



*The Albany Council
of the
Traditional Karate Do Organization, Inc.*

***RULES, REGULATIONS
And
GUIDE LINES***

ESTABLISHED IN MARCH 2006

The Albany Council of the Traditional Karate Do Organization, Inc.

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The Albany Council of the Traditional Karate Do Organization, Inc.

INTRODUCTION:

The Albany Council of the Traditional Karate Do Organization, Inc is dedicated to high quality, compassionate and caring instruction that is affordable for the whole family. The goal of the organization is to nurture a driving force in the community for personal safety, respect for oneself and others, refinement of character, and responsible citizenship. AC-TKO will continue to enhance a framework in the instruction of a moral education, by instilling the basic rules of life; such as how to develop a positive mental attitude, set worthy goals and how to be the very best one can be. This approach infuses the promotion of mind, body and spirit for all our athletes.

The Albany Council of the Traditional Karate-Do Organization, Inc is a community of parents, instructors and staff who, through a commitment to education, innovation and leadership believes in abiding by as well as instilling, respect of others, honesty, integrity, dedication, motivation and self-discipline in all of the athletes who participate.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to develop certain guidelines for our athletes to follow. These rules and regulations will create a structured environment, which informs the athlete about what is expected of them as part of a team. The goal is to eventually have everyone working off the same page, idea and concept.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Shihan Tony Butler Jr., Joseph A. Sorce, Jenneane N. Butler

THE EXECUTIVE BOARD:

Elizabeth Alexander, MaryAnn Butler, Jerome Culler, Michelle Fields, Isabel Laboy-Pica, Shawn Sorce, Kriste White and Sharan Lehman Jones

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SECTION ONE: DOJO ETIQUETTE

RESPECT

The Albany Council of the Traditional Karate-Do Organization, Inc. prides itself on instilling important values in all our athletes. One of our most important values is respect. Our athletes are required to show respect to all co-athletes, referees, coaches, staff members, chaperones, all adults, parents and especially to themselves. Showing respect is a sign of maturity. Showing respect teaches the athlete to be kind as well as have compassion toward others. Proper respect will be shown at all times by parents, athletes, instructors, siblings and friends of the athletes involved with The Albany Council of Traditional Karate Do Organization, Inc. (hereinafter referred to as "AC-TKO") The American Institute of Japanese Karate (hereinafter referred to as AIJK). It is important that the adults, through modeling, show the same respect the athletes are being asked to demonstrate.

Etiquette in the Dojo must follow a line of respect. Karate class begins and ends with respect, which is why it is considered good form to bow (*Rei*) when you enter and exit the dojo, as well as the training floor where the athlete may be practicing. Athletes should always defer to higher-ranking senior students. Athletes should always give their undivided attention to the individual who is teaching, correcting or informing them of things. The parents and athletes should know the tradition of the art and respect it. Respect is an honor and a privilege to have, embrace it and show it to others.

PROPER ATTIRE:

All students/athletes are required to have the proper attire at all times. Students when taking Karate class should be in their white Gi with the proper belt rank. Students when in Kobudo class should be in their black Gi top and white bottom with the proper belt rank. The Gi should fit the athletes' body. For example, if your sleeves are too long, fold them properly or have it altered to about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the arm length. If your Gi pants are too long, then, again, fold them properly or have it altered to the proper length of one (1) inch above the ankle. Gi's should be clean and each student should look presentable. **All jewelry must be taken off and for the girls no hard or big hair pins.** Toenails and fingernails should be cut. The athlete/student should take pride in how they look and they should look like they are a part of the class/team.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

TRAINING

CLINICS

Each student/athlete is assigned to a specific class depending on their ability, age and level of the art. Each student/athlete is required to attend each class. They should arrive on time, so as not to disturb the class when it is in progress. Attending each class will ensure that the athlete is up to date with their material and they do not fall behind.

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Students from time to time will be required to attend Clinics for special training or to learn new things. Students are encouraged to attend every clinic possible, so that their training keeps improving. Training is an important part of becoming part of the Travel Teams. Each student should want to absorb all training to get them ready for the team.

It is also the student's responsibility to pull their attendance card each time they attend class, at the dojo, to ensure that they are properly marked present for that class. If the student does not pull their card when they are in fact in class, they will not get credit for that class. All cards are located at the front desk in alphabetical order by last names and divided into sections under their school (Honbu, ASH, V.I, Hoffman Park, Arborhill, Myers Middle School, Montessori, School 18 and Loudonville Elementary... etc). If the attendance card is not present please ask and someone for help.

