

# JCC Maccabi Games 2025 FAQ's



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **1. What are The JCC Maccabi Games®?**

The JCC Maccabi Games are an international athletic competition for Jewish teenagers run much like the Olympics. Athletes can compete against Jewish teens from all over the United States as well as delegations from Israel, Great Britain, Mexico, Canada, and more. The Games are played with a focus on *rachmanus* (sportsmanship) with the intent to foster long-lasting friendships, memories and connection to Judaism and Israel. This unique event is not only about being a part of the Jewish people; it comes with a mission– to make the world a better place and to make ourselves better people. We express these *middot* (values) to help us remember the greater mission of the Games and Judaism. We emphasize *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world), *Kavod* (respect), *Rina* (joy), *Ga'ava* (pride), *Lev Tov* (big hearted), and *Amiut Yehudit* (Jewish peoplehood). The Games also promote community involvement and teamwork. The Games are one of the largest Jewish teen events in the world; each summer over 3,000 Jewish teens participate. Over 100,000 teens have benefited from the JCC Maccabi Games since 1982. At this Jewish Olympic style event, each athlete participates in one of fifteen

sports, social events, and an opportunity to give back to the community during this week-long experience, creating memories that will last a lifetime.

## 2. Where/When are the Games this year?

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tucson, AZ</b> <b>July 27 - August 1, 2025</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Ages 13-17 (newly expanded ages!)</li><li>● <b>Sports Offered:</b> baseball, boys and girls basketball, dance, girls volleyball, boys and girls soccer, flag football, tennis, swimming, golf and dance</li><li>● Highlights include:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Olympic-style sport competitions, including opening and closing ceremonies, and a tribute to the Munich 11</li><li>○ Home hospitality with local Jewish host families</li><li>○ JCC Cares community service projects</li><li>○ Hangtime programming with Israeli <i>schlichim</i></li><li>○ Evening social events</li></ul></li></ul>
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\*Sports are subject to change

## 3. Who is eligible to participate in the JCC Maccabi Games?

**a.** Jewish teens between the ages of 13-17, for the full duration of the program July 27 through August 1. Eligible athletes were born between August 2, 2007 and July 26, 2012.

**b. All athletes must be Jewish**, which is defined as follows: One of the athlete's parents is Jewish and the athlete is being raised Jewish or is a Jew by choice and is being raised Jewish. In the spirit of the Games, if the parent or child does not believe that they are Jewish on a year-round basis, then the child should not participate in JCC Maccabi. In the online registration, there is a declaration that contains the eligibility requirements; both the athlete and their parent(s) must sign this declaration.

**c.** All athletes must have current medical insurance and up to date on all age-appropriate vaccines including the Covid-19 vaccinations and boosters as per CDC guidelines. The JCC Association and JCC Maccabi Games do not provide any exemptions to this requirement.

## 4. What sports are offered?

Baseball, Boys and Girls Basketball, Boys and Girls Soccer, Girls Volleyball, Flag Football, Dance, Tennis, Swimming, and Golf.

## **5. What is the athletic competition like?**

The competitive level of the participants will vary. There are teens that are elite athletes and those that are there for the experience – the level of play is very diverse. Some of the sports will have different divisions based on skill levels. Throughout the week, players can expect to play at least four games/matches before tournament play begins on Wednesday. Gold, silver and bronze medals are awarded to the top three winners. Although it is competitive, the JCC Maccabi Games emphasize the *Rachmanus* Rule, which is good sportsmanship and fair play. The experience is about more than just sports. It focuses on an all-around experience including friends, community service, social, and educational activities.

## **6. What is a delegation?**

Teens from across North America participate in JCC Maccabi representing their 'local' delegation. Typically, this is the delegation representing their home city/local JCC for example Team Atlanta, Team Philadelphia, Team Toronto, etc. For 2025, athletes from the East Bay will be joining Team San Francisco, based out of the JCCSF.

## **7. How are teams selected?**

This ultimately depends on the level of interest. Some teams will have interest levels that require tryouts (basketball, soccer, and possibly volleyball) while the majority of spots will be filled based on interest. As we have limited spots available, any athlete who wants to attend is encouraged to fill out the application form at the bottom of this FAQ.

## **8. What is a mixed team?**

A mixed team is composed of athletes from multiple delegations. This is common and happens when a delegation does not have enough athletes to field a full team. If our delegation is unable to field a full team, athletes will be combined in a mixed team with one or more other delegations' players. Being on a mixed team can be a great experience and foster lasting friendships with Jewish teens around the world!

## **9. My athlete plays more than one sport and/or is interested in playing up (normally would be 14U but wants to be in 16U). What should we select in the application?**

If your child plays more than one sport and/or is comfortable playing with 16U, please utilize the 'select all that apply' option when filling out the application. Knowing that athletes can play different sports will help us be more flexible in the creation of our final team roster.

## **10. If my child plays more than one sport, will they get to play more than one sport during the games?**

Athletes are only permitted to participate in one sport. The Games are a whirlwind of constant competitions in multiple locations throughout the host city and these logistics, along with the desire to create connections and relationships within teams does not allow an athlete to participate in more than one sport.

