

## Anne Arundel County Youth Soccer Rules

Revised January 2025

### ***SPORTSMANSHIP - BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE GAME !***

The following rules apply to all Anne Arundel County Spring/Fall youth soccer games and comply with the Recreation and Parks Department *Guidelines and Reference Manual*.

Anne Arundel County combines the laws of the game as outlined in; the National Federation High School (NFHS) soccer rules, and the Federal International Football Association (FIFA) rules. These are available at the following locations:

NFHS: <https://www.nfhs.org/activities-sports/soccer/>

FIFA: [FIFA Laws of the Game](#)

Throughout this document, references are made to “coaches”; this includes both the head coach and assistant coach(s) of each team (unless otherwise indicated.)

#### **1) TOBACCO, DRUG, AND ALCOHOL PROHIBITION**

- No drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products including e-cigarettes and/or vaporizers of any kind are permitted in or on any Board of Education-owned or leased buildings or grounds at any time.
- No drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products including e-cigarettes and/or vaporizers of any kind are permitted in or on any R&P buildings or grounds at any time. To include but not limited to:
  - restrooms, spectator and concession areas, dog parks, aquatic facilities, or playgrounds in any R&P recreational facility or park.
  - Tobacco use of any kind is prohibited within 100 yards of an organized activity at an R&P recreational facility or park.
  - An organized activity is defined as an event with a defined start and end time that is held in a designated or permitted area. Examples of organized activities include athletic events, concerts, etc.

#### **2) PARTICIPATION AND ELIGIBILITY**

- a) Girls may play in the boys' program, but boys may not compete in the girls' program.
- b) The age group a player can participate in is based on his/her birth date. Use the age matrix below when determining player eligibility. Players who played in the Fall 2024 should play with the same age level they played for in the fall.
  - The organization commissioner must send a waiver request to the RP Supervisor before the season starts.

	2023-F	2024-F	2025-F	2026-F	2027-F	
	2024-S	2025-S	2026-S	2027-S	2028-S	
2021						
2020					U8	
2019				U8	U9	
2018			U8	U9	U10	
2017		U8	U9	U10	U11	
2016	U8	U9	U10	U11	U12	
2015	U9	U10	U11	U12	U13	
2014	U10	U11	U12	U13	U14	
2013	U11	U12	U13	U14	U15	
2012	U12	U13	U14	U15	U16	
2011	U13	U14	U15	U16	U17	
2010	U14	U15	U16	U17	U18	
2009	U15	U16	U17	U18	U19	
2008	U16	U17	U18	U19		
2007	U17	U18	U19			
2006	U18	U19				
2005	U19					
2004						

- c) Public, private, parochial, and/or home-schooled high school (HS) students who play (participate and/or are on the roster) on a **fall** HS soccer team **are not eligible to play on an AACO team in the fall season.**
- HS students who play on a fall HS team **ARE** permitted to participate in the spring season.
  - Players who are **no longer in high school ARE NOT** permitted to play on a U18 team.
- d) **Players may only be on the roster of one team playing within the Anne Arundel County league during a season.** Players ARE permitted to be on the roster of an AACO team and a “travel” (EDP, CMSL, CMSA, NCSL, etc.) team in the same season.

3) **LEVELS OF PLAY** - Divisions will be established, by skill level, to accommodate all teams participating.

- a. **Elite - (High Placement)** is the “select” division and is intended primarily for travel teams who are interested in participating in the AACO season.
- Teams that won Division 1 in the prior season are also encouraged to participate in this division, as are any other teams interested in “testing the travel league waters” before moving to a select league.
  - This division will be formed only if at least 4 travel teams in an age group sign up to participate. Coaches are required to play each player on the team at least 25% of the total game time.
  - AACO with the assistance of AAYSA reserves the right to place teams in the “A” Division based on prior performance.
  - Leagues may be either purple, orange, or black

