

# **HOWELL TOWNSHIP POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE PARENT HANDBOOK**



**BEFORE AND AFTER CARE PROGRAM**

**SEPTEMBER 2021 – JUNE 2022**

# HOWELL TOWNSHIP POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE MISSION STATEMENT

The Howell Township Police Athletic League mission in our community is to give every child the opportunity to participate in everyday childhood activities in a safe and caring environment.

The Police Athletic League does this through a number of programs and activities. The Police Athletic League goal is to provide diversity in our program in order to reach the greatest number of young people possible. We also strive to foster a partnership between youth and police officers in the community. This is a tremendous asset. Whenever you have young people in the community playing, working, and interacting with law enforcement, the entire community will benefit.



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## COMMUNICATION

The Howell Township Police Athletic League believes that it is very important to maintain an open path of communication with our families. The PAL will regularly distribute information from your child's program site that will be of interest to you. Information will be forwarded to you via your email. Please ensure that the PAL Main Office has all of your up-to-date contact information.

## REGISTRATION

**IMPORTANT:** All parents/guardians who wish to register in any Howell Police Athletic League childcare program are required to do so by utilizing our client software, **ELEYO**. All children must be registered prior to the beginning of the Howell School District academic year in order to attend the PAL Before Care or After Care program on the first day of school in September.

## TUITION

Tuition is due on the first day of each month in advance of service. Tuition is payable in ten installments beginning September 1 and ending June 1.

Monthly payments can be made by credit card or electronic funds transfer (EFT). Clients must fill out an Automatic Billing Authorization Form at the time of registration. Your account will be charged on or about the first of each month.

The monthly payment will be in accordance with the program you have selected and the attendance frequency indicated on your requested and approved **ELEYO** Registration Form that you have submitted and at the agreed upon rate.

Tuition not received 10 days after the payment due date is considered delinquent. A late fee will be charged to your account. Frequent delinquent payments may lead to your child being removed from the program. Any collection and/or legal fees required to collect delinquent payments will be at the expense of the parent/guardian.

## TUITION CALCULATION

The Howell Police Athletic League before and after school childcare programs, held on site at Howell Township School District locations, are academic school year programs available September through June every day that the district is in session. The monthly tuition rate will be in accordance with the childcare program, schedule type and number of school days that fall within the schedule you have selected during the on-line **ELEYO** registration process. Any subsequent change requests you submit will also affect the monthly tuition rate. More

specifically, the monthly tuition rate will be calculated based on our daily rates and the number of school days you have selected in each month. As such, the tuition amount billed and the payment amount required will vary month to month.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Tuition Discounts may be available for siblings enrolled in PAL school based childcare programs. For additional discount information, please contact the PAL Main Office at 732 919-2825.

### **ADDITIONAL FEES**

Additional fees may be charged for the following services:

- Unscheduled additional days or drop-in days.
- Schedule changes.
- Late pick-ups.

Any additional fees are billed and charged immediately upon the scheduling of the service requested and/or provided.

### **PARENTS' CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Howell Township Police Athletic League expects parents and guardians to be respectful and cooperative with our PAL supervisor, staff and to all children. Any parent or guardian who we feel is disrespectful, disruptive, threatening, uncooperative, or inappropriate will risk their child's expulsion from the program. Parents are not permitted to approach or discipline other PAL children in our program. A child may also be removed from the program due to a parent or guardians habitual tardiness when picking up the child. Removal is also possible due to an overdue account.

### **ARRIVAL, DEPARTURE AND RELEASE OF CHILDREN**

#### **AM ARRIVAL PROCEDURES**

At this time, and until further notice, all Howell PAL before school locations will open at 6:30 AM. Please do not arrive prior to the opening time, your child will not be allowed entry.

**IMPORTANT:** Due to COVID-19 protocol, parents will now escort their child to their specific PAL childcare location entry point. Prior to officially receiving the child, the New Jersey State licensing and New Jersey Health Department COVID-19 questionnaire must be completed. Your child's temperature will also be taken.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The following conditions are mandatory exclusions to accepting a child into our care:

- A temperature exceeding 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Exhibiting any of the COVID-19 symptoms listed on the questionnaire.
- Recent contact with any individual exhibiting any of the COVID-19 symptoms listed on the questionnaire.
- Recent contact with any individual who has tested positive with COVID-19.

