

PLAIN TOWNSHIP PARKS DEPARTMENT  
DIAMOND INDOOR SPORTS COMPLEX

**INDOOR SOCCER RULES AND REGULATIONS**

**Recreational K-8 Rules**

The Plain Township Parks Department has revised the rules and regulations for Recreational Indoor Soccer at the Diamond Sports Complex, effective immediately. Please help us by complying with this policy. If you have any questions concerning these revisions, please contact the Plain Township Parks Department at 330-492-4689.

---

**NOTE: These rules apply only to the recreational K-8 leagues**

**Rule #1: The Ball**

- a) The ball may be provided by Plain Township Parks Department. It is encouraged that the kids bring a soccer ball as well. Neither Plain Township nor the referee is responsible for a player's individual ball.
- b) Referees must collect at least one game ball from the building supervisor and either return it to the supervisor after their set or hand it to the next referee for the night.
- c) Ball sizes (based on US Soccer recommended size chart)
  - i. Pre-K/Kindergarten-Grade 2: Size 3 Ball
  - ii. Grades 3-6: Size 4 ball
  - iii. Grades 7-8: Size 5 ball

**Rule #2: Players and Substitution**

- a) There shall be two teams that include the following:
  - i. Pre-K/Kindergarten: four (4) field players, zero (0) goalkeeper, and 1 coach permitted on the field for instructional purpose.
  - ii. Grades 1-2: seven (7) field players, one (1) goalkeeper, and 1 coach permitted on the field for instructional purpose.
  - iii. Grades 3-6: six (6) field players, one (1) goalkeeper.
  - iv. Grades 7-8: five (5) field players, one (1) goalkeeper.
- b) Only coaches and players are permitted on the sidelines during games. In the case of a child being injured, the building supervisor can escort the parents of that child down the sidelines to attend the injury. **THIS IS NOT A TIME TO STAY AND WATCH THE GAME FIELD SIDE! THIS IS FOR YOUR SAFETY AND YOUR CHILDS SAFETY!** Thank you for your cooperation in this manner, and please remember the mezzanine is available for viewing.

- c) Substitutions are unlimited and may be made on the “fly” at any point in the game, however the player being substituted must be off the field or about to exit the door before the substitute enters the field of play.
- d) The referee may delay the restart of play up to 20 seconds to allow completion of substitutions on the following occasions:
  - i. When the ball is out of play excluding free kicks
  - ii. After a goal has been scored
  - iii. After a time penalty has been awarded
  - iv. On an injury stoppage
  - v. At any unique stoppage given by the referee

**Modifications:**

- No blue cards will be handed out for illegal substitutions, but corrections will be made. However, if done persistently, the referee does have the authority to display a blue card.
- Guaranteed substitutions can be made at any time frame in the game.

**Rule 2.1: Guest Player Rules:**

- Players are not permitted to play on any other teams besides the team they are assigned by the Parks Department
- In the case where teams are playing short-handed, the Parks Department, on a case by case basis, may approve guest players to play.
- Any guest players used must be registered in the league for the current session. Out of League players may never be used.

**Rule #3: Players Equipment**

- a) **NO JEWELRY OR ACCESSORIES** may be worn on the field at any time! This is a safety issue. Only religious (religions that require it) or medical alert bracelets or necklaces are permitted but must be secure at all times. Insulin pumps are permitted as long as they are secure.
- b) Company manufactured **shin guards are mandatory**, must fit properly and may not be altered. Socks should also be worn over the shin guard. Only shoes that have been designed for use on artificial surfaces may be worn. No cleats please! Hard casts must be approved by the referee and shall be used appropriately.
- c) Goalkeepers shall wear colors that distinguish themselves from all other players. A “pinnie” may be used to make this distinction. Any field player who replaces the goalkeeper must wear a goalkeeper jersey or “pinnie”. Protective headgear is allowed if it is approved by the referee.

- d) A player that is sent from the field of play to adjust or correct his/her equipment may not return to play until he/she has the referee's approval.
- e) In the case of a color conflict, the home team will be required to wear "pinnies" or alternative color.

