

YOUTH SOCCER FORT WALTON BEACH

General Guidelines Pertaining to All Age Groups

In general we follow FIFA Laws of the Game with amendments made for a recreation league.

The referee is the immediate authority to enforce and interpret the following:

1. The conduct of the coach and assistant coaches should be of the highest caliber at all times and should always reflect the best interest of the youth involved.
2. The conduct of the assistant coaches, parents, and the spectators of the team are the responsibility of the team coach. The referee will address misconduct through the coach, not the assistants, parents, or spectators directly. Fan unruly, the ref will not engage, look, or acknowledge. Ref will stop the game, walk to both coaches and explain a fan is disrupting, you must handle this immediately. If continues ref will stop the game until fan leaves the park. Coaches misbehaving, Ref will perform a 3-step process: **Ask** to stop, **Tell** to stop, **Dismiss** coach. If the coach is not responsive the game will be stopped until the situation is brought under control.
3. Any contact information coach's receive from the league (phone #s etc.) should be used for City league business only. Coach's should in no way represent themselves as league officials or act on behalf of the league in any City league business.
4. Coaches, Parents, or players should in no way solicit sponsors for equipment, services, parties etc. However, if sponsors offer support on their own volition, it may be accepted.
5. Cursing, using inappropriate language, or continued negative remarks by players, coaches, parents, or spectators will not be tolerated.
6. Coaches and assistant coaches will not incite the parents, spectators, or players by their actions or comments.
7. No alcoholic beverages will be consumed on the playing field at any time. There should be no smoking around the playing field; Smoking outside the fenced area is permitted.
8. There will be no more than 3 coaches per team (1 Coach 2 Assistant Coaches) on the playing field and/or on the team sideline at any time during a game. Only coaches and players are allowed in the technical area during play. Parents, spouses, friends, and spectators are to remain on the spectator side of the field.
9. Coaches must confine themselves to the technical area (area immediately in front of their team's benches) during play, (the only exception to this rule is in the 6U and 8U age division where one coach is allowed to stand next to their own team's goal to help coach the goalkeeper and organize the defense.) It is the coach's responsibility to keep its team's spectators and parents on the spectator side of the field and out of the technical area. If the coach is not responsive the game will be stopped until the situation is brought under control.

OFFICIAL GAME

1. The referee's time will be the official time.
2. The referee's score will be the official score.
3. The decisions of the referee regarding facts connected with play are final.
4. **SUBSTITUTIONS:** Players may be substituted liberally, there is no limit on how many substitutions a team or player can have. However, the referee must be notified and give permission for all substitutes to enter the field of play. Players cannot simply run on and off the field at their own discretion. Players being substituted must stand at the center line and wait for the referee's command to enter the field.
5. **INJURIES:** The referee is the final judge on whether to stop play because of an injury to a player. Coaches may bring an injury to the referee's attention, but let the referee be the final judge. If a player is hurt coaches may tell the player to come off the field, however, coaches may not substitute for that player or send the player back onto the field without the referee's permission. Coaches should tell their players that if they are seriously injured that they should stay down on the field. Do not enter onto the field until the referee gives permission. Blood injury has to be removed and cannot return until no blood is present. This includes on the jersey. It is acceptable to hide blood on jersey by turning the jersey inside out. Head to head (neck up) injuries, game will be stopped immediately.
6. Player infractions:
 - a) Yellow cards = misconduct (two yellow cards in a game equals a red card and an ejection.) Cautionable offenses include Dangerous play, excessive force, persistent infringement, dissent toward the referee, and unsportsmanlike conduct.
 - b) Red cards = Automatic ejection and 1 game suspension (3 red cards in a season and the player is suspended from participating for the rest of the season) Ejectable offenses include fighting, abusive language, repeated misconduct after caution, extremely dangerous play, and serious foul play. *Players cautioned will be asked to leave the field of play. The player can be, but does not have to be, substituted and may return at the next substitution opportunity
 - c) Teams that have a player sent off (straight red) will play short for the remainder of the game. Soft reds (two yellow cards in 1 game) do not require the team to play down a man and no suspension for the player ejected.
 - d) These rules apply to both players and coaches. Coaches will be asked to leave the premises.

