

## **Youth Soccer Rules**

### **All Divisions**

The purpose of the PCRD youth soccer league is to provide youth the opportunity to participate in soccer while gaining valuable experience in this international sport, thus promoting healthy recreational use of leisure time.

Payette County Recreation District **does not** provide medical insurance. If a liability waiver has not been signed by a parent/guardian, the child will be prohibited from playing until such waiver is signed.

National Federation High School rules will be used by the Payette County Recreation District. All teams shall abide by the same rules in all situations unless otherwise noted.

#### **1) REGISTRATION:**

- No player will be allowed to participate in games or practices until registration has been completed with the Payette County Recreation District.

#### **2) TEAM FORMATION:**

- Teams will be formed with parity being the main goal (i.e., equal number of girls/boys and/or grade levels).
- Coaches will draft teams with assistance from PCRD staff.
- The Head Coach and one Assistant will be allowed to place their children on their team. Requests are allowed but not necessarily honored.

#### **3) UNIFORMS:**

- Shin guards are **REQUIRED** during games and practices.
- Cleats are recommended, but not required. Steal cleats or those with a toe cleat (softball/baseball) are prohibited.
- PCRD reversible jersey is required and can be purchased at the PCRD office.

#### **4) CONDUCT:**

- The official, at his/her discretion, shall have the authority to eject anyone from the game or premises, which he/she feel are not conducting themselves in an appropriate manner.
- Spectators are guests and their support is encouraged as long as it remains positive. Spectators shall not criticize the officials, players or coaches of any team.
- The use of profanity or abusive language is unacceptable and the offender shall be subject to immediate ejection. This includes all players, coaches, spectators and parents.

#### **5) FIELDS:**

- **NO** pets, glass containers, alcoholic beverages or smoking allowed.
- Parents, spectators, and coaches are not allowed to stand or sit near the endline or goal on any field.

- All players and coaches are asked to pick up trash and other items near their bench/team area so the next game may start on time.

6) **WEATHER & LIGHTNING:** PCRD rarely cancels games due to wet conditions. If conditions are forecast that could make games unplayable, weekday games will be cancelled by 3 pm. After 3 pm, field conditions at game time will determine game status. Officials will *suspend* the game for a minimum of 20 minutes if lightning is observed in the area. Additional lightning activity could result in the cancellation of that game with a possible reschedule. Please find immediate shelter for your team.

7) **GAME TIME:**

- Please plan to arrive 30 minutes early. This will allow plenty of time for your players to warm up, stretch, and prepare for competition and begin their game on time.
- If a team is short players, we encourage coaches to play short or use players from the opposing team, but it is not required. As additional players arrive, they may be added to the game by notifying the opposing coach and the referee.
- Please notify PCRD if there is a need to cancel/reschedule a game. PCRD will handle all rescheduling as needed.
- Officials and/or PCRD staff are in charge of suspending a game due to weather.

8) **OFFICIALS /PARENTS/COACHES:**

- **Please keep in mind this is a recreational offering – FUN is emphasized and takes precedence over winning. The focus of the game should ALWAYS benefit the YOUTH who are participating.**
- Officials for these games may be adults or young people who have varying amounts of rules knowledge, experience and training. Remember, they are human and make mistakes. It is your job as a coach to show respect for their decisions and teach your players to do so also. Decisions made by the officials are final.
- Children must be picked up promptly after their games and practices are completed.
- PCRD considers coaching a privilege. Violations or disregard for the rules may be grounds for dismissal.
- **GOALS:** Skills to be stressed for all ages; follow directions, listen, work with each other, be on time for practice and games, be dressed and ready to play.

- ❖ ***DIVISION I & II:*** Learn basic rules, learn how to kick with either foot, how to stop (trap) the ball, proper way to execute LEGAL "throw-ins", how to dribble using both feet, and how to stop the ball as a goalie, and emphasize the role of each "position."
- ❖ ***DIVISION III:*** Learn the rules; learn name, location, and role of positions; learn how to play each position, basic foot control like dribbling, passing and kicking with both feet, trapping and chip shots. Improve accuracy of passing while in motion, learn different ways to trap the ball, increase the distance, accuracy of throw-ins, increase goalie awareness of shot angles and attack formations, learn both offensive and defensive strategies.

