

**CLAYTON PARKS AND RECREATION**  
**FALL RECREATIONAL OUTDOOR SOCCER LEAGUE RULES**

**RULE 1 - OFFICIAL RULES**

All games shall be played in accordance with the rules of the United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA), EXCEPT that local league rules shall take precedence in cases of conflict.

**RULE 2 - NUMBER OF PLAYERS**

- A. Kindergarten Teams: The game shall be played by two teams consisting of five (5) players each. There will be no goalkeeper in Kindergarten.

The 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Teams: The game shall be played by two teams consisting of eight (8) players each, one of whom shall be the goalkeeper.

The 5<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> Grades Team: The game shall be played by two teams consisting of no more than eleven (11) players each, one of whom shall be the goalkeeper.

The goalkeeper shall wear a different color shirt than the uniform color of the players on his/her team; as well as the opposing team.

The referee shall be notified when a team changes the goalkeeper during a game.

- B. All teams must meet the minimum requirement for a team to start the game. If a team does not have the minimum number of players to start the game, teams may and should borrow players from the opposing team in order to make an even game. Coaches should ask, not order, players to switch teams and should applaud their help and sportsmanship.

1. Kindergarten team must have a minimum of three (3) players to start a game.
2. 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> team must have a minimum of six (6) players to start a game.
3. 5<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> team must have a minimum of eight (8) players to start a game.

**RULE 3 - SUBSTITUTION**

- A. Free substitution is permitted. There is no limit to the number of times a player may enter or leave a game.

- B. Substitutions may ONLY be made at the following times:

1. After a goal is scored.
2. At half time or quarter break.
3. During an injury time out.
4. At goal kicks
5. Only by the team in possession on their throw-in.
6. Only by the team in possession on their corner kick.

- C. Coaches wishing to make substitutions shall notify the referee. The referee may elect not to grant the substitution at a particular time in a game if, in the referee's opinion, substituting by the coach is delaying the game or intended to delay the game, particularly during the closing minutes of a game. Coaches should attempt to keep the games moving and able to be completed within the time allotted for the game, and shall conduct their substitutions promptly.

- D. Substitution is not permitted for a player expelled from a game. When a team has a player expelled, the team must play with one fewer player than they had at the time the player was expelled.

#### **RULE 4 - DURATION OF GAMES**

- A. The duration of play will be as follows:
  - 1. Kindergarten - 2<sup>nd</sup> Grades: Four 10-Minute Quarters
  - 2. 3<sup>rd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> Grades: Two 25-Minute Halves
  - 3. 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grades: Two 30-Minute Halves
- B. Allowances shall be made for time lost through injury or other causes at the discretion of the referee.
- C. Time shall be extended to permit a penalty kick after the expiration of regulation time at the end of a quarter, half or the end of the game.
- D. For games played in quarters, the break interval between quarters will be one (1) minute and half time shall be three (3) minutes. For games played in halves, the half-time break shall be five (5) minutes.

#### **RULE 5- START OF PLAY**

- A. At the beginning of the game, the choice of ends or initial kickoff will be decided by coin toss.
- B. The game starts with the kick-off.
- C. All games shall start at the scheduled time.
- D. If a team does not have the minimum number of players to start the game at the scheduled time, the referee shall start the clock at the scheduled starting time and this time shall not be made up or added. After ten (10) minutes, the game will be declared a forfeit
- E. If a team does not have the minimum number of players to start the game, teams may and should borrow players from the opposing team in order to make an even game. Coaches should ask, not order, players to switch teams and should applaud their help and sportsmanship.
- F. If both teams have a sufficient number of players at starting time or at the start of a new quarter or half, but one or both of the teams have not set up their teams on the field, the referee shall give the coaches a one-minute warning that the referee will start the clock, and the first team with its players ready to begin play will be awarded the kick-off and play will begin.

#### **RULE 6- CONDUCT OF PLAYERS, COACHES AND SPECTATORS**

- A. The coach is responsible for the conduct of his or her spectators, parents and players on the field and bench. **COACHES, SPECTATORS AND PLAYERS SHALL NOT DISPUTE CALLS MADE BY THE REFEREE.** Coaches, players, parents or spectators who are verbally abusive to the referees, players or each other may be ejected by the referee or coordinator and must immediately leave the vicinity of the playing field.
- B. If, in the referee's opinion, a player or coach is not conducting himself or herself in a proper manner; such as yelling at the referee, use of profane or abusive language directed at another, display of violent or dangerous play - The player and/or coach shall be given a warning; if another occurrence happens the player and/or coach will be expelled from the game.

If the conduct is of an extremely violent, dangerous and intentional in nature, the referee may eject a player and/or coach without a prior warning. An expelled player and/or coach shall immediately leave the playing field area.

- C. Referees may give a yellow card (caution) or red card (ejection) to a player or coach, either by holding up a card or verbally informing the player and/or coach if the referee does not have yellow/ red cards.

At the referee's discretion, a game may be stopped and declared forfeited in the event of inappropriate and/or abusive behavior by a player, coach or spectator.