UNIFORMS & EQUIPMENT

1. Shirt, shorts, socks and cleats, color consistency does not apply. The Rec. Department will provide team shirts for all registered players. Parents must provide shorts, socks, cleats, and shin guards to complete the uniform. Color and style of the shorts and socks is left up to the coaches and parents. Color and style consistency is not an issue.
2. Cold weather gear (such as sweat suits, jackets) can be worn, but worn under the uniform.
3. **CLEATS:** All players should have soccer cleats. Soccer cleats must be made of molded plastic or rubber, no metal cleats are allowed. Gym shoes and turf shoes are not recommended. The coach should encourage the parents and child to get regulation soccer cleats for their own safety. Referees have the right to disallow any equipment they deem to be hazardous to other players.

4. **SHIN GUARDS:** All players are required to wear protective shin guards during games and practices. Shin guards need to be made of a suitable material and provide a reasonable degree of protection. Socks must be worn, completely covering shin guards.
5. **JEWELRY:** Watches, jewelry, bracelets, and earrings are not allowed, even when taped over. The only exceptions to this rule are medical alert bracelets, which should be taped down.
6. Hard casts are not allowed, even when covered or padded. Soft casts, braces, and splints can be worn but only at the discretion of the referee.

WEATHER

1. All attempts will be made to play complete games at the time scheduled including playing in light to moderate rain conditions. However, safety is a foremost concern. Lightning, heavy rain, extreme flooding or other unsafe conditions will usually result in game suspension or termination at the discretion of the soccer director and referee.
2. 30/30 rule: In the event of a storm, the referee will suspend play if 30 seconds or less elapse between the sightings of a lightning flash and hearing of associated thunder. Play shall not be resumed prior to 30 minutes after the last sound of thunder. During practices coaches will follow the same 30/30 rule, if the weather becomes inclement.
3. The soccer director will make the determination if a game will start or continue in rain or bad weather. **If the director is not present, the referee will make the determination.** If the second half has begun and game is stopped due to a bad weather situation, the game will be final at the point in which it was stopped. Games terminated before the second half may be replayed at a mutually convenient time.

FORFEITS

1. In the competitive age groups, a team will forfeit a game if it is not ready to play 15 minutes after the official game time as printed on the official game schedule. The referee will make the call on all forfeits.
2. Teams playing in leagues that play 11v11 need a minimum of 7 players to play.
Teams playing in leagues that play 9v9 need a minimum of 6 players to play.
Teams playing in leagues that play 7v7 need a minimum of 4 players to play.
If teams have the minimum number of players to play, the game will be played.
3. If one team should have fewer than the full complement of players on the field at the start of the game, the other team may, but does not have to, start with less than the allowable number in the interest of sportsmanship, which they may increase later to the maximum number at their discretion. Whatever the larger team decides to do, they must accept the final game results.
4. A coach who: a) takes his/her team off the field in protest of any kind; b) does not control his/her team or spectators; c) disrupts the game because of his/her opinion of the officiating, weather conditions, or any other dissent, will forfeit the game at that point.

PROTESTS/COMPLAINTS

1. The referee's will only respond to complaints in regards to rule interpretation (If you are unsure of a rule or how it is applied within the laws of the game) When approaching referee's, make sure that, it is always done in a non-aggressive manner and only concerning rule interpretation and the facts related to play.
*All other protests or complaints should be brought to the attention of the Soccer Director who in turn will resolve the situation in a timely manner.
2. If there are questions/suggestions as to the way the league is organized or preferred rules, Please bring these to the soccer director in the off-season or post-season when they can be more carefully considered or implemented.
3. Questions or complaints regarding referees will be referred to the referees association. The referees association will keep the soccer director informed about these issues.