

LEEP Participant Code of Conduct | 2024

LEEP prides itself in providing high quality recreation, sporting, and healthy living opportunities to enhance the lives of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to establish a high standard of participant behavior which will ensure the safety and well-being of all LEEP participants, volunteers, and staff. When representing or participating in LEEP programs, all participants will follow the Participant Code of Conduct as well as state and federal laws. This includes while being transported to and from a LEEP activity/event/program. A violation of this Code in any way by a participant will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, and a decision regarding participation in future LEEP programming will then be made and communicated.

General Expectations

- I will practice good and respectful behavior at all LEEP activities/events/programs.
- I will not borrow or share money or personal property.
- I will not use foul/abusive/obscene language (swearing) or gestures.
- I will not take anything that does not belong to me including other people's personal items & LEEP equipment.
- I will not alter myself or others (i.e. piercing, hair cutting, hair coloring, tattooing, etc.).
- I will not engage in any fighting (physically or verbally) with other participants, coaches, officials, volunteers, or staff from LEEP or any other team or organization.
- I will not drink alcohol, use illegal drugs, or take medications for which I do not have a prescription while representing LEEP. Tobacco (smoking, vaping, chewing, etc.) use is not allowed at LEEP, VINE, or any other facility while LEEP is holding an activity/event/program. I will only smoke at designated times and areas as determined by LEEP staff and Special Olympics staff or officials (if applicable).
- I will not wear inappropriate or revealing clothing as determined by LEEP staff (i.e. low-cut shirts, crop tops, short shorts or skirts, items with explicit writing, etc.).
- I will not engage in inappropriate sexual behaviors or sexual harassment.
- I will not bring any harmful weapons or substances to any LEEP activity/event/program.

Responsibility for My Actions

I understand that it is a privilege to participate in LEEP activities/events/programs as well as Special Olympics and not a right. I also understand that if I do not obey this Code of Conduct and state and federal laws, LEEP or Special Olympics Minnesota may not allow me to participate. I also understand that Special Olympics Minnesota will run a background check on me and that I may be disqualified from participating in Special Olympics if there are any findings. Special Olympics Minnesota is a separate organization with policies and procedures separate from LEEP. LEEP is not able to change or override Special Olympics Minnesota decisions about the participation of individuals.

Special Olympics and LEEP League Practices and Competitions

Special Olympics Participation:

To participate in Special Olympics sports athletes must complete an Athlete Application for Participation. All sections must be completed and signed. The form also requires a formal medical physical with a licensed medical provider's signature. Forms will not be accepted if not fully completed. Once completed, the application must be turned into the LEEP office in a timely way and LEEP will submit the form to Special Olympics Minnesota. This application does not guarantee participation in Special Olympics sports until official word is received from Special Olympics Minnesota.

Forms must be updated every three years to continue participation in Special Olympics. Athletes will not be allowed to participate in Special Olympics practices or tournaments without a current application on file.

Special Olympics Minnesota also runs a background check on all athletes and volunteers to ensure the safety of all participants.

As of December 2021, Special Olympics Minnesota is requiring all delegations, including LEEP, to collect information about Covid-19 vaccination status before athletes can participate. It is not a requirement to respond, however if someone does not respond or chooses not to share their vaccination status, they will be considered unvaccinated for planning purposes by Special Olympics Minnesota. At this time, Covid-19 vaccinations *ARE NOT REQUIRED* by Special Olympics Minnesota or LEEP in order for athletes to be able to participate.

As a Special Olympics and/or LEEP League athlete I agree that:

- I will attend practices and competitions promptly and as often as I can.
- I will let my coach know if I will not be at a practice or competition as soon as possible. I will listen to my coaches and officials and ask questions when I do not understand.
- I will report all incidents and accidents that occur including injuries, health concerns, physical or verbal altercations.
- I will do my best during practices, divisioning and competitions. I will follow all laws and Special Olympics rules.

Disciplinary Actions for Not Following Participant Code of Conduct

The following progressive disciplinary actions may be taken by LEEP and are dependent on the nature of the incident. Area Coordinators and Heads of Delegations must involve Special Olympics Minnesota state office staff prior to suspension or release of participant. Please note that this is a basic guideline that LEEP will follow, however, each incident is reviewed on an individual basis.

Action One: Verbal warning given to the participant and Verbal Warning Form filled out and filed in LEEP office.

