



# FYSA Summer Program Handbook

## w/ Locally-Modified 'Laws of the Game'

(Last Updated 5/30/20)

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This handbook contains important information regarding league policies, safety, rules of play & more. Please familiarize yourself with the information contained in this document. **Whether you are a coach, parent, referee or player, the most important aspects of our program, in order of importance, are Safe, Fair and Fun!** For FYSA's 2020 COVID-19 Mitigation Plan, see our website.

## 1. FYSA COACHING PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT

### 1.1. SAFETY

- 1.1.1. Your primary responsibility is the health & safety of all participants.
- 1.1.2. Having fun is secondary to this.
- 1.1.3. Inspect player's equipment & general field conditions for safety prior to any activity.
- 1.1.4. Be prepared to handle first aid situations or medical emergencies at practices & games.
- 1.1.5. Follow up all serious injuries with parent/guardian immediately & FYSA within 24 hours.
- 1.1.6. Utilize age-appropriate instruction of players regarding safety on & off the field of play.
- 1.1.7. Supervise your players so as to reduce potential injuries to themselves & others.
- 1.1.8. Strive to follow all established FYSA COVID-19 Mitigation Plan guidelines & general health/safety practices as currently set forth by state & local public health officials.

### 1.2. PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

- 1.2.1. Develop each child's appreciation of the game, regardless of skill level.
- 1.2.2. Keep winning AND losing in their proper perspective, for players, parents, & yourself.
- 1.2.3. Strive to be mindful & understanding of each player's development needs.
- 1.2.4. Players need to have fun & receive positive feedback.
- 1.2.5. Provide age-appropriate, constructive correction for performance & behavior if needed.
- 1.2.6. Educate players on the technical, tactical, physical & psychological aspects of the game.
- 1.2.7. Allow players to experience all field positions.
- 1.2.8. Practice should be conducted in the spirit of enjoyment, camaraderie & learning.
- 1.2.9. Strive to help each player reach their full potential, on & off the field.

### 1.3. ETHICS

- 1.3.1. Be a positive role model for players & set an example for behavior for all other adults.
- 1.3.2. Strive to maintain integrity within our sport & organization.
- 1.3.3. Set the standard for positive sportsmanship with opponents, referees, administrators & spectators, even when things don't go your way.
- 1.3.4. Know & understand the Laws of the Game, particularly local modifications & any adjustments for your specific age division.
- 1.3.5. Be aware of general & specific policies & guidelines set forth by FYSA & its parent-organizations. Abide by the directions communicating by league administrators.
- 1.3.6. Work in the spirit of cooperation with officials, administrators, other coaches & spectators to provide the participants with the maximum opportunity for enjoyment.
- 1.3.7. Coaches are encouraged to continue their own growth & understanding of the sport.
- 1.3.8. Don't hesitate to ask for help!

## 2. GETTING STARTED

- 2.1. First obtain your team roster online or contact FYSA for assistance to receive one.
- 2.2. Contact all the players/parents on the roster.
  - 2.2.1. Make sure team members know how to contact you.
  - 2.2.2. Ensure parents are aware of the posted game schedules.
  - 2.2.3. Inform parents & players of proper equipment to bring to games
  - 2.2.4. Convey any relevant COVID-19 Mitigation Plan guidelines.
  - 2.2.5. Discuss plans for meeting for an initial practice session prior to your first game. If you have flexibility, ask parents for input on preferred day/time for weekly practice plans (n/a for PreK divisions).
  - 2.2.6. Contacting each individual family as soon as possible is essential. Utilize every method available (email, phone, etc.) if necessary. Notify FYSA if contact hasn't been successful.
- 2.3. Pick up team equipment from FYSA at the designated date/time/location.
- 2.4. Review this Program Handbook & the FYSA Summer 2020 COVID-19 Mitigation Plan.

### 3. PRACTICE SCHEDULING (n/a for PreK divisions)

- 3.1. All youth recreational teams should have at least one practice per week in addition to their scheduled game(s).
- 3.2. In the summer, **FYSA does NOT** preemptively schedule specific practice sessions for teams.
- 3.3. Each team is allowed one free hour of field usage per week at the FYSA complex for practicing.
- 3.4. Coaches contact FYSA with a preferred day/time & an assigned field # will be provided.
- 3.5. Coaches can make practice plans by either polling the team families for preferences, or basing it on their own availability. Nearby parks, schools, etc. can also be used for team practices.
- 3.6. Practices typically should last for no more than one hour.

