



Northern Virginia Soccer Club Policies and Operating Procedures

March 2023

The following policies, operating procedures, rules of competition and modifications to the Laws of the Game pertain to all in-house age groups. Modifications and operating procedures for the Suburban Friendship League (SFL) supersede the rules and modifications contained herein – see www.sflsoccer.org.

GENERAL:

The goal of the Northern Virginia Soccer Club (NVSC) is to provide an atmosphere where our kids can have fun, learn sportsmanship, and develop their soccer skills. NVSC is a nonprofit, volunteer soccer league with an instructional in-house program and a travel (select) program. NVSC has incorporated, where feasible, the recommendations from both US Youth Soccer Association (USYSA) and Virginia Youth Soccer Association (VYSA) into the following policies and procedures.

It is the responsibility of each member and each player to conduct him/herself in such a manner as to comply with all the policies and procedures of NVSC that have been developed in accordance with USYSA and VYSA guidance. Any member or player acting in any manner on or off the playing field which brings disrepute to NVSC or disrupts or impairs its operation shall be subject to reprimand, suspension, or expulsion upon a recommendation of the Board of Directors.

MATCH COMPETITION:

Coaches must avoid running up the score. In the event of an excessive goal differential (+5 or greater) in his/her team's favor, the coach shall be responsible for reporting to his/her Age Group Commissioner actions taken during the match to limit the differential. Violations of this rule may be viewed as not keeping with the spirit of the game and considered unsporting behavior. Penalties to a coach for disregard or repeated violations of this rule include, but are not limited to, suspension from the next match or dismissal as a coach.

RISK MANAGEMENT (KidSafe):

VYSA requires that all VYSA personnel and personnel of member clubs submit a KidSafe Disclosure Statement and Release form or electronic equivalent. No individual will be permitted to participate in VYSA activities if all information requested is not provided. All coaches, assistant coaches, trainers, and volunteers are required to fill out a KidSafe Form. Using the information provided on this form, a background check will be conducted in accordance with VYSA procedures.

Excerpt from VYSA Risk Management Policy

- A. Section 2 of US Youth Soccer Bylaw 214 requires US Youth Soccer and VYSA and all of its other State Associations to establish and monitor a risk management program within its jurisdiction. That program must include, as a minimum
 - 1) the use of employment/volunteer disclosure statements or electronic equivalent for all volunteers, employees, coaches, and program administrators; and
 - 2) the identification of a Risk Management Coordinator and an alternate for the organization.
- B. In addition to US Youth Soccer Bylaw 214 and in compliance with those bylaw requirements, VYSA affirms its commitment to the safety and well-being of its youngsters by approving a requirement that background checks be performed on VYSA personnel and the personnel of VYSA members.
- C. This policy applies to all VYSA personnel and personnel of VYSA members. “Personnel” includes, but is not limited to, all coaches, assistant coaches, trainers, other team officials, Board members, staff, and volunteers, whether paid or unpaid. The VYSA Board of Directors shall, in conjunction with the VYSA KidSafe/Risk Management Committee, determine any additional positions that may be subject to this policy.

Purpose

- A. In order to preserve the safety and welfare of youngsters involved in soccer and served by VYSA and its members, the purposes of this policy are to—
 - 1) obtain disclosure and release forms or electronic equivalent from, and perform background checks on, all VYSA personnel and personnel of VYSA members; and
 - 2) determine whether individuals who are VYSA personnel or personnel of VYSA members are qualified to provide services for VYSA or VYSA members.
- B. VYSA will not permit individuals to work with soccer youngsters if they have demonstrated conduct incompatible with services to, or care of, youngsters.

PRACTICES:

Each season NVSC has field permits available for designated parks/schools in Prince William County. If questioned by a PWC Park Ranger, please identify yourself as an NVSC team; we do not hand out individual permits to teams. Practice space will be assigned by the club based upon the practice requests submitted by coaches. Practice days and times are selected by the coaches to allow for up to two (2) times per week, 1 hour per time slot. Coaches may request additional space for scrimmages on a space available basis.

