



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Code of Conduct

Family YMCA of Lancaster & Fairfield County

Purpose & Scope:

The Family YMCA of Lancaster and Fairfield County is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment reflecting our values of caring, honesty, respect, responsibility, and integrity. This Code applies to all members, guests, participants, volunteers, and staff.

Non-Discrimination & Equity Commitment:

The YMCA does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, citizenship status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status, or any other protected characteristic.

Values & Expected Conduct:

Members and guests must treat others with dignity, courtesy, and respect, refraining from any language or actions that could harm, frighten, or degrade another person. Conduct that endangers safety or interferes with others use of facilities may result in suspension or termination without refund.

Grounds for Denial of Access or Membership:

The YMCA may deny access or terminate membership for sexual offenses, substance impairment, prior suspension, or behavior posing safety risks. Regular sex-offender screenings are conducted.

Prohibited Behaviors:

The following are prohibited and may result in removal, suspension, or termination:

- Angry or vulgar language, harassment, or intimidation.
- Physical conduct in an angry or threatening way.
- Any demonstration of sexual activity, sexual contact, or sexual misconduct.

Prohibited Behaviors, continued:

- Theft, vandalism, or destruction of property.
- Possession of firearms or weapons on the premises (except sworn law-enforcement officers on duty with proper identification).
- Selling or promoting products/services without prior written consent.
- Members and guests are prohibited from using a cell phone camera or any other camera for photos or video while in the YMCA unless you are photographing or videoing an approved YMCA event or competition.
- Using cameras and cell phones for any reason in the locker rooms, restrooms, saunas, steam rooms, Child Care, and shower areas is strictly prohibited.
- Sharing membership cards or credentials.
- Possessing and/or use of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or vaping products and devices while on premises.
- Any behavior that is determined to be unacceptable by the YMCA and detrimental to those we serve.

Anti-Abuse & Anti-Mistreatment Policy:

Any form of abuse or mistreatment, verbal, emotional, or physical, toward members, children, employees, volunteers, or guests is strictly prohibited, including abusive language with racial, religious, or sexual references.

Bullying, Hazing, and Sexualized Bullying:

Bullying is intentional, aggressive behavior, repeated over time, with an imbalance of power or strength. The YMCA prohibits:

- Physical bullying (hitting, pushing, kicking, pinching, restraining).
- Verbal bullying (belittling, name-calling).
- Relational bullying (social exclusion, friendship manipulation, gossip, intimidating gestures).
- Cyberbullying (mean/vulgar/threatening messages; sharing private information; impersonation; intentional exclusion).
- Hazing (humiliating, degrading, abusive, or endangering activities regardless of willingness).
- Sexualized bullying (sexting, exposure of private body parts, sexualized language, or innuendos).



Personal Relationship Boundaries:

Romantic relationships between participants while in programming are strongly discouraged; physical displays of affection (e.g., holding hands, sitting on laps, full-frontal hugs, kissing) are not permitted in programming. Under no circumstances shall a romantic or otherwise personal relationship exist between a participant and an employee or volunteer.

One-on-One Interaction Guidelines:

Private one-on-one interactions between adults and participants or between participants are prohibited unless approved in advance by YMCA administration; members should report observed private one-on-one interactions to staff or the front desk.

Electronic Communication & Mobile Devices:

Members and guests are prohibited from using a cell phone camera or any other camera for photos or video while in the YMCA unless you are photographing or videoing an approved YMCA event or competition. Using cameras and cell phones for any reason in the locker rooms, restrooms, saunas, steam rooms, Child Care, and shower areas is strictly prohibited. Additionally, sharing cell phones among members or participants is not permitted.

Disruptive or Inappropriate Behavior:

Disruptive behavior that compromises safety or order (e.g., throwing objects, spitting, littering, graffiti) is prohibited.

Behavior Guidelines: Appropriate vs. Inappropriate Interactions:

Appropriate Verbal Interactions

- Appropriate jokes
- Encouragement
- Praise

Inappropriate Verbal Interactions

- Name-calling
- Bullying
- Ridicule or humiliation
- Discussing sexual encounters
- Cursing
- Hazing
- Off-color or sexual jokes



Inappropriate Verbal Interactions, continued:

- Shaming
- Belittling
- Derogatory remarks
- Harsh language that may frighten, threaten, or humiliate another consumer
- Derogatory remarks about another consumer or his/her family
- Inappropriate games like Truth or Dare and Never Have I Ever

Appropriate Physical Interactions

- Side hugs
- Shoulder-to-shoulder or temple hugs
- Pats on the shoulder or back
- Handshakes
- High-fives and hand slapping
- Verbal praise
- Pats on the head when culturally appropriate
- Touching hands, shoulders, and arms
- Arms around shoulders

Inappropriate Physical Interactions

- Full-frontal hugs
- Kisses
- Showing affection in isolated areas
- Lap sitting
- Wrestling
- Piggyback rides
- Tickling
- Exposing oneself
- Any type of massage given by or to a consumer
- Any form of affection that is unwanted by the consumer or the staff or volunteer
- Compliments relating to physique or body development
- Touching bottom, chest, or genital areas
- Hitting
- Spanking
- Shaking
- Slapping
- Unnecessary restraints
- Viewing or showing others pornographic materials

Examples of Suspicious or Inappropriate Behaviors Between Employees/Volunteers and Consumers:

- Violation of any abuse prevention policies outlined by the organization
- Seeking private time or one-on-one time with consumer
- Buying gifts for individual consumer
- Making suggestive comments to consumer
- Picking favorites

Service Animals:

Service animals (dogs trained to perform tasks for a person with a disability) are welcome. Handlers must ensure animals are leashed, under control, housebroken, and vaccinated per law. Pets, emotional support animals, comfort animals, therapy dogs, and other species are not service animals under the ADA; exceptions for service animals in training may be allowed with prior written consent.

Reporting Concerns:

Members and guests should promptly report concerns, accidents, injuries, or unusual incidents to YMCA staff or the front desk. Members are encouraged to report suspected abuse, bullying, or inappropriate conduct involving employees, volunteers, adults, or participants.

Shared Responsibility:

All members share responsibility for a safe and welcoming YMCA. Failure to comply with policies or staff direction may result in immediate action, including suspension or termination.

Enforcement & Appeals:

Violations may result in immediate removal, suspension pending review, termination of membership privileges, or permanent expulsion when necessary to protect the community. An individual may submit a written appeal to the Senior Director of Operations or the Chief Executive Officer. The Senior Director of Operations or Chief Executive Officer will consider the appeal and determine the outcome. If necessary, an Appeals Committee will be formed to schedule an appeal hearing to determine the outcome.