#### **Rule #4: THE REFEREE**

- a) The referee's jurisdiction begins when they enter Diamond Community Park and ends when they leave the property. The referee shall keep a record of the game.
- b) The referee's authority for penalizing extends to offenses when play has been suspended or when the ball is out of play. Referees' decisions on all matters of the game are FINAL! There shall be absolutely NO PROTESTS!**

#### **Referees have the authority to:**

- i. Stop the game for any infringement of the rules unless applying advantage, and to suspend or terminate the game due to poor behavior of the players, coaches, spectators, or any other cause he/she feels that the stoppage is necessary.
- ii. Penalize any player, coach, or personnel guilty of misconduct; Issue time penalties to any player or bench personnel. Report any player that is sent off to the building supervisor that is on duty.
- iii. Stop the game if a player has been injured. The player should be removed from the game as soon as possible so that the game may resume. The game clock will continue to run during any injury stoppage unless directed by the facility supervisor.
- iv. Signal for play to restart after all stoppages. The referee is required to blow the whistle for the following:
  - a) Kick-offs;
  - b) Penalty kicks;
  - c) After a guaranteed substitution;
  - d) Restarts from the center of the yellow line;
  - e) Free kicks where distance was counted.
- v. The referee controls the game clock on the scoreboard or by his/her watch when the scoreboard is inoperable. It is required that referees set the game clock and start the clock on time. Teams are responsible for their time and the clock will not be restarted for teams wasting their own time.
- vi. Referees are not permitted to stop or restart the clock unless instructed by the facility supervisor.

### **Rule #5: DURATION OF THE GAME**

- A) Pre-K/Kindergarten: Program determined
- B) Grades 1-4: 4 quarters of 12 minutes
- C) Grades 5-8: 2 halves of 25 minutes

\*The half or quarter will not be extended for any reason other than a penalty kick.

\*Any left over time for time penalties not served in full before halftime will be served in the second half.

\*All games can end in a tie. There will be no overtime.

### **Rule #6: THE START AND RESTART OF PLAY**

#### **Rule #6.1: KICK OFF**

- a) The home team shall always kick-off first, forward or backward. The ball is in play when it is touched and moves. All opponents must be outside of the center circle. The kicker may not play the ball a second time, including instances where the ball bounces off the perimeter wall and back to the kicker, without first having touched another player. A goal may be scored from a kickoff. After a goal has been scored, the game will restart with a kickoff by the opposing team.
- b) After the end of each half, each team shall change sides, unless both teams agree to stay, and the team that did not take the kickoff prior to the start of the game will kick off the second half.
- c) The kickoff shall be retaken except in the case of the kicker playing the ball a second time before it has been touched by another player. For this offense, a free kick shall be taken by the opponent on the center dot.

#### **RULE #6.2 FREE KICK REGULATION**

- d) When play has stopped for a penal foul listed in Rule # 10, and the restart does not call for a penalty kick, play shall be restarted with a free kick by a player of the opposing team.

- e) When a player is about to take a free kick, all opponents shall be at least four yards away from the ball until it has moved into play. The ball must be stationary before the free kick is taken.
- f) On all kicks, the ball shall be deemed in-play when it has been touched and moves. The player taking the kick may not play the ball again until another player has touched it including when ball is played off the perimeter wall.
- g) All free kicks are direct. This means a player can score directly from the free kick and it does not have to touch any other player before entering the goal.

**Rule #6.3: Goal Kicks (1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> Grade Only):**

- a) When the ball leaves play between the two corner dots, the restart shall be a goal kick.
- b) Goal kicks can be placed anywhere in the goal area
- c) Opponents must be behind the yellow line until the ball is put into play
- d) The ball is in play when it is touched and moves
- e) No player may touch the soccer ball until it is put back into play
- f) Any violation of this rule will result in a redo

**Rule #6.3 Goalkeeper Distribution (5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Only):**

- h) "Goal kicks" and any free kick to the defensive team within their own penalty area will be turned into a Goalkeeper Distribution
- i) The goalkeeper may distribute the ball by throw or may set the ball down anywhere in the penalty area
- j) Goalkeepers are not permitted to punt the ball during a Goalkeeper Distribution that occurs from a stoppage (goal kick/free kick) but can punt the ball off of a live save
- k) The goalkeeper may not dribble the ball outside of the penalty area
- l) The goalkeeper may not play the ball again until another player has touched it including when the ball is played off the perimeter wall.
- m) A goal may be scored directly from a Goalkeeper Distribution but three line violation is observed.
- n) The ball is in play when it leaves the penalty area or played to a teammate.
- o) Opposing teams may not enter the penalty area during a goalkeeper distribution.

