



Regional Club League Rules and Regulations 2018-19



Table of Contents

League Rules	Pg. 3
Best Practice	Pg. 15
Travel Policy	Pg. 18
Player Pass Rules	Pg. 20
Code of Conduct	Pg. 21



Regional Club League Rules 2018-19

Introduction

In order to provide an environment under which the development of youth soccer players is maximized, a Regional Club League (hereafter known as the RCL) has been formed for qualified Clubs with youth academies and teams in ages U9 through U19. It is administered by the Regional Club Subcommittee (RCS) of Washington Youth Soccer.

- (a) The Washington Youth Soccer Bylaws and authorized documents from the Soccer Operations Committee are the governing documents. Modifications to the **Rules of Competition – Internal Procedures** have been made expressly for RCL competition.
- (b) The RCL shall be for chartered Regional Clubs qualified by the specified criterion of fielding 1 team per age group/gender or 88% of possible teams in ages U12 through U18/19 in the RCL and comprised of properly registered youth players affiliated with Washington Youth Soccer Member Associations, provided such Clubs and Associations entering their teams and academies are in good standing with Washington Youth Soccer and that the team is in compliance with and has not violated any of the rules of Washington Youth Soccer.
- (c) Affiliated Club Select and Non-Regional Clubs may qualify teams into the RCL by the specified criterion (see the RCS-Select Agreement) and comprised of properly registered youth players affiliated with Washington Youth Soccer Member Associations, provided such Clubs and Associations entering their teams and academies are in good standing with Washington Youth Soccer and that the team is in compliance with and has not violated any of the rules of Washington Youth Soccer or the Select Agreement.

1.1 Administration

- (a) The Regional Club Subcommittee has been established by Washington Youth Soccer to manage soccer operations of the Regional Club League and issues directly related to the Regional level of play as specified in the Regional Club Subcommittee Charter.
- (b) The Coaching Directors of Regional Clubs may create subcommittees to formulate best league structures and best developmental practices to maximize the potential of youth development on a player by player basis.

1.2 Placement Meeting

Prior to each Seasonal Year, and in December of each seasonal year, the Directors of Coaching are required to attend the placement meeting for league play.

- (a) Agenda will be: review of automatic movement, 7v2 matches, and exceptional team qualifiers, affirming teams that are currently rostered to the Regional Club minimum and fielded requests for team placement where applicable.
- (b) Agenda that will be determined by results after this meeting but prior to the schedules posting:



- (c) All teams folding after the scheduled deadline from the Regional Club Commissioner will be subject to a fine.

1.41 Team Eligibility

- (a) Teams must be current with all Club, League, Association, and District fees and fines from the prior season before their participation will be allowed.
- (b) Teams must carry the minimum number of players required to fulfill all positions allowed on the field (e.g. 13 for 11-aside, 10 for 9-aside, 8 for 7-Aside, and 5 for 4-aside).

1.42 Staff Eligibility

Membership in the league requires adherence to the highest ethical standards of competition. Coaches, administrators and Association or club officials that demonstrate a lack of integrity or consistent inappropriate behavior will be removed from participation for a period of time as decided by the Committee, not to exceed State or USSF limitations on suspensions.

All adult personnel that routinely work with children, or around the children, or with children's personal information, must pass the Washington Youth Soccer Background Check.

1.43 WA Youth Soccer State Cup Tournament Eligibility

The top 10 finishing teams in the RCL may only compete in the US Youth Soccer Washington State Championships. The next 14 highest finishing teams in the RCL are may only compete in the Washington Youth Soccer President's Cup Division 1 or US Youth Soccer Washington State Championships. The remaining teams in the RCL may compete in the Washington Youth Soccer President's Cup Division 2 or higher.

Exception: 15U Boys- Post DA Age Group

- All teams in the Northwest Conference Post DA league must enter the Championship Cup
- The top 3 teams in RCL D1 must enter the Championship Cup. If team #4 is close to #3 then we recommend that team entering the Championship Cup.

1.5 Fee and Fine Structure

Per the RCL Procedures and Policies document, fines may be issued for incomplete or late match reporting.

- (a) All league fees for the RCL will be determined by management need as assessed by the RCS.
- (b) Any team submitted for placement in the RCL that withdraws after scheduling will be subject to a \$500 fine.
- (c) During league play, any team having an unexcused forfeiture, as determined by the RCS will be fined \$1000 for the first occurrence. A second unexcused forfeiture will constitute a withdrawal from the RCL, and the team's Member Association will be fined an additional \$500.
- (d) During league and State Cup Tournament play of a seasonal year, any coach receiving a red card removal from the match will be fined \$200 for the first offense, \$500 for the second offense and a Disciplinary Committee review, and a suspension from league operations for a third offense.



