



*Participant Guidelines  
&  
Operating Procedures*

### **1. Mission Statement**

*Texas Sports Reach is a Texas nonprofit corporation committed to show the love of Jesus, share His gospel and make disciples through sports and sports-related activities. The primary audiences will be prisoners in both state and federal prison systems and individuals at secular sporting events.*

### **2. Purpose of Texas Sports Reach**

*Texas Sports Reach will use sports as an evangelistic tool to share the gospel of Christ and make disciples through individual and group evangelism. In addition, we will seek to help other Christians, both team members and others we come in contact with, to grow in their faith. We will accomplish these purposes through Bible studies, prayer, accountability groups, and through developing vital relationships with others for the purpose of discipleship.*

### **3. Statement of Belief**

*We believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God and is our final authority. The basis for all teaching, instruction, and discipleship comes from our obedience to the word of God. We believe it is historical in its origin, relevant in its nature and life changing in its application.*

*We believe in one true God, who reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. To Him we owe our highest love, reverence, and obedience. God the Father is all powerful, all loving, and all wise.*

*We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He identified Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. By His obedience and His death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He physically rose from the dead on the third day after his death, and then ascended into heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father. He will one day physically return in full power and glory.*

*The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior. He enlightens and empowers the believer in worship, evangelism, and service.*

*We believe that man was created in the image of God, but willfully sinned, and is therefore spiritually dead and separated from God. We believe that the salvation of man is completely the work of God. He offers this free gift to anyone who believes that Jesus Christ paid the penalty for our sins by shedding his blood on the cross. Nothing we do before or after receiving this free gift can add to or take away our assurance of salvation and eternal security.*

#### 4. Spiritual Development

##### A. Prayer

*Prayer is the foundation and single most important activity we do. Prayer will bring down the power of God on our ministry. It will also develop unity and oneness among our members. Each member is expected to support the ministry through a consistent prayer life. Prayer should be included in all ministry activities.*

##### B. Worship and Bible Study

*Each member is expected to participate in some form of daily spiritual activity involving Bible study and prayer. This activity should be designed to improve the individual's personal relationship with Christ and equip him for the ministry to which he has been called. Each member is expected to be active in a church that supports the TSR Statement of Belief in Item 3 above. Church involvement should be exhibited at a minimum by consistent and regular attendance in worship services, Bible Study and other regular church activities.*

##### C. Evangelism Training and Ministry Equipping

*Each member is encouraged to complete at least one evangelism training activity each year designed to equip the individual for sharing the gospel with those we come in contact with. Each member should be equipped to share their personal testimony and the gospel plan clearly and effectively in group or one on one situations.*

##### D. Accountability / Life Style

*A person's lifestyle is important during and away from TSR activities. Each member is expected to conduct his life at all times in such a way that it will be pleasing to our Lord. A member's lifestyle should be one that builds up and does not tear down the unity and purpose of the Texas Sports Reach organization.*

*Each member will be held accountable for his words, actions and attitudes both on and off the field. Members are expected to have a team attitude and exhibit good sportsmanship at all times. Each member is expected to willingly submit to the accountability of teammates and will participate in holding his teammates accountable for their actions.*

*Texas Sports Reach staff will work to offer opportunities for teammates to form accountability groups and encourage team members to participate in such groups.*

*Members are expected to work to be the best they can be physically, mentally, spiritually and competitively.*

## 5. Roster / New Teams

### A. New Players

*All new players will be allowed to participate in 1-2 trip activities in order to gain training and confirm the individual's calling to the Texas Sports Reach ministry.*

## 6. Player Participation

*Members should understand that time sacrifices must be made in order to participate in this ministry and to experience the abundant blessings that God has in store for those who are faithful and obedient. Consistent participation is important for the quality of the ministry.*

### A. Time Commitment

*Each member is expected to participate in scheduled ministry activities as their schedule allows. Absence from scheduled activities should be avoided except in cases of unavoidable job obligations and emergency and/or serious family illnesses.*

