

MANHATTAN PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Youth Soccer “Recreational League” – By-Laws

These laws include United States Youth Soccer recommended modifications to the FIFA Laws of the Game.
Revised August 6, 2018

MRPD GENERAL RULES

Age/Grade:

1. Players must be enrolled in grades Kindergarten through Sixth
2. Divisions will be organized as follows:
 - a. Kindergarten
 - b. 1st/2nd grade
 - c. 3rd/4th grade
 - d. 5th/6th grade
3. Participants must play in their respective grade division with the exception that participant may play up in age group if approved by the participants guardians and the Recreation Supervisor if currently eligible.
 - a. Participants may NOT play down an age group for any reason.

Team Organization:

1. Before any child is permitted to participate in the “Recreational League” soccer program, they must be registered with the Parks and Recreation Department. A registration period will be established before each season begins. A participant who does not sign up during this period will be placed on a waiting list and assigned to a team as spots become available.
2. Once a team is established, each child will remain on this team. No player may switch teams’ under any circumstances except when approved by the MPRD Recreation Supervisor.
3. Family members who are eligible for the same league may be placed on the same team for family convenience.
4. Head Coach/Assistant Coach Assignment Policy: Parents who volunteer as a head coach or assistant coach will have his/her child/children place on their team.
5. A player is not eligible for participation until all of the following occur:
 - a. A player registration form is completed, signed by a parent/guardian and submitted to the Parks and Recreation offices during regular business hours.
 - b. The registration fee is paid.
 - c. The player is approved for participation and assigned to a team by the Recreation Supervisor in charge of the program.
 - d. Penalty: If a team uses a player who has not met each of these requirements, any game in which that player participated will be forfeited.

Practices: (All grades)

1. Players must make an effort to attend practices. If a coach is having problems with players not attending practices, the Recreation Supervisor must be notified before any “playing time” discipline is imposed. No player can be “benched” without the approval of the Recreation Supervisor.
2. If any behavioral problems that are occurring at the field during the game the referee of the field may keep a player on the bench if they deem necessary.

Slide Tackling: (All grades)

1. No slide tackling! Players must stay upright and “on their feet” and may not make contact with an opposing player. This does not prevent players from sliding to stop or intercept a ball, but no contact can be made with opposing players.

Heading: (All grades)

1. No heading! When a player deliberately heads the ball, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header 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 a player does not deliberately head the ball, then play should continue unless deemed necessary by the referee.

Coaches/Assistant Coaches/Parents/Spectators:

1. Kindergarten – 2nd grade only:

- a. One coach per team will be allowed on the field for games in grades Kindergarten – 2nd.
- b. The on-the-field coach must not intentionally interfere with play or argue with officials. Game officials have authority to impose necessary penalties for coaches who intentionally interfere with play including removing them from the field of play.

2. All Grades:

- a. Coaches who are not on the field with the team must remain in the team bench area on that side of the field. Game officials have complete authority to make decisions regarding enforcement of the team bench area.
- b. Parents and other spectators will not be permitted to “coach” from the end line (touch line) or goal area. Spectators who are in violation of this rule will be asked to move to the team bench or bleacher area. Head coaches, when asked by game officials, will be expected to assist in enforcing this rule.
- c. Only coaches and players are allowed on the team bench area side of the field. Parents must occupy the area on the opposite side of the field on or near the bleachers.
- d. Coaches, Assistant Coaches and/or anyone else within the team bench area are subject to yellow and red cards.
 1. A yellow card issued to a coach or anyone else within the team bench is a warning to cease the behavior that warranted the yellow card.

2. A second yellow card issued to any one individual, or a red card is ground for immediate removal from the playing area. Such individuals must remove themselves “sight and sound” from the game officials. Failure to do so with 60 second will result in immediately forfeiture by the offending individuals’ team and law enforcement being called.