**PARENTS/GUARDIANS:** It is strongly recommended that parents/guardians keep home any child exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms.

As previously stated, our PAL supervisor will be available to answer any site-specific questions, or to discuss you any issues or concerns particular to your child. Please share any information that may be valuable to our supervisor and staff concerning your child. Open communication and the sharing of information can assist our staff in appropriately managing any situation that may arise involving your child. All shared information will be kept confidential.

### **PM PROCEDURES**

Properly registering your child and your child's attending schedule is critical. Please keep your schedule up to date by updating your schedule in our **ELEYO** software as needed. It is also important to inform your child's district school of what days your child will be attending our childcare program and of any changes in schedule.

It is also important to notify the PAL if your child will be attending school on a particular day, but not after school care, or if your child will be absent from school. Attendance is taken at our PAL location according to scheduled days. This notification will eliminate undue concern about a child not arriving at our location as planned.

### **PICK-UP**

Please allow yourself sufficient travel time to pick up your child promptly. The PAL after school sites are scheduled to close at 6:00 PM. Parent/guardians will be charged a late fee for late pick-up.

At pick-up time, please take the time to meet with our supervisor and staff members.

Parents, guardians and other adults approved for your child's pick-up are required to possess proper identification. Please have identification available.

## **UNSCHEDULED ADDITIONAL DAY PROGRAM**

The unscheduled additional day or drop-in day program is designed as an as-needed service. Please make sure your child is aware that they will be coming to the PAL site on the day requested. Parents/Guardians must also notify your child's district school to avoid any confusion at dismissal time. Fees for the unscheduled additional day will be billed when the unscheduled additional day is scheduled.

## **ABSENCES**

Please notify the PAL Main Office if your child will not be attending our childcare program for any reason. You must also notify the district school your child attends.

Tracking a child absent without proper notification, therefore a child considered "missing" from our site, is a critical step in ensuring the safety and security of our children. It involves our site staff, district school staff, our PAL Main Office staff and others during at a critical point in the day at school dismissal. Therefore, a parent who neglects to call their child out repeatedly will risk expulsion from the program.

If your child is scheduled for after school care and is sent home from school due to illness or for any other reason, or is picked up at school that day, or is being transported home that day by district bussing, you are responsible for calling the PAL Main Office before the start of the aftercare session to advise our office of your child absence at aftercare.

If it is your child's scheduled day for PAL childcare and he or she will be attending another function at their district school, the PAL Main Office must also be notified. You must let us know if the child is to attend PAL aftercare after the school function or if they will be picked up. This notification ensures that your child is properly accounted for and is properly supervised at all times.

## **ESCORT AND RELEASE OF CHILDREN**

In order to provide a safe environment for your child, we ask that you please maintain an updated approved pick-up list in your child's file, so that we may ensure your child's safe return home. If there are any changes in the authorized pick-up list, please notify the PAL Main Office immediately. Authorized pick-up persons will be required to show proper identification.

Each child will be released only to the child's parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) to take the child from the site or to assume responsibility for the child in an emergency if the parent(s) cannot be reached

If the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) fails to pick up a child at the time of the center's daily closing, the site shall ensure that:

- The child is supervised at all times;
- Staff members will attempt, and will continue to attempt, to contact the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s).
- The PAL Directors will be notified.
- **PLEASE NOTE:** If at one hour or more after closing time arrangements for releasing the child to his/her parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) have failed, PAL staff will continue to supervise the child at the center. **However, be advised** that the PAL Directors may call the Family Services 24 hour Child Abuse Hotline (1-877-NJ-Abuse), (1-877-652-2873) to seek assistance in caring for the child until the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) is located and able to pick up the child.

If any parent or person authorized by the parent/guardian arrives at a PAL location to pick up a child and appears to be physically and/or emotionally impaired, to the extent that in the judgment of the supervisor and/or staff member, the child would be placed at risk of harm if released to such an individual, the PAL staff site will ensure that:

- The child will not be released to such an impaired individual.
- The PAL Directors will be notified.
- Staff members will attempt to contact the child's other parent/guardian or listed approved pick-up individual.
- **Be advised**, if no alternative arrangement can be made, that the PAL Directors may call the Family Services 24 hour Child Abuse Hotline (1-877-NJ-Abuse), (1-877-652-2873) to seek assistance in caring for the child.
- **Also be advised**, the Howell Police Athletic League Directors, at their discretion, may notify the Howell Township Police Department to assist in evaluating any impaired individual so that they may take appropriate lawful action.

