

**Pierce County Soccer Association
Home League Operating Procedures
and Rules of Competition
Revised September 1, 2023**



1. The Season

- A. Registration for the Home League:** PCSA's Competition Chair will open up the league for team registration on or before July 1st. Major Dates following the opening of registration are listed below
- a. Registration will close first Friday in August
 - b. Second full week in August a list of accepted teams will be posted for club verification, any change due by the second Friday in August
 - c. Preliminary schedules released the third Friday in August
 - d. The following Tuesday final schedules released to clubs for assignment of home game logistics.
- B. Number of Games:** U7- U12 teams will get a 10-game season. U11 and U12 will may be more due to Dave Painton and Leanne Ehnat cup games.
- C. Season Opener:** Will be the Saturday following Labor Day.
- D. Post Season Play:** U11 and U12 teams will have a post season event. The top two boys in each age group will participate in the Dave Painton Cup and the top two girls teams will participate in the Leanne Ehnat Cup. Teams advancing will advance based on the following criteria.
- Most league points.
 - Head-to-head competition.
 - Least goals allowed.
 - Coin toss.

2. PCSA Values and Goals

- A. **Good Sportsmanship** is ALWAYS one of PCSA's main priorities. Rest assured you can accomplish anything you want on the field while still maintaining a high level of sportsmanship. In fact, you can argue that you can achieve more.
- B. **Controlling the Game:** Do your best to keep games under control both emotionally as well as competitively (with respect to the score line). There is no reason for games to end with a **plus 5 goal differentials.**
- C. **Mercy rule:** Home league has a "mercy rule" for small sided games (U10 and below). The rule allows for a team losing by 5 goals to add a player to the pitch to help level play. This is a conversation the coaches and referee can address at the start of the game or at halftime (we understand we don't keep score but please understand this is the spirit of the rule). See more clarification under soccer specific rule 5.
- D. **NO SCORES** are kept in home league until U11, but we all know the score.....At U10 the referee will record the score however the score is not reported to the league.
- F. **RMA:** Only RMA cleared and registered with the club Coaches and Assistant Coaches may be on the team's sideline/bench area (maximum of 3 RMA cleared adults). Only RMA cleared staff will print on match day reports. In addition to completing the Risk Management Application, coaches must complete the Introduction to Safety Course and Safe Sport (if completed in previous years this will be a refresher course). If coaches have not completed these requirements, they should contact their club registrar for guidance.
- G. **Field Set-Up:** We advise starting at the U9 age group that the 2 teams bench area set up on one side of the field and parents/fans on the opposite side line between goal boxes. At U11 and above this is mandatory.
- H. **Game Logistics:** ALWAYS contact your opposing coach prior to the match to confirm game day logistics. The contact information for each coach can be found by clicking on the name within the schedule. We are adding a list of club contacts for scheduling concerns.
- I. **Referees:** The home team is responsible for providing referees. In the event that a referee is not present, both coaches will mutually agree upon one. If one cannot be agreed upon, each coach will referee one-half. Assistant Referees may be used whenever possible to assist the referee.

Soccer Specific Rules

3. Player Equipment

- A. **All players are required to wear shin guards.** Socks must be worn up and over the shin guards.

- B. All players shall be in uniform to play. A minimum “official” uniform is shirt (with a number). Goalkeepers shall wear shirt/vest colors that distinguish them from field players.
- C. Standard approved soccer shoes or gym shoes must be worn by all players.
- D. A player shall not wear anything that may be dangerous to other players or to themselves e.g. earrings
- E. A player may wear extra protective clothing against the cold, including gloves without dangerous, protruding or hard objects, provided that:
 - The proper team uniform is worn outermost; and any hat should be without a peak, bill or a dangling or protruding object of any kind; however, the goalkeeper may wear a soft-billed hat; and
 - Referee discretion may be used to determine if an item of protective clothing is considered to go beyond the purpose of providing a means of retaining body heat.
- F. A player wearing a cast or splint may be permitted to play with doctor’s note approving the player to return to play and the cast or splint is completely covered by a thick layer of soft material e.g., bubble wrap. The referee will make the final determination protective layer is acceptable.
- G. Protective orthopedic devices, prosthetic devices and any equipment, gear, appliance or apparatus that is protective for a known medical condition may be provided that:
 - The equipment, gear, device appliance or apparatus has been approved by licensed physician, prosthetics, therapist or other practitioner trained or licensed to prescribe, design, select and/or fit such devices.
 - A letter is on file with home club officials and team coach from a licensed physician, prosthetics, therapist or other practitioner trained or licensed to prescribe, design, select and/or fit such devices, stating that he or she is licensed to prescribe, design, select and/or fit such devices; that the device is properly fitted; and that the device is suitable for use in youth soccer competition; and the referee determines that the device conforms to Law 4 of the Laws of the Game.