Protests:

1. There will be no protests allowed in MPRD Youth “Recreational League” soccer. Any rule infractions must be resolved before play continues in accordance to soccer laws. The decisions made by game officials and field supervisors are final.

Unsportsmanlike Behavior:

1. May result in penalties being imposed upon the offending individual, including coaches, participants and/or spectators. Penalties may include banishment from further participation in Recreation Department activities. Penalties will be decided by a committee made up of the Recreation Director, Recreation Supervisor, and Recreation Coordinator in charge of the activity. The set procedure is further clarified in the Parks and Recreation Department’s policy manual, available at MPRD offices.
2. Each coach/team will be subject to a sportsmanship evaluation performed by the supervisor following each game.

LAWS OF THE GAME

Law 1 – The Field:

Dimensions: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line.

1. **Kindergarten – 2nd grade** – 30 yards x 20 yards
2. **3rd/4th grade** – 47 yards x 30 yards
3. **5th/6th grade** – 75 yards x 47 yards

The Goal Area:

1. **Kindergarten – 2nd grade** – A goal area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line three (3) yards from the inside of each goalpost. These lines are extended into the field of play for a distance of three (3) yards and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the goal area.
 - a. **Defending players must stay out of this area while defending.**
2. **3rd/4th** – A goal area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line five (5) yards from the inside of each goalpost. These lines are extended into the field of play for a distance of five (5) yards and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the goal area.

3. **5th/6th** - A goal area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line six (6) yards from the inside of each goalpost. These lines are extended into the field of play for a distance of six (6) yards and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the goal area.

The Penalty Area:

1. **Kindergarten** – None
2. **1st/2nd** – None
3. **3rd/4th** – A penalty area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line, ten (10) yards from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of ten (10) yards and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the penalty area. Within each penalty area a penalty mark is made eight (8) yards from the midpoint between the goalposts and equidistant to them (NOT USED FOR 3rd/4th GRADE GAMES). An arc of a circle with a radius of eight (8) yards from each penalty mark is drawn outside the penalty area.
4. **5th/6th** - A penalty area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line, fourteen (14) yards from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of fourteen (14) yards and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the penalty area. Within each penalty area a penalty mark is made ten (10) yards from the midpoint between the goalposts and equidistant to them. An arc of a circle with a radius of eight (8) yards from each penalty mark is drawn outside the penalty area.

Goals:

1. **Kindergarten – 2nd** – 6' x 4'
2. **3rd – 6th** – 18' 6" x 6' 6"

Law 2 – The Ball:

1. **Kindergarten – 2nd** – Size three (3)
2. **3rd – 6th** – Size four (4)

Law 3 – The Number of Players:

1. **Kindergarten** - A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than Three (3) players. There are NO goalkeepers. (3 vs. 3, NO goalkeeper)
 - a. Defending players must stay out of the goal area. Refer to Law 1 – The Goal Area. This rule is put in place to help deter from players acting as goalkeepers
 - b. A team that is down by 4 goals has the option to bring an extra player onto the field. Once the losing team becomes down by 3 goals, that player must go back to the bench. This rule is optional
2. **1st/2nd** – A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than four (4) players. There are NO goalkeepers. (4 vs. 4, NO goalkeeper)