### 4. PRACTICE GUIDELINES

- 4.1. Introduce yourself.
- 4.2. Explain what occur at a typical practice. Examples include warm-up routines, technical/tactical drills, ball-handling exercises, fun mini games & possibly an informal, instructional 'match', aka 'scrimmage'.
- 4.3. Go over age-appropriate COVID-19 Mitigation Plan guidelines for players & parents.
- 4.4. Encourage appropriate parent participation
- 4.5. Explain your goals & expectations, such as coming on time & picking up players on time. Coaches should not leave if a player is unattended after a game or practice has ended. Parents should remain at practices & games when possible.
- 4.6. Prioritize having a good time, but also explain that you will focus on learning skills such as teamwork, support for one another, positive attitude & good sportsmanship. In the registration process, every participant accepted a sportsmanship commitment. The start of the season is a great time to set this tone.
- 4.7. The following are general guidelines & suggestions for a typical team practice:
  - 4.7.1. When everyone has arrived, do a warm up routine for no more than 5 minutes.
  - 4.7.2. Work on skills like trapping, ball control, passing, shooting, & restarts (throw-ins, free kicks, goal clearances, corner kicks, etc.).
  - 4.7.3. Focus on one major topic per practice.
  - 4.7.4. Take regular water breaks as needed.
  - 4.7.5. Use down-time between more physical activities to explain the Laws of the Game (soccer rules).
  - 4.7.6. All players should be given opportunities to experience all positions on the field.
  - 4.7.7. Practice playing with a goalkeeper (n/a for PreK divisions).
    - 4.7.7.1. All players on recreational teams should have a chance to play goalie sometime.
    - 4.7.7.2. No player should play as goalie for an entire match unless that is the player's exclusive preference, with their parent's knowledge. Such players should also be encouraged to develop other skills & teammates given opportunities as goalie as well.
    - 4.7.7.3. In situations where no player is interested in playing as goalie, remind the players that each team must have a goalie at all times & suggest a rotating schedule so that each player serves in the position for a fair number of times during the season.
  - 4.7.8. Feel free to end practices with an informal scrimmage game for about 10-15 minutes.

### 5. SAFETY & VOLUNTEERS

- 5.1. Discuss with parents the importance of safety.
- 5.2. Ask for a volunteer to serve as a safety monitor during practices & games. This can include helping with any applicable COVID-19 Mitigation Plan guidelines. While all parents are concerned about their child's safety, a safety monitor can be someone who spends a little more thought & attention for such things for the entire team & can contact FYSA with specific questions or concerns regarding soccer activities.
- 5.3. Coaches can also ask for a parent or two to help with team communication, arrange for an optional snack schedule, & other various duties if desired.

### 6. UNIFORMS & EQUIPMENT

- 6.1. Talk about equipment with your team during the first practice.
- 6.2. Every player must have their own ball to use during practices.
- 6.3. The use of shinguards is mandatory for all practices & games in grades K-12.
- 6.4. The full FYSA uniform is NOT required to be worn for practices.
- 6.5. For league games, the **Home team wears their reversible jersey as BLUE while the Away team wears GREEN.** On your schedule, the Home team is typically listed first.
- 6.6. Jerseys should be tucked in during games.
- 6.7. If a player wears an additional layer of clothing under their jersey, there should not be any hanging articles that could pose a risk for accidental injury (ex. Hoods for a hoodie should be tucked in).
- 6.8. Soccer shorts should be worn for all games
  - 6.8.1. Shorts should be black, however players will not be turned away for non-black shorts.
  - 6.8.2. Pants may be worn by goalkeepers.
  - 6.8.3. Other players may also wear pants during cold temperatures.
  - 6.8.4. Players electing to play in a skirt or pants for religious purposes is permitted.
- 6.9. Players may wear any color of socks provided they fully cover all parts of the shinguards.
- 6.10. While not required, goalies may wear kneepads provided they are of a soft material.
- 6.11. There is no rule that states players must wear cleats to play soccer. Regular tennis shoes may be worn. However, there

are certain types of footwear that are NOT permitted. Football, baseball or other non-soccer cleats should not be worn as the various styles of cleats, studs & shoe structure are not conducive to soccer & may cause a risk to the player or others. Referees may prevent a player from participating in a game for unapproved types of footwear.

- 6.12.** Braces for knees, ankles, etc. are permitted provided they have not been modified from the original manufactured condition. Players are welcome & encouraged to also wear a protective sleeve over any brace, if possible.
- 6.13.** Players are permitted to wear eyeglasses, if necessary, to play. However, sunglasses are not permitted during a game.
- 6.14.** Soft headbands or other cloth materials on the top of the head or in the hair are permitted.
- 6.15.** Goalkeepers may choose to wear a soft brim cap if desired.
- 6.16.** Masks or other face-coverings may not be worn during a game. See the FYSA Summer 2020 COVID-19 Mitigation Plan for further details.
- 6.17.** A player wearing an arm cast that does not extend beyond the elbow may participate provided the entire cast is covered in suitable, soft, cushioned material such as bubble wrap or form, & the limb is not used during the course of play in a manner that poses a risk to others.
- 6.18. No jewelry** or watches may be worn during games or practices.
  - 6.18.1. This includes earrings & other piercings.**
  - 6.18.2.** Placing tape over a piercing or other jewelry is NOT sufficient to reduce the risk of injury to that player or others they may come in contact with.
  - 6.18.3.** A player or parent who wishes to accept the inherent risk of playing with jewelry must understand that the danger posed by the presence of metal, glass or hard plastic around the soft tissue of the face is NOT limited to the one wearing it. An online search can provide some pretty horrific images of very avoidable injuries involving torn flesh of both the wearers of jewelry during soccer & those who they come in contact with. Shredded ears, streaks of torn scalp, split lips, etc. No one expects that such injuries will take place, but they happen nonetheless & more often than we realize.
  - 6.18.4.** If any player has any piercings or jewelry, these should be removed as part of their game preparation just like putting on shinguards.
  - 6.18.5.** Debates about piercing holes closing up are not sufficient reason to allow such risks on the field. With proper planning & education, players & parents can manage this issue & help reduce the risk of injury..
  - 6.18.6.** While no coach, referee or administrator will ever force a player to remove a piece of jewelry, their participation in a game can be withheld for failure to follow this policy.
  - 6.18.7.** Medical alert bracelets are permitted but should be securely taped or wrapped.
- 6.19.** A player who has been prevented from taking part in a game or a player who has been sent off to adjust their equipment may not return until they have received permission from the referee.
- 6.20.** Referees are empowered to have the authority to make judgement calls for the safety of players regarding non-standard equipment.
- 6.21.** For specific questions regarding player any equipment, contact FYSA administrators directly.