UNIFORMS

All players must wear uniforms that have been approved and provided by NVSC. In the younger age groups, U4-U6, uniforms are included within the cost of registration so players will receive a new uniform each season.

For the U7-U12 age groups, uniforms are purchased separately as needed. If a player **has an approved uniform in good condition, purchased from a previous season**, the player will not need to purchase a uniform in the current season. The currently approved uniform consists of the following items: blue jersey with NVSC logo on front, white jersey with NVSC logo on front, blue shorts and blue socks.

Uniforms cannot be altered in any way. For safety reasons, uniforms intentionally have no identifiable marks including names and numbers. Putting names or numbers on the uniforms is considered an alteration and if a player has such a uniform the player may be asked to purchase an additional "unaltered" uniform to play in a match.

All players must wear the complete uniform issued by NVSC and it is the referee's discretion to allow a player not in uniform to play in a match (this includes the wearing of unofficial socks, jerseys, etc...).

The intent of this policy is to present a united club image, to keep costs down for parents and players, and to simplify team administration.

GAME DAY SETUP/TAKEDOWN:

Both teams are to help with field set-up, take down and marking. The first two teams scheduled to play on each field are responsible for setting up the goals (if portable goals are used), nets, and flags as well as ensuring the field markings are visible. Marking equipment and paint are available in the sheds.

At the end of the day (after the last match of the day), both teams are responsible to take down the field, which includes: putting away the portable goals, nets and flags. Goals that breakdown should be put in their respective bag, as well as the nets. All equipment should be put away neatly in the appropriate shed.

Please arrive early to allow sufficient time to setup to ensure the match is started on time. The match schedules posted on the club website indicate which teams have setup/takedown responsibilities.

It is important to anchor all goals. "J" stakes are available in the equipment sheds – front and back. A minimum of two stakes per side, per goal shall be used. No matches shall be played in which a goal is not securely anchored to the ground.

RAIN DATES/POSTPONEMENTS:

The decision to open or close fields is made by the Prince William County Park Authority (PWCPA). Check the NVSC website for the best information related to field closure. Field closing pertains to game days and practice days. It is up to each coach to check the NVSC website to see if the fields are open or closed.

During weekdays, the PWCPA will provide information on the fields after 3 P.M. This will be posted on our web site. If the fields are closed, you cannot practice on the fields. The decision to close the fields on game days normally occurs by 7 AM.

If fields are closed at 7AM on game day, all matches are canceled **even** if the fields are re-opened at 12PM (noon). In the event of inclement weather, the field conditions will be reassessed by the PWCPA at 12PM (noon). If the fields are open at 7AM on game day and are then closed at 12PM (noon), the matches scheduled to start 12:00 PM or later are canceled. This information will be emailed to impacted teams via the coach. All house matches cancelled due to field closure will be rescheduled.

RESCHEDULING MATCHES:

No matches will be rescheduled except for rainouts. Saturday matches that have been rained out will be rescheduled for Sunday of the following weekend for the same time and field as originally scheduled. Matches cannot be rescheduled for convenience of the coaches or players. If a coach cannot attend a match, it is incumbent on the coach to request his/her assistant coach or parent to coach the match.

PLAYING TIME:

It is an NVSC policy that all players shall have equal playing time and/or at a minimum one half of the match. The primary consideration for playing less should only be as a direct request from the player or parent. Our goal is to maximize playing time for all players. Before a player is not allowed to play or playing time is limited for disciplinary reasons, the coach shall inform the Age Group Commissioner and the player's parents or guardian. Don't penalize a child for showing up late to practice, often in this area it can be difficult with traffic to show up on time. A time that is convenient to you may not be convenient to another. Arriving late for matches is a different matter

– in all instances, be FAIR. See Rules of Competition section e) for more detail.

