



# ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

For  
PARENTS AND STUDENTS



*A Christian and Classical School*

Updated 8/16

# *Regents Academy Athletic Handbook*

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## **A. PHILOSOPHY**

### **1. Extracurricular Activities**

Regents Academy seeks to provide an extracurricular activities program in order to supplement the academic program of Regents Academy middle and high school. Regents Academy recognizes that God has gifted students in a variety of ways, including abilities in athletics, drama, music, academic study, as well as in other areas. We seek to provide an opportunity for these students to develop and use their God-given ability. We believe that an extracurricular activities program enhances the atmosphere of the Regents Academy student body, providing students and parents with an opportunity to express positive school spirit. We also recognize that extracurricular activities provide an opportunity to make the programs established at Regents Academy known to the broader Nacogdoches community.

We believe that participation in extracurricular activities, especially athletics, provides a good opportunity to encourage Christian students in their relationship with and witness for Jesus Christ. We expect, and will insist upon, Christ-like character and behavior in all athletes, fans, and coaches. We expect all fans and athletes alike to limit words and actions at sporting events to those that are uplifting, encouraging, and always positive (Eph. 4:29-32). We expect this to be our behavior toward our children, our opponents, our opposing fans, and game officials, whether “home” or “away”, “ahead” or “behind” We expect every Regents person in attendance to do what Jesus would, regardless of what the scoreboard says or how our opponents may conduct themselves.

Let’s teach our children to think, speak and act in the way Jesus would at our athletic events. Thank you for your prayers and for leading our young ones by example!

### **2. Relationship to Academics**

Extracurricular activities will not take priority over the academic program at Regents Academy.

## **B. GUIDELINES FOR SPORTS PROGRAMS**

### **1. Athletic Objectives and Guidelines for Participation**

1). No Pass, No Play: Extracurricular activities will not take priority over the academic program at Regents Academy. For this reason, students who receive a failing quarterly grade are ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activities. Students who have become ineligible for sports because of a failing quarterly grade may return to athletic activities upon receipt of a following quarterly report card that has no failing grade.

A student athlete who receives a failing grade on a progress report will be placed on athletic probation. The Academic Dean will notify the applicable coach, who will warn, encourage, and exhort the student to redouble his academic efforts. A student on athletic probation whose grades do not improve may be removed from the applicable team if the coach, Academic Dean and teachers see a continuing pattern of failure. Students who have become ineligible for athletics and have been removed from a team while on probation may return

to athletic activities (with the approval of the coach and Academic Dean) upon receipt of a following quarterly report card that has no failing grade.

- 1). Each student must have written parental permission to participate.
- 2). Operating expenses for these activities will be paid by participant fees.
- 3). Any student who is unable to attend school due to illness will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities on that day.
- 4). Students are required to complete medical history forms and pass a physical examination by a doctor, as required by TAPPS, in order to participate.

## **2. Junior High School**

Regents Academy participates in junior high sports through the Christian School Athletic Conference. The purpose of the CSAC is to glorify God by providing a Christian environment where athletic competition is kept in its proper perspective, and sportsmanship and Christian character are emphasized. The CSAC includes three divisions based on location: CSAC East (schools located in Henderson and Longview), CSAC West (schools located in Tyler and Athens), and CSAC South (including Regents Academy in Nacogdoches, and Harmony Hill Christian School and St. Patrick's Catholic School, both in Lufkin). We participate in co-ed soccer, girls' and boys' basketball, and track and field.

## **3. High School**

Regents Academy participates in high school sports through the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS). The objective of the varsity level is to exhibit impeccable sportsmanship and excellence. Varsity athletics is highly competitive and advanced. At this level the athlete will be scrutinized more thoroughly in his character, ability, attitudes and skills. He will play before many witnesses, including the Lord. The most qualified athletes will be allowed on the varsity team. Playing time will be entirely at the discretion of the coach. Coaches will communicate with players about their roles, coaches' expectations, and general playing time expectations.

## **4. Practice Length**

Practices may be no longer than 2¼ hours in length for any one child except with the approval of the athletic director.