### **COURT ORDERS**

If a non-custodial parent has been denied access, or granted limited access, to a child by a court order, the PAL Main Office must secure documentation to that effect. The PAL must maintain a copy of such order on file, and will comply with all terms of the court order.

In cases where an enrolled child is the subject of a court order (i.e.: Custody Order, Restraining Order or Protection from Abuse Order), the PAL must be provided with a **signed, certified copy** of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly



followed. In absence of a court order on file with the PAL, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. The PAL cannot, without a signed, certified court order, limit the access of one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself, where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, we suggest that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued. If conflicting court orders are presented, the most recently dated court order will be followed. Once presented with a Protection from Abuse or a Restraining Order, the PAL is obligated to follow the order for the entire period it is in effect. Employees of the PAL cannot and will not allow the orders of the court to be violated.

**THE PAL WILL REPORT ANY VIOLATIONS OF THE COURT ORDERS TO THE COURT, AND, IF NECESSARY, TO THE HOWELL TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT.**



#### **HOWELL TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHEDULED CLOSURES**

Whenever the Howell Township School District has a scheduled closure, to include Winter and Spring session closings and holidays, PAL school based childcare sites will also be closed.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The PAL does offer a fee-based childcare program at the Southard Community Enrichment Center, formerly Southard School, during Howell Township School District scheduled days off and during extended school district recess. This childcare location is also administered and staffed by PAL employees, and is the headquarters and houses the main office of the Howell PAL. Additional information is available at your childcare site, at the PAL Main Office and on our PAL website.

#### **HOWELL TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT UNSCHEDULED CLOSURES**

If the Howell Township School District closes their schools due to inclement weather, your corresponding PAL childcare site will also be closed. If there is a Howell Township School District early dismissal for any reason, including inclement weather and/or emergencies, the corresponding PAL childcare site will remain open to receive enrolled children at dismissal.

During inclement weather or other unforeseen emergencies, parents/guardians may be contacted and asked to pick up their children early, if possible.

PAL before school childcare sites will not be open on Howell Township School District delayed opening days. The after school session remains open as scheduled. No refunds will be given for emergency closing days.

### **SNACKS**

A snack will be provided to each child at our PAL after school programs. If your child has food allergies and/or is on a restricted diet, please inform the PAL staff accordingly. If your child would prefer, you may send an alternate or additional snack from home.

### **ITEMS FROM HOME**

The PAL cannot and will not be responsible for any personal items lost or stolen. We ask all parents/guardians to discuss this with your children, and decide what personal items are appropriate to bring to school and childcare. The PAL strongly discourages the sharing of personal items.

Because PAL staff cannot differentiate between one students' belongings and the belongings of another, we ask that all items be labeled with your child's name whenever possible

### **HOWELL PAL HEALTH POLICIES**

Please do not send your child to any Howell PAL childcare program if they have exhibited any signs of communicable diseases within the past 24 hours. If your child becomes ill while at the PAL program you will be notified and expected to pick up your child or arrange to have them picked up as soon as possible.

In order for our staff to administer medicine, whether prescription or non-prescription, a detailed physician's note along with a note from you with proper instructions must be on file at the PAL Main Office and at our childcare site. Additionally, the parent/guardian must complete a PAL Medical Release Form. Prescription medication must be stored in its original container with the prescription label still on it. If these are not submitted, medication cannot be given.

In the event of an emergency or accident, all efforts will be made to contact you immediately. If we are unable to reach you or your emergency contacts, an ambulance will be summoned if necessary.

### **PAL POLICY ON THE MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

(As per the New Jersey Department of Human Services, Division of Youth and Family Services licensing requirements.)

If a child exhibits any of the following symptoms, he/she should not attend any PAL childcare program. If such symptoms occur once at PAL, the child will be separated from the other children and you will be called to take him/her home.