Action Two: Behavior Incident Report Form filled out and filed in LEEP office with notification of behavior to participant's parent/guardian/staff. Form will also be sent to parent/guardian/staff.

Action Three: Personal meeting with participant to review unacceptable behavior and develop a plan for improvement.

If participant is under 18, they will be accompanied by their parent/guardian or caseworker.

If participant is over 18, a third person selected by the participant will attend the meeting. The meeting will be documented in writing and copies distributed to the participant, parent/guardian/staff, the LEEP office, as well as the Special Olympics state office (if needed).

Action Four: Suspension or expulsion from activities/events/programs, including practices or competitions for Special Olympics, during the specific sports season or competition year. The action will be documented in writing and copies will be distributed to the participant, parent/guardian/staff, the LEEP office, as well as the Special Olympics state office (if needed).

This Participant Code of Conduct has been made in LEEP participants' best interests to make LEEP programming successful, safe, and enjoyable for everyone. LEEP's goal is to ensure that each participant is able to participate and/or compete in a safe and welcoming environment. Thank you for your cooperation.

LEEP GENERAL INFORMATION AND MEMBERSHIP POLICIES



BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Leisure Education for Exceptional People, Inc. (LEEP) enriches the lives of individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities by providing inclusive recreation, sporting, and healthy living opportunities. Since 1978, LEEP has offered a variety of activities/events/programs to meet the needs of its participants. The following is a list of categories under which numerous activities/events/programs are offered: Special Olympics, LEEP leagues, night activities, and special events.

Membership and Forms:

To participate in any of LEEP's activities/events/programs, all individuals are asked to pay a small yearly membership fee (January-December for everyone) and complete a LEEP Membership Form each calendar year that will be kept on file. This form provides LEEP with helpful background information on each participant as well as basic medical information and emergency contact information. **Every member will be asked to fill it out each calendar year to ensure that the information is current.** Please fill this form out completely and return to LEEP. Should any information listed change (i.e. address, primary staff/guardian, health information, etc.), LEEP asks that participants be sure to let the LEEP office know as soon as possible. To obtain a copy of the LEEP Membership Form, please call or stop by LEEP or find it on the website at www.mankatoleep.org.

If the first LEEP activity one participates in is in July, for example, then the full annual membership fee must be paid prior to registering for and participating in that activity in July.

Program Registration:

Once all necessary forms are completed and the current year membership has been paid, registering for programs is easy. **ALL LEEP activities/events/programs require prior registration. Payment is also preferred prior to the activity/event/program. Walk-ins/drop-ins are not allowed and participants will likely be asked to leave.**

All paid members will receive a monthly paper newsletter, which lists all the activities/events/programs available at that time. Newsletters are also available online at www.mankatoleep.org. LEEP asks that members call the LEEP office at 507-387-5122 to register first to ensure there are openings available, then a check or cash can be dropped off at the LEEP office (secure "mail" slot at top of wooden stairs can be used outside of weekday office hours) or brought to the first activity the participant attends that month. U.S. Postal Service may be used, however it has not been timely or reliable recently and no guarantees can be made related to mailed registrations or payments.

Options for Registration:

- Call 507-387-5122 to make sure there are still openings for the desired activity(ies)/event(s)/program(s)
- Visit LEEP office in person
- Email registration to info@mankatoleep.org
- Mail registration form to LEEP (PO Box 3505; Mankato, MN 56001) from monthly newsletter with payment

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PLEASE NOTE that the U.S. Postal Service has not been very timely, so to register please call or stop by first to reserve your space. Payment can be mailed or brought to the first activity after registration is confirmed.

LEEP will ask for some basic information such as name, address, phone number and if transportation is needed (when applicable). Participants are welcome to leave ONE clear voicemail with their registration on LEEP's voicemail (507-387-5122, option 1) if no one answers the phone. LEEP will call back to confirm registrations during regular business hours, which are Monday – Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

No Waiting List:

LEEP staff does not keep a waiting list, so when programs are full, additional participants will not be able to attend. Some programs do fill quickly so LEEP suggests registering as soon as possible each month.

Form of Payments Accepted:

LEEP accepts cash, checks, and credit/debit cards for payment. Credit/debit card payments will incur a minimal convenience fee and must be processed in the LEEP office during regular business hours, which are Monday – Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. **Credit/debit card convenience fees are not refundable even if the participant cancels in a timely way.**

Activity/Event/Program Payments:

Participants pay a small fee for activities/events/programs, however LEEP does subsidize some of the expense. Program fees must be paid in full for each program before or on the date of event. Payments may be mailed in advance to LEEP or brought in person to the activity/event/program. Receipts will be provided upon request. No pre-payment will be accepted for unpublished activities/events/programs.

