



Valley Shore

YMCA

Member Handbook



201 Spencer Plains Road Westbrook, CT 06498



Hello!

Welcome to the Valley Shore YMCA. As a lifelong YMCA member, I cannot think of a more exciting, cause-driven organization to belong to, raise a family, work, volunteer, or donate. Since 1917, we have served families on the Shoreline in countless ways, including swim lessons, camp, teen nights, adult fitness, childcare, cancer survivor programs, a community garden and so much more.

At the YMCA, we are for:

- Youth Development: Nurturing the potential of every child and teen.
- Healthy Living: Improving the Shoreline's health and well-being.
- Social Responsibility: Giving back and providing support to our neighbors.

Welcome to the YMCA!

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "John Smith".





Our members represent 16 states & 74 Connecticut towns - 70% of our membership comes from the 5 towns of Westbrook, Old Saybrook, Clinton, Essex, and Old Lyme. We have 3,000 members and 1,000s more program & event participants. All of our programs are representative of our core focus areas of youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.

The YMCA movement seeks to include these following four core values in all our programs and classes; caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility.

Visit our website for all of our program offerings with up to date information. vsymca.org

Who we serve

What we do

Youth Safety

Child Abuse prevention

The Valley Shore YMCA is committed to providing youth with a safe and rewarding experience while in our facility or involved with any of our programs.

To that end our YMCA has enacted a number of policies specific to youth protection (a complete list of which can be found at vsymca.org). Those policies include but are not limited to:

- All members, staff and volunteers are checked against the National Sexual Offender Registry
- All staff and volunteers go through a thorough screening and background check process
- All staff and volunteers sign a Code of Conduct and abide by our Child Abuse Prevention Policies and Procedures
- The YMCA takes seriously and will investigate any and all reports of suspected abuse and follows legally mandated reporting requirements
- Members are encouraged to report any suspicious behavior to a YMCA Staff Member or the CEO

Youth safety is all of our responsibility. Thank you for doing your part.

Sex offender screenings

The YMCA conducts regular sex offender screenings on all members, participants, staff and guests. If a sex offender match occurs, the YMCA reserves the right to cancel membership, end program participation, and remove visitation access.

Sex offender dispute/grievance policy

The YMCA is willing to fully investigate and resolve any errors in information that may list individuals incorrectly as a sex offender. During the period of this investigation, however, we must insist that the restriction that the YMCA places on registered sex offenders be followed.

- YMCA will provide the individual with the information that we have been provided that identified the individual as a registered sex offender. This will be done within three (3) business days.
- During the investigation, we ask for both the individuals assistance in researching the matter as well as patience and understanding as these types of error can require significant effort to unravel. We will ask that the individual provide as much information as possible to refute the provided information and to provide additional information that establishes that the individual is not the individual listed.
- Following the receipt of information back from the individual, the YMCA will continue its investigation. This may include additional requests for information and/or a meeting to discuss the information that is available.
- We will notify the individual both directly and via written communication of the resolution. If there are any changes to these restrictions, the date at which that would take effect will be noted.

Diversity and Inclusion

The Y is made up of people of all ages and from every walk of life, working side by side to strengthen communities. Together we work to ensure that everyone, regardless of race, color, age, religious creed, marital status, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, physical disabilities, learning disabilities, intellectual disabilities, past or present history of mental disability, sex, pregnancy, sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, transgender status, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation or civil union status, veteran status, and other factors has the opportunity to reach their full potential with dignity. Our core values are caring, honesty, respect and responsibility—they guide everything we do.

Covid and health policies and procedures

Policies and procedures may change due to the Covid-19 pandemic or other health concerns. Please refer to the website vsymca.org for the most up to date information.

Photo/Audio visual/narrative release

In consideration for being allowed to participate in YMCA membership and programs; images, video and film footage is often used by the Valley Shore YMCA for promotional purposes. The Valley Shore YMCA may make, reproduce, edit, broadcast or rebroadcast any video film, footage, sound track recordings and photo reproductions of members, guests and staff and/or a narrative account of the experience at the Valley Shore YMCA for publication, display, or exhibition thereof in promotions, advertising and legitimate business uses without any compensation to, and/or claim. Individual may, or may not be, identified in such reproductions; however, shall not be stated by name to have endorsed any particular commercial products or commercial services.

Member health

The member(s) represents that they are in physically sound condition and understands that participation in group exercise and other exercise, weight training, recreational sports including use of pools, saunas and fitness equipment carry potential risk of injuries or illness. The members further understands that the Valley Shore YMCA assumes no responsibility for any such injury or illness.