- D. The referee shall report all ejections to the league supervisor as soon as possible after the game is completed, together with a brief statement of the occurrence. A player and/or coach expelled from a game may be automatically suspended by the league for one or more games, and/or other appropriate disciplinary action may be taken.
- E. If play is stopped because a player has been ordered off, the game shall be resumed by awarding an indirect free kick to the opposing team where play was stopped.
- F. In Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade games, one coach may remain on the field of play for each team; provided however that they shall NOT enter the penalty areas (goalie box) of either team and shall not interfere with play. Coaches on the field shall not touch or physically move the players. Coaches shall stand away from the play and shall not run alongside the play. Coaches on the field may not interfere with play.
- G. Coaches may NOT run along the sideline in front of the opposing team's bench. They are only allowed to run along the sideline on their "own" side of the field. If, in the referee' s opinion, a coach on the field is interfering with play or otherwise violating these rules, the referee may ask the coach to leave the field and the team shall thereafter be entitled to one less coach on the field for the remainder of the game. Failure to leave the field upon request of the referee may result in the game being declared a forfeit.
- H. The coach is not otherwise permitted on the field of play during the game, except when an injury has occurred upon signal from the referee or upon obvious serious injury after play has stopped.
- I. Coaches, players and spectators are not allowed behind the goal line. They must remain only on the sideline. Coaches must stay in front of their bench area. Roaming the entire length of the field is not permitted.

## **RULE 7 - THE REFEREE**

- A. **The referee's decision during play shall be final.** The referee should communicate all calls made during the game. The referee should explain the call to the younger players. Play shall be stopped for all serious injuries.
- B. The referee shall have the discretionary power to caution (yellow card) any player or coach guilty of misconduct or inappropriate behavior; as provided in Rule 6B. A referee may expel (red card) a player or coach from a game.
- C. Coaches, players and spectators shall not argue or dispute a referee's decision during the game. QUESTIONS about specific calls should be held until the end of a quarter, half or game and made to the referee in a calm manner. It is not the responsibility of the referee to explain his or her calls during the game or to instruct the coaches on the rules of the game.
- D. The breakdown for referees to be provided per game will be as follow:
  - 1. Kindergarten: No referee; Coach officiated
  - 2. 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grades: 1 referee
  - 3. 3<sup>rd</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> Grades: 2 referees

## RULE 8 - EQUIPMENT

- A. A player shall not use anything that is dangerous to the player or other players.
1. No players wearing a cast of any kind on any part of his/her body may participate in a game.
  2. No metal cleats, boots, or football shoes are allowed.
  3. No jewelry of any kinds is allowed; with the exception of medical bracelets
  4. All players are required to wear shin guards at all times, for all grade levels.
- B. For any violation of the above; the player shall be ordered off the field and shall not return without reporting to the referee during substitution to verify that the player's equipment is acceptable and safe.
- C. Team members shall wear the same color shirt, except for the goalie who shall wear a color different from his/her teammates and the opposing team.
- D. In the event two teams scheduled to play have shirts of the same color OR similar color, the first-named team on the schedule is responsible for changing its shirts to a contrasting color. It is the responsibility of the coaches to review the schedule in advance and have alternate shirt color available.
- \*Different colored pennies are acceptable to wear over the players shirts.
- E. Both teams shall bring a suitable game ball
1. Kindergarten - 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade:        Size 3 Soccer Ball
  2. 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Grade:                Size 4 Soccer Ball
  3. 5<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> Grade:                    Size 5 Soccer Ball
- F. **SHIN GUARDS: Required at all grade levels, for all games.** There will be no grace period at the beginning of the season. Players will not be allowed on the field without shin guards. If it is noticed during the game that a player does not have shin guards, that player will immediately leave the playing field and shall not return to the game until shin guards are worn. Delay of game will not be allowed for the player to put on shin guards; a substitution should be made. **\*Shin Guards must be worn under socks\***

## RULE 9 - SCHEDULING AND INCLIMENT WEATHER

- A. Games may not be cancelled, changed or delayed by the coaches. Schedule changes are the responsibility of the league supervisor. Once the final schedule is distributed, the schedule will not be changed. Teams may request special scheduling PRIOR to the schedule being prepared. Scheduling requests which are based upon a conflict for a large number of a team's players, within a reasonable possibility, will be honored. Failure to report for a scheduled game will result in a forfeit.
- B. Games will be played whenever possible. Teams should report to the field as scheduled unless otherwise notified. **Cancellations of games or field changes will be recorded on the Clayton Sports Hotline, 314-290-8515 as well as on the Team Sideline website ([www.teamsideline.com/claytonmo](http://www.teamsideline.com/claytonmo))** Make-up games for rainouts will be sent to coaches and coordinators. Referees shall immediately cease play in the event of dangerous weather conditions, such as lightning. If the game is halfway through completion, it will be ruled a complete game. If not, the league will attempt to reschedule the entire game.
- C. If lightning is seen or thunder is heard, games will be stopped immediately. Play will resume 30 minutes after the last lightning strike or thunder clap (provided field conditions are suitable for play.) If after 30 minutes play can not resume the game will be considered a rainout.
- D. Games will be cancelled if the heat index exceeds 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

