



Appendix B: Youth Protection Policies

Spartan Robotics Team Handbook 2025-2026

FRC- Teams 971 & 9584

Mountain View High School

PURPOSE

Spartan Robotics is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all team members. This appendix outlines our Youth Protection Policies (YPP), which address social safety, emotional safety, and physical safety for all participants. These policies apply to all interactions between adults and students, whether in person, online, or at events.

Note: Safety policies related to tools, robots, and machine usage are covered in Appendix A: Safety Manual & Training Procedures.

This appendix may be updated annually to reflect changes in process, timeline, or team structure without requiring changes to the main Spartan Robotics Team Handbook.



1. ADULT VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

All adults working with Spartan Robotics must meet screening requirements established by Mountain View Los Altos High School District and FIRST Robotics.

1.1. MVLA School District Requirements

All adult volunteers and mentors must complete **Level 3 volunteer screening** through MVLA:

- Level 3 screening includes comprehensive background checks
- Screening must be completed and approved before any interaction with students
- This is the highest level of volunteer clearance in the district

Resources:

- MVLA Volunteer Information: [Mountain View Los Altos Union High School District - Volunteer with Us](#)
- Detailed Requirements:  [MVLAVOLUNTEER HANDBOOK 25-26.pdf](#)

1.2. CA FIRST Requirements (Effective 2026 Season)

Starting with the 2026 competition season, all adults volunteering or mentoring at FIRST California events must complete two additional requirements:

Live Scan Fingerprint Background Check

- One-time requirement through California Department of Justice
- Cost: approximately \$27-40 (volunteer's responsibility)
- Valid for FIRST activities only
- Not transferable between organizations
- Required for volunteers working 16+ hours per month or 32+ hours per year with youth

Mandated Reporter Training

- Free online training through California state program
- One-time requirement
- Must use official California Mandated Reporter training
- Training link: <https://mandatedreporterca.com/training/volunteers>
- Select the FIRST Robotics icon when completing registration

Complete CA FIRST Requirements: <https://cafirst.org/new-ca-volunteer-requirements/>



1.3. FIRST Youth Protection Training (Effective 2026-27 Season)

Starting with the 2026-27 competition season, FIRST requires annual Youth Protection Training for **both Lead Mentors and every team mentor**, completed through the FIRST Dashboard/Training site.

- Required annually — separate from, and in addition to, the Live Scan and Mandated Reporter Training in Section 1.2
- If both Lead Mentors haven't completed it, the team loses youth roster access, Leadership Award eligibility, and event preferencing

1.4. Team Administrator

Lead Mentors may assign the optional Team Administrator role to a YPP-cleared mentor — typically someone involved in business or funding — to manage the team's youth roster in the FIRST system.



2. ADULT-STUDENT INTERACTION POLICIES

2.1. The Rule of Three

All interactions between adults and students must include at least **three people present**:

- **Preferred:** Two adults and one or more students
- **Minimum:** One adult and two or more students

The Rule of Three Applies To:

- In-person meetings at the lab or school
- Online communications (email, Slack, video calls)
- Off-site activities and events
- Transportation to/from events
- Any other team-related interactions

Best Practices:

- Minimize one adult with two students (1:2) interactions when possible
- Use public communication channels and spaces
- When in doubt, add another person to the interaction

*Any reasonable and common-sense based exceptions can be made (i.e. waiting for another member to arrive for a short period of time in otherwise public space such as a classroom or a lab). All violations should be reported via the appropriate channel outlined in Section 4 below.



3. BULLYING AND HARASSMENT PREVENTION

Spartan Robotics maintains a **zero-tolerance policy** for bullying, harassment, and disrespectful behavior.

