can split half of a gym for practices (or maybe even practice together on occasion). Sports like these can be used to increase your numbers of girl athletes without putting additional strain on your department's limited resources. Based on the Title IX context, the key is that these sports have uniform rules, other teams to play, and regularly scheduled practices, games, and/or tournaments.
- 2. Add Out of Season Sports Programs:** Once your department has added girls' sports in season and has grown those programs significantly, you may also consider adding some out of season sports programs as a supplement. Thus, if your fall soccer program is full of girls who want to play high school soccer and are demanding additional practice opportunities, you might meet that demand by offering a second off-season soccer program.

#### To increase your department's staff:

- 1. Get Interns:** As department staff numbers continue to shrink, providing additional sports programs can be challenging to your department's staff. To counter this, contact local colleges and high schools and offer students part time positions as interns. See if these schools would be willing to provide course credit to students who intern with your department. These interns could help with everyday tasks, including coaching and league administration.

*The city of West Sacramento used student interns from a local university to assess their Fair Play Act compliance. These students received course credit for evaluating and reporting on West Sacramento's compliance efforts.*



# Fair Play in Community Sports Act Compliance Toolkit

## WHO SHOULD WE CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE FAIR PLAY ACT?

For more information about the Fair Play Act, contact Legal Aid at Work, Fair Play for Girls in Sports project. The staff at the Legal Aid at Work can help answer questions and point you toward additional resources about the Fair Play Act.



### LEGAL AID AT WORK

Fair Play for Girls in Sports  
180 Montgomery Street, Suite 600  
San Francisco, CA 94104

**Telephone:** 877-593-0074 (toll-free)

**Email:** [fairplay@legalaidatwork.org](mailto:fairplay@legalaidatwork.org)



### Coaching Corps

310 Eighth Street, Suite 300  
Oakland, CA 94607

**Telephone:** 510-496-5101

**Email:** [sheilaghp@coachingcorps.org](mailto:sheilaghp@coachingcorps.org)

**Website:** [www.coachingcorps.org](http://www.coachingcorps.org)



# Fair Play in Community Sports Act

## Compliance Toolkit

### APPENDICES

The following documents can be used by your department as you begin to address the requirements of the Fair Play Act. Some of these documents are samples from departments that already have gender equity policies. Thus, you will likely need to alter these documents to suit your department's needs. Copies of these documents can be found on the LAS-ELC website for easy editing. [www.las-elc.org](http://www.las-elc.org)

<b>Appendix A</b>	
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Model Press Release	17

### Fair Play Act Self-Assessment Tool

#### Assessment Tool Performance Levels

The Fair Play Act Self-Assessment Tool is designed to help park and recreation staff determine the degree to which their sports programming is addressing girls' participation. To help you do so, you should answer each question using the following rating system:

- LEVEL 1: Our program is just beginning to work in this area and has an urgent need to address this practice. Our program can be much better at this than we are currently.
- LEVEL 2: Our program has done some work in this area but will need targeted support to move to the next level. Our program is making progress, but can improve further.
- LEVEL 3: Our program has achieved a high level of proficiency in this area and needs only a little additional work to be exceptionally proficient. Our program is very good at this practice.
- LEVEL 4: Our program is exceptionally proficient in this practice and can demonstrate this in observable ways. This is an area of quality practice where our program can serve as an example for others.
- DON'T KNOW ("DK"): I am not familiar enough with this aspect of the program to rate performance or I am just not sure how to rate it at this time.
- NOT APPLICABLE ("NA"): My department does not provide or have access to this (e.g. if your department does not have locker rooms then you would say "NA" to that question.)

Park and Recreation sites should strive to meet Level 3 or 4 for each indicator to demonstrate overall program quality. Assistance and support should be sought for areas scoring as Level 1 or Level 2. There is space next to each indicator for respondents to note what the practice looks like at their site or in their organization. Such information can help to inform discussion of the results.