Financial Help:

Scholarships:

LEEP recognizes that participants look forward to their favorite activity/event/program, but sometimes financial resources are limited. Individuals may come into the LEEP office and fill out a short scholarship form before the event and get up to 50% of their costs covered for an activity/event/program. This can be used for special events, night activities, and Special Olympics sports. Scholarships do not cover transportation at this time. Applications can also be found online at www.mankatoleep.org. All scholarships are given at the discretion of the Executive Director. Scholarships are limited per event.

Please Note: Scholarships may not be used for LEEP membership dues and cannot be used to pay for an outstanding balance on a participant's account.

Financial Difficulties:

If a LEEP participant finds him/herself in a difficult financial situation, please call the LEEP office and the LEEP staff will work to assist with financial arrangements. Payment plans can be established in a timely way if needed.

Participant Cancellations:

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If a participant is registered for an activity/event/program and cannot attend, they must call the LEEP office at (507) 387-5122 to cancel.

Night Activities—no less than 24 hours in advance for night activities

Special Events—by 12:00 noon on Thursday for special events.

If a participant does not cancel in the time frame described above for an activity/event/program, s/he will be charged for and expected to pay the full amount.

FOR LEEP ACTIVITY/EVENT/PROGRAM CANCELLATION UPDATES CALL 507-387-5122 (option 3)

LEEP Cancellation Policy:

Decisions regarding program cancellations will typically be decided by 2:00 p.m. on the date of scheduled event or 2 hours prior to practice for Special Olympics cancellations. Please call the LEEP cancellation line at 507-387-5122 (option 3) and listen to the recorded message to learn whether or not an activity/event/program will be held.

PLEASE NOTE: Voice messages left at this number will not be checked or returned.

LEEP follows Mankato Area Public Schools' winter weather policy and will automatically close if school is cancelled due to weather. When possible, LEEP staff/volunteers will try to call registered participants to notify them of a cancellation in advance. Cancellation notices may also be posted on LEEP's social media accounts.

LEEP Cancellation Refund Policy:

If LEEP cancels an activity/event/program for any reason, registered participants who have paid will receive a credit in their account. LEEP asks that participants use the credit for other LEEP activities/events/programs in a timely way.

Special Event Late Fee:

LEEP reserves the right to add a **\$5 late fee** for special events that are not paid by the date that the activity takes place or starts.

LEEP may assess a monthly finance charge of \$5 on accounts with an outstanding balance. A hold will also be placed on the participant's LEEP account until the past due amount is paid. Participants may not be able to register for any LEEP activities/events/programs until their balance is paid. Participants who have accounts that are paid or are on a pre-arranged payment plan will not receive a monthly service charge. LEEP encourages participants/guardians/staff to reach out and set up a payment plan when there is an outstanding balance.

Credit/Debit Card Convenience Fee:

Credit/debit card payments will incur a minimal convenience fee and must be processed in the LEEP office during regular business hours, which are Monday – Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. **Credit/debit card convenience fees are not refundable under any circumstance.**

