

CITY OF ROCKVILLE
Department of Recreation and Parks
YOUTH SOCCER LEAGUE BY-LAWS
(Pre-K – 5th Grade)

I. OBJECTIVES

- A. To offer all Rockville youth, Ankle Biters through Bantams, the opportunity to participate and compete in a safe organized soccer league.
- B. To offer these participants the opportunity to learn fundamental soccer skills in a recreational setting.
- C. To convey the Recreation and Parks Department’s vision for fair play and good sportsmanship to the participants, coaches, and spectators.

II. LEAGUE SUPERVISOR

- A. The League shall operate under the rules that will be administered by the League Supervisor: Chuck Reese (240-314-8639) or email creese@rockvillemd.gov
- B. Duties of the League Supervisor will include the following:
 - 1. Consider soccer league rule changes.
 - 2. Make decisions concerning protests.
 - 3. Approve requests for player transfers.
 - 4. Determine player eligibility.
 - 5. General league administration.
 - 6. Serve as a voting member on conduct review board; to suspend any coach(es), player(s), or spectator(s) with reasonable cause.

III. RULES OF PLAY

- A. Play in the Youth Soccer League will be governed by the NFHS soccer rules except as amended by these by-laws.

B. Number of Players on a Team:

- 1. Teams and roster sizes for the various divisions are:

<u>Division</u>	<u>Ball Size</u>	<u>Team</u>	<u>Max. Roster Size *</u>
Ankle Biters	3	4 v 4	10
Tiny Kicks	3	4 v 4	10
Strikers	3	5 v 5	11
Pee Wees	3	7 v 7	14
Bantams	4	7 v 7*	17

*Teams exceeding the maximum must meet approval of the League Director.

- 2. Ankle Biters play 4 v 4 and Tiny Kicks play 4 v 4 (no goalie), Strikers play 5 v 5 and introduction to goal keeping (4 outfield players), Pee Wees play 7 v 7 and Bantams play 9 v 9. The Bantams Division is the only division that has playoffs.
- 3. If a player is injured or disqualified, play will continue unless the official deems play to be detrimental to the safety and welfare of the players.

4. All rostered players in attendance at league games must participate. Such participation/substitution will be governed as follows:
 - A. At period breaks
 - B. With the consent of the official:
 - (1) Prior to kick off.
 - (2) Prior to a goal-kick by either team
 - (3) Prior to a corner kick.
 - (4) On injury.
 - (5) Upon issuance of a yellow card
 - (6) Prior to a throw-in for the team in possession of the ball.
 - C. In the Rockville soccer program, all participants should play about half of every game.
 - D. All teams are encouraged to roster a minimum of two (2) females per team.
 - E. If any player(s) are on suspension, injured, or sick, notification of the player's status should be made to the field supervisor before the game.
 - F. **No slide tackling will be permitted. Any slide tackling could result in an ejection.**
 - G. **No heading the ball for Ankle Biters, Tiny Kicks, Strikers, and Pee Wee Divisions Only. If a player uses their head to touch the ball it will be treated as a "Hand Ball" and reset for gameplay. If the heading occurs within the penalty area, the referee shall move the ball outside the penalty area and award an indirect free kick to the opposing team.**
 - **Heading is allowed in the Bantam league only.**

C. **Starting the Game:**

1. All games will start on time as indicated on the schedule. If a team is not ready to play ten minutes after the scheduled game time, the official shall declare a forfeit. **(Bantams division only).**
2. The home team (listed on the right side of the schedule) will kick-off to start the game. The away team will select which side of the field they want to occupy to start the game.

D. Length of Game:

1. Games shall consist of four (4) ten (10) minute quarters (running time). A period of two-minute (120 seconds) MAXIMUM will be allowed between quarters. Half-time periods shall not exceed five (5) minutes.

E. Off-Side:

1. "Off-Sides" will not be called in the Ankle Bitters, Tiny Kicks, Strikers or Pee Wee league, but will be called in the Bantam league.

