



New Jersey Youth Soccer

PLAYING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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1. GENERAL GUIDELINES

1.1 Seasonal Year.

The Seasonal Year is defined as the period from September 1st of the current year through August 31st of the following year. Player and Coach registrations and related insurance coverage are valid for the same period.

1.2 Age Definitions.

The term "youth" shall mean an amateur player who has not attained his/her 20th birthday prior to the end of the calendar year.

Senior/Adult Games. A youth player will be permitted to play in an unlimited number of senior games without losing the players youth eligibility.

See the US Soccer Player Development Initiatives for all birth year labels.

1.3 Gender Teams (Boys/Girls Teams)

For the purposes of registration on gender-based teams, a player may register with the gender team with which the player identifies. Confirmation for guaranteeing access shall be satisfied by documentation or evidence that shows the stated gender is sincerely held, and part of a person's core identity. Documentation satisfying this standard includes but is not limited to government-issued documentation or documentation prepared by a health care provider, counselor or other qualified professional not related to the player.

1.4 Inclusion Policy

Registration is open to all youth soccer players without discrimination based on race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or national origin.

2. LEAGUE RULES

2.1 Insurance.

Member Leagues and Clubs are provided Directors & Officers insurance as well as Liability insurance. Registered players and coaches are provided excess medical insurance coverage. See the NJYS website for details.

2.2 Number of Teams.

All member travel Leagues must maintain at least a structured group of four (4) or more unrelated teams, joined for the purpose of inter-team play organized under a common set of administrative and competition rules.

2.3 Rule Making.

Each member travel League has the right to elect its own officers and determine its own administrative and competition rules, to the extent they are not in conflict with the NJYS Playing Policies and the Player Development Initiatives (PDIs), as adopted by NJYS.

3. TRAVEL TEAM RULES

3.1 Carding and Registration.

- a. Each travel team will be able to set up a player roster and print the appropriate number of US Youth Soccer player and coach passes upon completion of the required registration process. Timely payment of registration fees is also expected.
- b. NJYS has requirements and limitations on the size of the game day roster. See NJYS PDIs for details.
- c. All additions or subtractions from the Player Roster are to be made through the required registration process.
- d. All teams must be properly carded through NJYS, as well as registered with the relevant league, before they are eligible to play in any league sanctioned games.

3.2 Guidelines for “Playing Up”

See US Soccer PDIs for guidelines and philosophies.

3.3 Transfers.

The Transfer rules (process) are determined by NJYS. See the NJYS website for details.

3.4 Club Passing.

NJYS permits club passing. Club passes are used to play on another team within the same club if proper age restrictions are met. Member leagues determine specific rules of their competition.

3.5 Disbanding Teams.

- a. Teams that are properly registered and rostered to play in accordance with NJYS guidelines may elect to disband during the seasonal year.
- b. The team must surrender all player/coach passes and roster to NJYS and submit the disbanded team application online.
- c. Registration fees paid to NJYS will NOT be refunded to teams that elect to disband.
- d. After a team is formally disbanded by NJYS, the players on that team are declared eligible to transfer to another team in accordance with any relevant league and NJYS rules.

3.6 Hardship Teams.

Policies on hardship teams are determined by the competition authority (e.g. NJYS League).

4. COACH RULES

4.1 Passes.

- a. Each travel coach and trainer must hold and present to the referee a valid approved NJYS Coach pass prior to participating in any league scheduled game. Coaches and trainers without a pass or who present a pass with missing, damaged or altered photographs are ineligible to participate in a game and may be subject to sanctions. Note: A Coach may hold multiple Coaches Passes, for example one per team for which he/she is rostered.

b. Coach passes from other organizations, such as US Club Soccer, are not authorized substitutes for valid approved NJYS Coach passes.

4.2 Coach Add, Transfer or Release.

NJYS registered coaches may be added to other team(s) without being released from their original team. Coaches may be carded to more than one team, boys or girls.

4.3 FIFA.

FIFA Laws of the Game which apply to players shall also apply to coaches and club officials.

4.4 Poaching.

All coaches are prohibited from poaching players from another team. Poaching is defined as actively encouraging a player to leave his/her current team to join your team through your own actions, or those of players, parents or officials associated with your team. Poaching restrictions only apply during the seasonal year. Complaints regarding allegations of poaching should be reported to NJYS.