## **5. Athletic Fees**

Families are assessed an athletic fee for each student in each sport for both high school and middle school athletics. This fee must be paid before participation in any game/match. Please see the current year's Tuition and Fee Schedule for more information about athletic fees.

## **6. TAPPS Handbook on Sportsmanship**

TAPPS recognizes that independent school interscholastic athletic events must be conducted in such a manner that good sportsmanship prevails at all times. It is necessary that administrators and coaches be individually and collectively responsible for taking every possible step to promote good sportsmanship at every interscholastic event. These steps must include the provision of such things as safe and adequate facilities for participants, spectators, and officials; the best possible officials for the events; and adequate control of

spectators, players, and pre-game and post-game activities. Every effort must be made to promote a climate of wholesome competition.

Athletic competition in the TAPPS is guided by the following ideals:

The Players:

- 1). play within the rules of the game.
- 2). win with humility and lose without excuses.
- 3). respect officials and accept their decisions.
- 4). never play with intent to injure an opponent.
- 5). never forget that they represent their schools, their coaches, and their families as well as themselves.
- 6). respect the property and facilities of their opponents.

The Coaches:

- 1). inspire in their players a love for the game and the desire to win.
- 2). teach that it is better to lose fairly than to win unfairly.
- 3). show restraint and respect when dealing with officials.
- 4). serve as positive role models for their players.
- 5). hold their players accountable for unsportsmanlike behavior.

The TAPPS Schools:

- 1). have a responsibility to treat officials, opposing teams, and their spectators as guests.
- 2). have a responsibility to educate their supporters to cheer the strengths and victories of their own teams and never to denigrate the performance of opponents or officials.
- 3). will not tolerate any spectator, either adult or student, whose behavior is disrespectful toward players, officials, coaches, or other spectators.
- 4). will not permit any type of spectator behavior that detracts from the proper conduct of the game.

## **C. COACHES**

### **1. Coaches' Authority**

The coach's authority to lead their team as they deem appropriate is in keeping with the philosophies and policies of Regents Academy. The head coach is charged with conducting tryouts, determining the team roster, defining player expectations, implementing team rules, deciding student-athletes' playing time, and taking disciplinary actions whenever necessary. Student athletes are expected to completely and respectfully abide by the leadership and authority of the head coach and their assistants. Disciplinary measures may include but are not limited to increased exercise, suspension from a game, or expulsion from the team. Grievances with disciplinary measures or other issues should be taken directly to that coach first. Wisdom is advised in choosing what issues a parent should take to the coach. Please keep in mind that most parents believe that their child should be getting a majority of the playing time and that expectation is not possible or realistic when dealing with a group of athletes. When approaching a coach, parents should do so in a respectful

way and in a manner consistent with Galatians 6:1-3. If the matter is not resolved, then the athletic director should be contacted.

## **2. Parent Coaches/Assistants/Volunteers**

Volunteer coaches or assistant coaches who are also parents of team members are expected to maintain a professional detachment from the parent/child relationship while “on duty”. In other words, they act as a “parent” only after leaving the game, practice field, or court for the confines of their home.

## **D. DISCIPLINE**

### **1. Discipline Policies**

All policies for student behavior adopted by the Regents Academy Board apply to extracurricular events. The following policies include: academic probation and discipline. The same consequences for disobeying the discipline standard of the school will apply toward misbehavior during extracurricular activities.

When discipline is necessary, the coach may administer any of the following options (not limited to these options):

- 1). Suspension from part or all of practice(s).
- 2). Suspension from one or more events.
- 3). Suspension from the team, with approval of the activities director.

Parents will be notified beforehand of all major disciplinary actions. The coach is responsible to notify the activities director of any discipline. Any participation fees charged would not be refunded in the event a player is suspended from the team.

### **2. Ejections**

Any ejection from a game or match by an official will result in a minimum of a two (2) game suspension from athletic events. This applies to coaches, students, and parents. RA parents may not approach an official to discuss any issues before, during, or after a game or match, or for any other reason. Any ejection decision by an official will be adhered to by the coaches, parents, athletes, and the school administration without further discussion. (There will be no appeal.)