## **7. INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICIES**

- 7.1. Rain.** Games are still played in rainy weather, however coaches are permitted to make their own decision regarding **practice** plans during rain.
- 7.2. Lightning.** FYSA shall adhere to a practice of canceling soccer activities whenever lightning is visible in the atmosphere & the associated thunderclap occurs in less than 30 seconds. In such instances, games are immediately cancelled. Cancelled games are NOT resumed after a waiting period. In other words, when this occurs, it is not a postponement but a full cancellation & all individuals should seek shelter. However games that take place later in the evening may still be played if the lightning has subsided in time.
- 7.3. Air Quality.** FYSA shall adhere to the practice of cancelling outdoor soccer activities whenever the Air Quality Index is at a rating of Unhealthy or worse. AQI information will be obtained via established borough, state & federal websites, as well as on-site at the FYSA field complex using available air quality monitoring equipment. This data will be used for reference, with ultimate decisions being made by FYSA staff on-site. Game cancellation decisions will be made & communicated to members in the 4 o'clock hour for all scheduled games that night.
- 7.4.** It is important to note that when soccer activities have been cancelled for any nature-related risk management purposes as outlined above, any players, teams, coaches, etc. that elect to hold their own events are doing so at their own risk. Such activities are not FYSA-sanctioned & thus are not covered under program insurance.
- 7.5.** When games are played in hot temperatures, or when air quality is poor (but not poor enough to cancel matches), referees have the discretion or may be directed to allow for short breaks to occur during a half in order that all players may hydrate & receive a small break. This is especially important on hot summer nights, when teams have many players missing & therefore little or no substitutions. These breaks should be short & play should resume as soon as possible, with the same restart that existed prior to the break.

## **8. HEADING THE BALL, CONCUSSION/HEAD INJURY INITIATIVES FOR YOUNG PLAYERS**

- 8.1.** US Soccer has published specific guidelines & recommendations pertaining to the prevention & treatment of head injuries & how heading the ball may be related to such efforts. For the most up to date information & education, please refer to safety related resources available on US Soccer's website.
- 8.2.** In relation to our local FYSA programs, we will follow the published recommendations:
  - 8.2.1.** Players in 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Grade divisions & younger shall not engage in heading, either in practices or in games.

- 8.2.2.** During a game in these age divisions, if a player deliberately heads the ball during the course of play, an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team where the location where the infraction occurred.
- 8.2.3.** For Middle School & High School divisions, while heading the ball is allowed, players shall be limited to a maximum of 30 minutes per week of heading training drills/exercise with no more than 15-20 headers.
- 8.2.4.** There are circumstances in which individual consideration is needed. Per U.S. Soccer's Concussion Initiative, if a player is suspected to have a head injury the referee is instructed to stop play to allow for treatment/evaluation as needed. Coaches shall also take an active role in keeping an eye out for these situations & not encourage/insist players to return to play. This is a difficult issue to address & to enforce, especially due to the experiences of many soccer loving adults & youth who may have not had such a serious approach to head injuries in the past. Coaches & parents are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the relevant information available pertaining to head injuries & the recommendations from U.S. Soccer & federal health agencies for heading the ball at young ages.

**9. 50% Fair-Play Policy:** There is no requirement that all players be given an equal amount of time on the field. However, **all recreational players shall play a minimum of 50% of all available minutes for the games that they attend.** This is to ensure that no matter what, families are getting a fair value of our sport with the cost of registration. Playing time is not required to be all in one half. Coaches are not required to track exact minutes of each player's participation, but they must be diligent in managing their substitutions to ensure each player is allowed a minimum of 50% of playing time in each game they attend. Understanding that there are often absences during the summer weeks at many games due to family trips & other commitments, roster sizes are set to allow for sufficient substitutions for each team, but not so large that it would be mathematically impossible for this policy to be followed. These fair-play guidelines apply even when a player misses a practice prior to a game. 50% minimum of game time on the field, for all players, 100% of the time.