- b. **DIVISION 1/2 (High Placement)** is a highly competitive level of play. Division 1 teams consist of players with the highest skill set within each age grouping.
  - Teams are usually selected by tryouts or skill comparisons by the sponsoring community organizations.
  - Coaches are required to play each player on the team at least 25% of the total game time.
  - Leagues may be either purple, orange, or black
- c. **DIVISION 2/3 (Medium Placement)** is not as competitive as Division 1. Teams generally are a combination of experienced and recreational players.
  - Coaches are required to play each player on the team at least 50% of the total game time.
  - Leagues may be either yellow, red, blue, or green.
- d. **DIVISION 3/4/5 etc. (Low Placement)** are primarily designed **for purely recreational players** and should be less competitive.
  - Most teams are fielded by random assignment of players rather than tryouts or skill comparisons.
  - If an organization fields multiple teams per age group in these levels, it is recommended that the organization attempt to level the teams by skill and avoid the placement of two teams within the same division.
  - Coaches are required to play each player on the team at least 50% of the total game time.
  - Leagues may be either pink, gold, white brown, teal silver navy or burgundy.

4) **PLACEMENT OF TEAMS**

- a) **Team placement** is primarily based on;
  - Notes provided by the commissioner,
  - Standings from the previous spring and/or fall season.
  - Elite/High Division Leagues - the two highest placing teams are advised (though not required) to move up to Division A and the lowest placing teams are typically moved down to the medium division
  - Medium Division Leagues - the two highest teams can be moved up to the High/Elite division
  - All other divisions will be handled in the same manner.

Request for exceptions to this policy must be justified in writing at the time of team registration. **Note:** The addition or loss of teams in an age group can affect placement in such a way as to make it unreasonable and contradictory to the intent of the rule to place certain teams according to the above procedures.

  - **Divisions** - Every attempt will be made to create leagues with a minimum of 6 teams except for the lowest division in each age group (which will have at least 6 but no more than 13 teams in it.) Exceptions to this 6-team division rule may be made as needed and based on the teams registered in each age level. In these cases, the commissioners acknowledge that in **doing so they may end up with an unbalanced game schedule.**

- b) **Travel Players** - (i.e. – carded players)
- If a team is playing with a player(s) that also play on select teams (for example, EDP, CMMSL, CMSA, or NCSL) in the same season, the following division placement rules may apply. The AACO placement committee has the authority to make other exceptions to the rules above (and interpret these rules) depending on the individual circumstances:
    - **For all 7v7 age groups** (U8, U9, U10 and GU18),
      - **25%** carded players would place a team into the High Division depending upon the previous seasons' record.
      - **50%** or more carded players would place the team into Elite or High Division. Registration fees would be refunded if there is not a good fit, unless there is another solution appropriate.
    - **For all 9v9 and 11v11 age groups** (U11- U18)
      - **50% or more** carded players would place a team into **the High Division** ~~Division A or Division I~~ if there is no Division A depending upon the previous seasons record. Registration fees would be refunded if there is no Division A and placement is Division I is not a good fit, unless there is another solution appropriate.
- c) **ReSeeding** - All leagues will play two or three complete regular league games, weather permitting. The results of those games will be reviewed and team swaps/moves will be considered by RP/AAYSA placement team.
- In the Fall, depending on the number of games played initially and schedule restrictions, games scheduled for weeks 3 **or** 4 will be played as scheduled allowing ample time for movement and publishing of the moves.
  - **If swaps/moves are made the team being moved will assume the schedule of the team they have been swapped with.** AACRP will look at potential coaching conflicts but may not be able to accommodate de-conflicting. There are **NO** promises.
  - AACO will review proposed team swaps with the placement committee before they are finalized, taking into account all factors including (but not limited to): team Win/Loss record, goals for, and goals against, and opponents.
  - AACO reserves the right to move teams to different divisions to balance the level of competition across the age groups at any time during the season.