1.5.1 Disciplinary (see also 2.18)

Per the RCL Procedures and Policies document and the WA Youth Soccer Disciplinary rules (see the documents Disciplinary Process, Request for a Disciplinary Hearing, Judicial – Internal Process, and Judicial – Operating Documents on the WA Youth Soccer website):

- (a) Yellow and Red Cards are issued to both players and coaches/bench/spectators
- (b) Coaches are still warned before receiving any card but **must** receive a red card to be sent off by the Referee
- (c) All Cards issued **must be noted** on the match report copies (or digital records in Affinity) by the referee for both teams
- (d) All Cards issued on the match report must be listed by the team managers in Affinity within 24 hours of the match
- (e) The managers may notify the RCL Disciplinary Committee of its **intent to request a hearing** on all Disciplinary cards issued within 24 hours of the match. This does not constitute a Match protest, which is a separate procedure (see 1.52) nor is it an appeal, which occurs after the committee has posted a determination.
- (f) For all reports listed for the first of two double header matches in a weekend, the Director of Coaching for the Club may ask for an accelerated hearing for the cards issued so that the hearing may be resolved before the next played match.

1.5.2 Match Protest

Per the RCL Procedures and Policies document and the WA Youth Soccer Disciplinary rules (see the documents Disciplinary Process, Request for a Disciplinary Hearing, Judicial – Internal Process, and Judicial – Operating Documents on the WA Youth Soccer website):

- (a) All Match protests must be filed with the Referee at the end of the match and noted on the match report copies
- (b) All Match protests must list the FIFA/RCL rule violated by the referee
- (c) All Match protests must be filed within 48 hours of the match's conclusion, with the appropriate fee and paperwork

1.6 League Standings/Tie Breaker

- (a) If any ties of two or more teams exist in Division standings, the following criteria will be used for ranking those ties (except as qualified elsewhere in this document):
 - (1) Head to Head (wins, ties and losses)
 - (a) With more than two teams, the head to head performance is measured by the team records within the pool of tied teams. Highest performing records are organized in order of finish, and if the tie(s) is/are not resolved the rest of the tiebreakers are followed below.
 - (2) Best Goal Differential between tied teams
 - (3) Best Goal Differential in division play
 - (4) Fewest Goals allowed



(5) Coin Flip



1.7 Recognition Awards

Recognition of winning teams will be reviewed on an annual basis by the RCS. Winning teams for each division are noted in the Washington Youth Soccer Annual Report.

1.8 Rules of Play

- (a) All league play, tournaments, and special competition under the jurisdiction of the RCS shall be conducted in accordance with current Washington Youth Soccer Rules of Competition, except as modified herein.
- (b) RCL Jr competitions will modify the U8 US Youth proposal for their jamboree competitions by adding a goalkeeper that rotates among field players, and condense the periods of play to 2 for the purpose of executing the Jamborees.
 - a. A **Club-Player Pass** shall be executed for Regional clubs in all league play to facilitate the development of players without enacting transfers. Details of that roster procedure are formulated and refined by the Regional Club Subcommittee with review provided by the Soccer Operations Committee.
 - b. An **Association-Player Pass** shall be executed for Regional clubs and participating select clubs in all league play to facilitate the development of players without enacting permanent transfers. Details of that roster procedure are formulated at the Association level pending RCS approval for league play.
 - c. A **Dual Registered** player may be listed with a Regional Club team while at the same time participate with and play Recreational League only.
- (b) Field of Play - If a field is not properly marked, equipped and netted, the referee will have the option to NOT allow the game to be played. Coaches have the right to **protest** a match result if the field of play is not properly marked.

1.9 Player's Equipment

Each player shall have a number on the player's jersey. The number shall be affixed to the back of the jersey, clearly visible and a minimum of six (6) inches high. Each player on a team must wear a number different from the number of every other player on the team. Numbered jerseys for goalkeepers are optional. Home team must change if colors conflict with visiting team.



2.0 League Structure

The league shall be a promotion/relegation league from U13 through U18 and a placement league from U12 and below. Division size will be eight-team divisions until the final division, in which there may be more than 8 teams listed. Exceptions may be granted to create a bracket of 9 or more teams as approved by the RCS. Players are expected to be played up on teams to their level of ability within the RCL.

(a) Procedures:

- a. All first place teams in a division promote
- b. All last place teams in a division relegate
- c. For high school aged teams U15 and U16 and Fall teams U12-U14, the second place team in a lower division has a playoff against the 7th place team in the next division above to determine which team promotes or relegates. That match is played in the last week of the season and noted in the schedule release.
- d. If a Division has more than 8 teams and there is a division below it, at least 2 teams will relegate automatically from that division and every division below it.
- e. If a team wins its Fall division in league play, and wins the State Cup in its age, it has demonstrated that it is an exceptional team. That team then may choose to move up in age for the following season (permanently).
- f. If a team folds or withdraws from league play, the 'last team down' that relegated to the division below that one will have the first opportunity to promote back up.
- g. Fall divisions of 9 teams or larger at U11-U14 will be split into smaller divisions for Winter play.