5. PLAYER RULES

5.1 Uniforms.

a. See the FIFA Laws of the Game and details from your competition authority (e.g. NJYS League) for details on uniform requirements. NJYS strongly recommends:

1. all players uniforms have numbers.
2. all team players are outfitted with matching uniform tops. Individual players are permitted to wear long sleeve shirts or jerseys under a short sleeve jersey so long as shirts are of the same solid color or match the sleeve color.
3. goalkeeper's jersey is distinctly different in color from all field players on both teams and the referees.
4. player names do NOT appear on the jersey.
5. all team players are outfitted with matching shorts. Individual players may wear clothing under their uniform shorts that may exceed the hemline of the shorts if they are hemmed and the same solid color as the shorts. All undergarments worn are of the same color throughout the team and should be tucked into the socks. Specifically designed goalie pants are allowed, and billed hats may be permitted at the referee's discretion.

b. A referee has the authority to require a player to remove any article of clothing he/she deems to be dangerous to that player or to other players on the field.

d. Players with casts or other protective gear may participate at the referee's discretion.

5.2 Passes.

Each player must hold and present to the referee a valid approved NJYS or USYS players pass prior to participating in any NJYS or USYS scheduled competition. Players without passes or who present passes with missing or damaged photographs are ineligible to participate in the game.

5.3 Secondary Carding.

Players in NJYS may only have one Travel Member Pass (i.e. primary card). NJYS also permits secondary permissions for 9U through 19U players. Note that this is not permitted for 8U and younger. Policies for secondary permissions are determined at the League level. See your NJYS Member League for details.

5.4 Player Add, Transfer or Release.

- a. All players seeking to be added or transferred to a team must follow and complete NJYS online instructions. Carded players for that seasonal year must first be released by their current team by completing and following the instructions on the NJYS website. Once a player is rostered to a team, he/she is bound to that team for the entire seasonal year unless he/she is released or transferred.
- b. Players transferring from one team to another team within the same club (i.e. club pass) during the seasonal year are not required to sit out prior to being eligible to play for the new team
- c. Leagues may have rules for sit-out for players who transfer within the same seasonal year.

5.5 NJ Residents Playing Out of State

Any youth player wishing to play on a team registered with a State Association other than New Jersey must register online through the "Registration" tab on the NJYS website.

5.6 Out of State Players (Players from State Associations other than NJ) Wanting to Play in New Jersey

Players must register with the State Association in which they reside. Once a pass is obtained, the player will register with the NJ Club in which they intend to play. During the registration process, the player will be given the opportunity to enter their out of state pass number. Registration fees may or may not apply to this registration.

6. GAME RULES

6.1 FIFA.

The Official Fédération Internationale de Football Associations (FIFA) Laws of the Game, the soccer rulebook authorized annually by the IFAB - International Football Association Board who maintains and annually updates soccer's rules and regulations, contains seventeen rules or "Laws" in soccer. Most of the rules get modified for youth soccer but can vary from league to league.

6.2 US Soccer Player Development Initiatives (PDIs)

The US Soccer Player Development Initiatives (PDIs) provide all stakeholders in the soccer arena a consistent approach, standards and recommendations regarding player development and best practices (philosophies) for players 12 years of age and younger. The focus of the document is to improve the development of the individual versus the success of a team. The document also provides parents with a resource so they can also have a better understanding of exactly what they should expect from a soccer program for their children. For players 13 years and older, refer to your competition authority (i.e. NJYS League) for details on game rules.

6.3 Game Scheduling.

- a. The day and time of games will be as specified by the relevant league.

b. NJYS State Cups games have priority over all other games. State Cups games should be scheduled for dates/times that minimize their impact on league schedules.

6.4 Game Day.

a. The Home Team is responsible for:

(1) If only one referee, up to two (2) volunteers to assist the referee on the sidelines if requested

(2) Goal nets (secured), corner flags and properly anchored goal posts

(3) Correct lining of the field including a spectator & team restraining line, preferably a different color from the touch line that is parallel to the touch line and 10 feet from it, and a properly marked build out line where applicable.

(4) Properly sized and inflated game ball.

(5) Changing jerseys in the event of duplication of colors.

(6) Any additional league requirements.

b. Coaches are responsible for their parents on the side lines. Coaches may be penalized/carded for not controlling their sidelines.

c. If at least one carded coach is not available at any time prior to the completion of the game, the game will be abandoned and, depending on the circumstances, may be declared a forfeit by the relevant league.

h. Both teams (players and all coaches) will occupy the same side of the field. All spectators will be on the opposite side of the field from the teams.

6.5 Heading.

Deliberate heading of the ball is not permitted in games or practices for U11 and younger.