## RULE 10 – MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

- A. In determining if a goal has been scored or if the ball is out of play, the **WHOLE BALL** must cross the entire line.
- B. To determine a foul or penalty kick for intentional use of hands, the referee's judgement must be that the handling of the ball was **INTENTIONAL** and not unavoidable or accidental.
- C. Players are not to interfere with or obstruct the goalkeeper in any way once the goalkeeper has possession of the ball. In 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade games, if the referee stops play because of interference with the goalie, play shall be restarted when the ball is in the hands of the goalkeeper.
- D. In applying the **ADVANTAGE RULE**, the referee may refrain from calling a foul if the player fouled or his/her team retains possession of the ball.
- E. A **DIRECT FREE KICK** means a goal can be scored directly from the kick. The referee shall signal an **INDIRECT FREE KICK** by raising one arm. When the ball is kicked the referee shall hold the arm up until it has touched another player on either team (this includes the goalkeeper as the 2<sup>nd</sup> player).

A team awarded a free kick (direct or indirect, **EXCEPT FOR PENALTY KICKS**) does not have to wait for the referee's signal or whistle to kick the ball, however the ball must first be stationary. Another player must touch the ball before the kicking player can again touch the ball. Players shall stand 10 yards away from all free kicks, unless the kick is less than 10 yards from the defending team's goal, in which case the defending players may stand on their team's goal line.

- F. On **THROW-INS**, the player must be outside the field of play, not touching the sideline. Penalty is loss of ball, except in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade games, where a second attempt is permitted before loss of ball.
- G. In Kindergarten games, players will perform a 'kick in' at the spot where the ball went out of bounds instead of a 'throw in' – Teams may allow for a 'throw in' instead if both teams are in agreement prior to the start of the game.
- H. The **GOALKEEPER** is permitted to hold onto the ball for five seconds and must get rid of the ball during that time. Any time taken while recovering balance is not counted. Penalty is **INDIRECT** free kick at the point of infraction. \*Second rule is **NOT** enforced in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade games.
- I. In Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade games **OFFSIDES** shall not be enforced.
- J. **Penalty kicks will be called only when the offense committed was clearly intentional, to the disadvantage of the other team and clearly prevented a goal from being scored.**

**\*No penalty kicks will be given in K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade, an indirect kick from outside the box will be rewarded instead.**

- K. In 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade games, if the goalkeeper picks up the ball and accidentally walks backwards across his or her own goal line; a goal is **NOT** awarded. The referee shall blow the whistle, explain the call, and then restart the play with the ball in the hands of the goalkeeper.

### **L. Heading the ball**

1. **Players 6<sup>th</sup> grade and below shall not engage in heading either in practices or games.**
2. **Players 7<sup>th</sup> and above shall be limited to a maximum of 30 minutes of heading training per week, with no more than 15-20 headers per player, per week. There are no restrictions on heading in matches in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade division.**
3. **The indirect free kick will be taken by the non-offending team from the place where the offending player touched the ball with his/her head.**

4. An indirect free kick awarded inside the opposing team's penalty area, must be taken on the penalty area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the player touched the ball with his/her head.

M. A DIRECT FREE KICK is awarded for the following offenses INTENTIONALLY committed:

1. Kicking or attempting to kick
2. Tripping
3. Jumping at
4. Charging dangerously or violently
5. Charging from behind UNLESS the opponent is obstructing
6. Striking or attempting to strike
7. Holding
8. Pushing
9. Handling the ball

N. An INDIRECT FREE KICK is awarded for the following offenses:

1. Playing dangerously (includes kicking above the waist, while on the ground or any other act dangerous to the player or other players on the field.)
2. Charging fairly, but when the ball is not within playing distance.
3. Intentionally obstructing the opponent.
4. Obstructing or interfering with the goalkeeper.
5. When a goalkeeper holds onto a ball for more than five seconds.
6. Heading ball (not permitted below 7<sup>th</sup> grade)

O. Players staying 'even' with the last defender (assuming the goalkeeper is behind the last defender) will not be considered offside.

P. Coaches, parents, spectators and substitute players should be at least five feet from the sideline of the field. Coaches and parents are not permitted to stand behind the goal line.

Q. When a player receives an initial yellow card, the player shall leave the game and a substitution for that player may be made. The player can return to play at the next substitution opportunity for his or her team. A player receiving a second yellow card in the same game automatically receives a red card and is expelled from the game. Substitution cannot be made for a player expelled from a game.

R. **NO SLIDE TACKLE RULE:** All slide tackles that take the ball away or attempt to take the ball away from a player are **banned**. The first attempt by a player will result in the player receiving a yellow card. The second attempt by the same player will result in a RED CARD.

**\*Any slide tackles from behind will automatically result in a RED CARD!**

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THESE ARE ONLY OUR SPECIAL LEAGUE RULES. Coaches should be familiar with the general rules (laws) of the game of soccer.

**THANK YOU!**

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