2.1.0 Online Game Sheets and Club/Player Passes

- (a) Prior to a league game, coaches must provide the referee with either a roster/game sheet and valid membership passes, **or access to their online roster and cards from Affinity**.
 - a. Referees are listed in the Affinity system for background checks and as such have the ability to login to the matches they are assigned to.
 - b. A valid Membership Pass is a US Youth Soccer / Washington Youth Soccer, Affinity-generated, or Stack sports-generated card for the player's current team that is signed by the player, has a recent identifiable photo of the player, and is laminated.
 - c. Players must be listed on the official match sheet from Affinity (not handwritten), and have a valid Membership Pass to be eligible to play in the game at U12 Divisions and older. *Online match sheets incorporate the Player Card information for the referee and qualify as a valid Membership Pass.*
- (b) Teams that routinely appear at matches with incomplete sets of player cards or rosters will put their Club at risk of disciplinary sanctions.
- (c) All misconduct incident reports must be reported to the RCS Disciplinary Committee through the Affinity **and** Ridgestar websites.
- (d) Players using the Association or Club-Player Pass for development must be noted on the team roster only using the Affinity system. Failure to do so will result in a forfeiture.



2.1.1 Coaching/Sideline Conduct

- (a) Coaching from the sidelines – giving direction to one’s own team on points of strategy and position – is permitted, provided:
 - (1) Neither mechanical nor electronic devices are used;
 - (2) The tone of voice is informative and not a harangue.
- (b) All coaches, substitute players and other bench personnel are to remain within the “coaching area” (two yards behind the touch line and not within eighteen yards of the goal line).
- (c) No player, coach, substitute player or other bench personnel are to make derogatory remarks or gestures to the referees, other players, substitutes, **or spectators.**
- (d) No player, coach, substitute player or other bench person is to use profanity.
- (e) No player, coach, substitute player or other bench person is to incite, in any manner, or engage in any kind of disruptive behavior.
- (f) If the above rules are violated, the referee shall ask the offending party for compliance with the rules. The referee may file a written incident report to the WA Youth Soccer office, Attn: League Disciplinary Committee.
- (g) In the event that compliance is not received from the offending party, the referee shall issue a red card and ask the offending party to leave the playing area: this is a send-off. The referee must properly note the issued card on the (digital or paper) game roster as returned to the team managers and file a written incident report to the League Disciplinary Committee.
- (h) **If the offending party refuses to leave the playing area**, or returns after leaving, the referee shall abandon the match and file a written incident report of the game abandonment with the League Disciplinary Committee
- (i) It shall be the responsibility of each team to maintain proper spectator conduct. Each coach, manager and team, club, or league official shall be held primarily accountable for the conduct of the spectators for or from their respective teams. At no time shall foul or abusive language be permitted at any field.

2.1.2 Player Release and Transfer/Player Identification

- (a) All teams participating in RCL competition are eligible in US Youth Soccer-sponsored events. Therefore, the player releases and transfer rules applicable to US Youth Soccer competition shall prevail with the exceptions noted below:
 - 1) Players with outstanding club balances will not be allowed to move between clubs, nor return to competition until all balances are resolved. Proof of resolution must be provided for the Committee to review on request in case of dispute between clubs.
 - 2) Clubs may not add fees to the player’s balance after the player submits to leave the club.
 - 3) **A reasonable refund policy for players withdrawing from the club during the course of the current playing year must be established by each Club and clearly communicated to parents and players at the time of tryouts and club sign up.**
 - 4) Association/Club/Player Passes utilized for player development cannot violate the WA Youth Soccer roster limits for team play.



- (b) Both US Youth Soccer and WA Youth Soccer have a seasonal year defined as September 1st through August 31st. The RCS reserves the right to adjust league play according to the needs of the players.
- (c) Roster limits for minimum and maximum players will adhere to WA Youth Soccer guidelines. U15 and older teams may roster 22 players, with 18 only eligible on game day, on approval of their Association and District (District is not required if the structure does not exist). Please see the Soccer Operations Committee-approved rule for expanded rosters at www.WashingtonYouthSoccer.org.
- (d) A team shall be limited to a total of three (3) players from outside the Club received by transfer per seasonal year in league play.
- (e) Team rosters are frozen for State Cup Tournament play in accord with WA Youth Soccer regulations prior to any competitive State Cup Tournament format. No additions or transfers, except for utilization of the Club Pass during league play, will be allowed after the WA Youth Soccer mandated cutoff date.
- (f) Players being transferred or added to a team **may not play** until they have a Membership Pass (Digital or Paper) for their new team.

2.1.3 Scheduling of Games

The Regional Club Subcommittee is responsible for assigning league administration, jurisdiction and fines associated with violations of Regional Club League policy. Scheduled league matches that are threatened by inclement weather fall under the **WA Youth Soccer Travel Policy** (available at www.washingtonyouthsoccer.org)

