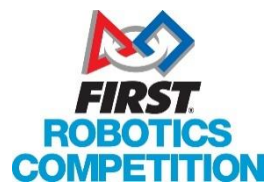


**First Robotics Team 179**

**Children of the Swamp**

# **Team Handbook**

Rev: 1 (updated: 9/13/23)



## **Welcome to team 179!**

Team 179 Children of the Swamp has competed in the FIRST Robotics Competition since 1998. Every year on the First Saturday in January FIRST (**F**or **I**nspiration and **R**ecognition of **S**cience and **T**echnology) provides all teams with a new and unique robot design challenge known as “the game”, and our team must design a robot to accomplish tasks described in the challenge through the competition season which starts in late February with regional events and goes through a culminating championship event in April. But that’s not all we do, as a FIRST team we are not just about building robots, our team strives to be a valued member of our community throughout the year by participating in outreach events, supporting community initiatives, supporting other less fortunate teams all while maintaining and presenting a professional image for our sponsors.

In addition to our regular build and competition season January through April, we also host various workshops, compete in “off-season” competitions, and build an additional robot to compete in offseason competitions year-round. We do this to train new members and allow returning members to gain new skills before the next build season. During the off season we meet less frequently and meeting schedules will be posted publicly or in email blasts for all.

With all of these opportunities comes a few rules and expectations set forth to make our team as fair and safe as possible. Safety of students is the top priority in all of our activities and the rules set forth in this handbook are meant for everyone’s safety. Working in the robot shop and at competitions means working with large and powerful machinery that requires awareness, safety and often protective equipment such as safety glasses, gloves etc. to operate. All students and adults are expected to only use equipment they have been trained on and can operate safely. We also outline expectations of both students and parents throughout the season to maintain membership on our team and earn the privilege to travel with the team to events throughout the season.

We look forward to having you on our team and part of our Swamp family! Any questions please contact one of our mentors and we will be happy to help.

## Expectations of Student Members

Students of Children of the Swamp are expected to be active members of the team. Students can be involved with the team through various opportunities made available throughout the year. Involvement includes but is not limited to participating in community events, trainings, team events, and robot build meetings.

### 1. Registration Fee

- Each student will be required to pay a \$100 registration fee.
  - This will be due by January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024 or before.
  - Preferably in the form of a sponsorship from a local company.
  - Cost will cover 3 shirts for the student, one black and two green for new students and one green for existing students, which will be given to the student before the first competition.

### 2. Meetings and Team-Related Activities

- **Attendance**
  - All Members must attend at least 75% of all team meetings and related activities to be considered for the drive team or pit crew.
  - 50% of attendance of all team meetings and related activities will be required for travel to events and calculated based off the number of meetings that have taken place up until the date of the travel meetings.
  - Example: If 10 meetings have occurred between October 25, 2023 and the travel meeting, the student would have needed to attend 8 meetings to meet the 75% requirement to be considered for drive team or pit crew and 5 out of 10 meetings to meet the 50% requirement for travel.
  - You are responsible for arranging your own transportation to and from meetings and other meeting or activity locations determined by the school or mentors. If assistance is needed with transportation, please let a mentor know and we will make every effort to find transportation for you.
- **Engagement**
  - Students need to maintain an acceptable level of productivity and engagement while at meetings and activities. (mentor observation/documentation)
  - Phones, iPads/tables, or other hand-held electronics are not to be played during educational/build hours.
- **Build Season**
  - Meeting times will be extended and additional days will be added during the build season to accommodate the amount of work that goes into creating a competition ready robot.
  - Study Hours will be offered at all team meetings during the build season.
    - The back room will be a study space for students that need a place to finish homework during the build season.
    - Coming to study hours to complete homework during build season will be counted as meeting attendance.

### 3. Community Service and Outreach

- **Participation**
  - Students must actively participate in 25% of all community service-related activities.
  - Participation will be required for travel and calculated based off the number of team based community service activities that have taken place up until the date of the travel meetings.
- **Volunteering**
  - All students will be required to volunteer at one FIRST Lego League, FIRST Tech Challenge, or FIRST Robotic Competition event in order to be eligible to go to any competitions.
    - There are plenty of opportunities to do this during the fall semester.
- **SwampWorks Projects**
  - Each senior student will be required to complete at-least one SwampWorks project with the help of assigned underclassmen.

### 4. Code of Conduct

- Students are expected to abide by the Palm Beach School Board Code of Conduct.
  - This can be found on the Palm Beach District website:  
[https://www.palmbeachschools.org/students\\_parents/student\\_code\\_of\\_conduct](https://www.palmbeachschools.org/students_parents/student_code_of_conduct)
- Students will be respectful to all teammates, teachers, mentors, and volunteers.
- Competitions are long, tiring and sometimes frustrating. Because students are a member of this team, they are committed to being at competition, even if they don't want to be there because the team needs them.
- The goal of the team should be to do our best to work together to solve a challenging problem. As a member of the team, students will contribute to all aspects of the process, not just the parts they like best.
- Students will show other teams the utmost respect and good sportsmanship. Gracious Professionalism is part of the spirit, culture and aspirations of FIRST. It is a way of doing things that encourages high-quality work, emphasizes the value of others and respects individuals and the community. Even in the spirit of the game and game play (on and off the field), all students, parents and mentors are encouraged to cheer and help all teams. If a team needs help, assistance, guidance or has questions, all teams help each other.
- While in the shop all students and parents must wear closed toed shoes and appropriate attire to protect themselves while working on equipment and around the robot. No loose or hanging jewelry is recommended as it may get caught in a machine and create an unsafe condition.
- ALL tools will require safety glasses to be worn, the team has safety glasses available in the shop or you can bring your own.
- Public displays of affection are not permitted at events, on trips, or while in the robot shop.
- Failure to follow the Palm Beach Schools Code of Conduct and rules set by the team will result in dismissal from the team based on the number of times the behavior has been discussed or due to the severity of the behavior or action.  
\*\*\*\* (mentor observation/documentation)