## 5) **PLAYER DOCUMENTATION**

- a. **Coaches' pledge MUST be completed by ALL coaches. This form can only be completed electronically upon signing into the [Team Sports Portal](#).**
- Teams will be given a warning the first time missing forms are discovered.
  - If organizations/teams do not come into compliance with forms, a team may be subject to forfeit each game played and/or coach suspended where documentation has not been completed.
  - If game(s) are forfeited the club is responsible for all fees due to the resulting forfeiture(s).
- b. All players must be properly rostered before participating in any game. **Team rosters must be entered into the [Team Sports Portal](#) before the start of the season.** Required information on the Portal roster is,
- Player's first and last name,

- Player DOB,
  - Jersey number,
  - Parent email - Portal allows parents to complete the player contract and concussion form electronically. If parents do not complete the electronic forms, then the coach/commissioner is responsible for getting the proper documentation to Recreation & Parks.
- c. **Player forms** (Player Contract and Concussion Form) should be completed in the **Team Sports Portal**. If the forms are completed manually and indicated as such by the team those forms should be submitted to AACRP supervisor by the first game. Failure to have player forms could result in forfeiture of game(s).
- d. **Teams are prohibited from fielding “guest players”**
- **A Guest player is any player not listed on the roster for the specific team in the Team Sports Portal**
- e. A coach, who permits a non-rostered individual to participate in a game, could be subject to forfeiting the game(s) the illegal player played in and may be subject to further disciplinary action.
- Roster Check/Protest should be submitted by the organization commissioner, to R&P Supervisor within 72 hours of the game in question.
- f. **Before each game, coaches should exchange rosters from the Coach’s Portal.**
- **A hard copy of the roster or a roster on the Portal should be presented.**
  - **Coaches should verify the number of rostered players and the number of players on site. A player who is not listed on the official roster may not play in a league game.**
  - **A coach’s failure to produce a roster at a game is not grounds to not play that game.**
    - **Coach should notify R&P staff, within 48 hours of the game when this occurs. Team Name, Age/Division, Date/Time/Location of game and Team without roster should be identified.**
    - **The games should be played under protest, officials and RP should be notified of the protest**
  - **Player names cannot be written onto a roster. However, jerseys numbers can be written onto a roster before the rosters are locked for the season. After the date for editing rosters commissioners should contact RP staff to adjust.**
  - **Duplicate jersey numbers are NOT permitted on AACO teams.**
  - **Teams without Rosters in the [Team Sports Portal](#) may be forced to forfeit the game reported and future games until that roster is entered and received by Recreation & Parks.**
- g. **Referees are not involved in the determination of player eligibility, unless the player in question has been disqualified and the official is aware of such disqualification.** In such a case, the referee will ask the player, (or disqualified coach), to leave before continuing play.
- h. Roster changes or additions will be allowed until the posted deadline within the **Team Sports Portal**. The deadline is generally just prior to the fourth week of the season. Changes or additions after the roster after the deadline/cutoff date must be submitted to R&P Sports Supervisor for approval.

- i. Roster maximums consist of the following number of players:
  - 7v7 - twelve (12) players
  - 9v9 - fifteen (15) players
  - 11v11 - eighteen (18) players
- **Any number of players over these amounts will require a written waiver prior to the first game of the season.** Over-sized roster waiver requests should be submitted to the R&P Sports Supervisor by that organization's Commissioner or President.

6) **ROSTER PROTEST AND PLAYER AGE VERIFICATION**

- a) **Roster Protest** should be sent to the AACRP Supervisor within 72 hours of the completed game.**by the organization commissioner.**
  - Documentation for protest should include:
    - Sport
    - Date / Time / Location Of game
    - Age / Division of game
    - Team Name and Coach of questionable roster
    - Team Name and Coach Name submitting the verification request
    - Clear identification of the player(s) in question
      - Players Name
      - Jersey Number
    - Or complete the [Roster Protest Form](#)
- b) Once received AACRP will begin verification of the questionable roster.
  - Staff will verify information entered into the Team Sports Portal
  - Teams may be asked to produce further documentation to verify a player's eligibility. This information should be presented to AACRP within 48 hours of the request.
- c) If a rostered player is found to be ineligible for a particular age group, the game(s) which that player can be identified as playing in could be forfeited. The ineligible player **must** be removed from the teams' roster before any future games are played.
- d) AACRP **will not** share copies of player information with organizations. However, we can share the result of the investigation with the organization's commissioner.
- e) **Missing or written in jersey numbers are not grounds for a Roster Protest. The jersey number is an aid to Recreation & Parks staff and game officials in player identification.**

