

Volunteer Miles Driven – Are they worth tracking?

Many youth basketball coaches drive thousands of miles each basketball season going back and forth to tournaments and weekly practices. Since many coaches do not get paid for their coaching services – they are basically “volunteering” their services. Although there are no IRS tax deductions for a coaches “time” spent for practices and tournaments, there is a tax deduction for “Mileage” used for practices, tournaments, and other events related to volunteering.

The chart below shows the 2011 IRS Mileage Rate for Volunteer/Charitable contributions. Fourteen cents a mile may not seem much for those coaches that do not accumulate many miles during a season, but for those of us that logged in a few thousand (or more) it could be a deduction of \$200-\$600 per basketball season.

My last full season of coaching AAU basketball I racked up over 3600 volunteer miles (which came to \$504 in deductions). Not bad for someone with my income.

There are also deductions for gifts and donations so if you are interested in looking those up there are guidelines on the IRS website.

Tax Year:	Business	Moving or Medical	Volunteer/Charitable
2011 IRS Mileage Rate	51 Cents/Mile	19 Cents/Mile	14 Cents/Mile

Taking a deduction on the volunteer miles that you drive is perfectly acceptable, but you will need to keep track. We have several forms and files that are easy to use that track you mileage (obviously you need to make sure that you enter the information consistently to keep up with it). Tracking your mileage can be a pain at times, but if you stay on top of it right from the beginning it will pay off at the end of the year...

Tracking volunteer miles may not be for every coach, but for those of us that could use this type of deduction at tax time – it is a small benefit for all the hard work that we put in coaching the youth of our communities...