### **3. School Discipline Policy**

The Regents Academy Student Handbook discipline policy for students applies in full to our coaches and athletes. All consequences of discipline problems described here may be applied to athletes, including but not limited to office visits. The kind and amount of discipline (punishment) will be determined by the coaches and, if necessary, the school administrators. The discipline will be administered in the light of the individual student's problem and attitude. All discipline will be based on biblical principles, e.g. restitution, apologies (public and private), punishment restoration of fellowship, no lingering attitudes, etc. In order to maintain consistency, coaches will regularly meet with the athletic director to discuss biblical standards and school guidelines concerning discipline. It is vital for parents and students to realize that maintaining an orderly atmosphere in the school and athletics is

critical to the learning process. As in all other areas of the education at RA, *love and forgiveness* will be an integral part of the discipline of a student.

There are five basic behaviors that will *automatically* necessitate discipline from the school administrators (versus the coach). Those behaviors are the following:

- 1). *Disrespect* shown to *any* staff member, including all coaches, paid or volunteer. The staff member will be the judge of whether or not disrespect has been shown.
- 2). *Dishonesty* in any situation while at school, including lying, cheating, and stealing.
- 3). *Rebellion*, i.e. outright disobedience in response to instructions.
- 4). *Fighting*, i.e. striking in anger with the intention to harm another student.
- 5). *Obscene language*, including taking the name of the Lord in vain.

## **E. UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT**

### **1. Practice Apparel**

Appropriate footwear is required. Students may not practice barefoot, in socks or in dress shoes.

Mouth guards: RA strongly recommends mouth guards for all athletes involved in practices or games in collision sports: soccer and basketball.

### **2. Game Apparel**

Dispersal: Coaches may not distribute game uniforms until all fees and forms have been collected and approval has been given from the athletic department. Uniforms will be dispersed to the students at school before their first game. RA athletic uniforms should be worn for games only; NOT FOR PRACTICES OR P.E.!

The goal of the uniform is unity. With that in mind, we expect our athletes to dress in such a way as to promote unity over individuality.

Return: Uniforms will normally be returned by the students on the day at the conclusion of the season, or after the last game of the season.

Care: In washing uniforms at home please adhere to the instructions printed on the uniform. Please repair tears and holes and disconnected stitching as they occur.

Game shoes for all sports must be in color combinations of navy, old gold, white, and black, or combinations of those colors only.

Game socks for each team must be:

- 1). Uniform in color, style, and length.
- 2). If anything other than white socks, or socks that are issued with the uniform are used, the socks must be approved by the athletic director.

Jewelry is not permitted in any form in game events. Young ladies need to be careful about when they get their ears pierced: you do not want to do this during your sports season because the earrings will have to come out for games!

### **3. Game Day Apparel**

Regents Academy tradition is for all athletes to wear their game jersey to school on game days.

## **F. TRANSPORTATION**

### **1. Drivers**

Competent adult drivers in safe vehicles with proper restraint provisions will transport all students. Coaches are legally responsible to make sure every child has a buckled seatbelt. The athletic director, not the coaches, will establish the time that students will be released from class for participation in games held on school days.

For all games where school transportation is available, the athletic director will inform coaches of dates when they are responsible for recruiting qualified parent drivers.

All parents will be required to sign a permission form allowing their child to be transported by the school. The school will keep this form on file in the office.

Children may ride home from athletic events with parents. They must have written permission to ride home with someone other than their parent. It is permissible to write a note granting permission to ride home w/ another parent for one sports season.

Students will not be allowed to drive themselves or other students to away games. Students may drive themselves in a case where the game is off campus but considered our home field, course, or court.

### **2. Eating on Trips**

During the week (Monday-Thursday), teams will travel home from away games as soon as possible, stopping only briefly to eat, while for games on Fridays and Saturdays teams may stop to eat and take slightly longer. We will try to minimize cost as much as possible. If the game is a long distance or an extended period of time, please contact the athletic director for permission to stop. Coaches should encourage athletes to pack a “bag” meal for long road trips; or, parents may leave early from road games to bring burgers or pizza to deliver to the athletes to eat during the ride home, as long as the food is returned in such time that no delay

## **G. GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **1. Physicals**

An annual physical before playing sports is required for many students, as directed by TAPPS.