Membership

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Visiting YMCA Member

Active YMCA members from another YMCA are welcome to visit the Valley Shore YMCA. By participating in the YMCA Nationwide Membership Program, visitors agree to release the National Council of Young Men's Christian Associations of the United States of America, and its independent and autonomous member associations in the United States and Puerto Rico, from claims of negligence for bodily injury or death in connection with the use of YMCA facilities, and from any liability for other claims, including loss of property, to the fullest extent of the law. Please bring your home YMCA scan tag and a state issued photo ID.

Membership Information

All members are required to present a valid license or state issued ID. Membership in the YMCA is a privilege, and the YMCA reserves the right to cancel any membership if the YMCA deems such action to be in its best interests. Membership dues are non-refundable. Membership dues and similar payments are not deductible as charitable contributions. Membership rates are subject to increase; notice of increase in membership rates will be released 30 days in advance. All monthly drafts/auto pay memberships are to be paid on the first of the month. If the membership dues remain unpaid by the end of the month the membership will be terminated, and the member will be responsible for paying the balance before they may attend or rejoin. If you would like to change your information please stop by the Welcome Center to update.

All members and guests are required to check-in at the Welcome Center. All members must have their membership card when checking in. No members or visitors may be let in via other doors. Members who allow other persons to enter the building may lose membership privileges. Exterior doors are not to be opened or propped open.

All members and guests under age 13 must be accompanied by an adult unless in a YMCA program. Youth ages 13-18 may be in the facility after they have a guest pass waiver signed by a legal guardian over 18.

You are welcome to rejoin the Y at any time after cancelling a membership. If you rejoin within 6 months, the joining fee will be waived.

Payments



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Quarterly, Semi-annual or Annual membership plans are available. Returned Checks, bank draft, credit cards or declined monthly draft will be charged a \$20 service fee.

Cancellation

If you are not attending the facility as much as you would like, please consider taking advantage of your wellness orientation to get re-energized! We want you to stay!

If you are moving or no longer enjoy the YMCA and need to cancel your membership, please stop by the YMCA Welcome Center or fill out the form on our website. We will contact you to verify your membership has been canceled.

Membership cancellation requires written notification by the 20th of the month in order to cancel your membership for the upcoming month.

If you are having trouble with a YMCA membership due to financial circumstances, please take a minute to call or visit our YMCA Welcome Center and speak with a staff member about Financial Assistance. Through the generosity of donors, we are able to provide programs and services to those who may not otherwise be able to participate. The YMCA helps hundreds of people each year with membership scholarships. Talk with the Welcome Center for an application or download the application from our website. All YMCA members receive the same membership benefits, regardless of assistance, and financial information is kept confidential.

Refunds

The YMCA does not require an annual contract and members may terminate their monthly membership draft by following simple written termination procedures listed in cancellation section. The YMCA does not provide refunds on membership fees, join fees, gift certificates, or open merchandise for resale. If you believe there has been an error on your account please notify us within 90 days. We hope there will be no errors made on our part, but we will certainly correct errors with timely notification.

The YMCA will provide refunds if a program is canceled due to low enrollment. System credits may be granted toward future YMCA programs if a member cancels a program prior to the start of a session. System credits will expire after 12 months and are not redeemable for cash. No refunds or system credits will be issued after the start of a session, unless it's due to medical reason and with a written verification of injury or illness by a physician.





Locker Room Use

Lockers are available for day use by members and guests. It is recommended you secure and lock all of your belongings in lockers. Any locks left on lockers overnight will be removed and the items in the locker will be placed in lost and found. Lost and found will be donated. When using any of our locker rooms please wear a towel or clothing in common areas to respect other members sensitivity to nudity. Cell phones, cameras and/or video recording devices are prohibited due to the camera and recording function. These practices will ensure that all Y member's standards or privacy are respected and safety prioritized. Children of opposite sex over the age of 3 must use family restroom.

Cell Phone

For the privacy and protection of all of our members please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Please limit conversations to the lobby or non-workout areas and hallways.
- The use of cell phones is not permitted in the locker rooms or youth program areas due to the camera and video function.
- Please set phones to silent while working out as not to disrupt others.
- Taking photos or videos without permission is not permitted.

