

RCYSL GENERAL PLAYING RULES

Revised June 2024

The following Rules and Policies apply to all Recreational matches played within River City Youth Soccer League (RCYSL) and should be reviewed by all RCYSL Coaches and Referees. Questions may be directed to a league Board Member, to your Club Manager, or to your Club Referee or Coach Coordinators.

0.1 RCYSL shall operate under the General Procedures and Specific Rules of the higher-level association(s) with which RCYSL is affiliated, and any additional Rules and Regulations adopted by the RCYSL Board.

0.2 Rules and Regulations adopted by the RCYSL Board shall not conflict with the Constitution and Bylaws of the higher-level association(s) with which RCYSL is affiliated, the United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA), the United States Soccer Federation (USSF), and the Federation International de Football Association (FIFA)

Section 1: Responsibilities Prior to the Start of a Match

1.1 Any team that fails to appear for a scheduled match without a 48-hour notification will be responsible for paying all referee fees for the rescheduled match no matter where the rescheduled match is played.

1.2 Coaches may not cancel matches without prior consent of their club manager or an RCYSL Executive Board Member. Coaches who violate this policy will be suspended for a minimum of one match. The Club/Team that violated the policy will be responsible for payment of referees for the improperly canceled match, as well as for any make-up game scheduled. A canceled match will not result in a forfeit but will be labeled as 'Un-played'.

1.3 All players and coaches must present valid player and coach passes to the referee as proof of their eligibility for each match. Referees may not accept a team roster in lieu of the required passes.

1.4 In an extraordinary situation and with pre-match approval from the club manager, another coach from the same club may use their pass to coach another team in their club. An RCYSL board member who is a registered coach may also coach the team.

1.5 Coach and player passes shall be given to, and retained by, the referee prior to the start of each match. The referee shall verify that each pass: (1) has not been altered, (2) is valid for the current season, (3) photograph accurately represents the player presenting the pass. (4) the teams name is correct.

1.6 The hosting coach shall provide a game card for the match. The game card must be accurately filled out by both coaches, including their team's name, player names, and identifying numbers for each player. Coaches must sign the game card verifying their team roster and give the card to the referee.

1.7 Unless restricted by field configuration, during all matches played in RCYSL, the home and visitor teams and their credentialed coaches shall occupy one side of the field, and all spectators shall occupy the opposite side of the field. The only exception to this policy is if only one side of the field may be safely occupied due to field configuration.

1.8 All efforts are to be made to start matches in a timely manner. Any team delaying the start of a scheduled game more than fifteen (15) minutes without the sanction of the proper authority shall forfeit the game to the opponent by a score of 1-0.

1.9 Where colors of uniforms are similar, the home team must effect a change to colors which are distinct from those of the opponent. In RCYSL, Bibs (pennies) may be used.

Section 2: Responsibilities During the Match

2.1 All players on a team's roster present at a match must play a minimum of one half of that match, unless there are contravening medical reasons. Only those players who are ill or injured or who have a documented physical limitation may play less than one-half of the match. Prior to the start of the match, the Coach must notify both the referee and the opposing coach of any player(s) who will not play at least one-half of the match.

2.2 During Fall Season recreational play, the use of guest players is not allowed.

2.3 At least one coach with a valid coach pass must be present for each team throughout the duration of the match. If there is not a coach with a valid pass present for each team, the match shall be immediately terminated.

2.4 Coaches and substitutes must remain at their bench area during the match. A team's bench area shall be that area one (1) yard back from the touchline and extending ten (10) yards, in one direction only, from the half line. No coach is to leave this area during a game unless approved to do so by the referee.

2.5 Coaches are responsible for the conduct and control of themselves, their players, parents and spectators before, during and after the match. Coaches may be sanctioned and/or sent off by the referee because of inappropriate behavior by any of these groups or individuals.

2.6 The referee's judgment regarding the physical condition of the field and its acceptance for play, to the actual happenings and occurrences related to the conduct of the game and those prerogatives granted to him/her, by the "Laws of the Game" shall not be challenged.

2.7 The Rules of Play for all recreational matches in RCYSL shall be the most recent edition of the USSF Laws of the Match, as modified by the higher-level association(s) with which RCYSL is affiliated, and any modified rules specified for inter-club play in which RCYSL teams participate.