- (a) Regularly scheduled league games shall have priority over any and all competition entered into by Regional Club teams.
- (c) The Home team determines field location, sideline policy, and kick-off time. Teams must provide their Member Association Representatives with home game and requested kick-off time information:
 - (1) League games should be scheduled to begin no earlier than 9:00 AM and no later than 6:00 PM. Exceptions- your games versus WA Timbers or Kitsap Alliance, unless agreed to by the visiting team in writing (includes fax and E-mail) at least two (2) weeks prior to the game.
 - (2) Double-header weekends for teams travelling across the State: Saturday games should not be scheduled to start before 2:00 PM and Sunday games should start no later than noon, unless agreed to by the visiting team in writing (including E-mail) at least two (2) weeks prior to the game.
 - (3) For all matches that are not double-header weekends for teams travelling across the State, the **shortest mapped travel time between the visiting team's Club address and the home team's field address via Google Maps** shall be used to determine game start times for travelling teams, plus 30 minutes for warm-up. Game start times may not create a travel start time earlier than 8 am, or travel end time later than 10 pm without approval from the opposition. The Club address of the traveling team to the scheduled game field determines travel time.
 - (i) For example, a team leaving Yakima to travel to Bellingham would travel 3.4 hours. Including warm-up, the match should not be scheduled to start before 12 p.m.
 - (4) Failure to schedule game start times within the prescribed guidelines may result in a mandatory game reschedule at the discretion of the League Commissioner.



- (a) A schedule change request must be agreed to by both teams and must be cleared in Affinity prior to the scheduled game date. The home team is responsible for scheduling the field and the officials. A team that fails to show for the match on the agreed upon schedule date and time, within a 30-minute grace period, that team will receive a loss for that game. If both teams fail to show, the match resolves as un-played and both teams may be fined.
- (b) If a referee declares a field unplayable at kick-off time or the field is closed by the field administrator, both coaches must report the postponement to the League Commissioner. The home team is responsible for rescheduling the game at a point midway between the clubs, with the approval of the visiting team. If the teams cannot agree on a reschedule date or location, the League Administrator will determine the reschedule date and location. The designated home team will be responsible for any field rental and referee expenses. If a team fails to show, on this date, that team will receive a loss for that game. If both teams fail to show, the match will be registered as un-played and both teams may be fined.
- (c) If a game is not played because there was no referee and a substitute could not be agreed upon, the visiting team may have the choice of rematch date and location. If there is no referee at the rescheduled game and a substitute cannot be agreed upon, the League Commissioner will reschedule the game at the expense of both teams.
- (d) If both teams have been notified of the game location and kick-off time, and one team fails to show up for the game, following a thirty (30) minute grace period, the game will be forfeited to the showing team with a score of 1-0.
- (e) If both teams have been notified of the game location and kick-off time, and both teams fail to show up for the game, the match resolves as un-played and both teams may be fined.
- (f) All league games must be played by the final weekend of the league season unless approved in advance by the League Commissioner

2.1.4 Responsibilities of Coaches/Managers

Please see the RCL Procedures and Policies document for more information on best practices.

- (a) The following are the responsibilities of the assigned “home team”:
 - (1) Marking the field-of play;
 - (2) Providing a proper game ball;
 - (3) Providing nets;
 - (4) Providing corner flags when applicable;
 - (5) Providing adequate directions to the opposing team to the home team’s venue as soon as game time and location are scheduled by the local scheduler, and at least ninety-six (96) hours prior to the game.
 - (6) Communicating the sideline policy to the opposing team, and the match referees.
- (b) Visiting teams must confirm receipt of the above directions by no later than 72 hours prior to the game.



- (c) Failure of the home team to properly notify the visiting team of game time and location or failure of the visiting team to acknowledge receipt of the game time and location information will result in a fine of \$100 and a forfeiture for the match.
- (d) Weather conditions and field closures are the exception to the aforementioned game notification and confirmation rules.
- (e) Any coach, assistant coach, team manager, or other party having direct contact with players or acting in the official capacity of the Club must be in compliance with Washington Youth Soccer's Risk Management Policy.
- (f) All match scores and cards issued must be entered into Affinity following the match. Please make sure to enter both teams' information.

2.1.5 Reporting Scores

The Coach or Manager of both teams (regardless of win, loss, or tie) must report the final game score in Affinity within twenty-four (24) hours of the match conclusion. Teams that do not report their score in Affinity may be fined \$25 for each occurrence. This policy ensures that we can contact players and coaches on disciplinary issues in a timely fashion before their next match.

- (a) Teams must report the game score, players scoring, and cards issued in the Affinity system.
- (b) If a game was not played as scheduled for any reason, this information must be reported via email to your club representative as described by Club policies, or the League Commissioner (Paulb@washingtoneyouthsoccer.org) if no such Club policy exists.
- (c) If a game was abandoned, this information must be reported via email to your club representative as described by Club policies, or the League Commissioner (Paulb@washingtoneyouthsoccer.org) if no such Club policy exists.

2.1.6 Officiating

A referee shall be assigned to officiate each game with the authority assigned as specified in the "Laws of the Game" (FIFA).

- (a) If possible, the Referee Assignor will be responsible for scheduling properly registered and qualified referees and assistant referees.
- (b) If assistant referees cannot be scheduled, each team must provide one (1) person to act as club linemen, if the referee wishes.
- (c) Referees who are also coaches, team managers, or relatives of players-of-record in a given age group of the RCL shall not be assigned matches in that age and gender group. Other individuals should disqualify themselves if there is a conflict of interest in that age and gender group.
- (d) Failure of a referee to show up within thirty (30) minutes of a scheduled game time will constitute grounds for a rematch. A substitute official may be chosen upon agreement by both coaches and the substitute's decisions will be final.
- (e) Coaches may file a letter of concern on a referee to the Washington Youth Soccer Director of Referee Development.
- (f) It is the responsibility of the Member Association or Club to send a complete RCL game schedule to the Referee Coordinator responsible for scheduling referees for their RCL games at the earliest opportunity.
- (g) Before the start of each game, the referee will ensure the home team's sideline policy is followed.



