



Arlington Aces House League Coaches' Manual

Welcome to the Arlington Aces! Whether you have been volunteering for years or are new this season, thank you for your time and energy.

Everyone involved in this program; coaches, referees, parents, and AHPD staff, should strive to uphold the basic tenets included in the “**Statement of Philosophy**”. As adults, we are role models for the young people in our community and are responsible for leading by example on and off the soccer field.

If you have questions about the program or need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us, and have a great season!

Contact Information

- **Kevin Wollnik, Recreation Supervisor, 847.506.2734 or kwollnik@ahpd.org**
- **Weather hotline: 847.577.3003, extension 5**, or check the Aces homepage at ahpd.org.

AHPD Youth Sports Program Objectives

The Park District has identified the following objectives that the youth sports programs will strive to achieve:

- Programs will be designed to promote positive learning experiences that enhance athletes to develop physically, psychologically and socially.
- Programs will emphasize fun, developing new skills, fair play and sportsmanship.
- Programs will be conducted with the utmost safety of the participants and spectators in mind.
- Programs will be designed to promote positive self-esteem and self-confidence of the participants.
- Programs will be comprehensive in nature and offer a spectrum of ability levels that match resources available. In the event that resources or facilities are limited, priority emphasis will be placed on accommodating the needs and interest of the greater majority of the users.

Programs will first serve the need of the Arlington Heights Park District residents before branching out to non-residents.

Non-residents are encouraged and invited to participate if openings still exist after the residents have been served.

Some of the youth sports programs provided involve competition either as a team or on an individual level. It is the desire of the Park Board of Commissioners to keep the intensity of the competition at a recreational level, which stresses fun, learning and the concept that everyone plays.

Game Conduct and General Information

- Be ready to play on time. Referees start games promptly at game time whether teams are ready to play or not.
- At least one coach must be present per field throughout the game. If a coach receives a red card, leaves the field, and there is not another coach present to take his or her place, the coach-less team forfeits.
- If no referee shows up for a scheduled game, two opposing coaches should referee the game and email Kevin Wollnik.
- No one may sit or stand behind the goal line. Coaches may not coach on the sideline adjacent to the penalty area.
- In all leagues, players and coaches sit on one side of the field and parents and spectators sit on the opposite side of the field, opposite their team bench. Players, coaches, and spectators must remain a minimum of five yards from the center line and ten feet from the side line.

- Both teams should line up and high five at the conclusion of the game. Any acts of unsporting conduct at this time will be dealt with harshly by the AHPD. This applies to players, coaches, and spectators.
- Game will be conducted under USSF and AASC rules.
- No coach, player, or spectator may enter the field of play during the game without the permission of the referee: the penalty is a yellow card. If a player is injured, the referee will whistle a suspension of play when appropriate and wave the injured player's coach onto the field.
- In all divisions, when an injury leads to a stoppage in play and a coach tends to a player on the field, the injured player must come off the field. If a referee checks an injured player and feels he or she may continue playing, the player may later re-enter the game. If the player leaves the field with a suspected head injury, he or she may not return for the remainder of the game.
- In grades 5/6 and 7/8, play will not stop for an injured player until the next whistle or unless the referees believe the injury to be serious enough to stop play.

Rules:

Small-Sided Soccer: 4v4 (Kindergarten) and 5v5 (1st Grade)