### **2. Insurance**

Regents Academy recommends that each family check with their insurance provider for adequate coverage in the event of injury, especially for collision sports. Most insurance companies provide supplemental coverage for athletics.



### **3. Missed Academic Time for Athletics**

The Regents school policy for pre-arranged absence applies to athletics. Athletes are to discuss early dismissals in advance with teachers and are to complete those assignments on time.

### **4. Team Parents**

In past years, we have enjoyed the initiative taken by parents to fulfill the role of “team mom/dad.” A team parent supports the team by encouraging players, organizing carpools, disseminating directions to events, providing refreshments, and promoting team camaraderie by overseeing post game outings. If you are able to support one of our teams in this manner, please contact either the head coach or the athletic director.

## **H. CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **1. Biblical Basis for Conduct**

We believe that it is in keeping with God’s word to compete with the desire to excel, including winning: “Whatever you do, do it with all of your might, as if done for the Lord...it is Jesus Christ you are serving in everything.” (Col. 3:23-24)

We also believe that competing with this desire is only a part of a greater purpose, defined in Romans 8:29, “For from the beginning God decided that those who come to Him should become like His son.” Our greater purpose in our athletic program is moving our athletes toward Christ-likeness, and shining the light of Jesus to all who witness this process. We do this by demonstrating the fruit of those who have His spirit within ourselves. “When the Spirit controls our lives he will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.” (Gal. 5:22)

Here are some behaviors we will expect from all RA families at our athletic events:

1). Be mindful of our witness to unbelievers. Colossians 4:5-6 reminds us to “conduct yourselves wisely toward outsiders, making the most of your time. Let your speech always be gracious, as if seasoned by salt.” Our words should witness to the world that we are His, as a star lights the darkness. “Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that no one can speak a word of blame against you. You are to live clean, innocent lives as children of God in a dark world, shining like stars in the darkness as you hold out the Word of Life.” (Phil. 2:14-16)

2). Be mindful of our witness to our children. Our behavior gives our children an implied permission to behave the same way. It is clear how we should behave toward one another. “Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification...that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you” (Eph. 4:29-32).

3). Think about how we should treat one another in the light of this warning: “Things that cause people to sin are bound to come, but woe to that person through whom they come. It would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around his neck than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin. So watch yourselves” (Luke 17:1-3).

4). Scripture speaks several times about the importance of not causing someone else to sin or to stumble (1 Corinthians 10:28-32; Romans 14:13). But the words of Jesus in Luke 17 give pause to those of us who work with children. Those of us who are parents, teachers, or coaches are daily influencing minds, bodies, and souls. Our attitudes and the way we choose to treat people are contagious. Let us take seriously the words of Jesus, and let us take seriously our duty to “watch ourselves”; our attitudes, words, and actions at sporting events either demonstrate the spirit of Christ or they do not. There is no in-between.

## **2. Parents and Fans**

Our fans are a vital part of the success of Regents Academy athletics and we encourage vigorous positive participation by our fans.

RA fans are also ambassadors of Christ and of our school and should cheer our teams in an appropriate manner. Our cheering should build up and encourage (Ephesians 4:29). Our emphasis on sportsmanship and character amongst our student athletes and student body begins with the example set by our parents.

Derogatory cheers, comments, “booing”, taunting, or disputing directed at any participant (players, coaches, officials, and fellow fans) will not be tolerated and will be considered grounds for removal from RA sport events. Spectators should NEVER approach an official before, during, or after a sporting event. Never ridicule or shout criticism toward officials and referees. During a game, the team bench is for coaches, players, and officials only. Do not approach the bench area during a game (including halftime).

A parent’s/fan’s inability to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner while at a RA athletic event could jeopardize their future attendance at RA events. Conducting ourselves in this manner should be done for one reason above all; we are not our own. Our old self has been crucified with Christ (Galatians 2:20), and we now have our minds set on higher things (Colossians 3:2). “Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but be new and different people with a fresh newness to your thinking. Then, you will learn from your own experience how His ways will really satisfy” (Rom. 12:2).