# Fair Play in Community Sports Act

## Compliance Toolkit

### APPENDIX A

### Park and Recreation Assessment Tool

1. Whether the community athletic programs effectively accommodate the athletic interest and abilities of both genders.	Level 1-4; DK	Program examples	7. The selection of the season for a sport.	Level 1-4; DK	Program examples
a. Girls and boys participate equally in sports programs (e.g., 50% girls participating in community athletic programs, <sup>1</sup> where community is comprised of 50% girls).			a. Your site provides sports opportunities to girls and boys throughout the year.		
b. Surveys are consistently conducted to determine girls' interest in sports (minimally once a year).			b. Weather is considered when determining the scheduling of seasons for both girls' and boys' leagues.		
c. Parents and community members are asked for input on sports programming for girls.			<b>8. The location of games and practices.</b>		
d. Partnerships with outside organizations are developed to provide sports for girls as well as boys.			a. Both girls' and boys' games and practices are located conveniently so that it possible for all youth tho get to their games.		
e. When a survey demonstrates girls' interest in a sport, my department plans to add that sport by the following season.			b. Both girls' and boys' games and practices are located conveniently so that it possible for parents/guardians of all youth to transport their children and attend games.		
<b>2. The provision of monies, equipment, and supplies.</b>			<b>9. Availability of locker rooms.</b>		
a. Girls' and boys' teams have equal access to functional, appropriate equipment and uniforms.			a. Both girls' and boys' teams have access to the same quality of locker rooms (i.e., size of locker rooms, size of lockers, and convenience of location).		
b. Girls' and boys' teams have equal access to quality, safe, and accessible storage units or rooms for their equipment.			<b>10. The provision of practice and competitive facilities.</b>		
c. Funds and donations are generally distributed equally among girls' and boys' teams.			a. Both girls' and boys' teams have equal access to safe and well-maintained facilities.		
<b>3. The scheduling of games and practice times.</b>			<b>11. The manner of providing publicity.</b>		
a. Girls' and boys' games and practices are scheduled so it is possible for girls as well as boys to get to games and practices.			a. Both girls' and boys' sports programs are equally advertised.		
b. The times of girls' and boys' games and practices are scheduled so it is possible for parents/guardians to transport their child and/or attend games.			b. Programming information regarding youth sports is equally available to parents of girls and boys.		
<b>4. The opportunity to receive coaching.</b>			c. Programming information is equally available to girls and boys.		
a. Qualified coaches are recruited and are coaching both girls' and boys' teams.			d. Girls' and boys' teams receive the same quality of awards, trophies, and other recognition events.		
b. Girls' and boys' teams have an appropriate number of coaches so individualized coaching can take place.			<b>12. Officiating by umpires, referees, or judges re: training &amp; certification standards.</b>		
c. Both girls' and boys' coaches receive equal professional development opportunities.			a. Both girls' and boys' teams have officials with similar levels of experience (in some cases, this might be zero experience).		
<b>5. The assignment and compensation of coaches.</b>			b. Both Girls' and boys' officials are equally compensated.		
a. The coaches of girls' and boys' teams are assigned in equal numbers to girls' and boys' sports activities.			c. Both girls' and boys' officials are equally supported by site staff.		
b. The coaches of girls' and boys' teams are equally compensated, if compensation is offered.			<b>6. Availability of lands and areas accessed through permitting, leasing, or other land use arrangements, or otherwise granted by the city, county, or a special district.</b>		
a. Your site grants permits, leases, and access to girls' and boys' teams to use your facilities without giving preference to one gender.					

<sup>1</sup> This includes third party competitive sports programs that are run and/or supported by park and recreation departments

## Using the Assessment Tool

This tool is meant to support a reflective practice process in which park and recreation department staff and stakeholders can explore their own girls' sports programs and work collaboratively to develop strategies to enhance policies, procedures, and practices to get more girls in the game. Please take a look at your scores in each of the twelve indicators. Have a discussion with your staff about the results. If your program scored Level 1 or 2 in some areas, the following section provides resources, tools, and ideas on strengthening your girls' sports programs and ensuring compliance with the Fair Play Act.

## Suggestions for Improvement

### 1) Whether the community athletic programs effectively accommodate the athletic interest and abilities of both genders.

- Use active recruitment strategies (e-mail, web, and hard copy advertising, etc.) to encourage girls to sign up for sports programs.
- Consistently track and document the gender of program participants.
- Offer a wide range of programming.
- Offer single-sex teams, where appropriate.

### 2) The provision of monies, equipment, and supplies.

- Run fundraisers that are specific to girls' teams.
- Close the gap by targeting your limited resources to girls' programming.
- Assess your equipment inventory for quality and numbers.
- Plan for replacement of worn out equipment.
- Require that leagues that invest in a boys' sport also invest in a girls' counterpart.

### 3) The scheduling of games and practice times.

- Create a spreadsheet of all your teams and field allocations. Keep track of the field/gym assignments so you can rotate times/space each season.
- Build partnerships within the community to access additional space that fits in with the best times for youth and parents to attend.

### 4) The opportunity to receive coaching.

- Apply to receive coaches from Coaching Corps.
- Build partnerships with local universities and high school sports teams.
- Build a parent-volunteer network.
- Hold coaching clinics for mothers and female community leaders/athletes.

### 5) The assignment and compensation of coaches.

- Have your experienced coaches trade-off seasons coaching a girls' team.
- Create a mentor training program so mentors can assist newer coaches.