PREPARATION FOR CLASS

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

All students are to come to class prepared at all times. This means the student/athlete should have their belt(s), weapon(s), sparring equipment, water bottle and binder. Each athlete should come mentally prepared, focused and ready to work as hard as they can. This shows that the athlete is responsible and has respect for Karate etiquette. It is the athletes' responsibility to make sure that they have everything they need for class.

CODE OF CONDUCT

AC-TKO / AIJK will work under the following Code of Conduct:

**I WILL DEVELOP MYSELF IN A POSITIVE MANNER
AND AVOID ANYTHING THAT COULD REDUCE MY MENTAL GROWTH AND PHYSICAL HEALTH
I WILL DEVELOP SELF DISCIPLINE
IN ORDER TO BRING OUT THE BEST IN MYSELF AND OTHERS
I WILL USE COMMON SENSE BEFORE SELF DEFENSE
AND NEVER BE ABUSIVE OR OFFENSIVE
THIS IS A BLACK BELT SCHOOL
WE ARE DEDICATED
WE ARE MOTIVATED
WE ARE ON A QUEST TO BE OUR BEST**

Every student and parent should conduct themselves accordingly and always remember these words to help them act appropriately in and out of the dojo.

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SECTION TWO: TRAVEL TEAM

SELECTION OF TEAM MEMBERS

There is a Department of Recreation team, which is sponsored by the City of Albany. All students in the Karate program are members of this team. Shihan will, at times, select individual athletes to represent the organization during presentations throughout the year. This is event dependent.

COACHES AND CHAPERONES

Technical coaches (hereinafter referred to as “coaches”) consist of our adults. Our head coach is Coach Debbie and our Junior Black belts assist in technical coaching. Technical or Red Shirt coaches are the coaches in Tournaments that are able to coach your child from the chair in sparring. They are also able to argue for the athlete when they feel a bad call has been made. They support the athlete and guide them during competitions.

The technical coaches are helped out by coach-chaperones (Administrative Coaches) and/or staff members (hereinafter referred to as “chaperones”) which consist of our volunteer parents who have been training to become coaches. These individuals can also coach but not in the same capacity as the technical coaches, they are merely there to support the athlete in the ring as well in the staging areas. Chaperones are not able to argue on the behalf of the athlete, but can certainly inform a technical coach to challenge a call. These individuals will also be responsible for the athletes when traveling. They will in essence act as a surrogate parent in your absence when the athlete is traveling with the team or competing on the floor.

The coaches and chaperones will travel with the competitors. Parents are always welcomed and encouraged to attend any and all special events, tournaments and clinics that the athletes will be at, but on their own accord. **The coaches and chaperones will be responsible for the athletes, and as parents we should give all our support, consideration and thanks to these individuals who are willing to take on this big responsibility.** Any parent can become a coach or chaperone by signing up and attending the necessary classes. If you wish to become a coach or chaperone, please see any one of the board members.

Under no circumstances, No Parent, at any time, should question or confront a coach or chaperone, especially during a Tournament. If a parent does interfere, this will be grounds for the athlete not being able to travel with the team to any tournament, clinic or event. Each coach and chaperone, taking care of the athletes, is working hard to help each athlete and they are taking time out of their lives to do this and they should be thanked and appreciated and not second guessed or degraded.

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As a parent if you have a concern, please abide by the following protocol. There will always be an assigned Board Member, Head Coach, or Adult Blackbelt where you can take your concern. Once you discuss your concern with the designated person, they will try to resolve your concern at that point in time depending on the urgency. If your concern cannot be satisfied, then it will be taken to Shihan and/or if needed, a meeting will be scheduled with all parties involved.

Coaches and chaperones will be responsible for making sure the athletes get to training, bed, staging and tournaments on time during travel.

If the athlete is traveling with their parent (local tournaments, clinics or special circumstances), the parent must make sure to have the athlete to the designated destination or assigned coach/chaperone at the time that is required.

Parents are also required to make sure that their child gives the utmost respect to each coach or chaperone their child is assigned to and to listen to that person without any attitude. If your child cannot abide by this, he/she will not be allowed to travel with or as part of the team. All athletes have to be respectful at all times and make sure that they are there to work. Traveling is not a vacation, although we will try to make it as comfortable and enjoyable as possible, but in reality we are there to work and learn.

