



## Administrative Guidelines For Coaches

1. The guiding principle of the League is sportsmanship and fair play.
2. The basic objectives of the League are two-fold: (1) to have fun and (2) to provide players an opportunity to develop their understanding and command of the game.
3. Teams may meet a maximum of three times per week, including games.
4. Do not leave any children on the practice fields alone. Wait for parents to pick them up. If this becomes a problem, talk with the parent. If the problem persists, call the League Office and we will try to resolve the problem.
5. Be prompt for all practices and games.
6. Be organized and prepared for practices and games.
7. Ask parents to assist you with coaching duties, phone calling, organizing after game snacks, etc..
8. Games will be played, as scheduled, unless you hear otherwise from the League Office. Games will be cancelled only due to field conditions, flooding, lightning, and below freezing temperatures. The League Office will notify coaches by e-mail, or phone, of any cancellations, at least one hour prior to the scheduled start of the game. Coaches will then notify players of the cancellation. The League will make every effort to re-schedule cancelled games. Please see the section below regarding cancellation procedures.
9. If coaches will be unavailable for any game day, they must notify the League Office and advise which assistant coach will be responsible for the team that day.
10. Games may be re-scheduled for just cause, if prior approval is given by the League Office.
11. Coaches must maximize the amount of playing time for each player. Each player must play at least one-half of each game attended. No player should play 4 quarters, until all players have played 3 quarters.
12. Coaches are allowed to restrict a player's playing time for disciplinary reasons, provided prior approval has been given by the League Office.
13. Coaches are expected to set a proper example for their players and their player's parents. Coaches should ALWAYS conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner and expect the same from their players and their player's parents. Under no circumstances will foul or abusive language be tolerated. Violators - be it coaches, players, or spectators - may be asked to leave the field and may be disciplined by the League.
14. In the U6, U7, & U8 Divisions, the Team Bench (coaches and players) should be located inside (or between) the pitches. Spectators should be located on the outside of the pitches. In the U9, U10 & U12 Divisions, the Team bench (coaches and players) should be located on one side of the pitch and spectators should be located on the other side. Neither coaches, players, nor spectators should be located at the end of the pitch (behind the goal).
15. All games will be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game as defined by FIFA, the international governing body, and the United States Soccer Federation (USSF). Modifications of the Laws may be adopted, as allowed by FIFA and USSF. Modifications will be published and distributed to coaches prior to the start of each season. Please see the League's "Program Guidelines" for modifications.
16. **Regarding Thunder/Lightning Delays**  
Lightning is the number one cause of injuries, and even deaths in youth soccer. In the event thunder is heard, or lightning is observed, **Games should be suspended immediately. All participants should leave the fields and go to their cars.** If ANYONE observes that lightning is in the area, **they should**

**immediately notify the referee or the League official if there is one at the field.**

There are no if's, and's, or but's in regard to this rule! If the referee or League official does not suspend play, the coaches should immediately remove their teams from the field and go to their cars. **THERE WILL NOT BE ANY EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE.**

When a league official or referee hears thunder or observes lightning, or has been advised that there is thunder and lightning in the area, a horn will be blown to notify everyone that there is thunder and/or lightning in the area. We will wait for 30 minutes for the thunder to cease or for the lightning to clear the area before resuming games. A league official will sound the horn to indicate that play may resume. The League may decide to terminate games after the delay. In the event a game is terminated, and play was suspended after the completion of the first half, it will be considered a completed game and the score at the time of suspension will be considered the final score. If the first half has not been completed, the League will try to re-schedule the game in it's entirety.

**Procedures for Game Cancellations**

As indicated earlier, games will be played as scheduled, unless you are notified otherwise. Typically games are canceled due to excessively wet field conditions. We generally try to make a cancellation decision on Friday night (for Saturday games) and Sunday morning (for Sunday games). If we have had a week of rain and more is predicted, you might want to start thinking about the possibility of canceled games. In the event games do have to be canceled, the League will notify ALL LEAGUE Participants (parents & coaches) following the procedures described below.

1. E-mail messages will be sent to ALL LEAGUE Participants (parents & coaches) to the **e-mail addresses that we have on file**. So, if there is any question about games being played, EVERYONE should check their e-mail! **If a player does not have email, the coach will have to call that player.**
2. A message will be left on the CESA voice mail, 253-6995 as soon as a decision to cancel games has been made. If there is no message indicating games have been canceled, then games have not been canceled as of the time the call was made. You might wish to advise parents of this option, so they can check themselves and not have to wait for your phone call.

**Team Communications**

The majority of issues that the League customarily handles is related to communication between coaches and players/parents. Frequent, timely, and clear communications usually obviates most problems. Typically, written communication is best. Most, if not all, households now have email. The new online registration system provides all coaches this capability. If you wish, you can also set up a "Team" Website. This too can be an effective, productive means of communicating with the team families.