4. Start and Restart of Play:

- A. The ball will be placed at the center of the field by the referee and after a signal by the referee the game will start with one player kicking the ball in any direction. For the initial kickoff, the player taking the initial kick is the only player inside the center circle. All other players of each team should start in their defensive half of the field and must stay outside the center circle.
- B. The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves. The kicker cannot play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player.
- C. A goal shall not be scored directly from a kickoff without the ball being touched by at least one other player on either team.

- D. After a goal has been scored, the game shall be restarted in like manner by a player of the team that gave up the goal.
- E. To start the next game period, the game will be restarted with a kickoff from a player of the team that that did not kick off the prior period.
- F. Restarting play after temporary delay: In the case of a temporary suspension due to an injury or any unusual situation, there will be an uncontested drop ball at the spot where the ball was declared dead. The ball shall be deemed "in play" when the ball has touched the ground.
- G. Ball in and Out of Play: The ball is out of play when the entire ball (either on the ground or in the air) has crossed the goal line, touchline, sideline and/or when the referee has stopped the game.

5. Substitutions

- A. Substitutions may be made, with consent of the referee:
 - Prior to a throw-in; by either team.
 - Prior to a goal kick, by either team.
 - After a goal, by either team.
 - After an injury, when the referee stops play, by either team.
 - At half time.
 - When the referee stops play to caution a player, only the cautioned player may be substituted, prior to the restart of the game.
- B. The number of substitutes shall be unlimited. Each **player should play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time**. Substitutions will be allowed in order to give an opportunity for all players to get equal playing time and to balance the outcome of the game rather **than to run-up the score**.

6. Mercy Rule:

- A. If the score differential reaches 5 goals, then the coach of the team with fewer goals may add one player to the field. If the goal differential returns to 4 goals, then the additional player must be removed from the field. Adding and removing the player must be done according to substitution rules.
- B. It is the responsibility of the coaches to adhere to this PCSA policy. The referees may remind the coach, but it is not their responsibility to bring this to the coach's attention or force the coaches to take the necessary steps.

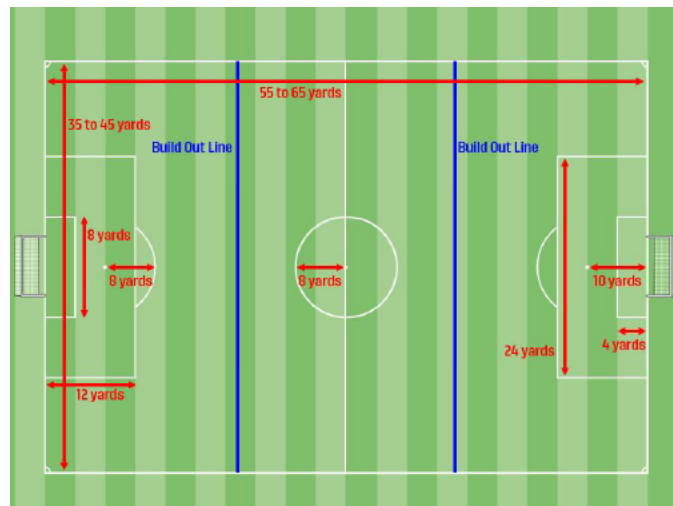
7. Modified Rules for age groups U7 & U8

