



## *Youth Soccer Rules Winter 2022-2023*

### **Governing Body**

- \* The governing body of this league will be the Athletic Supervisor from the Williamson County Parks and Recreation Department or the assigned representative.
- \* Items not covered by these by-laws will be ruled on by the Williamson County Parks and Recreation staff.

### **Eligibility**

- \* All players must sign a roster/player contract to be eligible to play.
- \* All rosters must be completed and turned into the Recreation Department prior to the first game. Teams without rosters on file will automatically forfeit their games.
- \* All players must have submitted a valid form of identification (any state of federally issued identification, Birth Certificate, Passport, Identification Card, etc.) prior to the start of the season.
- \* League registration fees (in order to have league participation) will be paid at the time of registration.
- \* Players cannot change teams once the season starts unless approved by the Williamson County Parks and Recreation staff.
- \* All protests of eligibility will be brought to the attention of the official before the game begins or the protest will not be allowed.

### **Player Conduct**

- \* Everyone must follow all of the facility rules.
- \* Only one spokesperson per team is permitted, in the case of youth sports the team spokesperson is either the Head or Assistant Coach. He or she will accept full responsibility for the team's actions.
- \* All spectators must remain in the seating area during the game. Anyone not wishing to abide by this rule will be asked to leave the facility.
- \* At no time will children be left unsupervised in any Williamson County Parks and Recreation facility.
- \* If a team forfeits two games during a season, they will be reviewed by the Athletics staff regarding their continued participation in the league.

## THE GAME

1. **U8:** Each game will consist of two (2) equal fourteen (14) minutes halves with a two (2) minute halftime. Teams will switch sides at the end of the half. Team on the AWAY side will kick-off to start.
2. **U10 and Above:** Each game will consist of two (2) equal eighteen (18) minutes halves with a two (2) minute halftime. Teams will switch sides at the end of the half. Team on the AWAY side will kick-off to start.
3. One U8 coach may be on the field during the game.
  - a. The on-field coach must be close to the sideline and not interfere with the game
  - b. The team must also have one coach or parent in the player box
4. Only two coaches are allowed in the player box during practices and games. Both coaches must be on the team's roster and have completed a background check.
5. WCPR officials have the right to shorten a game for arena scheduling purposes, injuries, etc., as they deem necessary.
6. Slide tackling is not permitted during indoor play. The result is a direct free kick by the offended team. If the slide tackle occurs in the penalty area, a penalty kick will be awarded. A slide tackle is defined as sliding with one or both feet to dispossess the opponent.
  - a. The goalkeeper may slide inside the penalty area but may not slide with their feet at the feet of another player.
7. Sliding to play the ball is permitted. If another player is in the proximity of the ball, this may be determined by the referee as a slide tackle and will result in a direct free kick by the offended team.
8. U12 and under (NO HEADING): When a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick will be taken from the nearest point outside the penalty area parallel to the goal line. If a player does not deliberately head the ball, play should continue.
  - a. U14 teams may head the ball during practices, not games.
9. A player is allowed to place one (1) hand on the walls for support. The use of one (1) or two (2) hands on the walls as leverage against an opponent will result in an indirect free kick for the opposing team.
10. Games will start at the scheduled time. There is a five-minute grace period for the first game of the night only. Teams not ready to play with the minimum number of

players will be given a forfeit. During halftime, teams should remain on the field to prevent any delay of the start of the second half.

11. There is no overtime; five penalty kicks per team will be used for tie-breakers in tournament games only.
12. Mercy Rule: If a team is ahead by five or more points, no more points will be added to the scoreboard until the trailing team scores. All goals will be counted on the official game score sheet.
13. Unless otherwise specified, FIFA rules apply.