ALL-STAR TEAMS:

To attend an All-Star Tournament, an NVSC team must submit an application (via email) to the NVSC Recreational Director for approval. Attending tournaments must not interfere with the NVSC Recreational schedule. Costs for attending tournaments are fully borne by the attending team. NVSC all-star teams must wear NVSC uniforms consistent with the club colors, sponsors, and logos. The NVSC Recreational League Uniform is an approved uniform for playing in an All-Star tournament. NVSC can contact our club sponsors for pricing and availability if All-Star uniforms are desired; uniform costs are the responsibility of the team attending. NVSC staff will provide player cards and signed rosters acknowledging the rostered players.

COACH AND PLAYER TRAINING:

NVSC provides its coaches with training through 1) the VYSA Joint Coaching Program, hosting coaches clinics for licenses, 2) hosting preseason/in season clinics (non-license) conducted by NVSC Staff for continuing coaching education, and 3) via the content available on the website NVSC Recreational Coaches Area (<http://novasc.org/resources/recreational-coaches-area>). These player and coach educational resources are open to any registered NVSC player or coach. House coaches may apply for financial support for a VYSA-sponsored license and requests will be reviewed by the NVSC Board on a case-by-case basis.

USE OF UNREGISTERED or PLAYERS REGISTERED ON TRAVEL:

Under no circumstances shall an NVSC coach knowingly use a player who is not registered with the club for the current season, nor use a player that has not signed the club waiver through the registration process. If there is a question as to whether a player has properly registered with NVSC, direct the question the appropriate Age Group Commissioner.

Roster checks may be performed periodically during the season. A registered player assigned to a recreational team may not play in a match in which the assigned team is not participating (example: Match being played by Team 1 & Team 2, player assigned to Team 3 may not play). Any exception to this policy must be coordinated and approved prior to the match by the Recreational Director.

It is an NVSC policy that players who are currently registered and are listed on an official roster for a VYSA designated travel team may not register and play on an NVSC recreational team concurrently during the season. This limitation does not preclude the recreational player from receiving authorization by the club to guest play with a designated travel team in accordance with the specific travel league's policy (CCL, EDP, NCSL, etc...).

RESTRICTIONS FOR HEADING THE BALL

These restrictions apply to all players, coaches, and member organizations registered with VYSA, as well as those who train with players, coaches, member organizations registered with VYSA.

Age Group U12 and Younger

- NVSC Coaches shall ensure that U12 and younger players do not engage in heading the ball during practices or play the ball with their head in matches. In all instances when the ball strikes a U12 or younger player in the head (any part of the body above the shoulder including the neck area) play must be stopped. Before restarting practice or a match, players should be reminded that they are not allowed to use their head to play the ball.

RULES OF COMPETITION:

All competition, except where noted, sanctioned by the Northern Virginia Soccer Club shall be conducted in accordance with the Laws of the Game authorized by the International Football Association Board (IFAB) and provided by the Fédération Internationale de Football Associations (FIFA) as modified by US Youth Soccer, Virginia Youth Soccer Association (VYSA) and NVSC for youth soccer:

A. General

- a) FIFA Laws of the Game are modified for house soccer and the Laws may change with each age group. Below is a summary of those modifications.
- b) All matches shall be played on the fields assigned by the NVSC Board of Directors. Each team must occupy opposite touchlines; the home team has the choice of side.
- c) **All Goals Must** be secured to the ground before the match begins. If you are unsure if the goal is properly secured, locate the field marshal for guidance.
- d) Unless otherwise approved by the Board of Directors, the following table reflects:
 - The ball size required for a match (Law II)
 - The number of players on the field, maximum and minimum, required for a match to start or continue (Law III)
 - Duration of the match (Law VII)

Age Group	Players		Ball	Duration	Breaks
	Max	Min			
U4/U5/U6 (COED)	4*	3	3	8 min quarters	10 min half / 5 min qtr
U7/U8	4*	3	3	10 min quarters	10 min half / 5 min qtr
U9/U10	7	5	4	25 min halves	10 min half
U11/U12	9	6	4	30 min halves	10 min half
* The Max/Min number of players includes the goal keeper – No goal keeper for U4 thru U8					