Sauna

- Please shower before using the sauna to remove perfumes, chlorine and chemicals that may sting eyes in sauna environment.
- Wrap in a towel or bring a towel to sit or lay down upon. For sanitation purposes, please do not sit bare on wood.
- Please wear clean workout clothing. No street clothes and no nudity. Swim suits are acceptable or wrapping in towel preferred. Different members have different modesty preferences and we need to respect all.
- Due to the camera function no electronics including cell phones are permitted.
- Please wear flip flops or water shoes only. No sneakers or street shoes are allowed to avoid bacteria contamination.
- Please do not place or hang anything inside to dry.
- The sauna is an electric unit. Please do not pour water on the heating unit. Water will damage it and cause the sauna to be closed. Serious injury can occur.
- Sauna is for ages 18 and over. It is not considered safe for children.

Lost items

Lost and found is located at the Welcome Center. Lost and found items will be donated. The Valley Shore YMCA is not responsible for lost or stolen items.



Child Watch

Children whose parents are exercising or participating in other activities at the Y and have an active membership may attend YMCA Child Watch. Child Watch programs offer supervised, age-appropriate experiences in a fun and safe environment. Schedules and information can be found at the Welcome Center or Child Watch. Services are available for no longer than 1.5 hours per day. vsymca.org/child-watch/

Racquetball Policy

Members may reserve the racquetball court up to 1 week in advance for 1 hour per day via our online portal. Eye protection is recommended. Please do not wear black soled shoes. Please keep all food and beverages outside the court. Please honor reservations times. Court is for racquetball only. All other activities must be pre-approved.

Parking

Parking at the YMCA is free. We know that parking can sometimes be difficult. Please arrive early to ensure ample time to find a space. The disabled parking access is reserved for those with official permits or plates. Please be aware and do not park in the fire lane.

Outside coaching and training

Only Valley Shore YMCA certified staff members or approved contractors will be allowed to utilize YMCA facilities for training services, including and not limited to sports, technique/agility training, personal training, and swimming instruction.

Health and wellness guidelines

To ensure the health, safety and enjoyment of all, we ask our members and guest to abide by the following guidelines:

- Please register online for a free wellness orientation. Members are encouraged to go through an orientation with a member of the Wellness Team.
- Youth aged 10-13 may be in the Wellness Center directly supervised by a parent. Youth aged 13 and up may be in the Wellness Center.
- Respect others by using courteous and appropriate behavior and language.
- Please secure all belongings in the locker room with a lock. The YMCA is not responsible for items left behind.
- Please wear workout shoes and appropriate fitness attire. Outdoor shoes are not permitted in the fitness center. Shirts and closed toe shoes are required. No jeans or sandals.
- For the health and consideration of other members, please refrain from using perfume/cologne and other scented beauty products.
- Please limit conversations to the lobby or non-workout areas and hallways.
- Please do not move equipment around workout area.
- When using the free weights please use spotters and collars to ensure your safety.

Medical Treatment

The member(s) gives permission for YMCA staff or volunteers to provide emergency medical treatment and to call emergency first responders for transport to an emergency center for treatment. Also, the member(s) consents to medical treatment deemed immediately necessary or advisable by such first responder or a physician.

Member conduct

The member(s) agrees to abide by all policies and procedures of the Valley Shore YMCA and understands failure to act in accordance with these rules may result in expulsion from the YMCA, programs and revocation of the membership.

The YMCA is committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for all. To promote safety and comfort, the YMCA asks all persons to act appropriately at all times when in our facility, on our property or participating in our programs.

We expect persons using the YMCA to act maturely, to behave responsibly, and to respect the rights and dignity of others. The actions listed below, which are not intended to be an all-inclusive list of behaviors, are considered inappropriate and are prohibited in our facilities or programs:

- Using or possessing illegal chemicals while on YMCA property or at YMCA sponsored programs
- Smoking on YMCA property—All YMCA buildings and grounds are smoke and tobacco product-free environments. This includes vaping and e-cigarettes.
- Carrying or concealing a weapon or any device or object that may be used as a weapon.
- Harassment or intimidation by words, gestures, body language, or any type of menacing behavior.
- Physical contact with another person in an angry, aggressive, or threatening way.
- Theft or behavior which results in the destruction of property.
- Verbally abusive behavior, including profanity, angry language, or any type of menacing behavior.
- Sexually explicit conversation or behavior; any sexual contact with another person.
- Loitering within facilities or on the grounds of the YMCA after being requested to depart YMCA's property.
- Solicitation on YMCA grounds.
- Service animals specifically allowed to aid a person with disabilities are allowed to enter the facility. Service animals must remain with their person. They may not be left unattended in the YMCA. Members are responsible for damage and housekeeping for their animals. No pets.