- a. Defending players must stay out of the goal area. Refer to Law 1 – The Goal Area. This rule is put in place to help deter from players acting as goalkeepers
 - b. A team that is down by 4 goals has the option to bring an extra player onto the field. Once the losing team becomes down by 3 goals, that player must go back to the bench. This rule is optional
3. **3rd/4th** – A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than six (6) players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. A match may not start if either team consists of fewer than four (4) players. (6 vs. 6)
4. **5th/6th** – A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than nine (9) players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. A match may not start if either team consists of fewer than four (5) players. (9 vs. 9)
5. Co-Rec: **(All grades)** There must be an equal number of male and female players or more females than males on the field at all times if numbers allow.
 - a. There will be an exception if there are not enough females present for the game or if an injury occurs now allowing a female to play. Coaches must use their best judgment in order to maintain the fairness and integrity of the game and the league.
6. Substitutes: **(All grades)** Substitutes will enter the game according to the following policy:
 - a. After approximately every five minutes of playing time, the officials will stop play at the first natural “play stoppages” opportunity. Examples include, but are not limited to goals, throw-ins, corner kicks, fouls, injuries and etc.
 - b. All players must play in the game for the equivalent of at least half the total game time. Coaches are expected to abide by this rule, as lineups are not required. If a coach is found to be in violation of this rule, his/her team will forfeit all games in which the rule was violated and be put on probation for a year, which may limit his/her ability to coach the sport again or other youth sports programmed by MPRD.
 - c. Any players who are on the bench must enter the game during this stoppage in play. The officials will beckon for the coaches to send the substitutes into the game.
 - d. In a normal game situation, substitutes will enter the game at approximately the five-, ten-, fifteen- and twenty-minute point in each half (for twenty-five minute halves).
 - e. Game officials have the authority to allow exceptions to the substitution rule when warranted by specific circumstances, such as injuries, illness or yellow cards.

Law 4 – The Players Equipment: (All grades)

1. Player shirts are provided by MPRD.

- a. If a player does not have his/her MPRD youth soccer shirt, another t-shirt may be worn that is a similar color, provided it contrasts with the opponent's shirt color.
 - b. Goalie jerseys are provided by MPRD and will be distributed and collected by game officials.
2. Non-Uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams.
3. A player must not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous to themselves or another player (including any kind of jewelry).
4. Shinguards must be worn by all players. A player not wearing shinguards will not be allowed to play.
 - a. Shinguards must be covered entirely by socks/stockings, if possible.
 - b. Shinguards must be made of rubber, plastic or a similar suitable material.
 - c. Shinguards must provide a reasonable degree of protection.
5. Soccer style cleats, running shoes or tennis shoes must be worn by all players.
 - a. Cleats with a "toe-stud" are not permitted.
 - b. Players with a "toe-stud" will not be allowed to play.
6. Supervisors and officials have authority to make rulings regarding legality of equipment.

Law 5 – The Referee: (All grades)

1. Enforces the laws of the game.
 - a. The decisions of the referee are final.
 - b. Game officials have the authority to declare stoppages in play, when necessary, for players to take water breaks. The stoppage will be kept as brief as necessary to insure that players are receiving proper amounts of fluids. Coaches may request such stoppages, but they will only be granted at the discretion of the game officials.

Law 6 – The Assistant Referee: (All grades)

1. Enforces the laws of the game.
 - a. The decisions of the assistant referee are final.

Law 7 – The duration of the match:

1. *Kindergarten – 2nd* – Two equal periods of 20 minutes and a 5 minute halftime
2. *3rd – 6th* – Two equal periods of 25 minutes and a 5 minute halftime.

Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play:

1. *Kindergarten – 2nd* – Conform to FIFA, with the exception of the opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.
2. *3rd-6th* – Conform to FIFA, with the exception of the opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least eight (8) yards from the ball until it is in play.

Law 9 – The Ball In and Out of Play: (All Grades)

1. Ball out of play

- a. The ball is out of play when it has wholly crossed the goal line or touch line whether on the ground or in the air.
 - b. Play has been stopped by the referee.
2. Ball in Play
- a. The ball is in play at all other times, including when it rebounds off a match official, goalpost, crossbar or corner flagpost and remains in the field of play

Law 10 – The Method of Scoring: (All Grades)

- 1. Conform to FIFA
 - a. A goal is scored when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, between the goalposts and under the crossbar, provided that no offence has been committed by the team scoring the goal.

Law 11 – Offside: (All Grades)

- 1. Offside will not be called at any age group.