- **Game duration:** Kindergarten will play one 4v4 game with four 8-minute quarters. First grade plays four 10-minute quarters. Quarters 1 & 2 and 3 & 4 are separated by a 2-minute break. Quarters 2 & 3 are separated by a 5-minute break.
- **Number of players on the field:** 4 max / 3 min on each field for Kindergarten. 5 max / 3 min for first grade.
- **Goalkeepers:** None for Kindergarten. First grade has a goalkeeper.
- **Scoring:** In Kindergarten, a goal may only be scored from the attacking half of the field. If any player kicks the ball from the defending half and it goes into the opposite side goal untouched, no goal is awarded. In first grade, a goal may be scored from anywhere on the field.
- **Substitution:** Allowed at any point there is a stoppage in play (kick-in, goal scored, etc.)
- **Offside:** The Offside Rule is not enforced at either age.
- **Penalty kicks:** No penalty kicks at either age.
- **Kick-offs:** Ball may be kicked in any direction on the kick-off. The player taking the kick, and only that player, may stand in the attacking half of field at kick-off.
- **Free kicks:** All free kicks will be indirect at the point of incursion. Opponents must be 6 yards from the kicker. A free kick given within 6 yards of the goal must be moved seven yards away so the defenders may form a wall 6 yards from the ball.
- **Kick-ins:** There are no throw-ins. Kick-ins are taken at the point where the ball left the field and are taken by the team that did not kick the ball out.
- **Corner kicks:** To be performed when the ball crosses the goal line and is last touched by the defense.
- **Goal kicks:** In Kindergarten, goal kicks are taken from anywhere on the goal line. In first grade, goal kicks may be taken half way between the goal line and the penalty area.
- **Playing time:** Each player will play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time.
- **Ball size:** Size 3
- **Ball in and out of play:** The ball must completely cross the boundary to be out of play.
- **Referees for Kindergarten games:** A certified referee will be assigned for each game. Parent coaches should be on the field coaching and encouraging players. The certified referee will keep time and start/stop the quarter and call fouls as needed, and serve as a resource for both teams,

House League Divisions

1st Grade (5v5)

- With permission of the referee, one coach per team may be on the field to help the players. Coaches should be sure to stay out of the way of play and promote sporting behavior.
- Ball size – 3
- Number of players on the field – 4 plus goalkeeper (5 players total). Minimum players 3.
- Field size – approximately 40 yards by 35 yards.
- Any player may play the ball in the goal area
- Goal width – 4 yards
- The Offside rule is not enforced.
- No deliberate heading. Penalty - indirect free kick awarded to the opposing team at the spot of the offense or on the

- goal line nearest to the point of the infringement, if the offense occurs within the penalty area.
- Build Out Line – When the goalkeeper has possession of the ball during play or for a goal kick, the opposing team must drop behind the build out line (midway between the penalty area and the halfway line of the field) until the goal keeper puts the ball into play. The opposing team has 6 seconds to drop and remain behind the build out line, however, the goalkeeper is not required to wait until the opposing team is behind the line to put the ball in play. If the opposing team takes longer than 6 seconds to move behind the line, the referee will warn the coach. If the delays continue, the coach will be shown a yellow card. Restart is an indirect free kick at the build out line.
- No punting. The goalie may throw, roll, or set the ball down and kick it into play. Penalty - indirect free kick awarded to the opposing team on the goal line nearest to the point of the offense.
- Kick-ins – not throw-ins
- Kick-offs: Ball may be kicked in any direction on the kick-off. The player taking the kick, and only that player, may stand in the attacking half of field at kick-off.
- Opponent must be 7 yards from the ball on a free kick.
- No penalty kicks.
- Substitutions are allowed at any point where play is stopped. The game clock will not stop for substitutions.
- Game length – 4 quarters, each 10 minutes in length. Each quarter starts with a kickoff, alternating teams on each kickoff.
- Goal kick may be taken half way between goal area line and penalty area line, except on fields without a goal area. In the latter case, the goal kick may be taken half way between goal line and penalty area line.

2nd Grade (7v7)

- Ball size – 4
- Number of players on the field – 6 plus goalkeeper (7 players total). Minimum players 4.
- Field size – approximately 60 yards by 40 yards.
- Goal width – 6 yards
- The Offside rule is not enforced.
- No deliberate heading. Penalty - indirect free kick awarded to the opposing team at the spot of the offense or on the goal line nearest to the point of the infringement, if the offense occurs within the penalty area.
- Build Out Line – When the goalkeeper has possession of the ball, during play or for a goal kick, the opposing team must drop behind the build out line (midway between the penalty area and the halfway line of the field) until the goal keeper puts the ball into play. The opposing team has 6 seconds to drop and remain behind the build out line, however, the goalkeeper is not required to wait until the opposing team is behind the line to put the ball in play. If the opposing team takes longer than 6 seconds to move behind the line, the referee will warn the coach. If the delays continue, the coach will be shown a yellow card. Restart is an indirect free kick at the build out line.
- No punting. The goalie may throw, roll, or set the ball down and kick it into play. Penalty - indirect free kick awarded to the opposing team on the goal line nearest to the point of the offense.
- Game length – 2 halves, each 25 minutes in length. Each half starts with a kick-off, alternate kicking team in the second half. Referees will stop play for substitutions approximately midway through each half, although players may substitute at any acceptable substitution opportunity.
- The game clock will not stop for substitutions.