7) **REGISTRATION AND FEES:**

- AACO League Fees must be paid before the team placement meeting, or the team may be dropped. All other fees must be paid before the start of the season.
  - AACO - Team league fees
  - CASRA – Officials Fee per team
  - AAYSA – Organizational fee
- Teams withdrawing after the season's placement meeting are not entitled to a refund of league fees.
- Teams may be added after the placement meeting **only in exceptional** circumstances as approved by the AACO. Late registrations will be considered based on league availability.
  - Teams added late MAY NOT play the same number of games that other teams do within a season.

- Out of County teams are required to pay an additional fee per team on top of the stated AACO registration fee. Once an organization participates in the league for 5 consecutive years the organization MAY be considered an in-county organization and should request such status from the Director of Recreation & Parks.
- Teams with outstanding balances from prior seasons may be denied the ability to play in current season.

## 8) **STANDINGS AND CHAMPIONSHIPS**

- a. Standings will be determined by awarding **two (2) points for a win and one (1) point for a tie for games played.**
- b. In the event of a tie, or head-to-head competition, then coin flip may be used to determine overall standings.
- c. In leagues where all teams do not play every team during league play, tie tiebreaker will be the best record among common opponents, and then a coin toss.
- d. The number of points earned, except when an unequal number of games have been played will determine divisional standings and placements. In that case, percentage of points earned out of the total possible points, which could have been earned will determine final placement after all other options have been exhausted.
- e. In the event of a tie between two or more teams, the teams will be declared co-champions.
- f. **In the Fall season**, within each Age Group and Division, the first-place team will receive 1 Team trophy awarded by AACO. In case of ties (see above), trophies will be awarded to both teams. There is no team trophy in the spring season.

## 9) **GAMES**

- a) The HOME TEAM is responsible for providing the game ball and is required to wear pinnies in cases where the opposing team's uniform colors and their team colors match. Teams can wear tie-dyed jerseys.
  - If the referee decides that the uniform colors, underlying garments, or number heights worn by a team are illegal, but not a safety issue and the team cannot correct the infraction, the game shall be played. The referee will notify the referee assignor of the infraction and the assignor will notify AACO.
- b) **Where possible, roster players and coaches should sit on one side of the field separated by the mid-field line. Supporters/spectators should sit on the opposite side of the field from their team and across from their team.**
- c) **The winning coach should enter the game score and referee count into the Team Sports Portal by midnight on the **Monday** following the game date.**
- d) If an error in the recorded game results and/or referee count is identified, it must be brought to the attention of AACO. The change will only be made after RP Staff verifies the requested correction with the opposing coaches and/or the official(s) at the game
  - No corrections to game results will be made after the Friday following the last game of the season.