## **10. LEAGUE GAMES**

- 10.1.** Games have set start & end times as scheduled by FYSA.
- 10.2.** Extenuating circumstances such as delays due to weather, atmosphere, holidays etc. may result in changes to this schedule.
- 10.3.** Coaches & players should be on time. 'On time' means early :)
- 10.4.** Warm-up before a game is important. However, due to time restrictions of games occasionally running back-to-back on the same field, teams should begin their warm-up routines off the field, utilizing nearby space for stretching & communicating plans for the game, assigning positions to the players, etc.
- 10.5.** When the prior game has ended, teams should take to the field immediately & utilize all remaining time to continue warming up until the referee indicates the game is ready to begin.
- 10.6.** It is important that games start & finish on time.
  - 10.6.1.** Teams that delay the start of their games may have shortened halves to ensure that they finish & clear the field so the next teams can begin on schedule (ex. if a team is not ready to start on time, resulting in the game beginning 8 minutes late, the referee may reduce each half by 2 minutes).
  - 10.6.2.** Generally, there is a grace period of a few minutes before this must be applied.
  - 10.6.3.** Referees are expected to inform team captains and/or coaches of the total playing minutes for each half prior to the start of any delayed game, in the event that halves must be shortened.
  - 10.6.4.** Referees are also instructed that unless absolutely necessary, game times should not be shortened for circumstances that are not the direct responsibility of a specific team. Examples include situations where both teams are on time but the previous game ends late, or if the referee is delayed in getting to the field due to a previous match ending late. In such situations, all efforts should be made by teams & the referee to quickly prepare for the new game to start as soon as possible & referees should not shorten games.
- 10.7. Misc. Notes.** The responsibility for ensuring every player is properly attired lies with the coach. Referees often perform pre-game equipment checks & will typically consult with each team prior to the game to communicate any specific guidelines relevant to the match or age division. The referee will ask for a captain from each team to conduct a coin-toss to determine team sides & kick-off. At the youth level, the captains are simply a formality, but this is important to some players. Select a different captain for each game. If your team is listed first on the game schedule, you are considered the home team & will be expected to provide the game ball. If playing near a fence, it is wise to have an extra ball or two available in the event of a ball being difficult to retrieve, in order to preserve playing time.

## **11. SPORTSMANSHIP & OFFICIALS**

- 11.1.** During the game, **only positive comments will be allowed**, whether to one's own team, opponents, parents, coaches or the referee. **Coaches shall be responsible for the conduct of their players & supporters.** Please help us to promote good sportsmanship by controlling any unsavory or negative comments. Do not quarrel with the referee regarding his/her calls on plays during the game. Do not enter the field during play without permission of the referee.
- 11.2.** Referees have the authority to temporarily stop or suspend a game as well as terminate a match for inappropriate behavior of players, coaches & spectators. Teams that continue to play after a game has been ended by a referee do so without the sanction of FYSA & program insurance is void.
- 11.3.** Concerns regarding officials should always be handled respectfully, at the conclusion of a game, in established lines of communication with FYSA. Many referees are young & while they may have soccer experience as a player, it can take many seasons to learn how to apply this to officiating. While inappropriate conduct of referees will not be excused, they are still human. Officials should be supported just as players are in order to further their development & training.

Referee clinics emphasize that their primary purpose is ensuring that matches are Safe, Fair & Fun, in that order. Remember, not every contact between two players is a foul, not every injury is a result of a foul & not every foul necessitates a yellow or red card. The Referee Coordinator will spend much of their summer observing & mentoring new referees as well as officiating with them, in order to provide positive, consistent, ongoing development. Coaches are encouraged to help referees feel appreciated for filling such a difficult role. If there is any constructive feedback after a game that they feel inclined to convey, they may do so provided it is performed in a positive, sportsmanship manner. For example, comments such as "You need to work on learning what a foul is", would not be appropriate, while "Thanks for refing. I think hand-balls are supposed to result in a direct free kick & I think you might have signaled for an indirect free kick. I'll have to look that up, but could you check also for next time?" would be constructive & respectful.

**11.4.** Any serious concerns or any questions regarding referees, rules or play or league policies should be directed to either the Referee Supervisor at referee@fairbanksyouthsoccer.com or the FYSA Executive Director at director@fairbanksyouthsoccer.com Do not call the FYSA office simply to complain about a referee. Any communication in the spirit of improvement & development is welcome & expectation is that all participants in our program (players, parents, coaches, referees, administrators) be open to the reality that none of us are perfect & none of us know everything there is to know about our sport.

**12. Division Guidelines.** The following chart is a helpful guide to many of the common questions regarding the specific parameters of the various age divisions that play regular games (n/a for PreK groups). Coaches are encouraged to keep this as a reference throughout the season. All parameters are subject to change at FYSA's discretion, however significant changes will be communicated to all coaches & parents, if appropriate.

Division	Players on Field	Roster Max	Min. # Players to Start	Game Length	Ball Size	Offside Enforced	Heading the Ball Permitted*	Use of Yellow & Red Cards for Players & Coaches
Kindergarten	5	9	4	4 x 10	3	n/a	No	n/a
1st-2nd Grade	5	9	4	4 x 10	3	No	No	No
3rd-4th Grade	7	12	5	2 x 25	4	Yes**	No	No***
5th-6th Grade	9	15	6	2 x 30	4	Yes	No	Yes
Middle School	11	20	7	2 x 35	5	Yes	Yes	Yes
High School	11	20	7	2 x 40	5	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adult Rec	7	12****	5	2 x 40	5	No	Yes	Yes
Adult Comp	11	18****	7	2 x 40	5	Yes	Yes	Yes
*See information in section 8 regarding US Soccer's guidelines for heading the ball in younger age groups.								
**See Law 11 in the Laws of the Game for details about the 'Build-Out Line' used in 3rd-4th Grade division.								
***Offences that warrant Cautions & Send-Offs (yellow/red card) will typically be otherwise dealt with through verbal correction. However, referees may issue such if needed based on the incident & overall spirit of the game.								
****Unless otherwise arranged between FYSA & the team and/or team captain.								

**13. 10 GOAL DIFFERENTIAL POLICY.** To strive for sportsmanship & prevent stronger teams from humiliating others, FYSA follows a '10 Goal Differential' policy. Efforts are made to balance teams. However, it is impossible to know on paper how teams might perform at any given week in the season. Coaches, especially those of stronger teams, are requested to keep the game score between the teams within 10 goals of one another. Coaches are encouraged to take measures to ensure that scores remain within this guideline. Rotate positions, place stronger players as goalie or in defense, create challenges that do not involve scoring i.e. 'complete 10 consecutive passes before shooting' or 'every player must touch the ball before shooting', etc. Such instructions should be provided tactfully & with respect, amongst the team itself & not shouted across the field. No team standings are maintained during the regular season.