3rd and 4th Grade (7v7)

- Ball size – 4
- Number of players on the field – 6 plus goalkeeper (7 players total). Minimum players 4.
- Field size – approximately 60 yards by 40 yards.
- Goal width – 6 yards
- **The Offside rule is enforced.**
- No deliberate heading. Penalty - indirect free kick awarded to the opposing team at the spot of the offense or on the goal line nearest to the point of the infringement, if the offense occurs within the penalty area.
- Build Out Line – When the goalkeeper has possession of the ball, during play or for a goal kick, the opposing team must drop behind the build out line (midway between the penalty area and the halfway line of the field) until the goal keeper puts the ball into play. The opposing team has 6 seconds to drop and remain behind the build out line, however, the goalkeeper is not required to wait until the opposing team is behind the line to put the ball in play. If the opposing team takes longer than 6 seconds to move behind the line, the referee will warn the coach. If the delays continue, the coach will be shown a yellow card. Restart is an indirect free kick at the build out line.
- No punting. The goalie may throw, roll, or set the ball down and kick it into play. Penalty - indirect free kick awarded to the opposing team on the goal line nearest to the point of the offense.
- Kick-offs: Ball may be kicked in any direction on the kick-off. The player taking the kick, and only that player, may stand in the attacking half of field at kick-off.

- Second chance on throw-in.
- Game length – 2 halves, each 25 minutes in length. Each half starts with a kick-off, alternate kicking team in the second half. Referees will stop play for substitutions approximately midway through each half, although players may substitute at any acceptable substitution opportunity.
- The game clock will not stop for substitutions.

5th/6th Grade (9v9)

- Ball size – 4
- Number of players on the field – 8 plus goalkeeper (9 players total). Minimum players 6.
- Field size – approximately 80 yards by 55 yards.
- Goal width – 7 yards
- The Offside rule is enforced.
- No deliberate heading. Penalty - indirect free kick awarded to the opposing team at the spot of the offense or on the goal line nearest to the point of the infringement, if the offense occurs within the penalty area.
- Kick-offs: Ball may be kicked in any direction on the kick-off. The player taking the kick, and only that player, may stand in the attacking half of field at kick-off.
- One chance on throw-in.
- Game length – 2 halves, each 30 minutes in length. Each half starts with a kick-off, alternate kicking team in the second half. Referees will notify the coaches approximately 3-4 minutes prior to the mid-point of each half for the coaches to plan their substitutions. Referees will not stop play for subbing at the mid-points.
- The game clock will not stop for substitutions.

7th/8th Grade (7v7)

- Ball size – 5
- Number of players on the field – 6 plus goalkeeper (7 players total). Minimum players 4.
- Field size – approximately 60 yards by 40 yards.
- Goal width – 6 yards
- **The Offside rule is enforced.**
- No deliberate heading. Penalty - indirect free kick awarded to the opposing team at the spot of the offense or on the goal line nearest to the point of the infringement, if the offense occurs within the penalty area.
- Build Out Line – When the goalkeeper has possession of the ball, during play or for a goal kick, the opposing team must drop behind the build out line (midway between the penalty area and the halfway line of the field) until the goal keeper puts the ball into play. The opposing team has 6 seconds to drop and remain behind the build out line, however, the goalkeeper is not required to wait until the opposing team is behind the line to put the ball in play. If the opposing team takes longer than 6 seconds to move behind the line, the referee will warn the coach. If the delays continue, the coach will be shown a yellow card. Restart is an indirect free kick at the build out line.
- No punting. The goalie may throw, roll, or set the ball down and kick it into play. Penalty - indirect free kick awarded to the opposing team on the goal line nearest to the point of the offense.
- Kick-offs: Ball may be kicked in any direction on the kick-off. The player taking the kick, and only that player, may stand in the attacking half of field at kick-off.
- Second chance on throw-in.
- Game length – 2 halves, each 30 minutes in length. Each half starts with a kick-off, alternate kicking team in the second half. Referees will stop play for substitutions approximately midway through each half, although players may substitute at any acceptable substitution opportunity.
- The game clock will not stop for substitutions.