- e) The outcome of a game cannot be challenged or protested based on whether scores should have been allowed, penalties should or should not have been awarded, interpretations of the rules, or for similar reasons. If it is determined that illegal players have been used in a game, the outcome of the game could be changed by R & P.
- f) The organization that is directly responsible for the field must ensure that the field is marked with an approved athletic field marking material, that corner markers are placed, that nets are installed, that the goals are properly anchored, and that the field is properly mowed and ready for safe play.
- g) If the game officials deem the field unsafe for play, the game will be canceled. Teams **CANNOT** play the game. R&P, at their discretion, will make every effort to reschedule games canceled due to weather. All teams are prohibited from rescheduling games themselves.
- h) A head or assistant coach who is at least 18 years old and has completed an Anne Arundel County R&P Background check must be present at each league game.
- The coaches from both teams (heads or assistants) should meet with the referee(s) before the start of the game to verify the length and number of periods, ball size, as well as age group, and local ground rules. **The officials should remind the coaches of their responsibility to control their players, all coaches, and spectators before, during, and after the game.**
- i) **Pre-Game Checks** - All players should be inspected by game officials before the start of play for adherence to the following safety and uniform rules.
- No jewelry (including watches, neck chains, bracelets, and earrings) may be worn. Hair scrunchies on the wrist are not allowed.
  - All team members, except the goalkeeper, must wear shirts, shorts, and socks, which are uniform and distinct from the opponents' uniforms.
  - The goalkeeper must wear a shirt that is distinct from both the opponents' and his/her own team's uniforms. However, the shirt does not need a number.
  - Both socks must be the same color, and single-color tie-dye is allowed.
  - A soft cap may be worn during cold weather.
  - Players wearing braces or other oral appliances are highly urged to wear protective, commercially available mouthpieces specifically designed for such purposes to cover those appliances.
  - Players wearing glasses are highly urged to have their glasses appropriately secured to the head using soft material.
  - All players are required to wear age and size-appropriate shin guards that have not been modified from the original manufactured state and are worn in the manner the manufacturer intended.
  - **Hair adornments may be worn but must be secured.**
  - Face paint and sprayed-on hair color are allowed so long as it is not considered offensive or objectionable by the officials.
  - Players may participate in games wearing a cast, but it must be sufficiently protected (with bubble wrap or foam or other padding at least ½ inch thick) to not injure another player.
  - Shoes must be worn by all players. No metal cleats are allowed and front cleats (for example, baseball shoes) or anything the referee considers dangerous will not be allowed.
  - A referee has the duty to exclude a player from participation until he or she



conforms to the safety standards. Any player, who missed the pre-game inspection or was not in compliance with the safety standards during the pre-game inspection, must report to the referee before entering the game. If a referee notices a safety standard infraction once the game starts, the violator will be instructed to leave the field of play when the ball next ceases to be in play unless there is a dangerous situation. No caution (Yellow Card) will be given to the player or to the coach. The removed player can be replaced. The removed player may return during a dead ball situation after reporting to the referee and demonstrating compliance.

- A player must be removed from the field if he/she is bleeding. Any wound must be adequately bandaged to prevent further exposure of blood before the player may return to a game. Any clothing or equipment contaminated with blood must be replaced. Players who exhibit signs of concussion (e.g., confusion, headache, or dizziness) are required to sit-out for the remainder of the game. The Coach must receive medical clearance in writing before allowing the player to return for another game.

10) **Forfeits**

- a) Off the field - If a team is unable to make a scheduled game (for any reason) and must forfeit the game, the coach is required to contact his/her organization's commissioner, the opposing team coach, and the AACO representative and notify them of the forfeiture. There are no refunds of referee fees for forfeitures.
- b) Any team not at the playing site within 15 minutes of the scheduled starting time of the game shall forfeit the contest. Referees should start the game clock at the scheduled start time. If a team shows before the 15 minutes is over the time passed will be deducted from the game time.
- c) Any team, that forfeits two games without notifying AACO within 24 hours of the scheduled game date/time, may be dropped from the league for the remainder of the season. There will be no refund of the team registration fee or referee fees.
- d) The results of all games played by the dropped team will be nullified, and the standings of that division will reflect byes for games that were originally scheduled for the dropped team.
  - A game shall be forfeited whenever one team fields fewer than seven (7) players for 11 vs. 11, six (6) players for 9 vs. 9, or fewer than five (5) for 7 vs. 7.
  - All forfeits will be recorded as a 1-0 decision.
- b) If a game is terminated by the officials as the result of the action(s) of either team, the game may be declared a forfeit loss to one or both teams, regardless of whether the first half has been completed.
- c) Lightning/Thunder Policy – To ensure player and spectator safety, all activities must come to a stop and the playing field cleared at the first sound of thunder or sign of lightning. Play may resume after a 30-minute delay after the last sound of thunder or sign of lightning. During the stoppage of play, the game clock continues to run, and the playing time is not made up when play resumes. Additionally, most high school fields are equipped with a lightning detection system that should be followed.
- d) The fall and Spring seasons are 8 games. Double-header weekends may be scheduled as needed depending on the number of teams within a division. If the schedule allows

the fall season may include a 9th game.