**Rule #6.4 The Corner Kick**

- a) A corner kick is awarded when the ball leaves the field of play by a defender over his/her own goal line
- b) The goal line is the area between the two corner dots
- c) A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick

- d) The ball must be placed on the corner dot designated by the referee (usually the half of the area that the ball exited the field of play)
- e) Failure to play the ball within six seconds will result in a kick in for the opposing team on the corner dot.

### **Rule #6.5 The Penalty Kick**

- a) A penalty kick is awarded when a penal foul is committed within the penalty area for the attacking team
- b) The placement of the ball is the center of the top of the penalty area (1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> grade) or the center of the yellow line on the dot (5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>). A kicker must be designated.
- c) The ball is in play when it is touched and moves
- d) The goalkeeper must remain on the goal line until the ball is put into play
- e) The remaining players excluding the kicker must be behind the yellow line and out of the way of the kicker (four yards each direction of the ball) until the ball is put into play. Restarts for violating this rule are listed below.
- f) The kicker may stutter step to the ball as long as the motion is continuous and without any stopping. This begins when the kicker begins moving towards the ball. If the kicker violates this rule, the restart will be a free kick from the penalty dot for the defending team.
  
- g) Violations by the attacking team:
  - i. If a goal scored- retake
  - ii. If a goal is not scored- goalkeeper distribution
- h) Violations by the defending team (including the goalkeeper)
  - i. If a goal is scored- goal stands
  - ii. If a goal is not scored- retake

### **Rule #7: THE BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY**

- a) The ball is in play, at all times, from start to finish
  - i. If it rebounds from a goal post, crossbar, or off the perimeter wall into the field of play
  - ii. If it rebounds off a referee who is in the field of play
  
- b) The ball is out of play:
  - i. When it has completely crossed the perimeter walls or contacted the perimeter netting surrounding the sides of the field. Play will be restarted on the side of the boards at the point where the ball left the field; if the ball makes contact with a substitute on the boards, the restart is a kick in and a warning for the child then a team two minute time penalty for the team if this occurs again. Coaches will designate a kid to sit the time.

- ii. When it has made contact with the netting above the field of play. If this happens, play will be stopped and a free kick shall be awarded to the opposing team. This will take place where the ball went out of play unless in the penalty area then the kick will take place at center of yellow line on the dot. This is not a penalty kick.
- iii. When a player or players pins the ball against the boards, not allowing it to move, for at least five seconds. In this case, play is restarted with a contested drop ball away from the boards.
- iv. The referee has stopped the game for any other reason.

### **Rule #8: The Method of Scoring**

- a) A goal is scored when the whole ball has passed completely over the goal line, between the goal posts, and under the cross bar. The ball may not be thrown, carried, or intentionally propelled by the hand or arm of a player of the scoring team unless by a goalkeeper within his/her penalty area not violating the three line rule.
- b) The score will be kept on the scoreboard. No more than a five goal differential will be displayed on the scoreboard. No stats are kept for any recreational games.
- c) A goal shall not be allowed if the ball has been touched by some outside agent while passing over the goal line. If this happens during the normal course of play, other than at the taking of a penalty kick, the game shall be restarted with a drop-ball. If this occurs during a penalty kick, the penalty kick shall be retaken.

### **Rule#9: Three Line Violation (Grades 5th-8th Only)**

Three Line violation will be observed for Grades 5-8 per the Diamond Competitive Rules interpretation

“Anytime the ball is kicked or thrown, in the air, completely over three lines, toward the opponents’ goal by the attacking team, a three-line violation shall be declared unless the ball makes contact with another player, the wall or referee prior to crossing the third line. The game shall restart with a free kick for the opponents at the center of the first yellow line that the ball crossed.”

