PAA Soccer Rules

Please refer to PAA handbook for league policies, procedures, eligibility requirements, etc. (ages, grades, limits on practices, games, physicals, behavior, etc). We will enforce all policies/procedures, requirements in PAA handbook – it is not the desire of the league for these to negatively affect a student – we have in place an appeal/hardship policy. This must be done PRIOR to a student/team participating in any sort of practice/game. This request must be in writing (mail, fax, email)- include in your request all pertinent information and also the rule that you are asking that the PAA set aside this one time for this student. All requests are kept confidential.

1. Divisions

* 1st and 2nd grade (U8)
* 3rd and 4th grade (U10)
* 5th and 6th grade (U12)
* 7th and 8th grade (U14)

1. Proper placement in divisions

* Divisions will be offered in the above divisions for both boys and girls.
* Boys are not allowed to play in the girls division. If a team is not able to enter both a boys and a girls team in a division, a girl may be permitted to play in the boys division. This should be noted on the roster when it is submitted. (Per PAA handbook – a student must play in his/her appropriate division and not play either up or down a division.
* Exclusions to this rule must be handled prior to the beginning of the season by requesting a hardship/appeal on this rule.)

1. Teams playing in multiple leagues

* Teams are not allowed to play in another league during the PAA soccer season.
* PAA does not dictate policy on individuals playing on dual teams with the exception that a player may not play on 2 teams that are in the PAA league.
* Schools/Churches are permitted to enforce their local policy.

1. Equipment
   * All players must wear soccer shin guards properly. Shin guards must be put on the foot first and then completely covered by socks. (do not put the sock on first, then the shin guard, then pull the sock over the top of the shin guard).
   * No player is allowed to wear any type of jewelry. Band-aids are not allowed to be placed over earrings.
   * Barrettes, bobby pins, plastic clips, metal clips or any type of hair accessory are not permitted. (Soft scrunchies, rubber bands, all fabric pony tail holders are acceptable). Nothing with metal or a hard surface/coating is allowed.
   * Soccer cleats are preferred but tennis shoes may be worn. Cleats must be soccer cleats (no football, baseball, cross-country). Toe-cleats may not be removed to try and make a different type of cleat a soccer cleat.
2. Schools/churches with multiple teams in one division

* When an school/church enters more than one team in a division, all teams must be evenly balanced in regards to age, grade, and ability.
* If, in the opinion of the league office, a team is intentionally stronger than the others – the school/church will be given the option of redistribution of that team or withdrawing from the league.

1. Players “switching” teams

* Players are not allowed to switch back and forth among teams (if school/church enters multiple teams in a division) during the season. The player must participate on the team that his/her name appears on the roster. IF, in an emergency situation, a team needs to borrow a player – written notification must be made to league office as well as notification to the opposing team.

1. Awards

* no team trophies are awarded and league standings are not kept.

1. Disqualified or ejected players

* In the U8 and U10 divisions – a player who has been ejected (given red card) may not return to play in that game, but can be replaced.
* In the U12 division, a player who has been ejected may not return to play in that game and may NOT be replaced.
* In all divisions, a report should be filed with the League Office within 24 hours of the occurrence – a determination will be made after reviewing reports from teams and officials as to the length of the suspension the player will serve. (See Code of Conduct in PAA handbook. In some instances, a red card can be given in soccer when a 2 game suspension may not be warranted – these situations will be dealt with individually)

1. Disqualified coaches

* Coaches must immediately leave the field and the site. Coaches should immediately notify their Athletic Director and provide a written report of the occurrence. Report should be forwarded to league office and will be reviewed. (See Code of Conduct in PAA handbook.)
* If the team does not have an approved assistant coach on the sideline, the game will be stopped at the point of the disqualification of the coach.