2.8 Referees and Coaches are not allowed to modify or ignore any of the Rules of Play. Coaches who attempt to violate or ignore the Rules of Play shall be appropriately dealt with by the Referee. Any Referee who modifies or ignores the Rules of Play should be reported to the League by noting the incident on the game card (if possible), and notifying the RCYSL Referee Coordinator describing the specifics of the incident.

2.9 Coaches, players, and sideline spectators should only address a member of the referee crew during play for; (1) Responding to a referee-initiated communication, (2) making a request for substitutions, or (3) pointing out emergencies or safety issues, such as an injured player on the field. Coaches and players may request clarification of any call, provided the request is courteous and non-

argumentative. Referees may caution or potentially dismiss any coach for their failure to abide by the above.

Section 3: Responsibilities After the Match

3.1 Coaches should retrieve their player/coach passes from the referee at the conclusion of the match, except for any passes that need to be retained by the referee.

3.2 Both home and visitor coaches must report the score in a timely manner. In the event of a contested score, the score reported by the referee on the game card will be the official scoreline.

3.3 Referees shall permit coaches from both teams to add written comments on the game card after the conclusion of each match. The referee shall include the identity of the coach(es) making written comments.

3.4 Game cards should be submitted to the home team Club Manager by the referee or the coach of the home team.

3.5 Any individual attending a match may submit an online match report concerning the match, the participants, the officials, or others in attendance. The online match report may be found on the RCYSL website.

Section 4: General Rules of Play

The following are general modifications and rule clarifications are for all matches in RCYSL:

4.1 Charging the goalkeepers shall not be permitted at any time, when he/she is within his/her own penalty area.

4.2 The number of substitutions by either team shall be unlimited, and can occur at any stoppage of play. Substitute(s) shall enter the field of play at the midfield line only after receiving the referee's permission to enter the field of play.

4.3 Intentional heading is prohibited for all recreational teams for players U14 and below. The penalty is the award of an indirect free kick to the opposing team.

Section 5: Player Equipment

5.1 All jewelry must be removed, including necklaces, rings, earrings, bracelets and any visible body piercing with an earring-like device. Medical identification jewelry is not to be removed but must be taped securely. Any item of clothing or jewelry that is clearly religious in nature and that is required by the wearer's religion to be worn may be permitted by the referee if it is not dangerous and not likely to provide the player with an unfair advantage.

5.2 Using tape, bandages, adhesive or any other material to cover/conceal jewelry is not allowed.

5.3 All players must wear shin guards for matches. Referees will not allow players to participate if the shin guards do not meet these criteria: (1) Shin guards shall be worn properly to provide adequate and reasonable protection to the shin. (2) Shin guards shall be professionally manufactured, age/size

appropriate and unaltered.

5.4 Players shall be permitted to wear and/or use medical devices that are prescribed to address a medically recognized disability such as glasses with corrective lenses, insulin pumps, hearing aids and cochlear implants.

5.5 A soft cast may be permitted if the cast does not present a danger to the wearer, or any other player and the player has on site a medical release signed by a licensed medical physician.

5.6 Casts or splints made of a hard substance covering the entire circumference of the arm or wrist are not permitted under any circumstances (even if covered with padding).

Section 6: Sportsmanship and Sideline Behavior

The primary goal of the clubs in RCYSL is to create a safe and fun environment for children to enjoy participating in the game of soccer. RCYSL believes that all participants and representatives of our programs must always model admirable behavior. Actions that are not explicitly prohibited in the following policies may still be sanctionable and deemed a violation of RCYSLs sportsmanship policy.

6.1 It is the responsibility of all coaches to maintain the highest standards of conduct for themselves, their players and supporters at all matches. Abusive and obscene language, violent play, violent conduct, fighting, and other behavior detrimental to the match will not be tolerated.

6.2 Coaching from the sidelines, giving direction to one's own team on points of strategy and position, is permitted provided no mechanical devices are used, and the tone of voice is informative and not a harangue.

6.3 No coach, substitute, player or spectator is to make derogatory remarks or gestures to the referees, other players, substitutes, or spectators.

6.4 No coach, substitute, player or spectator is to use profanity.

6.5 No coach, substitute, player, or spectator is to incite, in any manner, disruptive behavior of any kind.

6.6 The penalty for violating any of the above rules shall be ejection from the match and disciplinary action which will be taken by the Board of Directors, and/or the appropriate RCYSL committee.