### B. Communication Responsibility

*Each member is personally responsible for staying informed of ministry activities and communicating status for activities to TSR staff. The primary communication method will be by email and the website. Status for each activity is expected to be confirmed at least two weeks prior to the activity.*

*Each member is required to provide two primary points of contact for TSR staff. Members are responsible for informing staff of changes in contacts, checking email and responding in a timely manner.*

### C. TDCJ Training

***Each member will make every effort to complete the TDCJ volunteer training within 1 year of joining TSR.** Members must also complete other required and optional training as determined necessary by TSR staff.*

### D. Leadership / Ministry Roles

*At times members will be asked to participate in certain leadership roles including, but not limited to: serving on the team's board of directors, providing ministry support, leading Bible studies, planning worship services, etc. Members are encouraged to volunteer for certain roles whenever they sense God's leadership and direction.*

## **7. Calendar of Events**

### **A. Length of Season**

*The TSR season will officially begin in February with the annual Cookout Kick-off and run through October/November of that calendar year.*

### **B. Number and Type of Activities**

*During the regular season, activities will be scheduled a minimum of one Saturday/Sunday or one full weekend per month. These activities may be local or out of town and may be prisons, tournaments, or other ministry activities. A limited number of practices, Bible studies and team meetings may also be scheduled during or after the season. Additional ministry activities scheduled during or after the regular season will be agreed upon by the team and will be considered optional.*

### **C. Activity Schedules**

*The schedule of activities for each season will be posted on the website ([www.texassportsreach.com](http://www.texassportsreach.com)) typically by mid-February. The schedule will be developed by a member(s) of the Board of Directors. Specific activities may not be determined for all dates on the schedule before the start of the season.*

### **D. Mission Trips**

*Each team will schedule a minimum of one mission trip each season. A typical mission trip will last five days and will include one to two weekends. Team members will be expected to plan for a minimum of three-five days away from work for these trips.*

### **E. Overnight Activities**

*It should be understood that a limited number of overnight activities will be necessary each season. Team members should be prepared to set aside the entire weekend for each scheduled activity.*

## **8. Uniforms / Equipment**

### **A. What Texas Sports Reach Will Provide**

*TSR will provide for each team member a minimum of one to two game jerseys and one to two game hats. Additional uniforms and equipment will be provided by TSR as determined necessary by each team and as finances will allow. Additional uniforms must be approved by the Board of Directors. TSR will provide all game balls. As finances allow and with approval by the Board of Directors, TSR will provide team bats and other selected equipment.*

**B. What The Players Will Provide**

*Each member will be required to purchase matching uniform pants / shorts and belt selected by each team. Additional uniform items purchased by team members must be approved by the members of each team. Team members will be responsible for providing all gloves, shoes, bats and other personal equipment.*

**C. Use of Sports Reach Uniforms and Equipment**

*All uniforms and equipment provided by TSR should be used only for TSR activities.*

**D. Casual Attire**

*TSR will provide appropriate casual attire as necessary to enhance the quality and professionalism of the ministry. At times this will be limited by financial resources. Casual Attire purchased by players must be approved by the Board of Directors.*

**E. Team Colors**

*Standard colors for all TSR teams will be red, white and navy blue. These colors should be utilized on all uniforms and casual attire. Deviations must be approved by the Board of Directors.*

**F. Professional Appearance**

*A goal of TSR is to provide a professional atmosphere for all activities. All team members should be dressed alike for all team activities where uniforms are required. When traveling together as a team or attending non sports ministry activities, all participants are encouraged to wear matching casual attire.*

**G. Evangelistic / Ministry Equipment**

*TSR staff will select and provide all evangelistic and ministry related materials used for activities. The materials used will be reviewed regularly to insure that the ministry is using the tools that will be most effective. The amount and type of materials may at times be limited by financial resources.*

**9. Financing**

**A. Player Responsibility - General Budget, Individual Activities**

*Each member is expected to actively participate and contribute in securing the financial needs of the ministry. At a minimum, members are expected to contribute \$300 towards the general budget each year.*