- ❖ **PRACTICE:** We strongly suggest that you practice no more than 3 times per week. Players should not be kept for practice for more than 1-hour for division I, one and half hours for division II, and 2-hours for division III. There are locations available within the county. It is best to check with the recreation district or the school office if you are unsure where you can hold practices.

9) **PLAYING TIME:**

- This is a **RECREATION** program - ALL players in uniform **MUST** play a minimum of half of each of the first 3 quarters of each game. At or near the midpoint of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters, each coach will be allowed a 30-second officials time-out to enter their substitutes that will play for the remainder of each quarter. Only players who are injured, become ill or choose to remove themselves from play can be substituted for. Free substitution on allowable situations are permitted in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter only. Players who have fulfilled their playing time minimum may be substituted for by another player who has **ALREADY** fulfilled their minimum in that quarter.
- If disciplinary action that reduces playing time is deemed necessary, the following steps must be taken prior to the start of the contest:
  - ❖ Notify the parents
  - ❖ Notify PCRD
  - ❖ Notify the opposing team
  - ❖ Notify the officials

10) **SCHEDULING:**

- Payette County Recreation District will schedule all games.
- Coaches will be responsible for scheduling their own practices.

11) **EQUIPMENT (Issued to Head Coaches):**

- 5 regulation soccer balls
- 4 orange cones
- 1 goalie shirt

12) **SPORTSMANSHIP:**

Please have all members of your team (including coaches) congratulate each member of the opposing team for a well-played contest. Open displays of sportsmanship are paramount to the educational goals of this program. All coaches **MUST** strive to be a positive role model while displaying the importance of showing respect for your opponents.

**13) MERCY RULE:** In an effort to avoid lopsided scores and display sportsmanship, the following mercy rule will be in effect for all ages:

**\*\*6 Goal Lead:** The team behind in the score will begin play with a penalty kick.

**\*\*7-10 Goal Lead or more:** The team behind in the score will begin play with a penalty kick. The team leading will lose a player on the field for each time the leading team scores a goal and extends the lead.

**\*\*The leading team in any of these instances cannot return to full strength until a difference in score of 6 is reached.**

**\*\*The player who is removed should be the player that has scored the most goals.**

**\*\*COACHES SHOULD TAKE EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO ALLOW THEIR LESS-SKILLED PLAYERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE MORE ACTIVELY INVOLVED ON THE OFFENSIVE END OF THE FIELD IN THESE INSTANCES.**

**14) OFFICIALS:**

- Arrive a MINIMUM of 15 minutes prior to the start of your game.
- Must wear the PCRD official shirt that will be issued to you. You may wear shorts/pants and/or hats/visors, but they must be a solid dark color.
- Don't be afraid to blow your whistle. Explain your calls in a loud, clear voice. Use your hand signals. Do not be intimidated by the coach or the crowd.
- Call ALL infractions. Take the time to explain the violation to the player.
- If you are unable to do a game that you have accepted, please notify Ted at the Recreation District at 452-3542 so a replacement may be found.
- If you are officiating Division I or II, please explain the rules and be very kind. Remember, for a lot of the children this is their first experience. MAKE IT ENJOYABLE FOR THEM.
- Prior to the game:
  - ❖ Please read the PCRD soccer rules. If you have questions, ask!
  - ❖ Please attend the official's rule clinic. You are more likely to receive assignments if you do.
  - ❖ Introduce yourself and your partner to both coaches.
  - ❖ Check to ensure the players are wearing proper shoes and shin guards.
- During the game:
  - ❖ If you are in doubt about a rule interpretation, do not stop play to discuss the issue, tell the coach that you will refer the question to the Recreation District and they will contact the coach regarding the ruling. Write the question down on your score sheet or call.
  - ❖ Curb and penalize any unsportsmanlike conduct. Warn offenders. If they are cautioned again they should be removed from that game. Note the name of the offender on the back of your score sheet.
- After each game:
  - ❖ Fill out the score sheet completely and correctly and turn it in to the Field Supervisor or Recreation District Office. This is how YOU GET PAID. Fill out all the information requested. If you are confused regarding required information, ask! Do not assume it will be filled in by staff. Be sure to sign your score sheet and include the name of your partner.