1. Length of games

* U8 – 4 quarters of 12 minutes each
* U10 – 4 quarters of 12 minutes each
* U 12 – 2 halves of 30 minutes each
* U 14 – 2 halves of 35 minutes each

11. Size of ball

* U8 - #3 soccer ball
* U10 - #4 soccer ball
* U 12 - #4 soccer ball
* U 14 - #5 soccer ball

1. Substitution

* Either team may substitute: after a goal, between periods, after an injury, or before a goal kick.
* Only the team in possession may substitute; after the ball goes out-of-bounds at the touch line.
* Once that team has stopped play for a substitution, the other team can then also substitute.

1. Rosters
   * An official roster must be submitted by the league mandated deadline.
   * Players may be added after rosters are submitted, but before the player participates in any manner – a revised roster should be submitted to the league office as well as necessary fees. The name of the new player must be highlighted/noted and all required signatures must be on the roster (coach, athletic director, pastor or principal).
   * Player will become “eligible” after athletic director/soccer commissioner contacts the League Office to confirm receipt of roster (and payment).
2. Team/Coaches boxes and spectator restraining lines

* Coaches area (boxes) will be established not to exceed 1/3 the length of the field (approximately 30 yards) and no closer than 3 feet from the touch line. All substitute players and coaches must remain in the box.
* Spectators shall sit or stand no closer than 3 yards from the touch line.
* Persistent, illegal coaching from the touch line outside of team and coaches box shall result in a warning by the referee the first time and an indirect free kick thereafter awarded by the referee, from the point of play.
* Any coach who enters the field of play without permission of the referee, for any reason except in the case of an injured player, will be issued an automatic yellow card. A second such occurrence in the same game will result in an automatic red card, and the coach must leave the field and site. In the event of such an occurrence, the referee shall not have the option of whether or not to issue the card.

1. Goals

* U 8 -U 12 will measure 6’ x 16’ (inside dimensions).
* U 14 will be 8’ x 24’ (inside dimensions).
* Goals for all divisions will be equipped with regulation nets and if padded, must be properly padded & secured.

16. Penalty shots

* U 8 –U 12 penalty shots will be taken from a distance of 8 yards.
* U 14 penalty shots will be taken from a distance of 10 yards.

19. Fifty percent/equal play rule

* Each player must play a minimum of fifty percent of each game the player attends if he/she is eligible. The intent of this rule is for all players who are eligible to participate – receive equal playing time. (It is not the intent of this rule for all players to play 50% of the game and then the better players play 100% of the game – all players should receive equal playing time EACH GAME). It is the responsibility of each member institution to convey to parents/players at the beginning of each season what factors will determine a players “eligibility to play in games” – this is not the same as the PAA player eligibility rule that determines if a player can represent the member institution.
* For all age groups, the coach must make a good faith effort to keep track of the player’s time to insure compliance with the “minimum 50%/equal playing rule” each game.
* It is the responsibility of each school/church to monitor all their teams’ compliance with this rule.
* Coaches/teams not complying with rule are subject to league sanctions.
* To report violations of this rule – a written report should be filed with the league office and a copy sent to the offending institutions athletic director. The report should contain as much information as possible so that the athletic director can conduct an investigation into the matter. Violations should be reported within 48 hours of the game. As stated above, the league office will deal with the offending teams athletic director and pastor/principal – a reply will not be made to the team/person who turned in violator.

1. Rescheduled games
   * After school/church has submitted intent to enter league or the deadline to submit the information has passed – games will not be rescheduled except for rare occasions.
   * The league office will determine whether or not a game will be rescheduled.
   * Fines will be assessed for all games rescheduled, even with the league’s approval. Fines will also be assessed for any team who does not show for a game.
   * If for any reason the league office schedules a team on a date that was submitted on the intent to enter league form – that game will be rescheduled at no cost to the teams involved.
2. Inclement weather

