



# Park Advisory Board Memorandum

---

August 16, 2011

Page 1 of 2

**SUBJECT:** Concussion Awareness for Youth Athletes

**RECOMMENDATION:** It is recommended that the Park Advisory Board review and make recommendations a draft procedure for a Concussion Awareness Program within Moorhead Parks and Recreation.

**BACKGROUND / KEY POINTS:** The Minnesota State Legislature passed a new law, which will go into effect September 1, 2011, aimed at preventing and identifying concussions in youths participating in sports. (Attachment 1)

In an effort to increase awareness of concussion symptoms, reduce the potential for both short and long-term impact in young athletes and comply with Minnesota State Statute 121A.37-38, the City of Moorhead will require all youth sports participants, parents, coaches, league officials and youth sports program administrators to participate in a program aimed at prevention, recognition and response to concussions. (Attachment 2)

This is a Minnesota law, but other states are adopting similar legislation. North Dakota does have a Concussion Awareness Law but it is centralized in the School System. Youth programs sponsored by North Dakota Parks and Recreation Departments were excluded from compliance of this law.

**Key Points:** We have attached a draft procedure for your review. (Attachment 3)

- This procedure will guide park staff, coaches, and supervisors in administering the Concussion Awareness Program for Moorhead Parks and Recreation.
- Training for umpires, officials, administrators and coaches will be completed online. The certification is good for three years.
- Volunteer coaches are not exempt from the certification requirement. They also must complete the training.
- The Center for Disease Control has assembled an online educational program to assist with the training and comply with the statute. This training program is the recommended training program and will be used by Moorhead Parks and Recreation.
  
- Should volunteer coaches not have access to a computer, they are welcome to come into the Park office and complete this training or a training course will be set up for their convenience.
- As per the statute, information must be provided to the parent/guardian and participant and a signature obtained acknowledging that they received the information.
- Organizations using/renting space or facilities from the City of Moorhead to conduct youth sports will be required to demonstrate full compliance with all provisions of this policy by running a Concussion Prevention and Awareness Program.
- Background information and participation data is provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). For additional information about concussion prevention, awareness and symptom recognition, go to: [http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online\\_training.html](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html).

**Challenges in complying with this legislation include:**

- Obtaining parental signature at the time of registration would make online registration and call in registration obsolete. Both of these methods have become the most popular way for parents/guardians to register but the requirement for this signature at registration would force them to come into the Park Office.
- Currently if a child is enrolled in multiple programs it will require the completion of multiple forms. Clarification on this item is forthcoming from conversations with the Minnesota Recreation and Park Association and the State of Minnesota.
- Additional tracking of all coaches, officials and administrations to assure that they have completed the on-line training course prior to coaching will be time consuming for staff.
- In 2003 we went to a complete volunteer coaching staff for many of the sports programs offered by Moorhead Parks and Recreation. There is some risk that this additional requirement could deter citizens from volunteering to coach.
- Throughout the season additional coaches are added as needed. We do require background checks on all coaches but they will also have to complete this training course. This training requirement will slow that process down and potentially affect the programming with cancellations due to a lack of coaching.
- Tracking compliance of groups using City of Moorhead Parks facilities will also be challenging.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:** The City of Moorhead Parks and Recreation Division complies with all Minnesota State laws.

**POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:** Reviewing operating procedures is within the scope of work of the Park Advisory Board.

Respectfully Submitted:



Holly Heitkamp  
Recreation Division Manager, CSD

**Department:** CSD/Parks & Recreation  
**Prepared by:** Holly Heitkamp, Recreation Division Manager

**Attachments:** 1- Concussion Awareness Legislation  
2- Concussion Awareness Information  
3- Concussion Awareness Draft Procedure