- e) No electronic or mechanical noisemakers (including whistles, horns, cow bells, air horns, etc.) are permitted at any game.
- f) There are currently no formal “slaughter” rules or policies, however, it is suggested that coaches take reasonable steps to keep game scores in check in cases where teams are obviously mismatched. These reasonable steps include (but are not limited to) flipping the team’s offense and defense, instituting a minimum number of passes before shooting, and shooting with the players’ “weak foot” only.

## 11) **OFFICIALS & SCHEDULING**

- a) **IF REFEREES DO NOT ARRIVE** by game time, the coaches (heads or assistants) are encouraged to use volunteer officials, but they are not required to do so.
  - **Not having referees is not a guarantee that the game will be rescheduled.**  
This is not grounds for protesting a game. However, the coaches must notify their respective commissioners that the appropriate number of referees did not show up. If volunteer officials are used, the following rights and responsibilities should be followed:
    - o The head coach should not volunteer unless he/she has a qualified assistant coach to run the team. The volunteer officials should follow the same code of conduct as would be expected from a “regular” referee.
      - Volunteer officials have the same responsibility to officiate the game to the best of their ability, following the rules outlined herein. However, since they would not have the equipment a normal referee would have, they are unable to issue yellow or red cards. **Therefore, if the volunteer referees feel at any time during the game that the play is moving outside of their control, they have the right to end the game and notify RP staff..**
    - o If game officials arrive after play has commenced, the game will be turned over to them at a stoppage of play. Elapsed time will NOT be repeated or replayed. The game will be continued or resumed from the point at which play was stopped.
- b) All season games will be played as scheduled unless postponed for such reasons as adverse weather, darkness, or unplayable fields.
  - Possible grounds for postponements are;
    - Conflicts with a specific single-date religious holiday;
    - Verified school-sponsored event that resulted in the team not having enough players to field a legal team
    - The Commissioner of the affected team must notify the sports supervisor of their situation as soon as it is known, but no later than 2 weeks prior to the scheduled game date. The AACO sports supervisor will evaluate requests for rescheduled games for reasons other than religious or school events on a case-by-case basis. All requests must be in the required format below:
      1. Club Name/Commissioner Name
      2. Gender/Age Group/Division/Team Name
      3. Original Game Date/Time/Location

4. Reason/Conflict and contact email/phone
  5. Opposing team name/club name.
- c) The AACO may postpone or cancel the entire schedule for a game day based on inclement weather up to two hours before the first game that day.
- Make-up games are considered mandatory and are treated like any other game. Organizations must be aware of this contingency and be prepared to play the scheduled make-up games.
  - Fall Season make-up games are scheduled on Sunday afternoon. Regular season games will be scheduled on Saturdays
  - Spring Season make-up games are scheduled on Saturdays. Regular season games will be scheduled on Sunday**s**.
  - If an alternate field must be used, it is up to the organization that maintains the field to notify both teams of the change, and to adequately prepare the field for play following the league and R&P rules.
- d) If the entire schedule is NOT postponed by R&P, the referees have authority, based on their judgment, to cancel any games based on the playability of the field. **Teams are not to play games on canceled fields** in the absence of the officially scheduled referees. Whether individually canceled games will or will not be made up will be determined by AACO based on field and referee availability and other factors.
- e) The Referee is responsible for starting the clock on time and coaches are responsible for assisting in doing that by not dawdling or delaying the ref during the pregame check in which happens up to 5 to 7 minutes before the game.
- f) **Canceled games (closed fields) will be displayed on the Team Sports portal and Recreation and Parks Athletics page as they become available.**