F. "Pass Back Rule"

1. City of Rockville youth soccer leagues will not abide by the pass back rule, wherein the goalie cannot pick up a ball passed back by his or her own teammate. **Goalies can pick up the ball passed back by their teammates with no penalty.**

G. Set-pieces:

1. Distance of opposition: for all set-pieces in the Strikers and Pee Wee league, the opposition will be five (5) yards away from the ball.
 2. Goal Kicks: for all goal kicks, neither team will be allowed in the ‘goalkeepers area’, and the opposing team should retreat an additional ten (10) yards from the goalkeeper’s area, which will give appropriate space to restart the game.
- H. Strikers Division Specialized Goalkeeper Rules:
1. Only the goalkeepers will be permitted in the inner goalkeeper box (Goal area). This will be for the safety reasons. Players are permitted in the outer goalkeeper box.

IV. ANKLE BITERS and TINY KICKS 4 V 4 - RULES OF THE GAME

Roster Size:	10 players maximum on team roster
Number of Players:	4 field players on the field per team. Games will be played 4 x 4 (No goalkeepers).
Playing Field:	100 feet x 70 feet; smaller goals will be placed in the center of the end line.
Duration of Game:	Four 10-minute quarters (1-minute rest between quarters, 5 minutes at the half).
Objective of the Game:	To learn basic skills with emphasis on having fun and being spontaneous.
Game Description:	Game begins with the ball being played from the centerline of team who is listed on the right-hand side of the schedule, the home team (no off-sides in the Ankle Biter and Tiny Kicks division).
New Ball Method:	The idea of the “New Ball Method” is to keep the flow of the game constant and increasing the number of ball touches by all the players. This method eliminates restarts such as throw-ins and corner kick and keeps the ball in play continuously. To implement the ‘new ball method’ we will need one parent or coach from each team to throw the balls in once they go out of bounds. When a ball goes out of bounds, the coach/parent will yell “new ball!” and throws a new one in. This method will only be played in the Ankle Biters and Tiny Kicks divisions.
Substitutions:	Any stoppage in play with referee’s permission.
Infringements:	Tripping, handling, etcetera, can be dealt with by awarding an indirect free kick (i.e., ball must be passed before a shot can be taken) with opposing team 3 yards away from the ball.

V. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY AND TEAM MEMBERSHIP

- A. All residents and non-residents are eligible for this program if the participants qualify for the age divisions listed below in section B.
- B. Players are assigned teams according to their grade and school district (Children must play in divisions corresponding with grade.)

*Age divisions-

- a. Ankle Bitters Division - youth in pre-kindergarten, 4/5 years old
 - b. Tiny Kicks Division - youth in kindergarten
 - c. Strikers – youth in first grade
 - d. Pee Wees Division - youth in second and third grades
 - e. Bantams Division – youth in fourth and fifth grades
- C. Players shall be officially signed on the roster of only one (1) team in the league.
 - D. The transfer of player(s) from any team in a league must be submitted in writing for approval by the League Supervisor.
 - 1. No transfer will be permitted after a team has played two (2) regular season games.
 - 2. General grounds for a transfer are as follows:
 - a. Players moving to a new geographic area.
 - b. Request to play on a newly established team in a player’s area when in the previous year that player had been playing outside his/her area.
 - 3. When a player changes schools without moving geographically and wants to play with his classmates. The closure of schools and the reassignment of youth to new schools should not affect the team’s unity from the previous year.
 - E. Any player who quits (not transferred from) a team or is removed from a team for disciplinary reasons by a coach must miss at least one (1) regular season game. The fact that a player is quitting or is dismissed from a team must be reported to the League Supervisor. After the one-game period, the League Supervisor may reassign the player unless circumstances warrant suspension of the player.

VI. GENERAL LEAGUE ADMINISTRATION

- A. Team Roster:
 - 1. Each coach must obtain and always keep a league roster approved by the League Supervisor.
 - 2. Teams or individuals with outstanding paperwork will not be able to participate in any league games.