TRAINING

As part of the karate program, and especially as part of the team, each athlete is expected to train hard and consistently. Each athlete is expected to attend all required classes and is encouraged to attend all clinics. Sometimes training will take place out of the Dojo. If the athlete is chosen to attend these special training classes, they should always conduct themselves in a positive manner and show respect to everyone.

Each athlete should come away from each training class with more knowledge and understanding of what they learned, so that they are able to bring back any drills, katas, or information given or learned at these away clinics to the other athletes who did not go that time around. Training is learning and the athlete should absorb everything that is taught to them, so they can be the very best at what they do.

Parents, if your child is selected to travel for training and/or clinics; you will have three (3) days to respond to Shihan. If you do not respond within three (3) days then it will be considered as a "No" and another athlete will be asked. Once you respond, you cannot change your mind, so please be sure when responding. If you say no at that time, it will not preclude your child from attending another away training and/or clinic. It is our intention, that traveling for clinics and/or training will be done on a rotating basis, when possible, so all athletes/competitors can have that experience and training.

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DOJO-KUN

The Code of Conduct for the adult athletes is as follows:

**SEEK PERFECTION AND CHARACTER
FOLLOW THE PATH OF TRUTH
ENDEAVOR
RESPECT OTHERS
AND REFRAIN FROM VIOLENT BEHAVIOR**

EXPENSES/COSTS

Parents will be responsible for themselves and their athletes' expenses and costs while traveling to attend the events and/or training and competitions. Expenses and /or costs in connection with traveling mode and/or hotel will **ONLY** be paid for the Coaches and Chaperones. Expenses and/or costs will not be paid for any parents(s) under any circumstances.

Expenses and/or costs to cover Tournament(s) fees, maybe paid for, but will not cover AAU Dues. This is contingent upon parent support during fundraisers.

TRAVEL MODE

ARRANGEMENTS

CONDUCT

Competitors will travel via bus, plane or even train at times. Travel mode will be determined at the time of each travel period. Travel arrangements for the competitors will be made by a travel agent. Parents will be notified of the packages and will be able to make arrangements for their child and themselves through the travel agent or on their own.

Parents, when your child travels with the team, they are expected to be with the team. All athletes are encouraged to eat, train and stay at the same location as the team. No athlete will be alone during any travel periods. A chaperone and/or coach will be with the athletes at all times. *(For more details see Section Two: Coaches and Chaperones).*

Each athlete must be able to listen and abide by the rules set forth by their assigned coach and/or chaperone. Each athlete is expected to be respectful, have a positive attitude and be mature. **No foolishness will be tolerated.**

TEAM SPIRIT

It is very important that we show team spirit. Each athlete is to be there for their fellow athlete/competitor, who is competing, even if that athlete is not competing, has competed already, or not scheduled to train at that time. Each athlete should always show support for fellow athletes by cheering them on whether they win or lose. Parents, as part of the team, are also required to show their support for all competitors/athletes, as well.

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AGE REQUIREMENT TO TRAVEL

An age requirement to travel has not been established. But if an athlete is selected to travel with the team that individual should be able to travel without a parent, unless said parent is a Coach or Chaperone. Parents, if your child cannot travel without you, they will not be able to travel to the away tournaments or clinics until they mature enough to do so.

REMEMBER A TEAM THAT STICKS TOGETHER, WINS TOGETHER!!

SECTION THREE: TOURNAMENT

COMPETITION

Competition is being able to compete in all different Tournaments. We encourage all athletes to participate and compete in Friendship Tournaments to get the experience of what it would be like to compete in front of a big crowd, show their sportsmanship, build their confidence and most of all show their stuff. These smaller tournaments will prepare each competitor for the big tournaments and will teach them what competition is all about.

THE REQUIRED TOURNAMENTS

Competitors will be required to attend certain Tournaments in order for them to eventually be able to compete in Nationals or the World Cup. These Tournaments consist of the following:

1. Qualifier (Association Tournament). This is first tournament that the athlete will need to attend and compete in and place in the top 16 in order to move on to the next level. This tournament is usually held in March of each year. Qualifier is held in the Capital Region.
2. Regionals: This is the second tournament that the athlete will need to attend and compete in and place in the top 8 in order to move on to the next level. This tournament is usually held in April or early May of each year. Regionals are usually held in the Capital Region.
3. Nationals: This is the third and last tournament that the athlete will need to attend and compete in and only places 1st, 2nd, and 3rd are recognized. Placing in 1st will make you that year's National Winner for whatever you take 1st place for. Nationals also hold Finals for athletes who are 13-years-old and over. This is the best of the 13-year-old and over athletes in the Black belt division. Athletes who qualify for the finals only will spar (fight) on the last day of competition for 1st place and become their age group's National Champion for that year. Nationals are usually held in a different city/state every year.