* It is the duty of each institution’s Athletic Director to determine whether or not that institution’s field will be playable on game day.
* At the time a decision is made, it is the responsibility of the Athletic Director to notify the Official’s Coordinator as soon as possible and no later than 1 hour prior to the beginning of the first game on game day.
* It is also the responsibility of the Athletic Director (or designated appointee) to convey this information in a timely manner to all who will be playing at their field on that day. Some places choose to post information on a recorded message - this should be posted prior to 1 hour before the first game.
* The phone number to call must be made available to member institutions athletic directors and representatives and coaches, officials coordinator and officials – IT IS NOT TO BE GIVEN TO PARENTS.
* Each coach will be responsible for contacting his/her team.
* Once it has been determined that the field is playable , it shall be solely the discretion of the designated referee as to whether or not a game shall be played, or, if in progress, halted, due to inclement weather or dangerous playing conditions

1. Rescheduling of rained out games

* It is the responsibility of the Athletic Directors of the schools involved to reschedule games if so desired.
* If the official has been compensated for the rained out game or postponed game – it is the responsibility of the teams involved to provide payment for the official at the published rate.
* Before players are informed of rescheduled events, the officials coordinator must be notified and provide approval that an official can be assigned.
* All rescheduled games due to inclement weather should be turned into league office in writing by both teams involved after confirmation has been made with Officials Coordinator. Notation should be made on this form as to how payment will be made to official.

1. Protests & Complaints

* All protests will be reviewed by the Board of Control, Diocesan Athletic Director, representative from the Superintendent’s Office and the PAA Soccer Commissioner.
* If any of the above is directly connected with any party of the protest – a substitute will be appointed to review that case.
* Protests should be made within 72 hours of the act about which there is a complaint or protest.
* Protests should be made in writing and signed by the coach, athletic director and pastor/principal. Schools desiring to file a protest should provide a copy of a videotape of the game if possible if by viewing the videotape, it will better enable the members of the Board of Control to determine cause/action.
* A $25 protest fee must be paid by check to the League Office before it will be reviewed. If the protest is upheld, the $25 check will be returned.
* Protests are never allowed on a judgment call by the official.
* Two items are considered as protests:

1. a determination of the eligibility of a player and

2. a misapplication of a soccer rule by the game referee.

* If such a protest is allowed, the Board of Control can assess a fine/penalty/punishment/forfeiture of game/or have the game replayed.
* A complaint may be filed with the League Office on matters that are not eligible for a protest. Game officials are required to report unsportsmanlike behavior by coaches, players and fans, before, during or after a game to the Officials Coordinator.
* Complaints should be submitted in writing to the League Office within 72 hours of the problem.
* Complaints will be reviewed by the members of the Board of Control, Diocesan Athletic Director, representative from the Superintendent’s Office and the PAA Soccer Commissioner, but a meeting will not be convened.
* Game results will not be altered nor will the game be replayed.
* The Board of Control will take such action as necessary to correct any problem that may be discovered as a result of the complaint.
* Examples of complaints are: unsportsmanlike conduct, improper judgment calls by the officials, poor playing conditions and violation of 50%/equal play rule.

24. Referees

* The PAA shall use state registered referees in all games under its jurisdiction. Each new referee must complete a recognized training course and then pass a written and physical testing. All referees will abide by the Laws of the Game (FIFA) and the PAA handbook.
* Referees shall be compensated only for games played and officiated, or those games scheduled for which the referee appears at the field, but the game is forfeited by one of the teams, or for those matches postponed in progress due to inclement weather.
* Fees to referees shall be paid on a per game basis, the amount to be determined by agreement of Officials Coordinator, Board of Control, Diocesan Athletic Director, representative from Superintendent’s office and the PAA Soccer Commissioner.
* Any referee who willfully fails to enforce any of the rules is subject to immediate and permanent suspension by the league office and any fee due for that game will be forfeited.

1. Coaches

* Only 1 coach is allowed to give tactical advice to players and that advice must be given from the coaching area (30 yards either side of center, 1 yard from touchline).
* No coach may enter the field of play without the referee’s permission (except in the case of an injured player).

1. Spectators

* The spectator restraint line is parallel to and at least 9 feet from touchline. All spectators, substitutes and assistant coaches must remain behind this line.
* No parent, spectator, sibling, assistant coach may coach/watch from touchlines or goal line.