- (h) If any player has been sent off the field of play by the referee for violating the “Laws of the game”, the referee must file a written report following the completion of the game to the

Regional Club Disciplinary Committee. (Contact information will be available on www.WashingtonYouthSoccer.org under the Leagues tab)

- (i) Before the start of each game, the referee will obtain an official game sheet (paper or digital) and review the Membership Passes from each team (paper or digital). Players may not be handwritten on an official game sheet. **Players not listed on the official game sheet (paper or digital) and not possessing a valid Membership Pass (paper or digital) will not be allowed to participate in the game.** At the end of the game, the referee will note the final score, misconducts issued, goals scored, and any other information deemed appropriate. The referee will list the cards and score in Affinity and return one completed copy of each game sheet to each team.
- (j) Membership passes (paper or digital) are to be presented to the referee prior to each game.

2.1.7 Game Abandonment

- (a) If it has been determined that a league game is abandoned by the referee due to actions of the coach, players, spectators or any combination thereof, **NO REPLAY WILL BE GRANTED.**
- (b) Furthermore, if at the time of the abandonment:
- (1) The opposing team is ahead, the score will be the final score.
 - (2) The team causing the abandonment is ahead, the game shall be considered forfeited and a score of 1-0 in favor of the opposing team will be awarded.
 - (3) If the score is tied, the game shall be considered forfeited and a score of 1-0 in favor of the opposing team will be awarded.
 - (4) If it has been determined that both teams caused the abandonment, the match will be considered un-played and not re-schedulable with zero points for both teams.

2.1.8 Disciplinary

- (a) Clubs participating in the league shall approve a Coaching Director, Administrator, or Coach who shall be eligible to form the Disciplinary Committee. This Committee shall be staffed by Coaches and Administrators from Regional Clubs and ex officio members.
- (b) The Disciplinary Committee will review disciplinary cards issued each week (before Wednesday evenings) through the Affinity system. Written supplemental reports submitted by referees into other referee reporting systems must be
- (i) Filed (complete) within the appropriate time frame of 24 hours following the match
 - (ii) Labeled appropriately to the Regional Club League
 - (iii) It shall be the responsibility of the coach, or listed alternate, to contact their Club Disciplinary Director to obtain a hearing process or obtain notification of any action taken.
- (c) The Disciplinary Code is covered in the Washington Youth Soccer Governing Documents titled **Judicial - Operating Documents and Judicial Process – Internal Procedures.**



- (d) Players that accumulate three yellow cards during the league season will be ineligible to compete in their next scheduled league game (a required sit-out). Yellow card totals will not be carried over from the league season to other non-league events such as State Cup Tournaments. Players that accumulate a second set of 3 yellow cards during the league season will be ineligible to compete in their next 3 scheduled league matches.

- (e) Players receiving a red card will be ineligible to compete in their next regularly scheduled game unless a disciplinary hearing absolves the card issuance. At the next Disciplinary Committee meeting a more severe penalty may be applied by the Disciplinary Committee under established guidelines and according to the supplemental reports filed/evidence submitted.

- (f) Penalty points will be accumulated over the seasonal year. Yellow cards will be accumulated at one (1) point each and red cards at three (3) points each.

- (g) Players that accumulate seven (7) points from red and/or yellow card accumulation during the seasonal year will be suspended and be required to petition the Disciplinary Committee for reinstatement of eligibility to compete on any Washington Youth Soccer team. Upon reinstatement, the Disciplinary Committee will set the terms and conditions of probation. Failure to comply with the terms and conditions of probation may cause those player(s) to be suspended for the remainder of the seasonal year.

- (h) A coach of a team receiving a red card must notify the RCL Disciplinary Committee of his or her intent to **ask for a hearing** on the card within 24 hours of the match. Match reports that do NOT include the red card listing for the coach will be accepted as a failure of the referee to notify the coach properly of his or her removal from the game, and the card will not be admissible.

2.1.9 Disputing Misconduct Reports

- (a) All protests must be handled according to the published Washington Youth Soccer Rules of Competition within the league commissioner.

2.2 Ethics

- (a) The purpose of this league is to set the highest standards to develop youth players to their fullest potential – both physically and emotionally. As such, participants must conduct themselves to that same highest standard. At all times, adult participants are expected to be role models for the youth involved in this league - exhibiting good sporting behavior in both victory and defeat.

- (b) All participants in the Regional Club League (RCL) are members of Washington Youth Soccer and therefore must adhere faithfully to its stated bylaws, rules and policies as well as to their intent. All coaches, managers, players and spectators will adhere to the RCL Code of Conduct.