*After each event in the competition, each competitor should shake the hand of each referee in their ring as a sign of respect. It shows good etiquette.

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In some instances, if your child is ill or injured, you can request a Waiver of that particular tournament, so that they can move on to the next tournament. Waivers are not given easily and you still must pay the entry fee for that tournament, but if you have a valid reason you can contact the person in charge of the tournament via telephone or email and request a waiver and they will advise you on the proper channels to follow to obtain the same.

The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners age 10 years old and over at Nationals are invited to attend the Junior Olympics of that year usually held in July or August and also in a different City every year.

The World Cup is usually held in a different Country and it is a privilege to be invited to attend the World team, which represents the United States of America abroad. In the past, several of our senior students have been part of the U.S. team and have competed in Budapest and Germany.

GENERAL CHECK LIST

It is a good idea for each athlete, when competing in Tournaments, to have all the appropriate things in their bag(s). All competitors should always have all their gear, a washcloth, bottled water, crackers (no chocolate), mouth guard and sparring gear. Competitors can be in staging or on the competition floor for hours and they need some energy. Parents should always try to pack a little snack for the athlete (nothing that will stain) and they should always have bottled water.

DRESS CODE REQUIREMENT

Competitors must wear a white unmarked Karate Gi without stripes or piping. An identifying number issued by the Organizing Committee may be worn on the back.

The Karate Gi jacket, when tightened around the waist with the belt, must be of minimum length that covers the hips, but no longer than mid thigh. In the case of women, a plain white T-shirt or white sports bra may be worn beneath the Karate Gi jacket.

Gi sleeves may not be rolled. The sleeves of the Gi jacket must come, in principle, at least halfway down the forearm. The exception to this rule is in KOBUDO competition where the sleeves of the Gi jacket may be modified to facilitate safe progression of the performance.

The Gi jacket must be of kimono style (left side over right), not V-neck style.

The Gi trousers must be long enough to cover at least two thirds of the shin - and may not be rolled up.

The belts must be around 5 centimeters wide and of a length sufficient to allow 15 centimeters free on each side of the knot ends after it has been properly tied around the waist, but not to hang lower than the knee.

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The color of belts to be worn at all Qualifying AAU events is as follows:

White Belt -Beginner competitions (under one year experience).

Green Belt - Novice competitors (one to under two years experience).

Brown Belt - Intermediate competitors (two to under four years experience).

Black Belt - Advanced competitor (four or more years experience).

Each competitor must keep his/her hair clean and cut to a length that does not obstruct smooth bout conduct. Should the referee consider any competitor's hair too long and/or unclean, he may, with the Referee's Council approval disbar the contestant from the bout. Hair slides are prohibited, as are metal hair clips. In KATA a discreet hair clip is permitted.

Uniforms may not bear the trademark or name of a product or manufacturer, and may not bear the name of a club or organization, not a member of the AAU unless approved by the AAU National Karate Committee.

The official AAU patch shall be worn on the uniform, be affixed to the left breast of the Gi jacket and must be properly sewn on.

No protective gear shall be worn during KATA or KOBUDO competition.

Glasses that are secured to the head are permitted in KATA and KOBUDO competition.

The dress code requirements can also be ascertained from the AAU website at www.AAUKARATE.org. This website also hosts a scholarship program for all athletes/competitors in High School or early college years. Any athlete/competitors that fall under that criteria can be nominated by simply completing the application on line or downloading it and completing it that way and then submit it, all winners will be announced at Nationals of that year but please note there are deadlines to submit the applications so that your nominee can be considered.

Any further questions should be directed to the Executive Board members or emailed to actko@actko.com. For other information visit our website at www.actko.com.

SECTION FIVE: CONTACT INFORMATION

If you should need further information on any of these topics or have questions that were not answered herein you can contact Joseph Sorce, CEO at actko@nycap.rr.com.

Welcome and Thank You for being a part of our Organization and our Team.