NJYS has adopted the following policy on heading: All Players age 10 and younger shall not head the ball directly from the air in any match or competition, nor shall these players practice heading the ball in any organized team setting. If a player age 10 or younger deliberately heads the ball in a match, the referee shall award an indirect free kick to the opposing team at the spot of the infraction. If the heading occurs within the penalty area, the referee shall move the ball outside the penalty area and award an indirect free kick to the opposing team. Players age 9 and age 10 playing on a U11 team shall not head the ball in practice or competitions. Players age 11 and age 12 shall be permitted to head the ball in any match or competition. These players may practice heading the ball in an organized team practice or skill session, but coaches shall monitor this practice so that no single player heads the ball more than 25 times per week, regardless of setting. Players age 13 and older shall be permitted to head the ball in any match or competition and these players may practice heading the ball in an organized team practice or skill. NJYS has adopted a policy of NO HEADING in games or practices for U11 teams and younger and for 9- and 10-year players playing on U11 teams.

6.6 Goal sizes. Refer to US Soccer Player Development Initiatives

6.7 Substitutions. A player who is being substituted must leave the field by the nearest point on the touchline of their Team's Technical area (Coaches side) unless the referee indicates the player can leave quickly/immediately at a different point due to safety, injury, etc.).

6.8 Build Out Lines. Refer to US Soccer Player Development Initiatives

6.9 Punting

Refer to the NJYS PDIs. NJYS recommends that goalie punting is permitted at the 9v9 level (11U & 12U), but not into the opposing team's penalty area.

6.10 Offside. Refer to FIFA Laws of the Game and US Soccer Player Development Initiatives

6.11 Policy regarding Drones at NJYS Events

The use of unmanned aircraft is not permitted to be at activities of events of US Youth Soccer for youth soccer players. To view full policy: [http://www.njyslive.com/doclib/policy-on-unmanned-aircraft-systems-2015%20\(1\)b.pdf](http://www.njyslive.com/doclib/policy-on-unmanned-aircraft-systems-2015%20(1)b.pdf).

7. SANCTIONS

7.1 General Provisions.

All fines shall be paid within thirty (30) days of notification, including fines in the amount of \$100.00 or less that are the subject of an appeal. Fines greater than \$100 may be stayed if requested by the sanctioned party and approved by the entity hearing the appeal. Clubs with fines outstanding after that time period shall be declared not in "good standing," and may be subject to sanctions.

7.2 Club Fines.

All fines assessed against any players, coaches, trainers, officials or spectators associated with a specific club are the responsibility of that Club to remit. All payment must be tendered to the NJYS State Office by club check or money order. All fines must be paid within thirty (30) days of being notified unless otherwise provided in these Rules. A Club may not be allowed to register for an upcoming season until all unpaid fines are satisfied.

8. TOPSOCCER

TOPSoccer is a community-based training and team placement program for athletes with disabilities. The program is designed to bring the opportunity of learning and playing soccer to any boy or girl who has a mental or physical disability. There are no fees for this program.

A NJYS recognized program has a minimum of one (1) TOPSoccer Coach who has completed the TOPSoccer Coaching Course.

A recognized program has at least one (1) TOPSoccer Buddy who has successfully completed the TOPSoccer Buddy Training. TOPSoccer Buddies should be paired up with no more than two (2) Athletes. In other words, there should be a minimum of two (2) TOPSoccer Buddies and one (1) TOPSoccer Coach to train five (5) TOPSoccer Athletes. The purpose of this standard is for the safety and well-being of all participants.

9. STATE CUP

NJ Youth Soccer runs the following State Cup competitions:

1. National Championship Series
2. Presidents Cup

3. Commissioners Cup

The length of games and ball size for these games shall be in accordance with the US Soccer Player Development Initiatives.

Registration and fees are required to participate in all competitions. More detailed information and registration can be found in the NJYS State Cups rules and regulations, and on the NJYS website.

10. **OLYMPIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

The purpose of the Olympic Development Program is to identify players of the highest caliber on a continuing and consistent basis, which will lead to increased success for the U.S. National Teams in the international arena.

Registration and program fees are required for this program. Detailed information regarding the Olympic Development Program and Young Olympians can be found on the NJYS website.

11. **TOURNAMENTS**

Teams and players can use their NJYS passes at any tournament that accepts US Youth Soccer passes. Teams and players attending a non-US Youth Soccer tournament cannot use their NJYS passes for insurance claims. NJYS teams can check the tournament application to see what types of teams are being accepted prior to applying to the tournament.

12. **APPEALS**

For detailed information regarding appeals, please reference the NJYS By-laws on the NJ Youth Soccer website.