2.3 Safe Soccer Framework

WA Youth Soccer are committed to making soccer the preeminent sport in the United States by serving athletes, our members, and their fans. WA Youth Soccer Safe Soccer Framework, which incorporates policies mandated by the U.S. Olympic Committee and the U.S. Center for SafeSport, represents a



foundational structure for building a soccer community where all participants, be they athletes, coaches, referees, parents, administrators or volunteers, play an active role in creating a soccer atmosphere free of all forms of emotional, physical and sexual misconduct.

Reporting Concerns

WA Youth Soccer has zero tolerance for abuse or misconduct of any kind.

As part of this Framework, WA Youth Soccer encourages a culture of respect and open communication in which all participants feel comfortable reporting concerns, whether the concerns involve suspected abuse or any other misconduct. RCL Personnel are reminded of their obligation under the Federal the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and SafeSport Authorization Act of 2017 (the “SafeSport Act”) to report suspected child abuse to law enforcement authorities within 24 hours of becoming aware of such information.

In addition, RCL Personnel are required to promptly report to WA Youth Soccer any matter reported to law enforcement and any other alleged violation of the Safe Soccer framework. Failure to promptly report may lead to removal from the RCL.

Concerns may always be raised to the WA Youth Soccer.

Hotline at report to the U.S. Center for SafeSport at <https://www.safesport.org/>.

Reports will be handled as discreetly as possible. In the event WA Youth Soccer receives a report that implicates a reporting obligation to law enforcement or the Center for SafeSport, we will make the report directly and/or work with you to make the report.

WA Youth Soccer does not tolerate retaliation of any kind. No individual who makes a good faith report will be subject to retaliation, including harassment, or any adverse employment consequence, as a result of making a report.



Best Practices

Introduction

Regional Club League Procedures and Policies set operational standards that are not defined as rules. These policies and procedures should be followed to bring Regional Clubs closer to operational agreement and a smoother administrative process.

Scheduling and Re-Scheduling Policy

Please see the **RCL Operating Rules**, specifically 2.14, for scheduled time frames for matches.

The policy for setting schedules and organizing reschedules is as follows:

1. All home teams control their own field schedule and as such, the fiscal and logistical limits for that Club to execute rescheduled matches must be respected.
2. Timeliness is critical: plan ahead so that organizations with restrictive referee policies can avoid extra fees for late cancellations, etc.
3. Remember that all schedule changes have a cascade affect, which means that one change may require 3 other changes to meet the desired outcome. This has a broad effect on the schedules.
4. Notification for field location and match time changes must be confirmed by the away team. Teams that do not communicate changes or responses to changes in a timely manner may be subject to fines. Valid attempts to communicate to the Manager/Coach/Director of Coaching are (in order of priority):
 - a) Phone call (not voice mail)
 - b) Affinity update
 - c) Email
 - d) Text
5. Priorities for reschedules (in order):
 - a) Field availability (due to weather conditions or uncontrolled events)
 - b) Player availability (due to illnesses or uncontrolled events)
 - c) Coach availability (due to conflicting schedules or an uncontrolled event)
6. While re-scheduling away matches that are expected to be double-headers, the away team must inform the home team(s) of their intent and that the double-header rules for scheduling the match are in play.
7. Away teams that require a new game date must submit a reasonable number (at least 3) of alternative dates for consideration by the home team.
 - a) If no alternative game date can be found between the teams at least 2 weeks prior to the match being played, the issue should be escalated to the Directors of Coaching of the clubs for resolution.



- b) If no alternative date can be found after escalation, the match is played as scheduled.
 - c) If the match passes its scheduled date without an agreed-upon reschedule date, that match is listed as an “un-played” match with no points for either team. In the event that a weather event or crisis prevents the match from executing, the teams may notify the League Commissioner and reschedule within 48 hours of the event without the match relegating to “un-played” status.
8. **Before plane tickets are purchased to fly to an away match date, the away team must disclose the pending purchase to the home team prior to the confirmation of the date and time.** No reschedules will be considered if this disclosure is not documented.
 9. Manager contact must be confirmed on any proposed schedule change, through the Affinity platform (preferred) and through written confirmation of the change.
 10. Once the schedule is published in Affinity, teams must come to a mutual agreement for any change to the scheduled dates. Times and location are at the discretion of the home Club, but once confirmed by the away team 72 hours prior to the match, **mutual agreement to any further change must be reached.** Please follow Affinity’s directions for updating home fields and match times.
 11. No reschedules into the last 2 weeks of the league season will be permitted unless reviewed and approved by the League Commissioner.
 12. Intra-club matches (“A” team versus “B” team from the same Club) will not be scheduled during the last 25% of the league season: Fall, Winter, or Spring.

Match Day Responsibilities

RCL rules clearly define the responsibility of the teams for field dimensions, goal size, goal nets, and referee coverage. Please see the **Regional Club League Rules** for more details regarding referee reports, filing match reports, and the difference between match protests and requests for hearings on disciplinary cards issued.