### 6) The availability of lands and areas accessed through permitting, leasing, or other land use arrangements, or otherwise granted by the city, county, city and county, or a special district.

- Make athletic facilities available to girls' teams.

### 7) The selection of the season for a sport.

- Create a spreadsheet of all your teams and field allocations, or use your department software. Keep track of the field/gym assignments so you can rotate times/spaces each season.
- Factor in weather and traditional season scheduling for all sports programming season assignments.

### 8) The location of games and practices.

- Build partnerships within the community to access additional space that fits in with the best times for youth and parents to attend.

### 9) Availability of locker rooms.

- Ensure all available space is safe, secure, and divided between girls and boys.

### 10) The provision of practice and competitive facilities.

- Make sure the premium facilities (e.g., best playing surfaces, bleachers, parking lots) are distributed evenly between girls and boys.

### 11) The manner of providing publicity.

- Run clinics for girls and boys to advertise sports and coaches.
- Ensure all programmatic materials advertise girls' and boys' programs equally in the appropriate language.

### 12) Officiating by umpires, referees, or judges who have met training and certification standards.

- Equally assign top officials to girls' and boys' games.
- Equally train referees for girls' and boys' leagues.

# Fair Play in Community Sports Act Compliance Toolkit

## APPENDIX B

Department Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Fair Play Act Third Party League Data Collection Form

1. League Name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Are most of the participants in this league under the age of 18?

Yes  No

*\*If you marked "Yes," please complete questions 3, 4, and 5\**

3. Number of boys (under the age of 18) participating in the league: \_\_\_\_

4. Number of girls (under the age of 18) participating in the league: \_\_\_\_

5. Total number of youth participating in the league:  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Season (e.g., fall, spring, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

7. Facilities Used (e.g., Main Gym, soccer field, outdoor basketball courts):  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that the information is accurate and the

league complies with all rules and regulations associated with

DEPARTMENT NAME

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX C

Department Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Youth Sports Community Survey

The [insert department name] is committed to creating new youth athletic programs that meet the interests of our community members. If you have ideas for new sports programs, please take a moment to complete this brief survey. If you are filling out this form on behalf of your child, please answer the questions accordingly.

1. What is your gender (or gender of your child)?

Male:

Female:

2. What is your age (or child's age)? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What sports programs do you (or your child) currently participate in?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What sports programs or leagues would you like to see added by

\_\_\_\_\_?

DEPARTMENT NAME

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### OPTIONAL

If you would be willing to provide more information about the responses provided above, please provide a name and contact number at which you can be reached.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX D GENDER EQUITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES



### THE FAIR PLAY ACT

Passed in 2004, AB 2404, the Fair Play in Community Sports Act (“Fair Play Act”), made California the first state in the nation to require gender equity in community youth sports offered through local jurisdictions and special districts. The [insert department name]’s staff is not only obligated to comply with the law, but, more importantly, we believe it is the right thing to do. Therefore, we maintain the following gender equity policy.

### [Insert department name]’S GENDER EQUITY POLICY

It is the policy of [insert department name] to achieve gender equity in youth sports programs that are run by the department as well as programs that are offered at [insert department name]’s facilities. The department’s policy is to:

- Encourage the participation of youth in sports and recreation programs and to provide opportunities to youth for recreation.
- Address underrepresentation in sports programs where one gender is not adequately or proportionally represented.
- Improve the representation of female administrators of sports and recreation programs.
- Increase the number of female coaches, referees, instructors, mentors and other role models.
- Ensure the department is equitable in its distribution of resources (i.e., facilities, quality of services, playfields, etc.) for all participants in youth sports.
- Ensure regular reporting and monitoring of the department’s progress towards meeting its objectives.

### PURPOSES

The purposes of the department’s Gender Equity Policy are to:

- Involve more girls in sports and recreation programs in our community by undertaking measures to encourage their participation and by providing opportunities for participation.
- Improve the representation of girls and women in sports programs where they are not adequately represented.
- Ensure the department is equitable in its distribution of resources for all youth sports.

### PROCEDURES

Procedures for addressing gender equitable opportunities and ensuring a climate of equality in youth sports programs are stated in the Gender Equity Grievance Procedures.

## APPENDIX E GENDER EQUITY GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES



**PURPOSE: Resolving youth athletic complaints alleging discrimination on the basis of sex.**

[Insert department name] will maintain gender equitable opportunities for youth who participate in sports programs and recreational activities. In the event that an inequitable situation is discovered or suspected, [insert department name] provides four methods to file a grievance regarding discrimination of youth athletes or youth athletic program on the basis of sex.