### **Rule #9.1: Intentional Heading (Grades PreK-4 Only)**

The “heading” rule will be observed for Grades Pre-K- 4 only. This means that if a player intentionally uses their head to play the ball during a game, it will result in a free kick given to the opposing team. If this occurs in the penalty area, the kick will be taken from the yellow dot at the center of the yellow line. This is not a penalty kick.

### **Rule #10: Fouls, Misconduct, and Time Penalties**

### **Rule #10.1 Penal Fouls**

- a) Any player who carelessly, recklessly, or with excessive force commits any of the following penal offenses is guilty of committing a foul. The opposing team shall receive a free kick from the point at which the foul occurred.
- i. Kicking or attempting to kick an opponent;
  - ii. Tripping an opponent;
  - iii. Jumps at an opponent;
  - iv. Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent;
  - v. Encroachment towards an opponent;
  - vi. Pushing an opponent;
  - vii. Making contact with the opponent before contact is made with the ball;
  - viii. Carrying, striking, or propelling the ball with one's hand or arm; (does not apply to the goalkeeper in his/her own penalty area);
  - ix. Boarding or propelling an opponent into the perimeter wall.
  - x. Playing in a manner that is considered dangerous by the referee;
  - xi. Impeding the progress of the opponent;
  - xii. Charging an opponent
  - xiii. Sliding into or around an opponent; "Slide Tackling" (see Rule #10.1.2)

### **Rule #10.1.2 "Slide Tackling"**

To be considered for a slide tackle, a player must make contact with or be in dangerous proximity to their opponent. If a player slides with no opponents within the immediate vicinity, then the slide is not considered to be a "slide tackle". A slide tackle that is within dangerous proximity of the opponent will be considered a foul and a yellow card (2 minute time penalty). A second occurrence of a similar challenge is a red card. What is considered to be "dangerous proximity" is in the discretion of the referee but generally means "with potential of contact with an opponent". A slide tackle that makes contact with the opponent will result in a straight red card.

### **Rule #10.2 Non Penal Fouls**

- A) Hand to Hand: A goalkeeper who has control of the ball, and then having released the ball from his hands to be played either by his feet or by a teammate, shall not handle the ball with his hands again until it has been touched by an opponent.
- B) Pass Back: A goalkeeper, inside his own penalty area, may not touch the ball with his hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him by a teammate.
- C) Six Second Distribution: A goalkeeper, determined to have possession of the ball with his hands must distribute the ball within six seconds.



D) Illegal Procedure- Handling by Goalkeeper: A goalkeeper who attains possession of the ball from outside the penalty area, shall not handle the ball inside of the penalty area by bringing the ball inside with the feet and then picking the ball up.

E) All Non Penal foul restarts will be at the center of the yellow line on the dot. This is not a penalty kick.

### **Rule #10.3 Two Minute (Blue Card) Misconducts:**

A minimum of a two-minute penalty, with the maximum of expulsion from the session will be issued to any players guilty of the following offenses:

- i. Boarding;
- ii. Verbal or physical dissent to the referee or Parks Programming Department employee;
- iii. Taunting;
- iv. Persistent infringement of the rules;
- v. Illegal substitution;
- vi. Encroachment;
- vii. Any penal offense in a reckless manor;
- viii. Not returning to the bench after verbal command from referee during a fight.
- ix. Bicycle kick that is not within dangerous proximity of an opponent

The guilty player will be required to leave the field of play and sit for the two minutes until his/her team has been scored on, then they or another player can reenter the field of play ("SOFT" Time Penalty). If a goalie receives a two-minute penalty, then he/she must sit out for two minutes under the same circumstances. If the team who is serving the infraction scores a goal, the time penalty must still be served.