## **3. Athlete Etiquette Expectations**

### **a. During pre-game warm-ups**

Be sure you are appropriately dressed and outfitted: shirttails tucked in, (note: undershirts that “show” must be a solid color without printing and match the color of the jersey top) jewelry and metal hairpins out, and so on.

Pre-Game warm-up time is no time for horseplay. Do your drills with a serious attitude to prepare your mind and body for competition.

There should be no socializing with fans or family during warm-up time, half time, or any time until the game is over and post game activities are complete.

**b. Before the game**

**1). Player Introductions**

Some schools will introduce players through a loudspeaker. Often this will be “starters” only. Coaches will instruct athletes in the protocol for each specific sport, but in general, you will line up on the sideline “at attention” and run to the middle of the court or field when called, then line up there until everyone arrives. Your team will usually huddle at midfield for a team chant, and then return to the bench. We ask coaches to not allow self-promoting actions such as chest thumping or any action that may lack the appearance of genuine humility. This is a great opportunity to shake hands with players from the other team and/or with officials.

**2). Pre-game Prayer**

If a prayer is offered, line up at attention with head bowed on the sideline or at mid-court and be in prayer along with the one who leads.

**3). National Anthem**

Some schools may play or sing our national anthem. We will line up on the sideline at attention with our eyes toward the flag and respectfully listen or sing along.

**4). Just before the game begins**

In some sports or at some schools, you may have had opportunity to shake hands with players from the other team before or during pre-game warm-ups. If not, this is the time for that. Run around the court or field from player to player, coaches to coach and officials and with a firm handshake offer a sincere “Good Game.”

**c. During the game**

Players do not talk to friends or family in the stands or if they come from the stands to talk to you. Keep your mind and attention on the game. Stand and greet teammates (who are exiting the game) with applause and encouragement. Stand and cheer good effort and good plays by your teammates. Bench enthusiasm is required. Sulking or pouting on the bench is forbidden. During timeouts, all players must gather around the coach giving full attention to the coach. No players speak during timeouts unless asked to do so by the coach or raising the hand to be recognized by the coach.

Players never argue with or complain to or about game officials. Players may never speak unkind or derogatory comments toward opposing players. Christ-like demeanor and conversation is always our standard. If an injury occurs to a teammate or opponent, CCS athletes will be expected to respectfully “take a knee” on the field or court and bow in prayer for the injured athlete while they are treated. Players shall not respond to questionable referee decisions with any kind of verbal or body language indicating displeasure, shock, anger or negative emotion. RA players instead will quietly accept referee decisions by politely handing the ball to the referee and moving on with a smile. RA athletes who “knock someone down”

or collide with someone in competition are expected to extend a hand to “pick them up” and demonstrate a spirit of loving competitiveness. (Remember Drew Alders!)

**d. After the game**

As quickly as possible, players should line up single file to greet the opposing team with a handshake and congratulations or other encouraging words. Gracious whether we win or lose! Never Complaining! Where appropriate for your sport and the time available, many coaches will gather both teams together for a short post-game prayer. Players should then report to the locker room or the designated area for a meeting with their coach before dismissal.

**4. Sportsmanship**

Coaches, directors, and players are representing the name of Christ during all public events. Therefore, compliance with the following guidelines will be expected from all participants.

- 1). Comments by coaches, directors, participants, and spectators should be only uplifting, positive, encouraging statements. See Ephesians 4:29-32 for specific guidelines for speech.
- 2). Verbal abuse and/or unchristlike language or tones of speech toward athletes, spectators, or referees is forbidden. The activities director will determine whether or not such abuse has occurred. Generally, Ephesians 4:29-32 and Galatians 5:22-24 shall be the standard.
- 3). Actions of coaches, directors, and athletes should set a positive, encouraging example of Christian conversation and behavior for spectators.
- 4). Coaches should demonstrate Christ-like decision making when coaching a game where there is large lead by considering how the margin of victory will reflect on himself and Regents Academy, and how a large margin of defeat might impact the players, fans, and coaches of the opposing team. Coaches will be expected to take all measures available to avoid the humiliation of lop-sided scores, including but not limited to removing starters, playing players out of position, limiting who can score, even playing with fewer than the number of allowed competitors (if done discreetly). (Basketball teams should not play fullcourt defense with a lead of 20 or more points and 6 minutes or less left to play).
- 5). Conduct judged to be improper by the coach, administrator, or activities director might result in immediate withdrawal from the activity, as well as further disciplinary action. All sportsmanship-related technical fouls, yellow cards, penalties, ejections, etc. will result in a game suspension for a first offense. Additional offenses will continue to result in game suspensions and possible removal from participation. Coaches must report to the athletic director ALL occasions where they or a team member receive an official rebuke for sportsmanship violations (technicals, yellow cards, ejections, etc.). Coaches and team members will also be subject to suspension or removal for inappropriate behavior even if an “official” rebuke is not given.