- e) All eligible players shall play a minimum (or the equivalent) of one half of the match; However, no player shall play more than three-fourth (3/4) of a match unless all other players will have played at least three-fourth (3/4) of the match; unless there is an injury, disciplinary issue, or a request from a player or a parent to play less.
- f) Referees and Coaches are required to work together to control player and spectator disruptions.
- g) For the U4 – U8 age groups, two coaches will be allowed on the field when the ball is in play. Coaches will work together to ensure player safety is not compromised while maximizing player participation and enjoyment of the game.
- h) During the match everyone on the touchlines (sidelines) to include coaches (except for U4 – U8 coaches), spectators, players and substituted players shall:
 - Not be closer than two yards from the touchlines (sidelines)
 - Not be allowed goal side of the 18-yard line (must remain between the penalty areas)
 - Be prohibited from being behind the goals and goal line
- i) Sportsmanship rule: If the goal differential is more than 4 goals (+5 goal differential), the leading coach must adjust play to limit goal disparity (e.g. reduce opportunities to attack the opponents goal by successfully passing to teammates multiple times before entering attacking half of the field, move players to different positions, reduce number of players on the field, etc...). It is an NVSC policy that the leading coach has the responsibility to make adjustments to help prevent the differential from increasing and running up the score. Referees should remind the coach of this policy anytime the goal differential becomes +5 and each time it increases above +5.

- j) Players - no jewelry or uncovered hard casts are permitted; shin-guards must be worn under the stockings and covered; shoes may not have toe cleats
- k) All age groups will reduce to equate to no fewer than the minimum number of players for a match. Even when players are officially disqualified, all matches will be played with an equal number of players per team (a coach with a player receiving a red card (Send Off) may substitute for that player during the match, the match will continue with no fewer than the minimum number of players, even if a player is disqualified)
- l) Substitutions will be unlimited for all age groups and shall be done in accordance with the following:
 - o For U4 – U8 age groups substitutions may occur at any time.
 - o For U9 – U12, substitutions may occur at any stoppage and must be made at midfield and with the consent of the referee.
- m) In the U4 through U8 age groups, there will be no goal keepers. For U7 and U8 age groups, players may be designated as defenders, but may not remain in the goal area when the ball is in the opponents' half of the field.
- n) No slide tackles are allowed for age groups U10 and younger.
- o) For the U9-U10 age groups, the field will have an additional marking – a Build Out Line. The build out lines should be equidistant between the penalty area line and halfway line.
 - o When the goalkeeper has possession of the ball (by hand), either during play (from the opponent) or from a goal kick, the opposing team must move behind the build out line until the ball is put into play
 - o Once the opposing team is behind the build out line, the goalkeeper can pass, throw or roll the ball into play (punting is not allowed).
 - o The goalkeeper should, but is not required to, wait until all opponents have retreated behind the BOL before putting the ball back into play. However, the goalkeeper can put the ball into play sooner but he or she does so accepting the positioning of the opponents and the consequences of how play resumes
 - o After the ball is put into play by the goalkeeper, the opposing team can cross the build out line and play resumes as normal
 - o If a goalkeeper punts the ball, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense - If the punt 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
 - o The build out line will also be used to denote where offside offenses can be called (no longer halfway line). Players cannot be penalized for an offside offense between the halfway line and the build out line - Players can be penalized for an offside offense between the build out line and goal line
- p) For U12 and younger, whenever the ball strikes a player in the head, play is stopped. The proper restart depends upon whether the player deliberately played the ball with his or her head. If deliberate, the proper restart is an indirect free kick to the opposing team. If this occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred. If the play by the head is deemed inadvertent, then the proper restart is a dropped ball.