**14. CONCERNS.** For questions & serious concerns please email us. Provide as much detail to identify the situation including the date, time of game, field, team numbers, description of individuals involved, etc. While follow up inquiries may be made regarding a report, FYSA is not obligated to disclose results of correctional or disciplinary incidents. We are committed to taking any & all feedback for consideration. On game nights, there will often be FYSA staff present at the field complex monitoring all soccer activities. If there is an emergency at the fields, call the main FYSA office at 456-3972, come to the field office or call/text the after-hours number at 907-987-6334. Non-urgent issues should be emailed to FYSA at staff@fairbanksyouthsoccer.com

# FYSA OUTDOOR SOCCER 'LAWS OF THE GAME' (LOTG, aka the 'Rules')

The following mirrors the format of the International Football Association Board (IFAB) Laws of the Game, available at [www.theifab.com/laws](http://www.theifab.com/laws). U.S. Soccer recommends modifications to the LOTG in certain areas to accommodate the specific needs of youth, small-sided recreational matches. The FYSA LOTG apply to our recreational programs, although younger age groups are much less formal. Additionally, there are far more officiating situations than can be contained here, including complex scenarios & questions. Referees will do their best to apply the LOTG according to their ability as well as the 'spirit of the game'. Competitive teams & adult divisions will adhere to the more specific parameters set forth by the United States Soccer Federation (USSF). **Note: to conserve space herein, with few exceptions, only local modifications to the standard LOTG will be referenced below.**

## LAW 1 – THE FIELD OF PLAY

Field dimensions & goal sizes follow the established 'Player Develop Initiatives' from US Soccer. Full size fields and goals are NOT used for younger age groups.

**LAW 2 – THE BALL.** No changes from standard LOTG

## LAW 3 – NUMBER OF PLAYERS

1. See section 12 of this handbook for a chart outlining the specific parameters for each division.
2. If a team has fewer than the minimum required players, the game is forfeited. If a team begins a match with the minimum number of players or more, but during the course of the match drops below the minimum number, the game is forfeit. If the number drops below the minimum due to an injury that can be attended to & the player may return to the field, play will stop until they are able to return. See guidelines for forfeit situations near the end of this handbook.
3. Teams must have a goalie at all times. Goalie jerseys must be a different color than the rest of the team, as well as the opposing team. There is no requirement that a goalie remain in the goal are or penalty area. They are free to act as a regular player on the rest of the field, except for during a Penalty Kick.
4. Substitutions.
  - a. An unlimited number of substitutions may be made during any game, at the appropriate times.
  - b. Substitutions may occur during any stoppage of play, with the permission of the referee.
  - c. Substitutes should be at the center line, off the field, before calling for a substitution.
  - d. Substitutes should wait to enter the field until the player leaving the field has completely left the field or until the substitute is signaled to enter by the referee.
  - e. Coaches should manage substitutions in a way that enables the match to flow. For example, substituting a single player every 60 seconds reduces the amount of game time where actual soccer is being played.
  - f. In the Kindergarten & 1st-2nd Grade divisions, substitutions may be made 'on-the-fly', at any time that does not disrupt the flow of play. Goalkeepers may only be subbed at a stoppage of play, for all age groups.

## LAW 4 – PLAYER EQUIPEMENT

No significant changes from standard LOTG. **See section 6 of this handbook for comprehensive guidelines** regarding player uniforms, equipment & policy for no jewelry being worn during a game.

## LAW 5 – REFEREES (the following is directly from the IFAB Laws of the Game)

1. Each match is controlled by a referee who has full authority to enforce the LOTG in connection with the match.
2. **Decisions of the referee**
  - a. Decisions will be made to the best of the referee's ability according to the Laws of the Game & the 'spirit of the game' & will be based on the opinion of the referee, who has the discretion to take appropriate action within the framework of the Laws of the Game.
  - b. The decisions of the referee regarding facts connected with play, including whether or not a goal is scored & the result of the match, are final. The decisions of the referee must always be respected.
  - c. The referee may not change a restart decision on realising that it is incorrect or on the advice of another match official if play has restarted or the referee has signalled the end of the first or second half (including extra time) & left the field of play or abandoned the match. However, if at the end of the half, the referee leaves the field of play to go to the referee review area (RRA) or to instruct the players to return to the field of play, this does not prevent a decision being changed for an incident which occurred before the end of the half.
  - d. Except as outlined in Law 12.3 of the IFAB LOTG, a disciplinary sanction may only be issued after play has restarted if another match official had identified & attempted to communicate the offence to the referee before play restarted; the restart associated with the sanction does not apply.
3. **Powers & Duties**
  - a. The referee:
    - i. enforces the Laws of the Game
    - ii. controls the match in cooperation with the other match officials
    - iii. acts as timekeeper, keeps a record of the match & provides the appropriate authorities with a match report, including information on disciplinary action & any other incidents that occurred before, during or after the match
    - iv. supervises and/or indicates the restart of play
    - v. **Advantage:** allows play to continue when an offence occurs & the non-offending team will benefit from the advantage, & penalises the offence if the anticipated advantage does not ensue at that time or within a few seconds