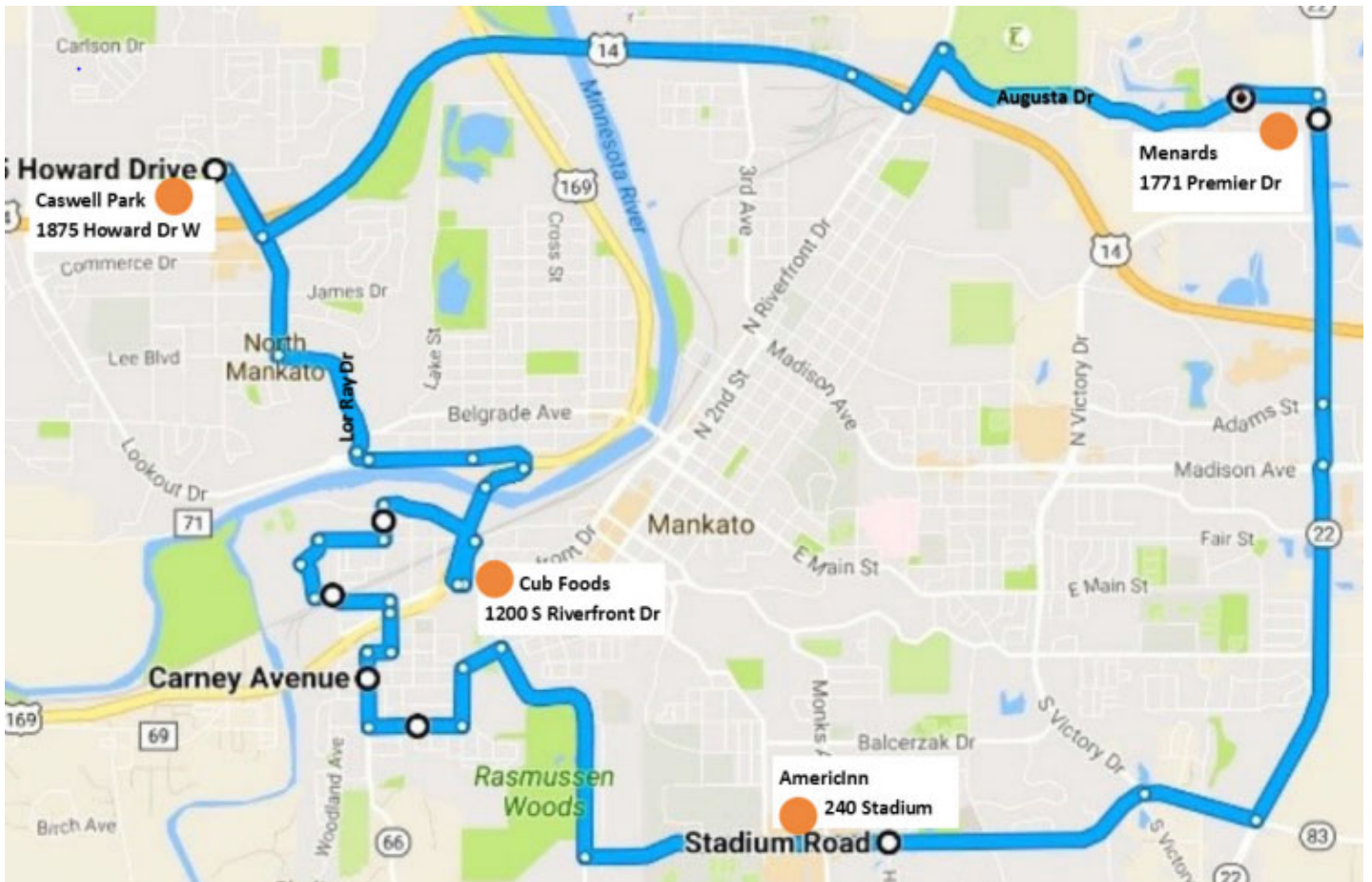
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Returned Check Fee:

If a check is returned by a financial institution for any reason, a \$25 charge will be assessed. LEEP reserves the right not to accept a check for payment from anyone who has previously had a returned check for any reason. Checks returned for any reason and not paid in full within 14 days of notification may result in further action being taken by LEEP. A participant will not be able to register for any LEEP activities/events/programs until the returned check is resolved.

Transportation Policy:

Pick-up/drop-off transportation for designated sports and events is offered for a small fee to participants living within the area outlined in blue on the map. Participants that wish to use LEEP's transportation services but live outside of the designated area should contact LEEP to learn the location of the designated stop closest to them. The address provided by participants at the time of registration will be the only pick-up and drop-off location used for the duration of activity/event/sport. LEEP staff will wait no longer than 5 minutes at each stop. LEEP is unable to accommodate any changes to pick-up/drop-off locations or times.



If participants need 1-on-1 assistance, LEEP is not currently able to accommodate staff/companions in the LEEP van due to limited space. Participants are welcome to meet LEEP at the activity/event/program location and participate in the event with the other participants and LEEP staff.

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Assistance with Medication/s:

All medications that LEEP staff must hold during activities/events/programs should be prepackaged in individual envelopes with detailed directions and handed directly to LEEP staff. A "Consent to Dispense Form" must be completed and signed by staff/guardian for each individual participant. LEEP staff are not certified to administer medication, but LEEP staff may dispense individually prepackaged prescription and over-the-counter medications.