B. U4 – U6 Modifications – Summary (see Full Modifications below for more detail)

Law 2	The Ball: Size three (3)
Law 3	Players: 4 max - 3 min (no goal keeper) Substitutions – See general information paragraph (l) above
Law 4	Players Equipment: Shall consist of a jersey, shorts, stockings, soccer cleats or turf shoes and shin-guards. Shin-guards are mandatory. Shoes with toe cleats are not allowed to be worn (typically found on softball or baseball type cleats). The toe cleats may not be cut off in an effort to circumvent this Law. Without exception, no jewelry is allowed to be worn. No hard casts are allowed. No dangerous equipment is allowed.
Law 5 & 6	Referee and Assistant Referee: No referees are provided for these age groups
Law 7	Duration: 8 minute quarters (5 min quarter breaks following 1 st and 3 rd quarter, and 10 min half)
Law 8	Start of Play: Kick off is indirect (may not score from kickoff without touching another player first).
Law 9	Ball in and out of Play: Restart of play after ball crosses the touchline (sideline) for U4 and U5 is a kick in. For U6 matches throw-ins are allowed.
Law 10	Method of Scoring: FIFA Law applies – no modification
Law 11	Offside: None
Law 12	Misconduct: Normal fouls are not called unless play is dangerous or reckless.
Law 13 & 14	Free and Penalty Kicks: No free kicks for U4 and U5 age groups. For U6 age group, all free kicks are indirect. No penalty kicks for these age groups.
Law 15	Throw-In: For U6 age groups throw-ins are allowed. Quick restarts, no correction for improper throw-ins. No throw-ins for U4 and U5 age groups – Kick-ins or coach rolling in
Law 16 & 17	Goal and Corner Kicks: Return the ball quickly back into play. Ball may be kicked by player or rolled by coach back into play.
General Notes	Slide tackles are not allowed for these age groups. Players are not allowed to play the ball with their head. Coaches will work together to ensure player safety is not compromised while maximizing player participation and enjoyment of the game.

C. U7 & U8 Modifications – Summary (see Full Modifications below for more detail)

Law 2	The Ball: Size three (3)
Law 3	Players: 4 max - 3 min (no goal keeper) Substitutions – See general information paragraph (l) above

Law 4	Players Equipment: Shall consist of a jersey, shorts, stockings, soccer cleats or turf shoes and shin-guards. Shin-guards are mandatory. Shoes with toe cleats are not allowed to be worn (typically found on softball or baseball type cleats). The toe cleats may not be cut off in an effort to circumvent this Law. Without exception, no jewelry is allowed to be worn. No hard casts are allowed. No dangerous equipment is allowed.
Law 5 & 6	Referee and Assistant Referee: No referees are provided for these age groups
Law 7	Duration: 10 minute quarters (5 min quarter breaks following 1 st and 3 rd quarter, and 10 min half)
Law 8	Start of Play: Kick off is indirect (may not score from kickoff without touching another player first). Ball must clearly move to be in play and can be kicked in any direction. Kicker may not touch the ball twice.
Law 9 & 10	FIFA Law applies – no modification
Law 11	Offside: None
Law 12	Misconduct: Normal fouls are not called unless play is dangerous or reckless.
Law 13 & 14	Free and Penalty Kicks: All free kicks are indirect. There are no penalty kicks, an indirect free kick shall be awarded in place of a penalty kick.
Law 15	Throw-In: Both feet must be on or behind the touchline with both feet touching the ground and the ball thrown over the head. Retries with instruction are to be given.
Law 16 & 17	FIFA Law applies – no modification
General Notes	All opponents shall remain four 10 feet from the ball until it is in play for all restarts. Slide tackles are not allowed for these age groups. Players are not allowed to play the ball with their head. Coaches will work together to ensure player safety is not compromised while maximizing player participation and enjoyment of the game.

D. U9 & U10 Modifications – Summary (see Full Modifications below for more detail)

Law 2	The Ball: Size four (4)
Law 3	Players: 7 max - 5 min Substitutions – See general information paragraph (1) above
Law 4	Players Equipment: Shall consist of a jersey, shorts, stockings, soccer cleats or turf shoes and shin-guards. Shin-guards are mandatory. Shoes with toe cleats are not allowed to be worn (typically found on softball or baseball type cleats). The toe cleats may not be cut off in an effort to circumvent this Law. Without exception, no jewelry is allowed to be worn. No hard casts are allowed. No dangerous equipment is allowed.