- B. Uniforms:
1. Each player is required to wear a uniform consisting of a T-shirt and shorts or pants (sweatpants are preferred.) Team shirts are provided by the city and should always be worn as the outer layer of clothing (over jackets, etc.)
 2. Players are required to wear rubber-molded cleats.
 3. It is **mandatory** that all players wear shinguards for protection. Players not wearing shinguards **will not** be permitted to play.
- C. Equipment: All required game equipment will be provided by the Recreation and Parks Department.
1. Game balls will be provided by the city – Ankle Biter, Tiny Kicks, Strikers, and Pee Wees will use a size 3 ball.
 2. Goal post dimensions:
Ankle Bitters and Tiny Kicks-3’h x 4’w
Strikers- 5’h x 10’w x 3’d
Pee Wees- 6’h x12’w x 4’d
Bantams -6.5’h x 18’w
- D. Protests: Protests will be accepted by the League Supervisor as to player eligibility only. Teams using ineligible players may forfeit games. Coaches shall be responsible for the eligibility of their players.
- E. Officials: An official will be scheduled by the Recreation and Parks Department before each game.
- F. Inclement Weather
1. In some instances, the Sports Division will shut down all fields for weekday practices.
- *Decisions regarding cancellations of weekday practices due to inclement weather:** if fields are open according to the sports weather line, it will be at the discretion of the coach to cancel or hold practices. Please call the weather line before all practices at **240-314-5055** or visit www.rockvillemd.gov/rainoutline.
2. In the event of inclement weather on weekends, the game cancellation procedures will be as follows:
 - a. We will try to avoid weekend game cancellations; However, coaches are required to call the Recreation Weather Line, at 240-314-5055 or visit www.rockvillemd.gov/rainoutline in the event of inclement weather to receive information on the game status.
 - b. If the pre-recorded message does not specify cancellation of games or if you’re unable to get through to the Recreation Line, both teams should report to the playing field and a decision to play will be made by the site supervisor and/or official.

- G. Play-offs: There will be a post-season divisional tournament at the end of the season for the Bantams Division only to determine the league champions.

VII. RULES OF CONDUCT

A. Player Conduct

- 1. Players are expected to exhibit good sportsmanship before, during and after games and practices. Unsportsmanlike behavior includes, but is not limited to the following:
 - a. Disrespectfully addressing or physical contact of an official or gesturing in such a manner as to indicate resentment.
 - b. Using profanity.
 - c. Maliciously fouling another player.
 - d. Chanting or yelling at the opposing team. Chanting is any yelling in unison.
- 2. Players who exhibit unsportsmanlike behavior may be ejected from the game and based on the reports of the game official may be suspended from the team's next league game or for a period deemed fair by the League Supervisor.

B. Coach's Conduct

- 1. Coaches are expected to exhibit good sportsmanship before, during and after games and practices. Unsportsmanlike behavior includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Disrespectfully addressing an official.
 - b. Attempting to influence an official's decision.
 - c. Using profanity.
 - d. Disrespectfully addressing or baiting an opponent.
 - e. Objecting to an official's decision by leaving the bench area and/or charging the official. (Outside the coach/players box)
 - f. Inciting undesirable crowd reactions.
 - g. Receiving a red card during a game.
- 2. Coaches who exhibit unsportsmanlike behavior may be ejected from the game and based on the reports of the game officials may be suspended from the team's next league game or for a period deemed fair by the League Supervisor.

3. Spectator Conduct

1. No person connected to a team in any capacity, including team followers shall taunt, bait, insult or threaten an opponent or game official by language/gesture that is deemed profane, threatening, discriminatory, or in bad taste.
2. It is the responsibility of the coach to control his own behavior and that of his assistant(s) and spectators. No coach or spectator may enter the field without the official's permission.