## **11. How does community service play a role in JCC Maccabi?**

Community Service is a key component to the JCC Maccabi Games experience. Each set of Games includes a JCC Cares project where athletes step away from competition for a part of their day and work to improve the local community, through activities like planting a community garden, bowling with adults with special needs, or doing art projects with children from underserved communities.

### 12. How will my child get to and from the Games?

Parents will be responsible for bringing athletes to the designated airport where delegation staff will be there to check teens in and accompany the group to the Games. Parents are not permitted to travel with the delegation.

### 13. What is the fee for the JCC Maccabi Games?

The all-inclusive fee is \$2,800 per teen. Program fees include Games registration fees, transportation to and from the host community and during the Games, uniform, delegation swag, adult supervision, coaches, practices, kosher meals, social events/team activities, and all other accommodations throughout the program.

*Note: the fee also includes pre-trip gatherings including practices, swag committee meetings, swag parties, and more for all athletes to get to know each other before we leave for the Games!*

### 14. Are there scholarships available?

Yes! Limited scholarships are available locally for families in need of financial assistance. All funding is need-based and you can apply through a confidential process.

To apply, please email [josh.steinharter@jccastbay.org](mailto:josh.steinharter@jccastbay.org) to receive the Maccabi Financial Aid application.

We also strongly encourage you to reach out to your local Federation, Jewish Community Foundation, and synagogue to enquire about local funding opportunities.

Limited scholarships are also available through the JCC Association of North America for families in need of financial assistance. All funding is need-based, and you can apply through a confidential process. Please visit [this link](#) for more information on the [Richard Cohen Memorial](#) JCC Maccabi scholarship. **Note: it is a requirement for all athletes applying for financial aid through JCC East Bay to also apply for the Richard Cohen Memorial scholarship.**

### 15. What does registration entail?

Registration includes submitting the completed registration, personal contact info, a \$800 non-refundable deposit paid upon signing up, and agreement to the non-refundable remainder of the payment to JCC East Bay. Additional registration steps are required at later dates including medical forms, and online registration, roommate requests, etc. Your delegation head will supply detailed information as next steps are required.

All fees after March 1, 2025 are nonrefundable.

**16. Are there adult chaperones at JCC Maccabi?**

Of course! There is a mandatory ratio of 1 adult for every 8 teen participants. The delegation will have a delegation head, assistant delegation head, coaches, and other adult chaperones, as necessary. Every athlete is assigned to a coach/chaperone whether they are on a team sport, individual sport, or a mixed team with a coach from another delegation. Head coaches are all over 21 and have passed extensive background checks.

**17. Where will my teen stay?**

During the week of the Games (Sunday-Friday), teens will stay with a host family, which are Jewish homes that are part of their greater JCC communities.

Teens can request specific homes that meet their needs such as dietary restrictions and pet allergies. Teens can also request a specific roommate - so they can stay with their friends, including teens from other sports. It's important to note that housing decisions are made by the host community's housing committee, not the JCC East Bay and we do not have any influence on making changes. Participants may not arrange their own housing unless approved and discussed by their Delegation Head.

**18. What are the health and safety standards at JCC Maccabi?**

JCC Maccabi we will require proof of vaccinations for all participants at the 2025 JCC Maccabi Games, inclusive of teens, coaches, delegation heads, volunteers, spectators, and age eligible host family members who engage with the games, with no exceptions. There are doctors, nurses, and other medical professionals on site at every sports location to care for athletes as needed during the Games.

**19. Can you tell me about security at JCC Maccabi?**

Security is taken very seriously at the JCC Maccabi Games. Background checks are utilized for all adults involved and all participants, spectators, coaches, host families, volunteers, etc. are required to wear a credential to access any JCC Maccabi facility. The host community also works closely with local, state, and federal law enforcement to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all.

**20. Our family keeps kosher and is observant- will my teen's needs be met at JCC Maccabi?**

Yes, all food served at the JCC Maccabi Games is kosher and all activities will conclude prior to Shabbat. Delegations will return home on Friday with plenty of time before Shabbat.

**21. Can I use my athlete's school or camp medical form for JCC Maccabi?**

No. Maccabi Central will only accept the JCC Maccabi Medical Form.

**22. What happens if there is a medical emergency?**

In the case of a medical emergency, the Delegation Head will act as the participant's guardian and will communicate with the parents to get any treatment necessary. Information such as the

parent/guardian's birth date and social security number is sometimes necessary to utilize insurance.

### **23. Can parents be spectators at the JCC Maccabi Games?**

Yes! Parents, family members, and friends are welcome to attend the Games as spectators. A spectator pass gives access to the opening ceremony and sport events. No one will be admitted to a Games site who is not wearing an approved credential. To register as a spectator, you will use the same website as when registering your teen. Please note registration and fee deadlines, be aware of early bird prices.

While we encourage families to consider attending to support their teens, the athletes have programs and activities going on for the entirety of their time at the Games and thus only see visitor's courtside at sporting events. At no point during the week can spectators or parents remove the teens from the program or take them off-site for any reason.

### **24. How can I sign up to be part of Team East Bay at the JCC Maccabi Games?**

[Click here](#) to fill out our interest form and we will be in touch to guide you through the process.

Please contact Josh Steinharter, [josh.steinharter@jcceastbay.org](mailto:josh.steinharter@jcceastbay.org), COO at the JCC East Bay to secure your athlete's spot at the 2025 JCC Maccabi Games.