Law 5 & 6	Referee: Center referee – NVSC may use assistant referees
Law 7	Duration: 25 min halves with 10 min halftime
Law 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 & 17	FIFA Law applies – no modification, except as describe above in Section A. or in General Notes below.
General Notes	All opponents shall remain eight (8) yards from the ball until it is in play for all free kicks, corner kicks, and kick offs. Build out lines will be in use for goal kicks and goal keeper distributions. Goal keeper may not punt the ball. Slide tackles are not allowed for these age groups. Players are not allowed to play the ball with their head. Female players are allowed to place their arms across their chest for protection. The referee has the final decision as to whether the action was legally executed.

E. U11 & U12 Modifications – Summary (see Full Modifications below for more detail)

Law 2	The Ball: Size four (4)
Law 3	Players: 9 max - 6 min Substitutions – See general information paragraph (l) above
Law 4	Players Equipment: Shall consist of a jersey, shorts, stockings, soccer cleats or turf shoes and shin-guards. Shin-guards are mandatory. Shoes with toe cleats are not allowed to be worn (typically found on softball or baseball type cleats). The toe cleats may not be cut off in an effort to circumvent this Law. Without exception, no jewelry is allowed to be worn. No hard casts are allowed. No dangerous equipment is allowed.
Law 5 & 6	Referee: Center referee – NVSC may use assistant referees
Law 7	Duration: 30 min halves with 10 min halftime
Law 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 & 17	FIFA Law applies – no modification, except as describe above in Section A. or in General Notes below.
General Notes	Players are not allowed to play the ball with their head. Female players are allowed to place their arms across their chest for protection. The referee has the final decision as to whether the action was legally executed.

F. Laws of the Game as modified by NVSC (Full Modifications):

Law 1 - The Field of Play

- A. All matches shall be played on the fields assigned by the NVSC Board of Directors.
- B. Each team must occupy opposite touchlines; the Home Team has the choice of side.
- C. **All Goals Must** be secured to the ground before the match begins.
- D. **Build out lines** will be used for U9 – U10 age groups – see NVSC Rules of Competition Section (A).

Law 2 - The Ball

See NVSC Rules of Competition Section (A) for appropriate age group

Law 3 - The Players

- A. See NVSC Rules of Competition Section (A) for appropriate number of players for each age group
- B. All age groups will reduce to equate to no fewer than the minimum number of players for a match. Even when players are officially disqualified, all matches will be played with an equal number of players per team on the field (a coach with a player receiving a red card (Send Off) may substitute for that player during the match, the match will continue with no fewer than the minimum number of players, even if a player is disqualified)
- C. The number of players listed in the Maximum and Minimum Table includes the goalkeeper, except in the U4 – U8 age groups where there are no goalkeepers.
- D. If either team lacks the minimum number of players, it is recommended that there be no forfeits and that the players be divided evenly between the teams and the match played if there are a sufficient number of players to meet the minimum required to start the match.
- E. Coaches will work together to ensure player safety is not compromised while maximizing player participation and enjoyment of the game.
- F. Substitutions will be unlimited for all age groups and shall be done in accordance with the following:
 - a. For U4 – U8 age groups substitutions may occur at any time.
 - b. For U9 – U12, substitutions may occur at any stoppage and must be made at midfield and with the consent of the referee.