## **BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY/RESTARTS**

1. **U10 and below:** Keepers may drop kick or punt the ball
  - a. The goalkeeper must be given space to distribute the ball. During goalkeeper distribution, the defending team must be outside the penalty area. The defending team may not encroach upon the goalkeeper while the goalkeeper is distributing within his/her own penalty area.
2. **U12 and above:** Keepers are NOT permitted to DROP KICK OR PUNT the ball.
  - a. The goalkeeper must throw or place the ball back on the field and kick it into play within six (6) seconds. The three-line rule applies. Goalkeepers are not permitted to punt or drop kick the ball. If the ball is drop kicked or punted, an indirect free kick will be awarded to the offended team, taken from the nearest point outside the offending team's penalty area, parallel with the goal line from the point of the infraction.
  - b. The goalkeeper must be given space to distribute the ball. During goalkeeper distribution, the defending team must be outside the penalty area. The defending team may not encroach upon the goalkeeper while the goalkeeper is distributing within his/her own penalty area.
3. **THREE LINE RULE:** A kicked or thrown ball cannot travel in the air across the three (3) centerlines. The result will be an indirect free kick by the offended team on the centerline closest to the opposing team's goal.
4. **KICKOFFS:** The team on the visitors' side (AWAY) of the scorer's table will kick off to start the game. Kickoffs may be played in any direction. Defending players must be outside the center circle and not touching it prior to the ball being kicked and moves. Players may not cross the center line prior to the ball being kicked and moves. The ball must be kicked into play within six (6) seconds after the referee blows the whistle for the start of play or an indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team.

5. **BALL OUT OF BOUNDS:** If the ball is kicked into the nets above the plexiglass, on top of the wall, or in the overhead nets, it will be kicked (not thrown) back inbounds by the opposing team within six (6) seconds of being placed. This is a direct free kick. The nets on the doors are considered part of the wall and therefore 'in-play.' If the ball hits the ceiling net, it should be placed on the nearest of the three (3) centerlines where it hit the net. If the ball hits the top rail or side net, it should be placed back on the field within the white line next to the wall. If the ball is placed outside the white line, or is moving as it is kicked, an indirect free kick will be awarded to the other team.
6. **GOAL KICKS:** The ball may be placed anywhere within the goal area and is in play once it is kicked and clearly moves. The opposing team is not allowed in the penalty area until the kick has been taken.
7. **CORNER KICKS:** The ball is placed on the painted red dot and kicked into play within six seconds after being placed on the spot. This is a direct free kick.
8. **DROP BALL PROCEDURE:** The ball is dropped for the defending team goalkeeper in their penalty area if, when play was stopped, the ball was in the penalty area or last touched in the penalty area. In all other cases, the referee drops the ball for one player of the team that last had possession of the ball at the position where it last played. All other players (of both teams) must remain at least 4 m (4.5 yds) from the ball until it is in play. The ball is in play when it touches the ground.

## PLAYER EQUIPMENT

1. **SHOES:** All players must wear either athletic or approved indoor soccer shoes. **No outdoor style cleats are allowed.**
2. **SOCKS:** All players are required to wear socks of the same pattern and color. No mixing of colors or patterns will be permitted. The socks must be one continuous sock, that has not been modified, that covers the foot, ankle, and shin guard in their entirety.
3. **SHIN GUARDS:** All players must wear shin guards made of a suitable material, that are age and size appropriate, to provide reasonable protection and must be covered entirely by the socks.
4. **SHORTS:** All players are required to wear their own black (or dark color) shorts. No volleyball, cheerleader or swim-type shorts are permitted. No design or lettering is permitted on the backside of the shorts. If the shorts have drawstrings, the drawstrings must be tucked inside the shorts and remain so throughout the match. Players will not be permitted to play until the player has the approved style of shorts.

5. **SHIRTS:** Numbered team jerseys will be distributed to all players and are required to be worn. Jerseys may not be altered. The only exception is if the entire team wishes to add the player's names to the back of the jerseys. Sleeves may not be rolled, cut off or tied. Jerseys must be tucked into a player's shorts when they enter the field if the jersey is longer than the length of their soccer style shorts. A player will be given one (1) verbal warning to tuck their jersey into their shorts. After the first warning the player will be given a yellow card and is not permitted to play for two (2) minutes.
  - a. No earrings or jewelry are allowed during a game.
  - b. Players will not be allowed to take the field until they are appropriately dressed according to these rules. Referees have the final decision on player equipment.
6. **HEADBANDS:** Must be made of a soft material with no knots or adornments.
7. Bubble wrap cast are allowed, subject to approval by the head official/supervisor.
8. **SIZE OF BALL:** WCPR will provide the standard ball for all games.
  - a. U12 and below – size 4
  - b. U13 and above – size 5