Participants should have a plan (e.g. allergy, seizure, fall, etc.) on file with LEEP so LEEP staff know what steps to take for those with known medical conditions that require emergency treatments. **LEEP is not able to administer seizure rescue medications, administer epipens/auto-injectors, or use any medical devices necessary for treatment during a medical emergency. The emergency treatment prescribed for participants should always be with the participant at activities/events/programs so that first responders are able to treat the participant in a timely way.**

Any questions about medications should be asked well before participation in LEEP activities/events/programs to ensure that the proper plan is in place should the participant experience a medical emergency.

Participant Supervision:

LEEP is not responsible for supervision of participants before or after designated program start and end times. **Parents/guardians/staff should note that it is their responsibility to ALWAYS check participants in with LEEP staff as well as to pick up participants at the scheduled end of the activity/event/program.**

Parents/guardians/staff must be available to be contacted at any time during an activity/event/program for emergency purposes.

At any time, if LEEP staff feel they cannot provide safe, appropriate supervision during a program, LEEP reserves the right to contact parents/guardians/staff and require them to pick up the participant from an activity/event/program. If there are ongoing concerns, LEEP may require that the participant have a parent/guardian/staff accompany him/her to future activities/events/programs.

LEEP is not a primary care giving organization. LEEP staff are not trained in the areas of personal cares, behavior management, physical interventions (holds), or medication administration. LEEP participants who have needs in these areas are required to have a parent/guardian/staff present at activities/events/programs to ensure their individual needs are met. Personal care tasks include but are not limited to: assistance with toileting, personal hygiene, feeding, cleaning/bathing, dressing, etc. If LEEP recognizes a change in a participants' needs over time, LEEP staff will reach out to parents/guardians/staff to have a conversation about their observations and how best to proceed in order to meet the needs of the participant in the future.

LEEP may require any participant who has had a history of physical aggression or inappropriate sexual conduct to be accompanied by a parent/guardian/staff to all LEEP events.

The LEEP Board of Directors and/or the Executive Director reserve the right to review each LEEP participants' needs on an individual and ongoing basis to determine the appropriate supervision needed to ensure the safety, wellbeing, and enjoyment of all LEEP participants.

LEEP Participants Who Need Physical Assistance:

If LEEP participants need physical assistance to safely participate in LEEP activities/events/programs, they need to bring a parent/guardian/staff to assist them. LEEP is not able to lift, position, or transfer participants; provide significant assistance to participants getting in or out of the LEEP van or other means of transportation; or regularly assist those with significant balance issues whether or not they use assistive equipment (wheelchairs, cane, crutches, hand crutches, walker, etc.).

Assistance with Spending Money:

LEEP offers participants optional oversight of their spending money. LEEP requires participants who need assistance with money management to turn in all funds and the Spending Assistance Form to LEEP staff at program check-in. The form will help LEEP staff to document and track expenditures of the participant and funds will be placed in an individual envelope with the participant's name. This form is available at LEEP.

LEEP staff will not assume responsibility of a participant's money unless the form is completed and signed. Participants may choose to handle their own money independently without any assistance from LEEP staff.

Participants Prepared to Participate:

LEEP requires that participants are properly prepared and dressed to participate in LEEP activities/events/programs. Participants should be dressed appropriately for the anticipated weather and have any other items they need to help keep them safe and healthy. In winter participants should be dressed in a winter jacket in addition to wearing winter boots, a scarf, mittens/gloves, a hat/earmuffs, etc. During summer and warmer, more humid months participants should be dressed in cooler clothes (shorts, t-shirts, etc.) or light-weight clothing that blocks the sun; and have a hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, insect repellent, etc. as needed. Layering of clothing is a good idea, especially during activities/events/programs that last for several hours or more. When possible, LEEP participants should bring water bottles filled only with water and labeled with their names to help them to stay hydrated at all times.

LEEP participants are asked to dress appropriately at all times. Please NO low-cut shirts, tank tops or tube tops; short shorts/skirts; explicit or derogatory writing on clothing, etc. The appropriateness of clothing will be determined by LEEP staff.

LEEP staff members reserve the right to send participants home without participating in the activity/event/program if they are not properly prepared or dressed for the activity/event/ program and/or the anticipated weather. In this situation the participant's account may not be credited/refunded.

Policy Enforcement:

By signing and having a witness also sign the Participant Membership Form, LEEP participants and parents/guardians/staff agree to follow the LEEP Participant Code of Conduct and all membership policies listed above. The Executive Director will have discretion to interpret the policies and make final determinations in unique situations that may arise.