*Each player will be responsible for all food during activities and for personal equipment as outlined in Section 7 above. Players will also be responsible for gasoline used for personal vehicles during activities. During times of low budget resources, members will be expected to pay for all other required expenses.*

**B. What Texas Sports Reach Will Pay For**

*It will be the goal for TSR staff to secure enough funding for each season to cover the costs of all ministerial materials, uniform items as outlined in Item 7 above, all tournament and league entry fees (if finances permit), all game balls, all hotel expenses and airline expenses, if required. TSR will also provide selected casual attire as finances permit. Other items may be purchased by TSR with approval of the Board of Directors.*

**C. Budget Priorities**

*The budget priorities for each season should be first to secure the necessary ministerial materials. Secondly, priority should be given to the mission trip. Thirdly, priorities should be given to uniforms and hotel expenses for trips during the season. Budget resources should be used wisely with consideration given to the ability of each member to contribute personal finances during activities. Spending ministry resources for extra uniforms and casual attire or other goods and services should be carefully weighed taking into account the financial requirements for remaining activities.*

**D. Contributions From Other Sources**

*TSR will always depend heavily on contributions from outside sources. All members should be active in searching out and securing contributions from other individuals, churches and businesses. Although personal contributions is vital, the long term financial stability of TSR will depend on our ability to secure consistent and significant funding from outside sources.*

**10. Discipline / Discontinuing Participation**

**A. Failure to Complete Required Training**

*Any member who fails to complete the required TDCJ training as indicated in item 6C or any additional training as identified by the Board of Directors will not be allowed to participate until such training is completed. This suspension may be waived if after meeting with the Board of Directors it is determined that training was not completed due to circumstances beyond the individual's control.*

**B. Repeated Absence / Lack of Communication**

*Any member who exhibits a pattern of consistent absence from activities or constantly fails to communicate in a timely manner will be required to*

*meet with the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will determine if action is necessary to remove the privileges of the individual to participate in TSR activities.*

**C. Attitude and Life Style Issues**

*Unity and teamwork are of utmost importance to the success of TSR. Any member who consistently exhibits a lifestyle that is detrimental to the unity of the team will have participation privileges removed. This includes an attitude of selfishness and individualism on the field, poor sportsmanship, divisive or disruptive behavior during activities, being quarrelsome or disrespectful to other team members, an unwillingness to be accountable for personal actions and attitudes, and living a questionable life style outside of TSR activities.*

*Individuals who exhibit such attitudes and actions will be required to meet with TSR staff to discuss the specific circumstances. Accountability will be put in place to check the person's improvement. If notable improvement is not made the person's participation privileges will be removed and he will be replaced with someone from the reserve roster.*

**11. Ministry Activities**

**A. Prison Ministry**

*Typical activities during prison events will include playing softball games with inmate teams. Ministry will include developing relationships with inmates during and between games, sharing testimonies and the gospel in group situations between games and during formal chapel services. Ministry will also include one on one sharing times as opportunities are presented. All members should be equipped and prepared to participate in these activities. Other activities include distributing tracts and other Christian literature, and counseling with those that make decisions.*

**B. Tournament Ministry**

*Ministry activities during tournaments will include building relationships with other men who are participating in the tournament and with spectators. Determined efforts must be made to meet people and establish relationships that may lead to opportunities to share the gospel. Activities will also include conducting Bible studies during the tournament, distributing tracts and other Christian literature, and counseling with those who make decisions.*

**C. Other Ministry Opportunities**

*At times other ministry opportunities will present themselves which may or may not include participating in sports. These opportunities will be presented to the team by the operating council and a decision will be made by the team whether or not to participate in the opportunity.*



## ***12. Texas Sports Reach Organization***

### ***A. Board of Directors***

*The Board of Directors for TSR will be made up of a minimum of 4 to 9 members who will govern the organization. There will be a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. The board of directors will meet four times per year. Some meetings may take place on Ministry Trips as long as there is a majority of board members present.*