Inclement Weather

- The **Soccer Inclement Weather Hotline is 847.577.3003, extension 5**. If there is bad weather on a game day, call the hotline to see if there are game cancellations. If we haven't closed your field, go to your game prepared to play. The Park District or the referee may cancel games if they judge that playing conditions are dangerous.
 - **COACHES MAY NOT CANCEL GAMES.**
 - **UNDER NO CONDITION SHOULD ANY GAMES BE PLAYED DURING THUNDER OR LIGHTNING.** When a referee stops a game for lightning, immediately remove all players from the field to a safe place. The referee may restart the game 20 minutes after the last thunder or lightning is detected. In the case of ongoing delays that heavily impact the remainder of the game schedule, the referee may choose to cancel the game.

- **In case of thunder or lightning during a practice, immediately stop and move all participants to a storm safe area. WAIT UNTIL 20 MINUTES AFTER THE LAST OCCURRENCE OF THUNDER OR LIGHTNING TO RESUME PRACTICE.** The safest location is a building. If one is not available, bring participants to a vehicle and wait until the storm subsides or the event is cancelled. Stay away from high structures, trees, fences, or any item that can conduct electricity. Once the storm has passed and it is safe to resume play, review the field. If conditions are safe, resume play.
- In case of a tornado, immediately seek shelter in a building or, if a building is not available, in the lowest lying area. Participants should lay flat or as low as possible to the ground.
- It is the coach's responsibility to keep participants safe. Coaches should move players to safety or hand over to their legal guardians. Under no circumstances should a player be dismissed without a parent.

Uniforms and Player Equipment

Jerseys are reversible blue and white. Home teams wear white, and away teams wear blue.

- Soft-cleated soccer shoes are encouraged. Gym shoes are allowed. Metal spikes and shoes with toe cleats are prohibited.
- Shin guards are **MANDATORY** for all games and practices. Socks must cover shin guards.
- Players must wear the AHPD uniform at games. The goalkeeper must wear a shirt or pinnie other than blue or white.
- Players may wear warm layers under the official uniform and soft fabric, knit hats on very cold days. Headbands are permitted as long as they conform to the USSF rules. Hoods must be tucked under the jersey.
- USSF rules do not allow players to wear watches, earrings, bracelets, necklaces, or hard barrettes. Encourage players with glasses to wear sport glasses. Glasses must be secured by a strap.

Violations and Penalties

To insure fair play and sporting behavior, the following penalties have been established:

- **A coach shown a red card:** 30-day probation, which may result in expulsion from the Aces. When a coach receives a red card, he or she must immediately leave the park for the day and may not coach the following game.
- **A player shown red card:** one game suspension for the first offense and a three-game suspension for subsequent offenses during the soccer year.
- **Any red card suspensions that cannot be served because the current season ends will be served at the beginning of the next season.**

Team Formation

Teams are determined by registration by closest community center. Parents will register their child to the nearest community center in which they live by. Once registration ends, players will be divided up into teams. We will try our best to divide up teams based on what school they go to and by reciprocal friend requests. Once teams are made up, we will recruit volunteer coaches and figure out a practice time for the team based on coach's availability.

Referee vs Coach Responsibilities

If you have any questions regarding referees, contact Kevin Wollnik.

Referees apply and enforce the Laws of the Game:

- Arrive at least 10 minutes before the start of the game dressed in a proper referee uniform.
- Inspect the field, and check in both teams.
- Start games on time and keep them on time using a running clock.
- Keep score for application of the Mercy Rule. Scores are not otherwise needed.
- If a player does not understand a call, referees may explain the call to the player, but they do not coach. Referees do not have to explain the reason for a call or non-call to coaches and parents but may explain a Law, if they wish, after a game.

- Work with coaches to keep the game safe, fun, and fair.

Coaches enforce Park District rules and ensure their players and spectators exhibit sporting behavior:

- Communicate to teams where players and parents should sit during games, including the areas they must avoid (behind the goal line and dashed lines, etc.)
- Keep players on the bench behind the dashed line.
- Coaches are responsible for the conduct of all players, coaches, and spectators on their team.
- Work with referees to keep the game safe, fun, and fair.

Code of Ethics for Coaches

- I will place the emotional and physical well-being of all my players ahead of a personal desire to win.
- I will treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development for the same age group.
- I will do my best to provide a safe playing situation for my players.
- I will promise to review and practice the basic first aid principles needed to treat injuries of my players.
- I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging, providing growth opportunities in skills for all my players.
- I will lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all my players.
- I will be knowledgeable in the rules of soccer, and I will teach these rules to my players.
- I will use those coaching techniques appropriate for each of the skills that I teach and the level of development of each player.
- I will remember that I am a youth sports coach and that the game is for children and not adults.
- I will provide opportunities for all players to participate in both practice and game situations, allowing the players to apply new skills and demonstrate their abilities.