D. Yellow/Red Cards

1. The cards are shown to the players who have committed a foul. The color of the card depends on the severity of the foul.
A yellow card is shown by the referee to indicate that a player has been cautioned.
A red card is shown by the referee to indicate that a player has been sent-off or expelled from the game, and must leave the field immediately
2. During one game a player can receive:
1 red card- the player is expelled from the game and no substitute player can come in.
1 yellow card- the player has been officially cautioned
2 yellows card, which is equivalent to 1 red card- the player must leave the game and no substitute player can come in.
3. Red cards are subject to the player being removed from the following game. This will be determined by the League Supervisor

E. Ejection's/Suspensions

1. If a player or coach is disqualified a second time during the season, he shall be suspended for the remainder of the season, or longer if deemed fair by the League Supervisor.
2. A player who does not serve his suspension shall be denied participation in the League for a period of not less than one year, and his team shall forfeit all games in which he/she participated.
3. A coach who knowingly uses a suspended or ineligible player may forfeit their coaching position, and the team shall forfeit all games in which the player participated.



**Department of Recreation and Parks
Youth Sports Division
League Expectations, Policies/Disciplinary Measures**

MISSION

The City of Rockville’s Youth Sports Division mission is to promote participation in a safe, recreational setting to encourage fun, physical activity, teamwork, and sportsmanship. Programs are designed to meet participant needs for physical activity, social interaction, mentorship through positive coaching, fundamental skill development, and instill lifelong values in each participant.

EXPECTATIONS

The City of Rockville provides league rules that dictate how the program is operated and governed. In addition to these rules, coaches are required to get fingerprinted by the City of Rockville, become NYSCA (National Youth Sports Coaches Association) certified and sign a *Coaches Code of Ethics Pledge*. Parents/Guardians are strongly encouraged to read and sign the *Parents Code of Ethics Pledge* and return to your coach for the season. Both pledges represent the requirements that coaches, and parents must embrace and use to serve as a role model to all participants.

The City of Rockville requires participants, coaches, spectators, and parents to exhibit good conduct and sportsmanship before, during, and after games and practices. Examples of good sportsmanship and conduct include but are not limited to:

- Fairness
- Ethics
- Respect
- Sense of fellowship
- Teamwork
- Positively encourage and congratulate all players and opponents as well as officials, city staff
- Understanding and promoting that this is a recreational league

POLICIES/DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

City of Rockville Sports Supervisors reserve the right to amend disciplinary measures below if investigation deems it necessary

THE TERM “INDIVIDUAL” INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING: MANAGER, CAPTAIN, PLAYER, OR SPECTATOR. A TEAM IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONDUCT OF ITS

INDIVIDUAL PLAYERS AND SPECTATORS. MISCONDUCT MAY RESULT IN PENALIZING AN INDIVIDUAL OR TEAM FROM ALL CITY OF ROCKVILLE LEAGUES.

- Coach/Player/Spectator/Parent/Guardian Ejection
 - If ejected from a league game, that individual will be suspended from the team's next played league game or for a period deemed fair by the league. If an individual is disqualified a second time during the season, he/she shall be suspended for the remainder of the season, or longer if deemed fair by the league.
- Ineligible Players
 - A coach who knowingly uses a suspended or ineligible player shall forfeit his/her coaching position, and the team shall forfeit all games in which the player participated.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct:
 - If ejected from a league game, that individual will be suspended from the team's next played league game or for a period deemed fair by the league. If an individual is disqualified a second time during the season, he/she shall be suspended for the remainder of the season, or longer if deemed fair by the league.
 - Unsportsmanlike conduct includes, but is not limited to:
 - Disrespectfully addressing an official or City Staff
 - Using profanity
 - Attempting to influence an official's decision
 - Baiting an opponent or obstructing his vision by waving hands near his eyes
 - Disrespectfully addressing or baiting an opponent and/or own team
 - Objecting to an official's decision by rising from the bench or using gestures or raising voice
 - Inciting undesirable crowd reactions.
- Before, during or after a game, anyone who strikes, shoves, pushes, bumps, or otherwise molests, harasses, or threatens anyone shall be suspended for at least 1 year from the date of the incident or longer if deemed necessary by the league. After the suspension is served, the individual can return to programs on a probationary period for a minimum of 1 year.