6.7 Dogs are not allowed within 7 yards (21 feet) of the sidelines or endlines of any RCYSL game or game field, home or away. Any relevant local and site-specific policies regarding animals on field sites must be followed. Coaches may be asked to enforce this policy.

6.8 The use, consumption, or being under the influence of any alcoholic beverages or controlled substances, immediately before, during or immediately after the playing of any game, practice, or athletic event is expressly prohibited. Any player, team official, league official, parent or spectator, or any other member of this Association who violates this prohibition shall be subject to disciplinary action and/or suspension.

Section 7: Support for Referees

7.1 No one is to address a Referee in a negative manner immediately before, during or after the match. A coach's responsibility for referee support and spectator control includes the times prior to, during, and after the match at the field and surrounding areas.

7.2 In the event of negative spectator comments, abuse or other inappropriate behavior, a referee may stop the match and request the assistance of all coaches to remind spectators of the above rules. A referee may stop the match, caution the coach, and instruct the coach to direct the offending spectator(s) to leave the field.

7.3 A referee may dismiss from the match any spectator for any egregious action including, but not limited to, abusive language or any implied or actual threat of physical abuse. A prior warning is not required. The referee shall simultaneously instruct the spectator to leave the field. An ejected spectator must depart to a distance where they can no longer see or hear the match. If the ejected person fails to leave the field, the referee may abandon the match.

7.4 A referee may dismiss the coach and direct the coach to leave the field along with the offending spectator(s). The coach may only be dismissed if they have not put forth an effort to have the spectator(s) stop the offending behavior. If the ejected/dismissed coach and/or spectator(s) fail to leave the field, the referee may abandon the match.

7.5 Any infraction of referee abuse/assault will result in automatic notification of the credentialing Club/League, and potentially further disciplinary action.

Section 8: Goal Differential Policy

To promote respect and good sportsmanship, as well as to keep the atmosphere fun and friendly, the acceptable winning margin for RCYSL league games a goal differential of five (5). Coaches shall actively endeavor to prevent the goal differential from increasing to or beyond the 5-goal limit. Examples of preventative measures coaches may take to avoid lopsided scores include intentional rotation of player positions and/or use of substitutes, removal of players from the field of play, directing teams to play with an objective of ball control rather than scoring, etc.

8.1 If, during a match, the goal differential increases to five (5) goals, the coach of the leading team shall remove one or more players from the field (U8 teams down to 3 players, U10 teams down to 5 players, U12 teams down to 6 players). If the goal differential is reduced to less than five (5), teams may return players to the field.

8.2 Violations of the goal differential policy will be reported to the RCYSL coaching coordinator. If it is determined that the team in question deliberately violated the goal differential policy, the sportsmanship committee may impose sanctions on the coach and/or team.

8.3 Anyone sanctioned for violating the goal differential policy is entitled to an appeal, following the RCYSL appeal process.

Section 9: Registration

9.1 In order to be issued a Coach's pass, all Coaches and assistant Coaches must: (1) comply with the licensure requirements defined in by RCYSL (2) complete the online coaches' application, (3) submit an appropriate picture, (4) complete the CDC Heads Up Concussion Awareness course, and (5) pass the

required LiveScan (fingerprinting and background check) process. If a Coach has previously been licensed under the old USSF coaching structure, they only need to register and take “The Introduction to Grassroots” and do not need to take further coaching modules

9.2 The maximum number of players allowed on a team’s roster shall be: Six (6) in the Under 6 age group, eight (8) in the Under 8 age groups, twelve (12) in the Under 10 age group, fifteen (15) in the Under 12 age group, eighteen (18) in the Under 14 age group, and twenty-two (22) in the Under 16 & Under 19 age groups.

Section 10: Air Quality

10.1 Game Cancellation for U6-U12: RCYSL will cancel (a) game(s) at or above 150 AQI based on Sacramento general area on IQAir app using the app’s 2p.m. projection the day before the game(s), looking at the projection for the general time of game start on (morning, afternoon, night), notwithstanding whether field permits are otherwise suspended. RCYSL Scheduler shall communicate and coordinate with pertinent leagues regarding any RCYSL AQI cancellations.

10.2 Game Cancellation for CPL (U14, U16 & U19): AQI cancellations are up to CPL.

10.3 Practice Cancellations: Each club may make practice modification or cancellation for AQI policies, however each club must also follow, and ensure its coaches/teams follow, any field closure edicts by the permitting entity