## 5. Travel

- **Dress Code**
  - At events each student will need to wear the specific colored shirts on the certain days at events. This information will be sent via email prior to events.
  - Closed toed shoes will be required to go into the pits at an event.
  - Additional apparel orders are made as a group order.
    - Jackets, t-shirts, and parent shirts can be purchased at an additional cost. Please make sure to submit your order by deadlines to ensure you get the apparel you would like to have for competitions.
- If the number of team members traveling to a competition has to be limited (if there are more students wishing to travel than can be accommodated), the members selected to travel will be determined by
  - Attend competition's travel meeting
  - Attended 75% of official team meetings.
  - Attended 25% of community service-related activities
  - Volunteered at required FLL, FTC, or FRC event
  - School Approval to Travel (GPA and behavior)
  - Years on the team and/or position on the team (drive team, pit crew, head scouter)
- **School and Travel**
  - Student may be absent from school during travel to the Regional and Championship competitions, and are responsible for following their school's procedures.
  - Student is responsible for all make-up work while absent and will stay focused on schoolwork while attending competitions.
- Parents are responsible for arranging transportation to and from all competitions. Due to stated times on all TLEs, the student is required to attend the event from start to finish and stay with the team.

## 6. Safety

- **During meetings and competitions, students must follow all safety rules.**
  - When at the shop and at competitions, closed toe shoes and safety glasses are mandatory for everyone in the pit areas or around machinery.
  - When working on any machinery, long hair must be tied back and no jewelry is allowed.
- **Tools and Equipment**
  - Students must safely use all tools and equipment while working on any project.
  - Student must respect the severity of a possible accident and agree that they may be dismissed from the team if there are repeated safety violations.
  - Students will not operate any tool or item of equipment unless they have been trained to use it safely by a mentor.
  - When a tool or part of any machinery becomes broken or malfunctioning, the student must immediately notify a mentor.

- **While at Competition, during lunch only, students must:**
  - Students will travel in groups.
  - Students will let a chaperone or mentor know where they are going if it requires leaving the facility. A chaperone or mentor may need to go depending on distance.
  - Check-in with chaperones and mentors if there are any changes to the day's pre-determined schedule.
  - The chaperone or mentor must know where the student is at ALL TIMES.

#### **7. Dismissal from Team**

- Students will be given two (2) chances to improve their behavior or fix the issue that is occurring. If the behavior or issue continues, the student will be dismissed from the team. (mentor observation/documentation)
- Dismissal from the team can happen for a variety of reasons. Reasons include, but are not limited to
  - Failure to follow code of conduct
  - Bullying or cyberbullying
  - Inappropriate behavior while at a meeting, traveling or volunteering
  - Harassment of a student or mentor
  - Interfering with any operations of the team
  - Use of machinery improperly

## Parent Involvement

Parents play a big part in helping the team be successful. Mentors will be contributing a significant amount of volunteer time and effort to provide a positive and rewarding experience for all students and parents. As a parent you can be involved in our success in different ways. Opportunities for involvement include but are not limited to volunteering to bring in a lunch during build season, driving additional students to and from competition, and assist at competitions as a volunteer.

### 1. Registration Fee

- Students will be required to pay a \$100 registration fee.
  - This fee is due at the time of Kick-Off in January.
  - Students will need assistance in finding local company sponsors; parents can assist in locating a sponsor for the student.

### 2. Meetings and Activities

- Make every effort to have your student attend every team meeting. If there is a conflict, either the student or the parent will notify the mentors as soon as possible. Please understand that your student has made a commitment to the team.
- Make every effort to pick up students at the end of scheduled meetings or activities, as mentors have to stay until all students have left.

### 3. Travel

- Parents will be required to attend travel meetings with their student. (MANDATORY)
- Driving Volunteers will be requested for most competitions, if parent would like to help with this, please let the mentors know either before or at the travel meetings.
- Team apparel can be purchased through the team's group order.
- While traveling for competitions, make sure the student completes their assignments for school as a priority.

### 4. Code of Conduct

- Parents may be requested to participate in discussions with mentors and teachers regarding behavior concerns depending on the severity of the student's actions.

### 5. Safety

- When at competitions, closed toe shoes and safety glasses are **mandatory** for everyone in the pit areas or around machinery. This includes at the shop.
- Please discuss the importance of safety with the student if you are not attending a competition or event.

### 6. Build Season

- Parents will be asked to pay a fee for lunches during the build season. This fee will be collected and determined by Carrie Stewart.
  - Snacks, water, drinks, plates, utensils, cups and napkins are also needed during the year.
- Students will be spending additional days and hours at the shop during build season, please make sure the student's homework is getting done during this time. We will have a Study Hall space for students who need to complete homework during the build season.

### 7. Gracious Professionalism is part of the spirit, culture and aspirations of FIRST. It is a way of doing things that encourages high-quality work, emphasizes the value of others and respects

individuals and the community. Even in the spirit of the game and game play (on and off the field), all students, parents and mentors are encouraged to cheer and help all teams. If a team needs help, assistance, guidance or has questions, all teams help each other.