The Following Exceptions To NFHS Rules Will Be Applied:

**A. Game Duration:**

DIVISION		MINUTES	HALF TIME
I	4 QUARTERS	8	5 MINUTES
II	4 QUARTERS	10	5 MINUTES
III	4 QUARTERS	12	5 MINUTES

**B. All games that end in a tie will remain a tie.**

**C. Penalty Kicks - Division I penalty kicks will be taken from the 10-yard mark. Division II & III will take penalty kicks from the 12-yard mark.**

**D. All Divisions – Coaches are encouraged to play an individual player for only one half (1/2) of each game at the goalie position. Substitutions for the goalie should only be made between quarters. Exceptions include illness, injury, or PLAYER choice.**

**E. One or two coaches may be on the field to assist players in Division I only. Coaches are STRONGLY encouraged to assist OFF of the playing field as much as possible. Please do not physically move players to a desired position.**

**F. The Basic Rules are as Follows:**

❖ **Coin toss**

- ❖ Prior to the game teams will decide jersey colors. Girls should be reminded to wear a shirt under their jersey in the event the jersey color needs to change.

❖ **Game Ball**

- ❖ Division I will use the size 3 ball
- ❖ Division II will use the size 4 ball
- ❖ Division III will use the size 5 ball

❖ **Team Size (All divisions will use goalies)**

- ❖ Division I ~ Grades 1 ~ 2 will play a maximum of 7 players at a time.
- ❖ Division II & III will play up to 11 players at a time.

❖ **Direct Free Kick (All Divisions):** If a player commits any of the following acts outside the penalty area, a direct free kick will be awarded to the opposing team, at the point of infraction:

- ❖ Kicking or trying to kick an opposing player (includes ejection).
- ❖ Tripping an opposing player with the feet or the body.
- ❖ Jumping on or at an opposing player. (Could lead to disqualification)
- ❖ Attacking an opposing player from the rear. (Could lead to disqualification)

- ❖ Punching or trying to punch an opposing player (includes ejection).
- ❖ Holding or pushing an opposing player with the hands or arms
- ❖ Carrying, hitting or throwing the ball with the hands or arms.
- ❖ EXCEPTION - The goalkeeper may touch the ball with the hands or arms within his own penalty area. DEFENDERS MUST BE 10 YARDS AWAY IF REQUESTED BY THE OFFENDED TEAM.
  
- ❖ **Slide Tackling**  
**Slide tackling in any division is ILLEGAL.** Players who slide tackle and do not make contact with an opponent or teammate will be warned. Play will be stopped, and a direct kick awarded if a player slide tackles and makes contact with an opponent or teammate. If the contact is severe enough the player may be removed for the remainder of the quarter/half/game at the official's discretion.
  
- ❖ **Scoring off a Kick**
  - ❖ The player taking a direct free kick can score with the kick. Another player must touch an indirect free kick before a legal goal can be awarded.
  
- ❖ **Removal from the Game**
  - ❖ Intentional pushing, shoving, rough play or deliberate kicking or striking an opponent may result in the player being warned, removed, or ejected. If it becomes necessary to warn the same player again, the player can be removed or ejected from the game.
  
- ❖ **Free Substitutions – 4<sup>th</sup> quarter only**
  - ❖ The clock does not stop for substitutions. Preferable times for substitutions are as follows:
    - Prior to a throw-in your favor.
    - Prior to a goal kick by either team.
    - After a goal by either team or breaks between periods.
  
- ❖ **Offsides**  
Offsides will be called in Division III games. Division II will be a warning and then called. Division I games will rarely have offsides called unless it is blatant. Officials should make every attempt to educate the participants on this rule.

Monday, July 28, 2025