Law 4 - The Players' Equipment

- A. A player's uniform shall consist of a jersey (shirt), shorts, stockings, soccer cleats or turf shoes, and shin-guards. Shin-guards are mandatory and shall be worn inside of the stockings. Long pants and sweatshirts are permitted, provided that the team jersey is worn on the outside and that. Hoods attached to sweatshirts may not be worn while on the field of play and should be tucked under the jersey.
- B. It is recommended that all players wear legal, molded-sole soccer shoes or turf shoes. Metal or metal-tipped cleats are not allowed. Shoes with toe cleats are not allowed to be worn (typically found on softball or baseball type cleats). The toe cleats may not be cut off in an effort to circumvent this Law.
- C. Illegal equipment is not to be worn. If an article of equipment is considered dangerous or confusing by the referee (or by the coaches for U4 – U8 age groups), that article must be removed or covered before play can start or continue. Hard casts may be wrapped with a soft cushioning material (bubble wrap) to reduce the likelihood of injury to another player. It will be at the Referee's discretion (or the coaches for U4 – U8 age groups) to determine the safety and suitability of player equipment including the wearing of an orthopedic cast or hard brace.
- D. Jewelry of any type is NOT ALLOWED to be worn (including earrings). Medical bracelets or necklaces may be worn, but must be taped to the body.
- E. No metal, plastic, wood or other hard pins, barrettes or ponytail holders may be worn. Hair bands with hard plastic balls are also illegal.

The use of elastic bands and soft headbands are allowed though they may not be worn around the neck or warped around the wrist.

- F. All referee (and coaches for U4 – U8 age groups) decisions are final regarding player equipment.

Law 5 - The Referee

There are no referees for the U4 – U8 age groups.

Law 6 - The Other Match Officials (see FIFA Laws)

NVSC does not use AR's for U9 – U12 matches

Law 7 - The Duration of the Match

- A. See NVSC Rules of Competition Section (A) for appropriate age group
- B. The Referee (or coaches for U4 – U8 age groups) shall keep the official time
- C. The match shall consist of two equal halves or four equal quarters
- D. For matches that do not start on time or have delays (e.g. team doesn't have the minimum number of players, severe weather, injury, etc...) the following applies:
 - If necessary, referees should shorten the match duration to fit within the scheduled time slot and let the coaches know that the duration will be reduced.
 - If there is not sufficient time to start or restart the match and play at least half of the match (e.g. match duration is 60 minutes, sufficient time must remain to play at least 30 minutes) within the scheduled time slot, then the match should not be started/restarted.

Law 8 - The Start and Restart of Play

- A. A coin toss at the beginning of the match shall determine who defends which goal. The visiting team shall call the coin toss. The team winning the coin toss chooses which goal to defend in the first half. The opponent shall kick-off. At the start of the second half, the opposite team shall kick-off.
- B. All age groups shall change ends of the field at the start of the second half.
- C. **No match shall start or continue** if the goals are not secured to the ground.
- D. Kick-off: Ball must clearly move to be in play and can be kicked in any direction.

Law 9 - The Ball in and Out of Play (see FIFA Laws)

- A. For U4 and U5 age groups, when the ball crosses the touch lines play will be restarted with a kick in by a member of the opposing team of the player who last touched the ball.
- B. For U6 players throw-ins are allowed (see Law 15). Optionally either coach may elect to roll the ball back into play. Players and coaches are encouraged to restart play quickly and focus on keeping the play and match moving
- C. U7 and older age groups will follow FIFA Laws.

Law 10 - Determining the Outcome of a Match (see FIFA Laws)

Law 11 – Offside (see FIFA Laws)

This Law only applies to U9 and older age groups. U8 and younger age groups do not call offside.