1. Starting Game

* U 8 and U 10: The team LOSING the toss kicks off in quarters 1 and 2. The team WINNING the toss chooses the goal and kicks off quarters 3 and 4.
* U 12 and U 14: The team LOSING the toss kicks off 1st half. The team WINNING the toss chooses the goal and kicks off 2nd half.

27. Field dimensions and goal width

Division Goal Width Field Dimensions

U 8 16 feet Length: 65 – 70 yards

U 10 16 feet Length: 65 – 70 yards

U 12 16 feet Length: 65 – 70 yards

U 14 24 feet Length: 100 yards

* U 8 - U 12 fields – the absolute minimum width is 94 feet (goal of 16 feet plus penalty areas of 36 feet outside each goal plus three feet between penalty area and touchline). Absent severe space restrictions, the minimum width is 120 feet (40 yards).
* U 8 – U 12 fields, the penalty area is a rectangle 88 feet wide centered on the goal, extending 36 feet into the field.
* The goal area is a rectangle 40 feet wide centered on the goal, extending 12 feet into the field.
* The penalty mark is a spot 8 yards from the center of the goal (halfway between penalty area line and goal area line).
* The penalty arc is drawn outside the top of the penalty area at a radius of 20 feet from the penalty mark.
* U 14 fields – the absolute minimum width is 50 yards.
* The penalty area is a rectangle 132 feet wide centered on the goal, extending 54 feet into the field.
* The goal area is a rectangle 60 feet wide centered on the goal, extending 18 feet into the field.
* The penalty mark is a spot 12 yards from the center of the goal (halfway between penalty area line & goal area line).
* The penalty arc is drawn outside the top of the penalty area at a radius of 30 feet from the penalty mark.
* Each field shall have a center line, with a center circle of radius 20 feet for U 8 – U12 and center circle of radius 30 feet for U 14 division.

1. Number of players

Division Maximum # of players Minimum # of players

U 8 7 7

U 10 7 7

U 12 8 8

U 14 11 11

1. League fees

PAA soccer fees are charged per player. PAA is responsible for paying the officials coordinator, officials fees for all regularly scheduled games, training fees/rules meetings associated with officials and coaches. If enough interest, the PAA will sponsor state certification clinics. This cost will be passed on to member institution for the number of coaches who attend and gain certification.

1. Coach certification and training

It is the responsibility of each member institution to ensure that each coach (head and assistant) and anyone who might serve in a leadership/teaching capacity with any team:

1. Have on file at the Catholic Center a completed criminal authorization form and proper clearance of that check. (Proper clearance is granted through the Human Resources Dept. at the Catholic Center). See appendix for a copy of the criminal authorization background check form.
2. This form should be submitted prior to the person being approved as a coach/volunteer.

All coaches (head and assistant) and anyone who might serve in a leadership/teaching capacity with any team must have attended and registered online to certify attendance at the VIRTUS – Protecting God’s Children Program. These courses are taught throughout the Diocese at different parishes/schools. Upcoming schedules are published in the West Tennessee Catholic and also available through the Human Resources Department at the Catholic Center.

1. Each head coach must attend the mandatory rules meeting for the sport. Assistant coaches are welcome to attend also.
2. Games Ending in Ties

Regular season games that are tied at the end of regulation – will end as a tie. The 5th – 8th grade divisions traditionally have an end of the year tournament upon completion of the regular season. Because a winner must be determined to advance to the next round, the following procedure will be followed:

* One 5-minute overtime period. If the score is not tied, the one with the larger number of goals will be declared the winner.
* If the score is still tied at the end of the first 5-minute overtime, the teams will play a second 5-minute overtime. If the score is not tied at the end of the second overtime, the one with the larger number of goals will be declared the winner.
* If the score is still tied at the end of the second 5-minute overtime, the teams will go into a shoot-out where 5 different players from each team will go one-on-one with the opponent’s goalie. This procedure will be continued until one team has broken the tie.

Please note that neither the overtime periods nor the shootouts are not sudden death where the 1st team to score wins. Each overtime period is to be played in full as well as each 5-player shoot-out per team is to be completed.