**Pre-Season Communications**

All players should be contacted by phone, or email, as soon as possible after you receive your Roster. Be prepared to advise parents of the following:

1. Your name and phone number.
2. Equipment requirements - The League will provide the player's jersey. All other equipment must be purchased by the player:
  - a. Jersey color (Provide by League)
  - b. Soccer socks (same color as jersey)
  - c. Shin guards
  - d. Black shorts
  - e. Ball (specify size)
  - f. Shoes
    - Soccer shoes are optional, although they are recommended, if parents can afford them.

- Cleated SOCCER shoes must have round, molded, rubber cleats. Screw-in cleats are not allowed.
  - Cleated football or baseball shoes, or shoes with a toe cleat are not allowed.
3. Practice Days
  4. Practice Times
  5. Practice Locations
  6. Family email address

### **In-Season Communications**

It is recommended that a Team Meeting be held at the first practice to advise parents of plans for the upcoming season. Topics that could, or should, be covered include the following:

1. Games Schedules
2. Team Roster with parents' names and phone numbers
3. Maps
  - a. Directions to the fields
  - b. Layout of park/location of parking and game field
4. Photo Day
5. Expectations of parents
  - a. Timely arrival for games and practices
  - b. Notification that the player cannot attend a practice or game
  - c. Need for parents to help with team activities
  - d. Need for parents to be encouraging and supportive of players - NOT critical!
  - e. After-game snacks/drinks
  - f. **No pets at the fields**
6. Expectations of players
  - a. To have fun
  - b. To participate in practices
  - c. To learn how to participate as a member of a team and be supportive of teammates.
7. Practice cancellation policy
  - i.e. "Practice will always be held as scheduled unless you hear from the coach. Cancellation calls will be made at least one hour prior to the start of practice."
8. Pertinent League Rules/Policies
  - i.e. Sportsmanship, Playing time, Lightning delays, Team Photos, etc..

The League encourages on-going communication with individual players/parents to let them know how they are doing: things the player is doing well, areas they need to work on, etc.. Such communications should always be encouraging, or at least include some element of positive vibrations.

### **Discipline/Sportsmanship**

Special mention is made of this in an attempt to reinforce the League's guiding principle of "sportsmanship and fair play." This principle should be applied by all participants (coaches, parents and players) during all team activities (including games and practices). We are all aware that disruptive behavior can be encountered with other coaches, parents, or players at some point in time - either during a game, or at practice.

As coaches, we are the role model upon which parents and players base their behavior. We need to be particularly sensitive to always conduct ourselves in a fair and sportsmanlike manner. Sometimes the best action is no action at all. At other times, we do need to act upon such behavior; but such action should be positive, diplomatic, and fair. It is frequently best handled on an individual basis, at a time and place removed from the immediate moment of the occurrence.

Let us always bear in mind that the disruptive behavior of one person can ruin the positive experience we are striving to attain for everyone. If you encounter behavioral problems with a player, or group of players, it is best to act upon it sooner rather than later. The first thing to do is to discuss the situation

with the relevant parent (s) and seek their assistance or suggestions for changing the player (s) behavior. If the problem (s) persists, call the League Office to discuss the situation. The League may intervene, if that is determined to be the best course of action. Limiting playing time may only be applied after discussing the matter with the League Office.

### **Field Management**

The following items will be taken out to the fields each game day. The League will pick them up after the last game of the day.

#### **1. First Aid Kit**

First aid kits will be placed in the bench areas of all fields. They are blue bags with red cross labels attached to the handle. They contain only rudimentary first aid items, like bandages, band aids, ice packs, etc.. If more serious injuries occur, the referee will notify the field commissioner.

#### **2. Corner Flags**

Corner flags will be placed in the bench area with the First Aid Kit. Coaches of the first game put them up, coaches of the last game take them down. Simply place them by the First Aid Kit.

#### **3. U6 Goals**

The goals for the U6 Fields are stored in the trailer. The League will bring them out to the fields. Coaches of the first game should place the goals and flags on the fields. Coaches of the last game should remove the goals and flags and place them in one location. The League will take them back to the trailer.

### **Pets**

Please ask your parents to not bring pets to the fields.

### **Trash**

In general, we are pretty good about cleaning up after each game. Please be diligent! Somebody has to pick it up. If each team does their part, we won't have to pay someone to do it.

### **Field Conditions**

If you notice any conditions that may be considered dangerous to the players, please notify the referee, or a League Official so the problem can be corrected. This is particularly true of things such as rocks, holes, goals that are not secured, etc.