- Severe pain or discomfort.
- Acute diarrhea.
- Episodes of acute vomiting.
- Elevated oral temperature of 100.4 Fahrenheit or above.
- Sore throat or severe coughing.
- Yellow eyes or jaundice skin.
- Red eyes with discharge.
- Infected, untreated skin patches.
- Difficult or rapid breathing.
- Skin lesions that are weeping or bleeding.
- Swollen joints.
- Skin rashes lasting longer than 24 hours.
- Visibly enlarged lymph nodes.
- Stiff neck.
- Blood in urine.
- Nasal discharge that is unclear.

Once the child is symptom free, (with an elevated temperature the child must be fever free for 24 hours) or have a physician's note stating that he/she no longer poses a serious health risk to himself/herself or others, he/she may return to PAL.

#### **TABLE OF EXCLUDABLE COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

If a child contracts any of the following diseases, you must report it to the PAL Main Office immediately. The child may not return to PAL without a physician's note stating that the child presents no risk to himself/herself or others.

Respiratory Illnesses, Gastrointestinal Illnesses, Contact Illness

- Chicken Pox
- German Measles
- Hemophilus
- Measles
- Meningococcus
- Mumps
- Strep Throat
- Tuberculosis
- Whooping Cough
- Giardia Lamblia
- Hepatitis A
- Influenza

- Shigella
- Impetigo
- Lice
- Salmonella A
- Scabies

As required by N.J.A.C. 10:122-7.10 (a). If your child is exposed to any reportable disease while at PAL, you will be notified in writing.

Additionally, the State of New Jersey Department of Human Services requires that all school-age child care programs obtain a written statement from each child's parents indicating (1) that the child is in good health and can participate in the normal activities of the program; and (2) any and all conditions or special needs that may require special accommodations or increased supervision.

Although it is not the intent to exclude those children who require special accommodations or increased care or supervision, the PAL reserves the right to assess each child's needs on an individual basis. The PAL may exclude a child if their needs cannot be met, or, may discuss with parents the option of an additional fee to appropriately staff to meet those needs.

**PLEASE NOTE: The Howell PAL Health Policies, New Jersey Department Of Children and Families mandates, and the New Jersey Department of Health mandates have changed dramatically under our current COVID-19 environment. Please see the most current COVID-19 requirements on our website.**

### **BEHAVIOR/DISCIPLINE**

The PAL policy is to work closely with any child who is misbehaving. Children who continue to misbehave and/or not follow the rules set forth to the group at the beginning of the year will receive a disciplinary form. This form will be placed in the child's file after being reviewed and signed by a parent. When a child receives three disciplinary forms, he/she may be suspended from the PAL program for up to three days. Upon return, if the behavior does not improve, the parent will be required to withdraw their child from the program. If the staff considers a particular behavioral incident to be particularly severe, the child may be expelled from the program immediately. Judging the severity of an incident or the need to write up an incident will be at the discretion of the PAL Site Supervisor. Please Note: if a child is suspended, no credit or reimbursement will be given for the days missed. If a child is expelled from the program, no credit or reimbursement will be given for the remainder of that month.

### **GUIDELINES FOR POSITIVE DISCIPLINE**

Positive discipline is a process of teaching children how to behave appropriately. Positive discipline respects the rights of the individual child, the group, and the adult.

Positive discipline is different from punishment. Punishment tells children what they should not do; positive discipline tells the children what they should do. Punishment teaches fear; positive discipline teaches self-esteem.

Staff will use positive discipline by planning ahead. Staff will:

- Anticipate and eliminate potential problems.
- Have a few consistent, clear rules that are explained to the children and understood by adults.
- Have a well-planned daily schedule.
- Plan for elements of fun and humor.
- Include some group decision-making.
- Provide time and space for each child to be alone.
- Make it possible for each child to feel he/she has had some positive impact on the group.
- Provide the structure and support children need to resolve their differences.

Staff will use positive discipline by intervening when necessary. Staff will:

- Re-direct to a new activity to change the focus of a child's behavior.
- Provide individualized attention to help the child deal with a particular situation.
- Use time-out by removing a child for a few minutes from the area or activity so that he/she may gain self-control. (One minute for each year of the child's age.)
- Divert the child's attention and remove the child from the area of conflict.
- Provide alternative activities and acceptable ways to release feelings.
- Point out natural or logical consequences of children's behavior.
- Offer a choice only if there are two acceptable options.
- Criticize the behavior, not the child. Will not say "bad boy" or "bad girl." Instead, we will say, "That is not allowed here."