## FOULS

1. Direct free kick foul counter: A direct free kick foul counter will be used to keep track of all direct free kick fouls called by the officials during game. Direct free kicks awarded inside the penalty area as a result of a foul by the defending team will be assessed as a penalty kick and the foul will not be added to the defending team's foul counter.
  - a) U10 and below: When a team receives a total of five (5) direct free kick fouls, the opposing team will be awarded a penalty kick and the foul counter is reset to zero (0).
  - b) U12 and above: When a team receives a total of four (4) direct free kick fouls, the opposing team will be awarded a penalty kick and the foul counter is reset to zero (0).
2. Indirect Free Kicks: Indirect free kicks awarded inside the penalty area will be taken from the nearest point outside the penalty area parallel to the goal line. Indirect kicks include: one (1) or two (2) hands on the wall when used as leverage, obstruction without contact, an intentional pass back to the goalkeeper, dangerous play, deliberated heading, three-line rule and punt/drop kicks, etc.
3. Penalty Kicks: Penalty kicks may be taken by any player on the offended team. That player will start on the line (of the three (3) center lines) closest to the

opponent's goal. The balance of players on both teams will be on the center line. Players' feet are not to touch or be on the yellow half line. When the referee blows the whistle to start play, the kicker may dribble forward and shoot, the goalkeeper may come off their line and the remaining players are free to defend or aid in the attack.

4. Yellow Card (Two-Minute Foul): This situation calls for the offending player to sit out in the players' foul box for two minutes and the time starts when the player exits the playing field. The team plays short during that time. *Two-minute penalties are automatic on any yellow card offense.* If a goal is scored against the team that is playing short, the player serving the penalty remains out for the entire two minutes but the team may return to full strength. If the team that is playing short scores, the player remains in the box for the remainder of the two minutes and the team continues to play short. The team is permitted to substitute any of the other players with the exception of the player that received the yellow card. Two yellow cards to the same player in one game will result in an automatic red card (see rule 5: red card) and a five-minute penalty for the offending team.
5. Red Card (Five-Minute Foul): Red card offenses will result in ejection of the player for the balance of that game and the following game. The player must leave the arena. In addition, there team will play short for five minutes.
6. Advantage Rule: If a player is fouled but the team/player retains possession of the ball, the referee may call a foul without stopping play. The referee will notify the scorer's table of the foul.

## Number of Players

1. Rostered Players: All players must be on your approved roster as submitted at registration, or, have been added to your roster through the WCPR. Any team that plays with an unregistered player for this league will automatically forfeit that game and any prior games that the unregistered player played in. Coaches are also subject to review for this offense.
2. Number of players on the field:
  - a) U8 and U10: Teams play with six players on the field, plus a keeper, for a total of seven.
  - b) U12 and U14: Teams play with five players on the field, plus a keeper, for a total of six.
3. The minimum number of players for a game to legally start is four (4), this includes the goalie. During the course of the game, if a team is reduced to less than four players, for whatever reason, then they will forfeit the game.

## Substitutions

1. Players may sub on the run and the game will not stop for substitutions. Players being substituted must be within the prescribed arc before the new player is permitted to enter the game. Neither player may play the ball within the arc until the exiting player has left the playing field. Neither the exiting nor entering player can be part of any play during the substitution. The exiting player must be completely off the playing field.
2. **All players are required to play a minimum of eighteen minutes per game. (Fourteen for U8 teams)**
  - a) All players should play equal amounts per game, with the exception of injuries or other extenuating circumstances.
3. If either player involved in the substitution becomes part of the play, the other team is awarded an indirect kick, may be given a yellow card (referee discretion).
4. The doors are to remain shut unless a team is actively substituting a player. The player coming off the field must be in the yellow half circle before the coach opens the door.

## **Coach's Conduct and Fair Play**

1. It is the desire of the WCPR Indoor League to host fair play and excellent team/coach conduct. It is the coach's responsibility for his or her conduct and the conduct of his or her team on and off the field.
2. Time: Please make sure your team arrives in plenty of time to stretch and warm up in the designated warm up areas. Also, coaches and players are not allowed to kick soccer balls outside the playing area or the warm-up area. Line up to shake hands after the second half. Each team is responsible to remove their team from the field immediately after a game ends.