Law 12 - Fouls and Misconduct

- A. Official cautions (yellow card) shall be in accordance with FIFA Laws

- B. Sending-Off (red card) of player(s), coaches and bench personnel shall be in accordance with FIFA Laws with the additional penalty that anyone who is disqualified, is not only prohibited from participating in the rest of the match in which the disqualification occurred, but they are also prohibited from participating in the next scheduled match.
- C. All cautions and sending-offs shall be reported to the Referee Assignor and the Age Group Commissioner. The NVSC R&D Committee may review the incident and may also determine if any additional action is required.
- D. Youth Players: A youth player that is sent off may remain on the sideline with their team to watch the remainder of the match unless, in the referee's opinion, doing so is disruptive to the match.
- E. Coaches, Parents, and Spectators: A coach, parent or spectator who is ejected must leave the vicinity of the playing fields immediately. The match will be suspended until the referee determines the individual has left the vicinity of the field. If the individual refuses to leave the field, the referee may terminate the match and a loss will be recorded for the offending team.
- F. The NVSC R&D Committee may review the accumulation of yellow and red cards throughout the season to determine if any additional action is required.
- G. Referees are instructed to deal with spectator problems by engaging the coach to assist in control of the sideline. Spectators considered to be causing problems will be asked to leave the area.
- H. For U4 – U8 age groups, normal fouls are not called unless play is dangerous or reckless. Coaches are asked to deal with spectator problems. Spectators considered to be causing problems should be asked to leave the area. If they won't leave the area, report it to the age group commissioner.

Law 13 - Free Kicks (see FIFA Laws)

- A. No free kicks for the U4 and U5 age groups.
- B. All free kicks for the U6 - U8 age groups shall be indirect free kicks, including the kick-off. Opponents should remain at least 10 feet from the ball until it is in play. For Free Kicks within the penalty area, play shall restart with a free-kick at a point on the penalty-area line closest to where the infraction occurred.
- C. For U9 – U10 age groups all opponents shall remain eight (8) yards from the ball until it is in play.

Law 14 - The Penalty Kick

- A. There are no penalty kicks for U4 – U8 age groups.
- B. For U6 – U8 age groups, an indirect free kick will be awarded in place of a penalty kick. Play shall restart with an indirect free-kick at a point on the penalty-area line closest to where the infraction occurred.
- C. U9 and older age groups will follow FIFA Laws.

Law 15 - The Throw-In

- A. There are no throw-ins for the U4 and U5 age groups. Kick-ins or the coach rolling in a ball shall replace throw-ins for these age groups.
- B. For U6 age group throw-ins are allowed. Players should be encouraged to quickly restart play and no correction should be given for improper throw-ins.

- C. For U7 and U8 age groups, when a player commits a foul on the throw-in, the coach shall explain the proper method of a throw-in and allow the player to throw in again.
- D. U9 and older age groups will follow FIFA Laws.

Law 16 - The Goal Kick (see FIFA Laws)

- A. For U4 – U6 age groups, when balls cross the end line it is recommended coaches place the original or another ball quickly back into play. Optionally coaches may elect to have a player quickly kick the ball from the end line or penalty area (if marked) back into play.
- B. For U8 and younger age groups– opponents shall remain at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play
- C. For U9 and U10 age groups – the opposing team must move behind the build out line until the ball is put into play. After the ball is put into play by the goalkeeper, the opposing team can cross the build out line and play resumes as normal
- D. U11 and older age groups will follow FIFA Laws.

Law 17 - The Corner Kick (see FIFA Laws)

- A. For U4 – U6 age groups, when balls cross the end line and are last touched by a player of the defending team for that end line, the ball may be kicked back into play from the nearest corner by a player of the opposing team or another ball rolled in by a coach.
- B. For U8 and younger age groups – opponents shall remain at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play
- C. For U09 and U10 age groups– opponents shall remain at least eight (8) yards from the ball until it is in play.
- D. U11 and older age groups will follow FIFA Laws.

General Notes for Referees and Coaches

- A. For U4 – U6 age groups, it is important to maintain the flow of play in these age groups and provide more opportunities for all players to have touches on the ball. Kick-ins, throw-ins, and coaches restarting of play should all be done quickly.
- B. For U7 and U8 age groups, opponents shall remain at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play for all free kicks, goal kicks or corner kicks.
- C. For U9 and U10 age groups, opponents shall remain at least eight (8) yards from the ball until it is in play for all free kicks, kick offs or corner kicks. Build out lines will be in use for goal kicks and goal keeper distributions. Goal keeper may not punt the ball.
- D. For U4 – U12 age groups, players are not allowed to play the ball with their head.
- E. For U9 – U12 girls' age group, players are allowed to place their arms across their chest for protection. The referee has the final decision as to whether the action was legally executed.