vi. **Disciplinary action**

1. punishes the more serious offence, in terms of sanction, restart, physical severity & tactical impact, when more than one offence occurs at the same time
2. takes disciplinary action against players guilty of cautionable & sending-off offences
3. has the authority to take disciplinary action from entering the field of play for the pre-match inspection until leaving the field of play after the match ends (including kicks from the penalty mark). If, before entering the field of play at the start of the match, a player commits a sending-off offence, the referee has the authority to prevent the player taking part in the match (see IFAB LOTG Law 3.6); the referee will report any other misconduct
4. has the power to show yellow or red cards &, where competition rules permit, temporarily dismiss a player, from entering the field of play at the start of the match until after the match has ended, including during the half-time interval, extra time & kicks from the penalty mark
5. takes action against team officials who fail to act in a responsible manner & warns or shows a yellow card for a caution or a red card for a sending-off from the field of play & its immediate surrounds, including the technical area; if the offender cannot be identified, the senior coach present in the technical area will receive the sanction. In other words, coaches may be shown yellow or red cards
6. acts on the advice of other match officials regarding incidents that the referee has not seen

vii. **Injuries**

1. allows play to continue until the ball is out of play if a player is only slightly injured
2. stops play if a player is seriously injured & ensures that the player is removed from the field of play. An injured player may not be treated on the field of play & may only re-enter after play has restarted; if the ball is in play, re-entry must be from the touchline but if the ball is out of play, it may be from any boundary line. Exceptions to the requirement to leave the field of play are only when:
  - a. a goalkeeper is injured
  - b. goalkeeper & an outfield player have collided & need attention
  - c. players from the same team have collided & need attention
  - d. a severe injury has occurred
  - e. a player is injured as the result of a physical offence for which the opponent is cautioned or sent off (e.g. reckless or serious foul challenge), if the assessment/treatment is completed quickly
  - f. a penalty kick has been awarded & the injured player will be the kicker
  - g. ensures that any player bleeding leaves the field of play. The player may only re-enter on receiving a signal from the referee, who must be satisfied that the bleeding has stopped & there is no blood on the equipment
  - h. if the referee has authorised any individuals to enter the field of play to address the injury, the player must leave the field.
  - i. if the referee has need to caution or send off a player who is injured & has to leave the field of play for treatment, the card shall be shown before the player leaves
  - j. if play has not been stopped for another reason, or if an injury suffered by a player is not the result of an offence, play is restarted with a dropped ball

viii. **Outside Interference**

1. stops, suspends or abandons the match for any offences or because of outside interference
2. an object thrown by a spectator hits a match official, a player or team official, the referee may allow the match to continue, or stop, suspend or abandon it depending on the severity of the incident
3. a spectator blows a whistle which interferes with play - play is stopped & restarted with a dropped ball
4. an extra ball, other object or animal enters the field of play during the match, the referee must:
  - a. stop play (& restart with a dropped ball) only if it interferes with play unless the ball is going into the goal & the interference does not prevent a defending player playing the ball, the goal is awarded if the ball enters the goal (even if contact was made with the ball) unless the interference was by the attacking team
  - b. allow play to continue if it does not interfere with play & have it removed at the next opportunity
  - c. allows no unauthorised persons to enter the field of play

4. **Liability of match officials**

- a. A referee or other match official is not held liable for
  - i. any kind of injury suffered by a player, official or spectator
  - ii. any damage to property of any kind
  - iii. any other loss suffered by any individual, club, company, association or other body, which is due or which may be due to any decision taken under the terms of the Laws of the Game or in respect of the normal procedures required to hold, play & control a match
- iv. Such decisions may include a decision
  1. that the condition of the field of play or its surrounds or that the weather conditions are such as to allow or not to allow a match to take place
  2. to abandon a match for justifiable reasons
  3. as to the suitability of the field equipment & ball used during a match
  4. to stop or not to stop a match due to spectator interference or any problem in spectator areas
  5. to stop or not to stop play to allow an injured player to be removed from the field of play for treatment
  6. to require an injured player to be removed from the field of play for treatment
  7. to allow or not to allow a player to wear certain clothing or equipment

8. where the referee has the authority, to allow or not to allow any persons (including team or stadium officials, security officers, photographers or other media representatives) to be present in the vicinity of the field of play
9. any other decision taken in accordance with the Laws of the Game or in conformity with their duties under the terms of FIFA, confederation, national football association or competition rules or regulations under which the match is played

**LAW 6 – ASSISTANT REFEREE.** No changes from standard LOTG

**LAW 7 – DURATION OF THE MATCH.**

No significant changes from standard LOTG. See section 6 of this handbook for guidelines for each age division.

**LAW 8 – START AND RESTART OF PLAY.**

1. No significant changes from standard LOTG.
2. See section 6 of this handbook for guidelines for each age division.
3. Kindergarten, & 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> play 4 quarters vs. 2 halves & will start each quarter with a kickoff, alternating teams.
4. It is important to note a recent change from the IFAB LOTG for 2020. Any time play must be restarted with a 'Dropped Ball', the ball will be dropped, by the referee, at the feet of a player of the team who last touched the ball prior to play being stopped, at the location the ball was when play was stopped. In other words, dropped balls no longer involve players from both teams.