Guidelines for Coaching

Coaches have a double responsibility: teaching the game while being mindful of the mental and physical development of their players. Ages 5 to 14 years are ideal for learning soccer skills. Children are energetic and enthusiastic, and coaches should channel this energy into positive development at a pace and level that is physically and emotionally appropriate.

- Hold a parent meeting before the 1st game to introduce yourself, explain league rules, and answer questions.
- Accentuate the positive. Criticism should be constructive and sandwiched with positive comments.
- Make practice fun. Use a variety of exercises and drills and break them up by introducing games. Children participate in sports to have fun, make friends, and improve their skills.
- Give players responsibility during practices and encourage creative play. Allow them to make up their own rules, make up new practice drills, play different positions, resolve their own arguments, and lead warm-up exercises.
- Demonstrate sporting behavior and communicate to your players that you expect the same behavior from them.
- Be alert to individual needs, and be flexible. Work in small groups, praise players' strengths, and encourage them to practice their weaknesses.
- Come to practices and games prepared with drills, games, and rosters. Practice your skills so that you can give competent demonstrations. Keep your team organized, both on and off the field.
- Encourage players to compete against their own past performance rather than against the performance of others. Set realistic personal and team goals.
- Teach skills, tactics, and rules in practices, and utilize these new skills in games. Do not expect your players to implement new instructions given during a game.
- Complexity is confusing. Explain moves using clear, specific explanations with appropriate soccer terminology.
- Let everyone play. Research has shown that children would rather play on a losing team than sit on a winning team.

- Don't over coach. Coach at practices, and allow players to play and learn from mistakes at games. During games, take notes about what needs improvement, and use them to plan your next practice.
- Don't "psych up" your team before games. Chances are they are nervous enough. Play down the importance of winning, and praise new skills and effort.
- Require that all players wear shin guards at and bring a ball to every practice.
- Be aware of your players' stage of physical and mental development. They will vary in age and ability.
- If you are having difficulty with a player, talk with their parents. If you continue to have difficulty, or have difficulty with a parent(s), contact AHPD staff.

Ages 5 to 8

Players at this age are self-conscious, have a limited attention span, and have difficulty sitting still. Encourage movement through soccer related games such as playing tag with a soccer ball. Use small grids for small-sided games. Emphasize fun over winning.

Ages 8 to 12

Players at this age are typically well-balanced physically and mentally. They have a sense of team loyalty, are competitive, and learn skills eagerly. Introduce dribbling, juggling, receiving, passing, shooting, tackling, and team play with games that emphasize specific skills or techniques and small sided scrimmages.

Ages 12 to 14

Players at this age are entering puberty. They are experiencing physical changes and may be easily frustrated or emotional. They may be more interested in building a social group than mastering techniques. Continue to develop techniques introduced at the 10 to 12-year level. Channel players' desire to form groups into creating team spirit and tactical unity.

ATTACHMENT

MOVABLE SOCCER GOALS SAFETY ACT NOTICE

8/26/24

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: All parents and guardians of soccer players:

One of our primary objectives is that children have safe recreation areas. To that end, soccer goals should remain securely anchored to the ground and nets firmly attached to the goals.

In an effort to keep the goals and nets secure and children safe, you are required to advise your children/soccer players and any other person accompanying you for whom you are responsible that the following is strictly prohibited: moving any soccer goals and any use of a soccer goal that is inconsistent with soccer-related activity, including without limitation, playing, climbing, or hanging on any part of the soccer goal. This especially applies to children climbing on or hanging from nets or goal frames. According the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, these activities can result in serious injury, including death.

If you observe any child inappropriately using a soccer goal or net, immediately and politely ask the child to stop. If the activity continues, please notify a coach or referee as soon as possible. Players violating this rule may be forced to sit out, at the coach's discretion.

Finally, if you see any soccer goal that is not anchored down or any net that is not firmly secured to the goal, please notify a coach or referee immediately or in their absence contact the Arlington Heights Park District during normal hours of operation at 847-577-000.

Sincerely,