Staff will use positive discipline by showing respect and encouragement. Staff will:

- Catch the kid being good. Respond to and reinforce positive behaviors; acknowledge or praise to let the child know you approve of what he/she is doing.
- Provide positive reinforcement through rewards for good behavior.
- Use encouragement rather than competition, comparison or criticism.
- Overlook small annoyances.

### **EXPULSION GUIDELINES**

Causes for Immediate Expulsion (This is not a complete list):

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or to himself/herself.
- Parents/Guardian exhibits verbal abuse to staff in front of enrolled children.
- Parent/Guardian threatens physical or intimidating actions toward staff members.

Parent/Guardian Actions Leading to a Child's Expulsion (This is not a complete list):

- Failure to complete required forms including the child's records.
- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child.

- Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payments.
- Verbal or physical abuse toward staff.

Child's Action Leading to Expulsion (This is not a complete list):

- Failure of the child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time.
- Excessive biting.
- Uncontrollable tantrums/ repeated angry outbursts.
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children in the program.

A Child Will Not Be Expelled if a child's parent/guardian:

- Questions the site regarding policies and procedures.
- Makes a complaint to the Office of Licensing regarding a center's alleged violations of the licensing requirements.
- Reports alleged abuse or neglect occurring at the center

#### **SCHEDULE FOR SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION:**

If the remedial actions above have not worked, the child's parent/guardian will be advised verbally and in writing about the child/parent/guardian behavior warranting a suspension or expulsion. A suspension is meant to be for a specific period of time so that the parent/ guardian may work on the child's behavior or to come to an agreement with the site.

- The parent/guardian will be informed regarding the length of the suspension period.
- The parent/guardian will be informed about the expected behavioral changes required in order for the child or parent to return to the site.
- The parent/guardian may be given a specific suspension date that allows the parent sufficient time to seek alternate childcare.
- Failure of the child/parent to satisfy the terms of the plan may result in permanent expulsion from the site.

#### **PROACTIVE ACTIONS IN ORDER TO PREVENT SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION:**

- Staff will try to redirect the child from negative behavior.
- Staff will reassess site environment, and the grouping and supervision.
- Staff will use positive methods and language while disciplining children.
- Staff will reward appropriate behaviors.
- Staff will consistently apply consequences for rules.
- Child will be given verbal warnings.
- Child will be given time to regain control.
- Child's disruptive behavior will be documented and maintained in confidentiality.
- Parent/guardian will be notified verbally.
- Parent/guardian will be given written copies of the disruptive behaviors that might lead to expulsion.
- The director, site staff and parent/guardian may have a conference to discuss how to promote positive behaviors.

- The PAL may recommend an evaluation by the local school district child study team.
- The PAL may recommend an evaluation by a professional consultation on premises.

**Subsequent to professional evaluation and recommendation, PAL officials and parents/guardians will meet to discuss cooperative proactive efforts, and then decide if the child can appropriately continue in pal care.**

## **DIVISION OF YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES NOTICE**

Any person who has reasonable cause to believe that an enrolled child has been, or is being, subjected to any form of abuse is required by the State of New Jersey to report their concern immediately to the Division of Youth and Family Services, Child Abuse Hotline, at 1-877-NJ-ABUSE

Alleged abuse may include physical neglect, physical abuse, and/or sexual abuse.

PAL staff members have received training in identifying physical and behavioral indicators of neglect and abuse and will report any suspected abuse.

Parents and guardians may also report suspected abuse by calling the same Child Abuse Hotline, 1-877-NJ-ABUSE.

When reporting, callers will be asked to provide all available information regarding the child in question, the alleged abuse, all physical and/or behavioral indicators, and any other pertinent information.

When reporting, callers will be asked how they came to discover the alleged abuse.

When reporting, callers will be asked to identify themselves, but may choose to remain anonymous. All calls are confidential.

If you, a parent/guardian or concerned citizen, are unsure about any alleged incident you have become aware of, or if you have questions concerning information that may lead to a reported incident, please feel free to contact the PAL Main Office to discuss your concerns with the PAL Executive Director and/or the PAL Education and Program Director.

The Executive Director and Program Director have extensive police backgrounds, and are available to assist you with deciding to report and reporting, when deemed appropriate.