## 12) RULES OF PLAY

- **FIELD OF PLAY:** Reasonable variations in field dimensions are permitted; recommended field dimensions are shown in the table on the following page and in Attachment A.
  - The home team has the choice of side.
  - Team members and coaches are restricted to the coach's box. Parents and spectators are not allowed in this box.
  - No spectators may be positioned behind either end line, or from the end line to the top of the penalty box. **All spectators and players must stay THREE YARDS from the touchline and may not interfere with any replay or re-start. The coaches are expected to help in the enforcement of this margin-**
  - The organization supplying the field will be required to designate by painting the coach's box, which extends 10 YARDS on each side of the half and THREE YARDS from the touchline.
- **THE BALL:** The HOME TEAM must provide one suitable game ball of the appropriate size. These sizes are shown in the table on the following page.
- **GAME OFFICIALS:** The number of referees scheduled for each age group is shown in the table below. For U11 through U18, if only one referee shows up for a game, the game will be played, and volunteer line judges may be used. The referee will declare the game a forfeit if a team does not appear for a scheduled game within 15 minutes after the official start time. If the team shows up before the 15-minute grace period, time will be

subtracted from game time.

- **DELAYS:** If a game official determines that a coach, parent, or spectator unreasonably prolongs a discussion with the referees or refuses to leave the field when requested by the official, the game may then be suspended/terminated. A referee may terminate the game in the event of a grave disorder. However, the game will not be ruled a forfeit until the referee’s written report is reviewed by the sports supervisor.
- **DURATION OF THE GAME:** The referee will keep the official game clock. The duration of games and lengths of periods are shown in the table below and the game clock will be a “running clock” and NOT stopped for any situation; the intent is to keep games on their hourly (7v7 & 9v9) or hour-and-a-quarter (11v11) schedules.
  - **Games are considered complete if the first half of the game has played out.**
  - The clock will be stopped for on-field medical treatment, or when otherwise ordered by a referee.
  - No coach may call time out to “coach” the team or for any other situation.

AACO	AGE	PERIODS	PERIOD LENGTH	FIELD SIZE	BALL SIZE	# REFS
7 v 7	J08- U10	Two Halves	25 minutes	60x40 Yards	4	1
9 v 9	J11- U12			80x50 Yards		
11 v 11	U13- U18		30 minutes	110x60 Yards	5	2
7 v 7	Girls U18		30 minutes	80x50 Yards		

- **7 v 7 - GIRLS U18:** The goalkeeper may not punt the ball past midfield. In the event, the goalie punts the ball past the midfield line, the opposing team receives an indirect free kick at the point the ball passed the midfield line. A ball drop-kicked by the goalkeeper is not considered to be a punt even if it crosses the midfield line in the air.
- **SLIDE TACKLES:** To ensure safe play, **slide tackles are prohibited** for all 7v7 and 9v9 age groups but are allowed for all 11v11 age groups and GU18.
  - Slide tackles performed by 7v7 or 9v9 age groups will be treated **as a foul and may result in a direct kick or (if judged to be egregious enough) a yellow or red card.**
- **U8 and U9 any goal kicks,** or other kicks such as a direct kick for the defensive team that would be inside the penalty box line will be taken from the penalty box line as opposed to the goal box or place of infraction.
- **SUBSTITUTIONS:** Will be allowed as follows:

- 1) No limit on the number of substitutions or substitutes.
- 2) A player who has been substituted may return to the game.
- 3) Substitutions can be made, before a throw-in in your favor.
- 4) Before a throw-in for your opponent, **only if your opponent is making a substitution at that time.**
- 5) Before a goal kick by either team; after a goal; or at half time.

- **Substitutions MUST be made:**

- 1) After an injury, by either team when the referee stops play unless it is the goalkeeper.
- 2) Following a yellow card. The opposing team may also substitute.
- 3) Substitutions must be declared by the coach (“May I have the next substitution, please?”) to the referee closest to their side of the field, and only when players entering are ready and standing at the field center line. Players may enter the field upon acknowledgment and request of the referee at the next available situation noted in items 3a, b or C, or 4 above.

- **Heading Rules:** AACO is enforcing the heading policy from US Soccer. The modifications of the rules about bringing the indirect kick and drop ball out to the top of the penalty area is an AACO rules interpretation change.