- A. Goalkeepers are not allowed at the U7 and U8 age groups playing 4v4. What does this mean?
 - Parking a field player in front of the goal is not allowed.
 - If a team is in their offensive half, all players should be encouraged to move up past the midfield line and not hang back in their defensive half.
 - When defending, players should be defending a player versus defending the goal (not standing in front of the goal)

- B. No heading of the ball ((any intentional heading of the ball will result in the opposing team being awarded an indirect kick from the spot of the infraction)
- C. No slide tackling (any intentional slide tackling will result in the opposing team being awarded an indirect kick from the spot of the infraction)

8. Modified Rules for age groups U9-U12

- A. No heading --of the ball (any intentional heading of the ball will result in the opposing team being awarded an indirect kick from the spot of the infraction)
- B. No slide tackling (any intentional slide tackling will result in the opposing team being awarded an indirect kick from the spot of the infraction)
- C. No punting or dropkicks by the goalkeeper. If the goalkeeper punts or drop kicks the ball, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the punt or drop kick occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infringement occurred.
- D. Rules to support the build out line.
 - a) Goal-kick. As soon as the ball is in play, the opposition can enter the build out area.
 - b) Once the ball is in play, the opposition can enter the build out area.
 - c) Once the opposing team is behind the build out line, the goalkeeper can pass, throw or roll the ball into play (punts and drop kicks are not allowed).
 - d) Following a save, once the goalkeeper puts the ball on the ground, the ball is considered in play and the opposing team can cross the build out line and play resumes as normal.
 - e) Offsides will be enforced at the midfield/center line.



9. Fouls and Misconduct:

- A. FREE KICKS: Free kicks shall be classified under two headings: "Direct," from which a goal can be scored by a direct kick against the offending side and "Indirect," from which a goal cannot be scored unless the ball has been played or touched by a player other than the kicker before passing through the goal.
- B. **DIRECT KICKS WILL NOT BE AWARDED AT U8 AND BELOW, ONLY INDIRECT KICKS WILL BE USED**
- C. Any intentional header at U12 and below will warrant an indirect free kick for the opposing team. If the header occurs within the goal area the kick is to be taken at the point closest to the infraction on the goal area line.
- D. **No Penalty Kicks will be granted at U8 and below**
- E. A DIRECT KICK (U9 AND UP) Can be awarded at the referee's discretion. Below are common examples but are not limited to:
 - Kicking an opponent
 - Tripping an opponent
 - Jumping at an opponent
 - Charging an opponent in a violent or dangerous manner
 - Charging an opponent from behind
 - Striking an opponent
 - Holding an opponent
 - Pushing an opponent
 - Handling the ball, with the exception of the goalie, in the designated area

10. Coaching:

- A. The coach is responsible for his own behavior as well as that of his players and team spectators. Discuss what you expect of parents during games. Remember, recreational soccer is for fun and to build a player's passion for the game.
- B. Every player must play in each game at least 50% of the playing time unless they are not able to play due to illness or injury.
- C. Coaching must be done in a civil manner and the tone of voice will be informational and encouraging, not demanding or critical.
- D. Contact the visiting coach at least three days before the scheduled game to reaffirm the time, directions to the field, and to share team colors (home team changes jersey color if visiting team is the same color). If the visiting coach is not contacted, he/she should contact the home team coach. The contact information for each coach can be found by clicking on the name within the schedule. We are adding a list of club contacts for scheduling concerns.
- E. Home team is responsible for providing the game ball, make sure that you have a game ball properly inflated before the game starts.

- F. Make sure that all of your players are properly equipped, fit and emotionally ready to play.
- G. In case of injuries during the game, ask for referee permission to enter the field of play, assure that the player is properly attended to. Check his/her condition after the game and follow up with a call to the home in the evening.
- H. In the event an injured player requires medical attention, he/she must have a written release from the doctor before returning to practice or play with the team.
- I. Proper warm up of all players should take place for approximately 20-30 minutes prior to the start of the game.
- J. At home games, your club is responsible for field preparation (check with your club officials)
- K. Prior to the start of the game, meet and greet the visiting coach. After the game, exchange with them some friendly, positive comments. Be sure to thank the referees and shake their hands. Have the player's line up at the center of the field to shake hands with the opposing players.