



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Akron Area YMCA

Code of Conduct

for YMCA Members, Participants, Guests and Third Parties

The term “consumer” refers to any person of any age (adult or youth) visiting or involved in YMCA facilities, programs, and services.

The Akron Area YMCA is committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for all.

Abuse or Mistreatment

Our association’s top priority is keeping consumers safe. Any form of abuse or mistreatment of consumers, employees, and volunteers is prohibited. Use of abusive, obscene, or profane language, including racial, religious, gender identity, or sexual references will not be tolerated.

Bullying

Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional, is repeated over time, and involves an imbalance of power or strength. Bullying can take on various forms including physical bullying, verbal bullying, nonverbal or relational bullying, cyberbullying, sexualized bullying, and hazing.

Anyone who sees an act of bullying, and who then encourages it, is engaging in bullying. This applies to all consumers, employees, and volunteers.

Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco

Use of alcoholic beverages, drugs, and tobacco/vaping products while at the Y is prohibited. Consumers who appear to be under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or illicit substances will not be permitted to participate in any program and will be asked to leave the premises.

Weapons

Weapons, and items that may be considered weapons, are prohibited. This includes laser pointers. Anyone found to be in possession of such items will be required to leave and the items may be confiscated. The authorities may be notified as appropriate.

Violence

Violence and threats of violence will not be tolerated at the Y, on our grounds, in our facilities, in other facilities being utilized or visited by our association, or during association-sponsored activities and events. Employees are available to assist in the resolution of differences.

Sexually-Explicit Materials

Everyone in the YMCA is prohibited from accessing, displaying, producing, and/or distributing pornography or sexually-explicit materials on our association's property or involved in our services.

Disruptive Behavior

The YMCA is committed to providing a safe, caring, healthy and respectful environment for all members and guests. To promote these values, we ask all individuals to act appropriately at all times when they are using our facilities, participating in our programs, or attending any event as a spectator. The following conduct may be grounds for removal from the YMCA, suspension, or termination of membership as determined by the YMCA in its sole discretion:

1. Inappropriate attire, such as clothing that is overly revealing or containing vulgar or discriminatory language / images, obscene gestures, or other content that is inappropriate for a facility serving children.
2. Physical contact with another person in an angry or threatening manner, or intentional physical contact that injures another person.
3. Threatening, hostile, or vulgar language including swearing, name calling or shouting.
4. Any demonstration of sexual activity or sexual contact with another person.
5. Intimidation or harassment by words, gestures, body language or any other menacing behavior.
6. Theft or attempted theft, or behavior that results in destruction of property.
7. Carrying or concealing a weapon, devices or an object that may be used as a weapon, including guns, knives, and explosive devices.
8. Providing personal instruction / training / coaching to YMCA members as a non-authorized provider.
9. Using, possessing, and/or being under the influence of illegal or harmful chemicals/substances or alcohol on YMCA property, in YMCA vehicles or at off-site YMCA programs locations.

10. Using tobacco or tobacco-like products such as e-cigarettes, vape pens, or other vaping products, on YMCA property, in YMCA vehicles or at offsite YMCA program locations.

11. Any other conduct of an inappropriate, threatening or offensive nature determined by the YMCA to be inconsistent with its mission and values.

If any member or guest feels uncomfortable confronting a person regarding conduct in violation of this policy, they should immediately report the behavior to a staff member. Staff members are ready to help when these situations arise.

Photos and Audio/Video Recording

The use of audio, camera and video recording devices, including the recording and photography functions of cell phones, are prohibited in all YMCA facilities owned or leased unless there is implied authorization.

- The use of these devices is strictly prohibited in the Child Watch area, Wellness Center, free weight room, gymnasium, locker rooms, restrooms, and pool areas.
- Implied authorization is when a person is taking a picture, using an audio device, or taking video of a member of their family, family friends, or others from whom prior permission has been obtained.

PROTECTING OUR YOUTH

Because our association is dedicated to maintaining zero tolerance for child abuse, it is imperative that everyone actively participates in the protection of our youth.

If you observe, suspect, or learn of any suspicious or inappropriate behaviors and/or policy violations on the part of employees, volunteers, or other consumers, it is your personal responsibility to immediately report your observations.

Report any suspicions

- **To the branch Executive Director, and/or**
- **To the Vice President of Membership Branch Operations at 330-745-9622, and/or**
- **To the State of Ohio anonymous line at 855-642-4453 (855-OH-CHILD), and/or**
- **By completing the anonymous form on <https://www.akronymca.org/youth-protection-resources>, and/or**

- **by contacting the local or state authorities.**

Examples of suspicious or inappropriate behaviors between employees/volunteers and youth:

- Violation of any abuse prevention policies outlined by our association
- Buying gifts for an individual youth
- Making suggestive comments to the youth
- Picking favorites

One-on-One Interactions with Youth

Most child abuse occurs when an adult is alone with a youth, or when a youth is alone with another youth. Our association aims to reduce or eliminate these situations, and thus we prohibit private one-on-one interactions unless approved in advance by the association administration and parent. If you observe one-on-one interactions between employees/volunteers and youth, you should report this. Any romantic or otherwise sexual relationship between a youth or teen and an employee/ volunteer is strictly prohibited.

Electronic Communication with Youth

Individual direct calls or text messaging between youth and employees/volunteers is not allowed, unless approved in writing by a program supervisor and parent. Employees/volunteers will only message youth via methods that include parents/guardians (such as the app "Remind"). Employees and volunteers are not permitted to befriend/follow youth on social networking or social media sites or be involved with youth in any variation of online gaming. Youth will comply with the association's policies governing the use of personal mobile communication devices while in programming.

Our Youth Protection Policies and Procedures are published in our website – <https://www.akronymca.org/youth-protection-resources>

Name of Individual/Organization

Representative Title (if applies)

Signature

Date