3.1. Expected Behavior

Language:

- No swearing, cursing, or profanity
- Use respectful, professional language at all times

Feedback:

- All feedback from mentors or peers must be respectful and constructive
- Focus on actions and outcomes, not personal characteristics
- Provide specific, actionable guidance

Communication:

- No negative or derogatory comments directed at individuals
- Treat all team members with dignity and respect
- Listen actively and considerately

Sarcasm:

- Use with extreme caution
- Never directed at a person or individual
- Avoid when feedback or instruction is needed

3.2. Prohibited Behavior

The following behaviors are strictly prohibited:

- Any form of bullying or harassment
- Discriminatory language or behavior based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or any other characteristic
- Personal attacks or insults
- Intimidation or threatening behavior
- Creating a hostile environment
- Exclusionary behavior or cliques that marginalize others



4. REPORTING PROCEDURES

Everyone has a responsibility to report concerns. Students, parents, mentors, and volunteers should report any violation of Youth Protection Policies or safety concerns immediately.

4.1. Reporting Channels

For Minor Incidents:

- Report to team mentors or lead mentors
- Goal: Quick resolution and learning opportunity

For Serious Incidents:

Students and parents may choose any of the following reporting options:

1. Team Mentorship

- Mentors or Lead Mentors
- School-appointed club advisor

You are never required to report to team mentorship first for serious concerns.

2. School Administration

- Required for incidents occurring at school
- Required for major incidents (see 4.2 below)
- Contact MVHS administration

3. FIRST Robotics

- Required for incidents at FIRST events
- Must also report to school administration
- Contact event officials or FIRST via their [website](#)

Students and parents may report directly to school administration and/or FIRST at any time.

4.2. What Constitutes a Major Incident

Major incidents requiring school and/or FIRST reporting include:

- Physical abuse or violence
- Sexual harassment or misconduct
- Clear violations of Youth Protection Policies



- Threats to student safety
- Illegal activities
- Discrimination or hate speech
- Retaliation against someone who reported a concern

4.3. Confidentiality and Protection

For School/FIRST Incidents:

- Follow their established protocols for confidentiality
- Anti-retaliation protections apply
- Support services available

For Team-Level Incidents:

- Handled professionally by Team Leadership with appropriate confidentiality
- Information shared only on a need-to-know basis
- Focus on resolution and safety

Zero Tolerance for Retaliation:

- Any retaliation against individuals who report concerns is strictly prohibited
- This protection extends to family members
- Retaliation will result in immediate removal from the team

4.4. Resolution Process

Minor Incidents (Handled by Lead Mentors):

- Informal engagement with involved parties
- Focus on understanding and learning
- Prompt resolution
- Goal: Behavior correction and team harmony

Incidents Requiring Discipline:

- Discussed with school-appointed club advisor
- May be escalated to school administration
- Follow established procedures
- See Appendix C: Code of Conduct & Disciplinary Procedures for complete information

Note: All minor incidents reported to lead mentors must be documented for future reference. Major incidents must be reported to school and/or FIRST as appropriate and follow official processes for documentation and resolution.



5. ONLINE COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA

5.1. Communication Standards

Rule of Three Applies:

- All online interactions with students and adults must include at least three people
- Use group channels instead of direct messages
- CC additional people on emails when appropriate

Team Communication Policies:

- The team uses both Slack and email for communication
- Check team communication channels regularly
- No inappropriate language or content
- Professional tone at all times, avoid emotional discussions.

Best Practices:

- Use public channels whenever possible
- Minimize one-on-one digital communications
- Keep communications transparent and visible to the team
- Avoid lengthy (Slack) debates, especially when they become tense.
- When needed, gather and discuss in person instead.
- Use team platforms, not personal accounts

5.2. Team Social Media

Posting Requirements:

- All team social media posts require mentor approval before posting
- Content must represent the team professionally
- Follow FIRST Robotics gracious professionalism standards
- Respect privacy of all team members

Platform Guidelines:

- Official team accounts only (no personal accounts representing the team)
- Appropriate content standards
- No controversial or political content
- Celebrate team achievements and FIRST values



5.3. Communication Hours

General Guidelines:

- Use common sense: respect sleeping hours (generally 10 PM - 7 AM)
- Respect work and school time (during school hours on school days)

Expectations:

- Non-urgent messages can wait for reasonable hours
 - Emergency communications are exempt from time restrictions
 - Mentors and students should establish mutual expectations
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6. Photography And Video

6.1. Student Consent

Team-Created Content:

- Students consent to team photography and videography for team promotion purposes upon joining the team
- This consent covers team-created content only
- Includes use on team website, social media, and promotional materials
- Consent is documented through team registration

Scope of Consent:

- Team promotional materials
- FIRST event media
- School publications
- Competition documentation

6.2. Student-Created Content

Photography/Video Restrictions:

- Students may not photograph or video other students or adults without their explicit consent
- Students may not post photos/videos made during team activities of others on personal social media without consent
- Respect privacy and dignity of all team members
- When in doubt, ask for permission first

Best Practices:

- Ask before taking photos or videos of individuals
 - Obtain verbal or written consent
 - Respect when someone says "no"
 - Delete content if someone requests removal
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7. REFERENCES TO EXTERNAL POLICIES

Spartan Robotics Youth Protection Policies are built upon and reference comprehensive policies from our school district and FIRST Robotics.

7.1. MVLA School District Policies

The following MVLA policies provide additional guidance and requirements:

- Comprehensive student safety and protection policies
- Anti-bullying and harassment policies
- Volunteer screening procedures
- School safety handbook
- Student code of conduct
- Title IX and discrimination policies
- Emergency response procedures

MVHS Student Handbook: [25-26 MVHS Parent/Student Handbook \(English\)](#)

7.2. FIRST Robotics Youth Protection Program

FIRST's comprehensive Youth Protection Program (YPP) includes:

- Required training for all adult volunteers
- National standards for youth safety in FIRST programs
- Best practices for youth-serving organizations
- Incident reporting procedures
- Event-specific safety protocols

FIRST YPP Information: <https://www.firstinspires.org/programs/youth-protection-program>



8. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

8.1. Required Training

Adult Volunteers:

- MVLA Level 3 volunteer screening
- CA FIRST Live Scan (starting 2026 season)
- CA FIRST Mandated Reporter Training (starting 2026 season)
- FIRST Youth Protection Program training
- Annual review of team Youth Protection Policies

Students:

- Annual review of team Youth Protection Policies
- Safety training (covered in Appendix A)
- Respectful behavior expectations
- Reporting procedures

Parents:

- Review of team Youth Protection Policies during registration
 - Understanding of reporting procedures
 - Support for policy enforcement
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9. QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

If you have questions about these policies or need to report a concern, you have multiple options:

9.1. Contact Options:

Team Leadership:

- Lead Mentors
- Team Mentors
- School-appointed club advisor

School Administration:

- MVHS Assistant Principals
- MVHS Principal
- MVLA District Administration

FIRST Robotics:

- Event officials (during competitions)
- FIRST Headquarters
- Regional support staff

9.2. Remember:

- Your safety and the safety of all team members is our top priority
 - **When in doubt, speak up**
 - You are always right to report a concern
 - Multiple reporting channels are available
 - You can choose the reporting channel that feels most comfortable
 - Retaliation against anyone who reports in good faith is strictly prohibited
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10. Annual Review

Youth Protection Policies are reviewed and updated annually to:

- Reflect current MVLA and FIRST requirements
- Incorporate lessons learned
- Address emerging concerns
- Maintain best practices

10.1. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

By participating in Spartan Robotics, all team members (students, parents, mentors, and volunteers) acknowledge that they have read, understood, and agree to follow these Youth Protection Policies. We generally follow the progressive disciplinary steps.

Violations of these policies may result in:

- Removal from team activities
- Removal from the team
- Reporting to school administration
- Reporting to FIRST Robotics
- Reporting to law enforcement (when appropriate)

Our commitment: We are committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment where all team members can learn, grow, and excel in FIRST Robotics Competition.

This appendix was last updated: August 2026

Next scheduled review: April 2027

For the most current version of this appendix and all team policies, visit the Spartan Robotics team website or contact team leadership.

Spartan Robotics

Mountain View High School

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<https://spartanrobotics.org>