1. Contact [insert department name]’s Anti-Discrimination Coordinator and Fair Play Act Compliance Coordinator, [insert compliance coordinator] at [insert telephone number], to communicate your concerns and obtain a Gender Equity Complaint Form. Upon completion of [insert department name]’s Gender Equity Complaint Form, the issue(s) will be investigated and reviewed for further action. [Insert Anti-Discrimination Coordinator’s email/web contact information]
2. Attend a Youth Sports Committee meeting, and voice your concerns during oral communications. After doing so:
  - Youth Sports Committee may agendize the item at an upcoming meeting for further discussion.
  - During the next meeting the item may be discussed, and if it requires action, the Sports Committee may ask staff to investigate the item further, or make a Sports Committee recommendation that will be forwarded to the City Council for final approval.

3. Attend a Human Services Commission meeting, and voice your concerns during oral communications. After doing so:

- The Commission may agendize the item at an upcoming meeting for further discussion.
- During the next meeting the item may be discussed and if it requires action, the Commission may ask staff to investigate the item further, or make a Commission recommendation that will be forwarded to the City Council for final approval.

These grievance procedures do not restrict the right to file a complaint with any state or federal agency responsible for the enforcement of anti-discrimination legislation. It is the commitment of [insert department name] to confront and eliminate discrimination, and to provide gender equitable opportunities for all youth involved in sports and recreation programs.

The meaning of gender equitable opportunities in this City is defined as: The absence of discrimination and unfavorable treatment of citizens; the promotion of gender equitable sports and recreational programs; and the commitment to ensure equitable support of facilities, fields, and promotion of girls’ and boys’ athletics and recreational programs.

## APPENDIX F

### Gender Equity Complaint Form

The purpose of this form is to assist you in filing a Gender Equity complaint. You are not required to use this form; a letter with the same information is sufficient. However, the information requested in the items marked with a star (\*) must be provided, whether or not the form is used. NOTE: Item #11 must be signed before form is submitted.

#### 1. \* State your name and address.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: Home: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. \* Person(s) discriminated against, if different from above:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: Home: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

#### 3. \*Please explain your relationship to this person(s).

\_\_\_\_\_

**If person discriminated against is a minor (under 18 years old), please provide the following information:**

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the parent/guardian contact information the same as provided in question #2?

Yes  No  (If not, please provide contact information below)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: Home: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. \* Fair Play Act Complaint: Please indicate below the basis on which you believe gender discrimination is taking place.

- Individual participants are being treated unfairly because of their gender.
- Certain sports programs are being treated unfairly because of the gender of participants.
- There are unequal numbers of participation opportunities available to girls and boys.
- There are unequal numbers of male and female youth sports participants.
- The interests and abilities of both genders are not being provided for.

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 5. \*To the best of your recollection, on what date(s) did the alleged discrimination take place?

Earliest date of discrimination: \_\_\_\_\_ Most Recent Date of Discrimination: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 6. \*Please explain as clearly as possible what happened, why you believe it happened, and how you were discriminated against.

Indicate who was involved. Be sure to include how other persons were treated differently from you, if you know. Please use additional sheets if necessary and attach a copy of written materials pertaining to your complaint.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Fair Play in Community  
Sports Act  
Compliance Toolkit**



# Fair Play in Community Sports Act

## Compliance Toolkit

Please list below any persons (witnesses, employees, supervisors, or others), if known, whom we may contact for additional information to support or clarify your complaint.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: Home: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Do you have any other information that you think is relevant to our investigation of your allegations?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**8. What remedy are you seeking for the alleged discrimination?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**9. When is a convenient time for us to contact you about this complaint?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**10. If you have an attorney representing you concerning the matters raised in this complaint, please provide the following:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: Home: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

**11. Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please submit completed form to the Fair Play Act Compliance Coordinator.

## APPENDIX G

### Model Press Release

[Insert department name] Achieving Gender Equity in its Youth Sports Programs

The Fair Play Act is a California law that requires local park and recreation departments to provide girls and boys with equal opportunities to participate in youth sports programs. Additionally, the law requires girls' and boys' sports to be given equal treatment and benefits such as athletic fields and sports equipment.

[Insert department name] understands the importance of providing balanced opportunities in all areas of [insert department name] youth sport programs. Ongoing training for department staff is helping the department evaluate and document the opportunities, treatment, and benefits available to girls and boys in [insert department name]'s various youth sports programs. Once statistical information is gathered, it will be reported to the City Council and will be available for public review. This information will be used to allocate resources in a manner that ensures equitable athletic opportunities for all City youth. It is the goal of [insert department name] to increase athletic opportunities for local girls while maintaining our existing youth sports programs.

Gender equity is a priority for the City, and we celebrate the benefits of athletic programs for everyone. If you have any questions or comments regarding this issue, please phone or e-mail the [insert compliance coordinator] at \_\_\_\_\_.