**LAW 9 – BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY.** No changes from standard LOTG

**LAW 10 – METHOD OF SCORING.** No changes from standard LOTG

**LAW 11 – OFFSIDE**

1. As outlined in the chart in section 6 of this handbook, there is no Offside enforcement for the Kindergarten or 1st-2nd Grade divisions.
2. For 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Grade, Middle School & High School divisions, no changes from standard LOTG.
3. The 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> Grade division incorporates a unique concept referred to as the 'Build-Out Line':
  - a. The BOL initiative outlines modified enforcement of the Offside rules.
  - b. This is the first age group where players are introduced to such concepts, so the BOL is a way to familiarize them with such rules, but in a way that helps teach the parameters of Law 11, preparatory for full enforcement in older divisions.
  - c. The ONLY difference the BOL brings to the standard Law 11 concept is 'where on the field can a player be considered offside?'. For example, in standard LOTG, the dividing point is the center line, meaning a player cannot be in an offside position if they're on their own half. The BOL shifts that dividing line further up the field, reducing the 'offside-eligible' space from the attacking 1/2 to only the final 1/3 of the field, for each respective team. The same standard definition of being in an 'offside position' exists, with the exception that the dividing line where such consideration begins is not the center line at midfield, but the Build-Out Line.
  - d. Additionally, the BOL has a secondary component that is activated when a goalie has possession of the ball:
    - i. all opposing players must retreat to a point on or behind the BOL anytime the goalkeeper has possession of the ball, either in their hands or at the taking of a Goal Kick).
    - ii. Opposing players may press forward only once the goalkeeper has played the ball.
    - iii. All opponents not on or behind the BOL when the goalkeeper has possession of the ball should be in the process of retreating to that point until the goalkeeper has played the ball..
    - iv. This is to allow teams to develop plays out of their defensive end ('building out from the back')
    - v. If a player does not try to follow this requirement & plays or attempts to play the ball, the referee may award an indirect free kick to the goalkeeper's team at the point of infraction.
    - vi. Note: The goalkeeper does NOT have to wait for all opponents to have met this requirement before playing the ball. However, if a player is in the process of retreating but has not yet reached the BOL AND the goalkeeper choose to play the ball early, that opponent may now play the ball without punishment as outlined in the previous section.

**LAW 12 – FOULS AND MISCONDUCTS**

This section outlines Fouls & Misconduct according to FIFA's Laws of the Game. While all the principles remain the same, their application may be modified for youth & recreational matches. At younger ages, fouls & misconduct often occur due to lack of experience and/or control. Thus, coaches & referees must adjust their approach to the game with an understanding of the spirit of the law, as well as the letter of the law.

1. Direct Free Kick (DFK)
  - a. A DFK is awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following offences in a manner considered by the referee to be careless, reckless or using excessive force:
    - i. kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
    - ii. trips or attempts to trip an opponent
    - iii. jumps at an opponent
    - iv. charges an opponent
    - v. strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
    - vi. pushes an opponent or tackles an opponent
  - b. A DFK is also awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following offences:

- i. holds & opponent
    - ii. spits at an opponent
    - iii. handles the ball deliberately (except for goalkeeper within their own penalty area)
  - c. DFKs are taken from the place where the offence occurred, or in the event of 'holding', at the place where the referee called the foul and directs the DFK to be taken.
  - d. A Penalty Kick is awarded if any of the above offences is committed by a player inside his own penalty area, irrespective of the position of the ball, provided it is in play.
2. Indirect Free Kick (IFK)
- a. An IFK is awarded to the opposing team if a goalkeeper, inside his own penalty area, commits any of the following offences:
    - i. controls the ball with his hands for more than six seconds before releasing it from his possession
    - ii. touches the ball again with his hands after he has released it from his possession, before it touches another player
    - iii. touches the ball with his hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him by a teammate
    - iv. touches the ball with his hands after receiving it from a throw-in by a teammate
  - b. An IFK is also awarded to the opposing team if, in the opinion of the referee, a player:
    - i. plays in a dangerous manner
    - ii. impedes the progress of an opponent
    - iii. prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his hands
    - iv. commits any other offence, not previously mentioned, for which play is stopped to caution or send off a player
  - c. In age groups where heading the ball is not permitted, an IFK is awarded to the opposing team if a player deliberately heads the ball, taken at the spot where the deliberate heading occurred.
  - d. The IFK is taken from the place where the offence occurred unless the offence occurs within the goal area. In this instance, the free kick is taken from the nearest point of the goal area parallel to the goal line.
3. The yellow card is used to communicate that a player, substitute or substituted player has been cautioned. A player is cautioned & shown the yellow card if he commits any of the following offences:
- a. unsporting behavior
  - b. dissent by word or action
  - c. persistent infringement of the Laws of the Game
  - d. delaying the restart of play
  - e. failure to respect the required distance when play is restarted
  - f. failure to follow the outline procedure for substitutions as outlined in Law 3
4. The red card is used to communicate that a player, substitute or substituted player has been sent off. A player, substitute or substituted player is sent off if he commits any of the following offences:
- a. serious foul play
  - b. violent conduct
  - c. spitting at an opponent or any other person
  - d. denying the opposing team, a goal or an obvious goal scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball
  - e. denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick
  - f. using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures
  - g. receiving a second caution in the same match
5. A player, substitute or substituted player who has been sent off & shown the red card should leave the vicinity of the field of play & the technical area. For youth participants, if prudent, they may be permitted to remain within the team area provided their presence & behavior does not create further concerns for the match to continue. Sent-off players will not be permitted to participate in their next match unless authorized explicitly by league administrators. If the offence is of a serious enough nature, player suspensions will be reviewed by the Executive Director for potential further disciplinary action.
6. Typically, a player that receives a red card may not be replaced & the team plays one player short for the rest of the match. However, due to the primarily recreational nature of our league, the need for all players to receive as much playing time as possible, & FYSA's intent that entire teams not be punished for misconduct of a single player, this will not be implemented for FYSA recreational programs. In other words, a sent-off player may be replaced & the team will not play down a player.
7. The referee has the authority to take disciplinary actions from the moment he arrives at the field, for the duration of the match & until he has left the vicinity of the field, even after the final whistle.
8. See Law 11 for details regarding enforcement of the Build-Out Line for the 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> Grade division.