### **Rule #10.4 Two Minute (Yellow Card) Misconducts:**

A player who is guilty for repeating any of the below offenses will be issued a two-minute time penalty. This two-minute penalty is a "HARD" time penalty. If a player or goalkeeper receives this two-minute penalty, they are required to leave the field for a period of two minutes.

- i. Committing a serious penal offense
- ii. "Slide Tackling" within dangerous proximity of the opponent
- iii. Denying the Obvious Goal Scoring Opportunity by Foul or Hand
- iv. Persistent Infringement of the rules

- v. Verbal or Physical dissent to the referee or Parks employee
- vi. Taunting
- vii. Unsporting Behavior
- viii. Has already received one two minute time penalty (Blue Card)
- ix. Bicycle kick that is within dangerous proximity of an opponent

**Rule #10.5 Five Minute (Red Card) Misconducts:**

A player that commits a serious foul will be given a Red Card and asked to leave the facility immediately and not return to the playing surface or team bench that evening. Play will not restart until that player has left the area and his/her team will play short of one player for 5 minutes of the game. The following offenses will result in an immediate Red Card:

- i. Fighting;
- ii. Third person into already proceeding fight;
- iii. Any player off the bench during proceeding fight;
- iv. Violent conduct;
- v. Serious foul play;
- vi. Using offensive, insulting, or abusive language;
- vii. Has already been issued two time penalties;
- viii. Slide tackling into the opponent;
- ix. Spitting on Field; or any person
- x. Any penal offense with excessive force;
- xi. Bicycle kick that makes contact with an opponent;
- xii. Jumping over the perimeter wall
- xiii. Touching the game clock console without permission

**Modifications:**

- A) Referees are encouraged but not required to talk to players about fouls before issuing time penalties as this is a learning experience for everybody. The time penalties are used as a strategy to dismiss inappropriate behavior and create a safe and fun environment for soccer.
- B) If possible, referees and coaches should work together to teach the rules of the game to the players. For REC K-4, this strategy should be used more often than time penalties.
- C) Referees are expected to show discretion based on the age group they are officiating.
- D) Referees may use the coach to help diffuse situations with players or to sit a player out as a measure to prevent future misbehavior.

**Rule #10.6 Bench Misconduct:**

A coach or substitute on the sideline may be shown a blue, yellow, or red card during the course of play for any of the above listed infractions. If a coach receives the card, then the coach will need to designate a field player to sit for the time penalty. If the substitute receives a card, then

the substitute will serve the time penalty as well as a designated field player picked by the coach. Time penalties will operate as listed in the above categories.

### **Rule #11: Recreational Game Modification:**

#### “Running up the Score”

- The purpose of the recreational game is for kids to have a fun opportunity to learn and play the game of soccer. No player is having fun by winning or losing by large goal differentials. Coaches should do everything in their power to prevent score lines from getting out of hand. The score board will only show a 5 goal differential at most.
- Coaches can set challenges for their teams before scoring goals: limit touches, set number of passes, switch player positions, etc.
- Coaches can also share players to their opponents in the case of lopsided numbers or ability levels. This must be approved by the facility.

#### Facility enforcement for “Running up the Score”:

\*Starting at a 6 goal differential the winning team will be required to remove a player from the field and the losing team will be permitted to add an extra player to the field.

\*If the differential continues to raise then teams will remove and add players accordingly until a minimum of 4 players remain for the winning team.

\*As the differential decreases teams will remove and add players until even (back to a 5 goal differential again)

\*The facility can suspend and/or remove a coach for differentials that are consistently too much (10+ goals) and achieved with unsportsmanlike intent. This is up to the discretion of the facility but can follow this general progression.

1<sup>st</sup> offense- written warning

2<sup>nd</sup> offense- Minimum 1 week suspension

3<sup>rd</sup> offense- Removal as a coach for the session

\*Multiple offenses in multiple sessions can result in permanent ban from being a volunteer coach in future Plain Township programming.

If you have any questions or concerns about the rules please do not hesitate to ask the building supervisor on duty! Or you can email our soccer staff by visiting

[www.teamsideline.com/plaintownship](http://www.teamsideline.com/plaintownship) and clicking “contact us”. We hope you enjoy your experience in our leagues!