- Only Affinity rosters are considered official RCL rosters for the season. Please have your rosters uploaded (free as a service from Affinity) prior to the season and take advantage of the Digital Roster and Digital Cards services.
- Sideline behavior is the responsibility of the Coach of each team. Please follow the sideline policy as issued by your Club.
- RCL Disciplinary Committee reviews the reports from managers and from referees. Please have managers immediately input all cards issued, listing the player/coach and the foul, and goals scored in the Affinity system following the match. This allows us to adjudicate cards issued much faster and relay the information back to teams in a timely manner.
- Match results may be protested if the fields do not pass inspection from the coaches and referees.
- Protests of the match results **MUST** be from a violation of a FIFA rule or misapplication of a Regional Club League rule and **MUST** be lodged with the referee immediately following the match. The opposing coach must also be notified at that time.



- Contested cards – any card issued at a match for a player or coach may have a hearing request with the RCL Disciplinary Committee to resolve the issue. Evidence on the FIFA rule that was not applied correctly by the referee and any information on the conditions in which the card was issued may be submitted as evidence; that filing must occur within forty-eight (48) hours of the match completion. Red cards are a required minimum one (1) game sit-out for the Coach or the Player (next scheduled match for **that team**). Players issued a red card or under a sit-out with a team **may not be player passed with either the Association Pass or the Club Pass**.
- Home teams failing to provide referee coverage cannot force the away team to accept replacement referees, and if the away team declines the replacement referees, the match **will be replayed** at a neutral site (roughly half the distance between the teams based on available fields).

Conflict Resolution

Conflicts between teams regarding scheduling that cannot be resolved 2 weeks prior to the match date must be immediately escalated to the Club Directors of Coaching to resolve. Failure to resolve the issue at the Director of Coaching level escalates the issue to the Regional Club Subcommittee for final instruction/decision. Please note that all communications need to be responded to in a timely manner for resolutions to occur.



Travel Policy

By entering a Washington Youth Soccer State Sponsored tournament/league, including Cup Tournaments, State League, and Regional Club League, teams agree to make *every effort* to play all of their games.

Safety is always our number one priority. It is not required nor expected for teams to take an alternate route that is much farther than the original direct route in order to make a game. It is impossible to cover all situations that may arise due to inclement weather in one document; therefore, any situation not covered below will be referred to the corresponding Washington Youth Soccer staff program manager to determine further action.

Inclement Weather Travel Policy

Road Closures

If a roadway necessary to reach a game location is closed either 24 hours prior to game time when teams are staying overnight or 6 hours prior to game time when teams are traveling the day of the game, per the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) for reasons other than regularly scheduled maintenance closures, then the game will need to be rescheduled through the State Sponsored tournament/league representative. If the game is unable to be rescheduled, the program committee and/or staff program manager for the State Sponsored tournament/league will flip a coin to decide the game results if results are needed for advancement.

Chains Required

If roadways are open but chains are required, a team may opt not to travel. These games must be rescheduled as soon as possible at the original home team's site. If either team refuses the reschedule, the team refusing will accept a loss for the game. It will be recorded as a 0-1 loss and any unrecoverable game expenses the other team incurred for the unplayed game may be submitted to the Washington Youth Soccer office for *review* to be reimbursed by the team opting out of travel. In addition to reimbursing the opponent for the unrecoverable game expenses, the team declining/refusing to reschedule may also be subject to forfeit fees as applicable in accordance with each State Sponsored tournament/league rules of competition. See reimbursement policy below.

If roadways are open 4-24 hours before game time with no requirement for chains per WSDOT, and a team does not travel to the game, then they will be issued a forfeit loss. The team earning the forfeit loss will not advance in the tournament/league; additionally, the team may be subject to fines per the State Sponsored tournament/leagues rules. Any unrecoverable game expenses the hosting team incurred for the unplayed game may be submitted to the Washington Youth Soccer office for *review* to be reimbursed by the team opting out of travel. See reimbursement policy below.



Reimbursement Policy

Unrecoverable game expenses include field and referee fees. These fees will vary across the state therefore reimbursement for unrecoverable game expenses shall not exceed \$300.00.

The team refusing to reschedule will be billed \$1000.00 by Washington Youth Soccer for the approved unrecoverable expenses from the original unplayed game. It is the team's responsibility to pay the invoice within 30 days. If payment is not received within 30 days, WA Youth Soccer will then invoice the team's Member Association for the unpaid balance. Team penalties for outstanding balances will include ineligibility for the specific team to compete in any current or future state-sanctioned competition until payment is received. Association penalties for outstanding team balances will include probation or suspension of participation of the Association's teams in future state-sanctioned competitions.

Unplayable Fields Policy

Declared by Facility or Local Soccer Administration

If the field is declared unplayable by the facility or the local soccer administration and the hosting team is notified by the facility/local soccer administrator, the hosting team is required to notify the traveling team as soon as possible. It is recommended that the home team makes every effort to find an alternate playing field for the originally scheduled game time and maintains contact with the away team during the process.

If an alternate field cannot be found, the unplayable game needs to be rescheduled as soon as possible through the appropriate tournament/league representative. If a team had already traveled less than 100 miles one-way to the original unplayable game site and an alternative field is not available, the rescheduled game will be rescheduled at the original Home Team's facility. If the team traveled over 100 miles one-way to the original site, the game will be rescheduled at a neutral* field to minimize travel. The home team will not be responsible for hotel/travel costs that may be incurred by the away team if a facility declares the fields unplayable. If the game is unable to be rescheduled, the program committee and/or staff program manager for the State Sponsored tournament/league will flip a coin to decide the game results if results are needed for advancement.