In addition, the YMCA reserves the right to deny access or membership to:

1. Any person who has been accused or convicted of any crime involving sexual abuse, or has been a registered sex offender.
2. Any person who is currently under the influence of illegal or dangerous drugs or chemicals, narcotics, or intoxicating behavior, or if staff have reasonable suspicion.

YMCA staff members are here to be of assistance. Anyone who feels that this Code of Conduct is being violated should immediately report the behavior to a staff person on duty.

While an incident is being investigated, the membership may be temporarily suspended pending a final decision. Suspension or termination of YMCA membership may result from a violation of this Code of Conduct.

Aquatics

Pool use & Safety Guidelines

- Please shower before entering the pool; this is required by State Health Codes.
- Any person with open sores and communicable diseases will not be allowed to use the pool due to State Health Codes.
- All swimmers must wear swimming attire; infants must wear swim diapers.
- Children under the age of 8 must be accompanied by an adult in the pool.
- Poor or non-swimmers must be accompanied in the water within arms reach of an adult at all times.
- All children over the age of 8 must take the swim test to determine swimming ability.
- If a swimmer has passed the swim test their name will be recorded in a swim test binder and a wristband will be issued. Upon arriving at the pool, swimmers who have passed may see a Lifeguard to get a wrist band.
- Only Coast Guard approved PFD's (Personal Flotation Devices) may be used; IFD's (also known as "bubbles") are for instructional use only.
- Swimmers must be able to confidently swim 25 yards without flotation and tread water for 30 seconds in order to swim outside of the shallow swim area; flotation devices are not permitted in the deep end except for adult water exercise and swim lessons.

- Running, horseplay, prolonged breath holding, or hanging on lane lines is prohibited.
- Jumping into the shallow end of the pool is prohibited.
- Diving and the use of diving blocks is prohibited except under the direct supervision of a YMCA Coach or Instructor.
- Noodles, Kickboards, IFD's (bubble floats), barbells, fins, snorkels, and other devices are to only be used properly during swim instruction, adult water exercise, and lap swimming. Noodles and small toys may be used for play with lifeguard permission.
- Strollers, glass, sharp objects or food are prohibited on the pool deck.
- Pool stairs are for entering and exiting the pool only.
- Lap swimming is confined to lap lanes only. Lap swimming is defined as continuous swimming end to end. Rec area is for recreational swimming, swim exercise, water walking, and any water activity not defined as lap swimming; Lesson areas are for lessons only.
- When all lanes are occupied, lap lanes are to be shared. Two swimmers can split a lane; three or more will circle swim. Circle swimming requires a swimmer to stay to the right side of the lane at all times.
- Swimmers may be asked by the lifeguard to change lanes to accommodate swimmers of different speeds.
- A private lesson may take over the use of a scheduled lap lane.
- For your safety, the pool and pool deck are not open during thunder and lightning storms. The pool will reopen 30 minutes after the final sound of thunder.
- In case of an Emergency Alarm, swimmers must exit the pool area via the Exit doors. For your own personal safety, no one may reenter the building until cleared by professional responders. Emergency supplies will be provided by lifeguards.
- The lifeguard's word is final.

General Liability

Release and waiver of claims

The member affirms they have no medical condition that would prevent them from participating in activities of the YMCA. It is the responsibility of the member or the member's parent or guardian to ascertain that they are physically and medically able to participate in the activities in which they may choose to engage. The member further authorizes the YMCA to administer first aid in the event of an emergency, including CPR and AED, and to obtain emergency medical care for the member should that be necessary.

By participating in the YMCA Nationwide Membership Program, the member agrees to release the National Council of Young Men's Christian Associations of the United States of America, and its independent and autonomous member associations in the United States and Puerto Rico, from claims of negligence for bodily injury or death in connection with the use of YMCA facilities, and from any liability for other claims, including loss of property, to the fullest extent of the law.

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In consideration of the grant of membership by the YMCA and access to the programs and facilities of the YMCA, the member hereby agrees to release, absolve, indemnify and hold harmless the Valley Shore YMCA, its staff, employees, volunteers, supervisors, instructors and any other representative, together with their agents, representatives or assigns (collectively the "Released Parties") from any and all claims, liabilities or lawsuits for any bodily injury suffered by them, including death, for any loss due to theft of or damage to the members' personal property, or for any other consequential or incidental damages caused in any manner whatsoever where any such claim, liability or lawsuit is attributable to the negligence or absence of ordinary care of the Released Parties.

The member expressly waives any claims arising from the above that may be brought at any time by the member, their family, estate heirs or assigns, and assumes all risks and hazards attendant to the use of the facilities, use of the equipment, or participation in program events or instructional classes.