- 1) For Ages U12 and above there is no restrictions
- 2) For Ages U11 and under - If a player purposely heads a ball, an indirect kick at the spot of the infraction will be awarded to the opposing team. If it was headed purposely in the penalty area, the ball will be placed at the top of the penalty area. (18-yard box)
- 3) If a player accidentally heads a ball, a drop ball will occur at the spot of the infraction. If a player accidentally heads a ball in the penalty area, the drop ball will occur at the top of the penalty area. (18-yard box)

### 13) **FOULS AND MISCONDUCT:**

- a) **Coaches may be cautioned or disqualified for failure to maintain reasonable and proper control over the behavior and actions of his/her team and their spectators (including parents, relatives, friends, etc.) when the referee deems that he is not working with the referee to help with the good order of the game.**
  - 1) **Referees are encouraged to issue a warning (yellow card) to the TEAM upon the first major infraction such as foul or derogatory language, threatening behavior or over-aggressive play from a player or spectator.**
  - 2) **After the TEAM warning has been issued the next major infraction should result in a RED Card and the player, coach, or spectator should be removed from the game field.**
  - 3) **Both the issuance of the Team Yellow and/or the individual red card should be reported to RP Supervisor within 24 hours of the game completion.**
- b) In the event of disruptive behavior by a spectator(s) the official may direct the offender(s) to leave the field of play. If they do not leave, the game may be halted by the official.
  - 1) Parents and spectators must be aware that the coach is responsible for their actions on the **sideline, BEFORE, DURING, and AFTER THE GAME.**
  - 2) **Halted games due to sideline behavior can be forfeited as deemed appropriate by Recreation & Parks.**
  - 3) It is entirely inappropriate for team staff, parents, or spectators to make loud, abusive, derogatory, or threatening comments to the referees, members of the

opposing team, their team staff, or their spectators.

- c) **COACH YELLOW/RED CARDS**
- 1) **For all RED cards, the coach is removed from that game and suspended for the next two (2) games.**
    - **Two yellow cards equal a red card.**
  - 2) If the infraction occurs at the end of one season, the coach will serve the suspension at the start of the next season.
  - 3) If the person coaches 2 or more teams, **the suspension is served at the coach's next 2 scheduled games.**
    - The coach will not participate in any game.
    - The coach must completely leave the field of play and cannot have any communication with the team during the suspension. If caught at the field by either the officials or the opposing team coaches, the sports supervisor or league board may impose additional disciplinary action as appropriate.
- d) **PLAYER RED CARDS** – If a player receives a red card, he/she is suspended for the remainder of the game and for the next scheduled game. He/she may not be on the sidelines during the suspended game or have any communication with the team.
- e) **PLAYER YELLOW CARDS** – If a player receives a Yellow Card, the player must leave the field until the next legal substitution opportunity. The coach may elect to play short-handed or send in a substitute. Players who have violated the safety rules must leave the game until the infraction is corrected, but neither the coach nor the player will receive a Yellow Card.
- f) **INCIDENT REPORTS** - RP has created a Google Sheet, [Sportsmanship Incident Report](#), for incidents that occur on the field. Please complete this form for Red Cards/Yellow Cards or incidents that present unsafe conditions.

## Attachment A – Field Dimensions and Specifications

The following are the main field dimensions and other specifications for the 3 field sizes utilized by the Anne Arundel Youth Soccer for the Spring and Fall seasons. While some flexibility in these field dimensions is allowed organizations should make every attempt to follow these as closely as is possible.

Dimension of Fields	7 (U8 – U10)	9v9 (U11, U12, GU18;	11v11 (U13, U14, BU18)
Length	180'	240'	360'
Width	120'	150'	210'
Goal Area / Box	36' W x 12' D	54' W x 18' D	60' W x 18' D
Penalty Area / Box	72' W x 36' D	96' W x 45' D	120' W x 54' D
Penalty Spot	12' from goal	18' from goal	24' from goal
Penalty Arc	30' from Spot	30' from Spot	30' from Spot
Center Circle (radius)	24'	30'	
Corner Arc (radius)	3'		
Coaching Area	60' (30' on either side of midfield line)		
Goal Size	6' H x 18' W	8' H x 18' W (GU18: 8' H x 24' W)	8' H x 24' W