### **LAW 13 – FREE KICKS.**

- 1. No significant changes from standard LOTG
- 2. It is important to note 2 recent changes from the IFAB LOTG for 2020.
  - a. Any Free Kick (FK) being taken from by a team within their own Penalty Area (PA) is in play once it has been kicked & moved. Players of the opposing team must be outside of the PA prior to the kick. See Law 16 for similar revisions to Goal Kick situations & guidelines for opponents that apply for these kinds of FK's as well.
  - b. At the taking of a Free Kick, where three or more defending team players form a 'wall', all attacking team players must remain at least 1 yd from the 'wall' until the ball is in play.

**LAW 14 – PENALTY KICK.** No changes from standard LOTG

**LAW 15 – THROW IN.** No changes from standard LOTG

**LAW 16 – GOAL KICK.**

1. No significant changes from standard LOTG.
2. It is important to note a recent change from the IFAB LOTG for 2020.
  - a. The ball is now in play once it has been kicked & moves (i.e. does not have to leave the Penalty Area (PA))
  - b. All opponents must be outside of the PA prior to the kick but may enter the PA once it is in play.
  - c. If, when a goal kick is taken, any opponents are inside the penalty area because they did not have time to leave, the referee allows play to continue. If an opponent who is in the penalty area when the goal kick is taken, or enters the penalty area before the ball is in play, touches or challenges for the ball before it is in play, the goal kick is retaken.
  - d. If a player enters the penalty area before the ball is in play and fouls or is fouled by an opponent, the goal kick is retaken and the offender may be cautioned or sent off, depending on the offence.
  - e. For any other offence, the kick is retaken.

**LAW 17 – CORNER KICK.** No changes from standard LOTG

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**FYSA FORFEIT GAME POLICY**

Unfortunately, there are occasionally situations that occur where a game is considered a forfeit. The most common cause is a result of teams having fewer than the minimum number of required players for a match to take place. This is rare, as team roster sizes are set to ensure family vacations, illness, injury or other situations do not result in a team having to forfeit due to these players' absence. However, it can still occur, & it is often unclear to coaches, parents & referees how to proceed.

For FYSA recreational matches, an informal soccer game (aka 'scrimmage') may still be organized by those players present on both teams. While this is deemed unofficial, it will still fall under the jurisdiction & insurance coverage of FYSA programs so long as the only players participating are those currently registered with FYSA. Siblings of a player or players from other teams who may be present are allowed to participate, provided they are also currently registered with FYSA & within one year of the age division guidelines. This allowance is also subject to the approval of both coaches & the referee. IF the appropriate guidelines are met for a forfeited game to be considered a sanctioned scrimmage, any referee assigned to officiate the match will remain to oversee the scrimmage, unless there are other non-scrimmage matches in need of officials. A scrimmage that does not follow these guidelines (that is, only involving currently registered players of the appropriate ages) is not covered by FYSA insurance & participation in such an activity is at the own risk of all participants. FYSA discourages such non-sanctioned informal scrimmages & urges coaches to inform parents of such guidelines in this policy in the event of a forfeited match.

Note: if for a scheduled game a team is short players & is between the range of having 'enough to play' but is still below the full allowable team size on the field players may be 'loaned' just as they can during a 'forfeit' as outlined above, if coaches want.

**REFEREE RELATED MATTERS FOR FYSA PROGRAMS**

Many youth referees also participate in our programs as players. Adult referees are often parents or older siblings. There are times that commitments, soccer or otherwise, as well as injury, illness, family vacations, or other circumstances, may result in the availability of referees being less than needed on any given night of games.

If there are not enough referees available on a given night to cover all matches, the FYSA Referee Coordinator and/or Executive Director will make every effort to adjust referee assignments as well as communicate with any affected teams/coaches about situations that may impact them. Assistant referee (linesman) positions may occasionally be filled by a volunteer spectator, parent or youth. Some matches in the youngest of age groups may also occasionally be overseen by a volunteer referee. On game nights, if a scheduled game time arrives & no referee is present, coaches may proceed with the game if any competent volunteer, including themselves, can serve as a temporary official. These situations are rare and often never occur for an entire season. If any parent or youth would like a brief crash course in basic soccer rules in order to be able to fill in as a volunteer or even an official referee, FYSA will be happy to provide them with the necessary training even if mid-season.

**This handbook, policies & FYSA modified Laws of the Game have been reviewed & revised for the 2020 summer soccer season. FYSA may, at its discretion, update this handbook or other related policies or guidelines. Changes will be communicated to any impacted parties & revised documents posted online. Questions, requests for clarification, suggestions for future updates & any other feedback is always welcome. THANK YOU for being part of our soccer community!**