6). Coaches, fans, and athletes should be mindful of Phil. 2:14-16: “ Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may be blameless and pure children of God, without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life.” Be careful of the example we set for our athletes and fans. Coaches must limit verbal disagreements with officials to matters of rule interpretation and rarely (if ever) argue judgment calls. Arguing with and/or complaining to officials/referees will be considered improper conduct subject to disciplinary action.

7). In summary, we expect all participants (coaches, fans, and athletes) to ask themselves: “Who is this about? Is this game about me-my needs, desires, or passions- or about serving the Lord? Who am I playing for? Who am I cheering for? Who am I living for? What am I demonstrating by my words and actions?” The preeminent goal of the athletics program at Regents Academy is to train young ladies and gentlemen to put their talents to work skillfully and graciously in order to extol and enjoy the excellencies of the Creator. In light of that fact, gracious and respectful behavior will be expected at all times toward coaches, players, officials and fans.

## **I. Letter and Letter Jacket Awards**

### **1. Policy**

Regents Academy students in Grades 9-12 may “Earn Letters” based on above average individual and/or excellent team performance in a particular extracurricular activity in which the individual student has “mastered” and/or developed a high level of proficiency that warrants recognition for their efforts. Only students that have significantly contributed to the success of the extra-curricular activity in a meaningful manner, mastered the basic and advanced elements of the extracurricular activity, and performed/participated in a manner consistent with “Appropriate Sportsmanship and Moral Behavior,” as well as exhibiting good conduct expected from all students representing Regents Academy (both inside and outside the classroom) - may earn and/or receive “Letters and Letter Jacket Awards.” Students “receiving” Letter and Letter Jacket Awards are recommended by the particular extra-curricular activity’s “Head Coach” and confirmed by the Athletic Director, Administrator and Board. As highly visible symbols of Regents Academy, all Letters and Letter Jackets are “Contingent Awards” and may be revoked at anytime, at the sole discretion of the Board, for any reason or circumstance it deems actionable. Under no circumstances will a Letter or Letter Jacket be awarded to a student prior to the completion of their sophomore year (10<sup>th</sup> grade). Letter Jackets may be worn to school, but are not approved “field trip” or “dress uniform” attire. Letters and Letter Jackets Awards are part of the “Pay-to-Play” program and will be issued at an annual extra-curricular awards banquet, in the month of May or June, at a place and time determined by the Athletic Director and Administrator. Only one “RA Letter” will be awarded to a student. Patches or Stars will be Awarded to denote the specific Extra-Curricular Letter activity. Multiple Letter Awards in the same activity will receive Letter Bars (or possibly additional Patches) to complement the previously received Letter, Letter Patches, and Letter Stars.

## **2. Approved Letters**

Current Board-approved, TAPPS-governed Letter and Letter Jacket Award Extracurricular Letter Activities are as follows:

- Academics/Scholastics
- Fine Arts
- Basketball
- Baseball
- Softball
- Football
- Volleyball
- Soccer
- Track
- All-Region Orchestra \*
- Taekwondo \*

\* The Board has approved Taekwondo (Red Belt or equivalent) and the UIL sponsored “All-Region Orchestra Recognition” as Non-TAPPS recognized extra-curricular activities for which Letter Awards can be earned.

## **J. Appendices**

Appendix 1: Medical Release Form

Appendix 2: Authorization to Treat a Minor Form