Law 12 – Fouls & Misconduct:

- 1. Yellow Cards/Red Cards: Penalties **(3rd-6th grade only)**.
 - a. When a player receives a yellow card, they must be substituted for.
 - b. If a player receives a second yellow card in the same game, the player is disqualified from playing the remainder of that game. A substitute may take the player's place on the field.
 - c. If a player receives a red card the player is disqualified from playing in the remainder of that game. That player's place in the line-up cannot be replaced. His/her team will play the remainder of the game with one less player.
 - d. A player who receives a red card will be ineligible to participate in his/her team's next game.
- 2. **Kindergarten** - Conform to FIFA with the exceptions that all fouls shall result in a direct free kick. The referee must explain all infringements to the offending player.
 - a. No cards will be shown for misconduct.
- 3. **1st/2nd** - Conform to FIFA with the exceptions that all fouls shall result in a direct free kick. The referee must explain all infringements to the offending player.
 - a. No cards will be shown for misconduct.
- 4. **3rd/4th** – Conform to FIFA with the exception that an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team at the center spot on the halfway line if a goalkeeper punts or drop-kick the ball in the air from his/her penalty area into the opponents penalty area.
- 5. **5th/6th** – Conform to FIFA with the exception that an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team at the center spot on the halfway line if a goalkeeper punts or drop-kick the ball in the air from his/her penalty area into the opponents penalty area.

Law 13 – Free Kicks:

- 1. **Kindergarten – 2nd** - Conform to FIFA with the exceptions that all free kicks are direct and opponents are at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.

2. **3rd – 6th** - Conform to FIFA with the exceptions that all opponents are at least eight (8) yards from the ball until it is in play.

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick:

1. **Kindergarten – 2nd** – No penalty kick will be taken for this age group. Any fouls that occur in the penalty area will be pulled out to the top of the penalty area for a direct kick.
2. **3rd/4th** - No penalty kick will be taken for this age group. Any fouls that occur in the penalty area will be pulled out to the top of the penalty area for a direct kick.
3. **5th/6th** – Conform to FIFA with the exception that the penalty mark is made eight (8) yards from the midpoint between the goalposts and equal distance to them.

Law 15 – The Throw/Pass-In:

1. **Kindergarten – 2nd** - A pass-in is considered as a direct free kick with the opponents four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play. The player can also perform a throw-in
 - a. The throw-in must conform to FIFA
 - i. All opponents must stand no less than two (2) yards from the point at which the throw is taken.
 - ii. If on the throw-in the thrower violates a throw-in procedure listed in the Laws of the Game the referee will explain to the player what they incorrectly to violate the Law and give them another opportunity to complete a legal throw-in. If they thrower violates a procedure once again on the second attempt a throw-in will be awarded to the opposing team.
2. **3rd – 6th**– The throw-in must conform to FIFA.
 - a. All opponents must stand no less than two (2) yards from the point at which the throw is taken.
 - b. If on the throw-in the thrower violates a throw-in procedure listed in the Laws of the Game the referee will explain to the player what they incorrectly to violate the Law and give them another opportunity to complete a legal throw-in. If they thrower violates a procedure once again on the second attempt a throw-in will be awarded to the opposing team.

Law 16 – The Goal Kick:

1. **Kindergarten – 2nd** - The goal kick should be taken within 2-3 yards of the goal line anywhere across the width of the field of play at the nearest point from where the ball was retrieved. Opposing players must be four (4) yards away from the ball until it is in play. It is suggested that if necessary that opponents are in their own half of the field until the ball is in play.
2. **3rd – 6th** – Conform to FIFA. It is suggested that if necessary that opponents should remain in their own half of the field until the ball is in play. The team taking the goal kick does not have to wait for the opposition to retreat and has the option to restart the game beforehand should they so choose. The ball is in play when it is kicked directly out of the penalty area.

Law 17 – The Corner Kick:

1. ***Kindergarten – 2nd*** - Conform to FIFA with the exception that opponents remain at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.
2. ***3rd – 6th*** - Conform to FIFA with the exception that opponents remain at least eight (8) yards from the ball until it is in play.