Declared by Referee Crew

If the field is not declared unplayable by the facility, the assigned referee crew for the game may declare the field unplayable 15 minutes – 1 hour prior to game time. The referee crew must be onsite and will consult with the referee assignor and/or field scheduler to determine if alternate options are available – i.e. relocation, delay, reschedule, etc. to declare if a field is unplayable. If the game cannot be played, the game needs to be rescheduled as soon as possible through the appropriate tournament/league representative. If a team had already traveled less than 100 miles one-way to the original unplayable game site and an alternative field is not available, the rescheduled game will be rescheduled at the original Home Team's facility. If the team traveled over 100 miles one-way to the original site, the game will be rescheduled at a neutral* field to minimize travel. If the game is unable to be rescheduled, the program committee and/or staff program manager for the State Sponsored tournament/league will flip a coin to decide the game results if results are needed for advancement.



* A neutral field is defined as a field outside of each team's Association boundaries that provides close to or equal travel distance and is agreed upon by both teams. For help facilitating the neutral site, contact the State Sponsored tournament/league commissioner.

Player Pass Rules 2018-2019

The spirit of the rule is to provide developmental opportunities within a league season for players to move to a higher level of competition, and to temporarily replace players with documentable injuries and illness. Players using the Club/Player Pass should have a participatory target of 35 Washington Youth Soccer sanctioned matches in league and State Cup play during that year period. Violating the spirit of the Club/Player Pass is considered any player movement to

1. Justify a result for a team (**e.g.: prevent promotion/relegation or simply to improve standings**) by bringing a starting player from a higher level of play team.

Violation of the spirit of the rule will result in a suspension of the use of the Pass for that team and the possibility of a fine of \$500 levied by the Regional Club Subcommittee.

Please note that the use of the Digital Roster and Digital Player cards in Affinity avoids the problems of written roster copies and player eligibility questions due to yellow/red card accrual.

1. These rules shall be in effect for all RCL matches in 11v11 or 9v9 format.
2. No more than 3 players may be moved via the Player Pass to a single team for any given match without approval from the Coaching Director of the opposing club.
3. Players may move up in division or age without restriction, but **may not move down in age or division.**
 - a. Goalkeepers are exempt, but may only play in the goal and only in the case of a documented goalkeeper injury, not an absence.
4. Affinity Game Rosters must be noted for player pass use. **These cannot be handwritten, and must be listed through Affinity** for the pass to be used.
 - a. DO NOT transfer the player and have the player list permanently (for the season) with the second team. This will lead to a suspension of the use of the Pass since it cannot be determined how many times the player participated.
5. Mutual agreement between the DoC's may waive the requirements of item 3, but the results of the game then may not be contested.
6. Failure to follow these procedures will result in the forfeiture of the match



Code of Conduct

1.1 Introduction

The Regional Club Charter is a commitment between Washington Youth Soccer, a Member Association, and a chartered Regional Club to work together to serve the highest level of development and play, and improve the quality of development across the association.

- (a) The Washington Youth Soccer Bylaws and Operating Procedures are the governing documents.
- (b) Ethical violations are treated as more grievous offenses and subject to censure and possible disbarment at both an individual and Club level. All Clubs are encouraged to consider the behavior of all adults within their organization as role model specific.

1.2 Ethics Policies

The purpose of this league is to set the highest standards to develop youth players to their fullest potential – both physically and emotionally. As such, participants must conduct themselves to that same highest standard. At all times, adult participants are expected to be role models for the youth involved in this group of chartered clubs - exhibiting good sporting behavior in both victory and defeat. All participants in Regional Clubs and the Regional Club League (RCL) are members of Washington Youth Soccer and therefore must adhere faithfully to its stated bylaws, rules, and policies as well as to their intent. All coaches, managers, players, and spectators will adhere to the Regional Club Code of Conduct.

In addition to those stated bylaws, rules and policies, adult members of the Regional Clubs shall abide by the following:

1. Will not recruit players – the definition of “recruit” for purposes of this league shall be: Approaching a player who is registered to and actively playing for another team within Washington Youth Soccer, and asking them to either try-out or play for any other team, without first receiving prior written permission from the players’ current Club Director of Coaching – even for purposes of guest play (email is considered acceptable written permission). The only "open period" is the week between the US Youth Soccer Washington State Championships and the start of tryouts for their gender/age group. During this week only, players are allowed to attend other teams’ training sessions without approval from their current Club Director of Coaching. Players must initiate interest and the coach should have an email thread from the players (or parents) expressing their interest. They must have this prior to a player coming to practice. If a player/parent calls the coach, they can talk and agree to them joining a training session, but must email them as well. Players cannot be offered spots at the practices, though relative levels of interest from both parties may be expressed. These open training sessions cannot be advertised. There can only be two practices per team.
2. Will not acquire teams from outside their Club unless said teams are released from their clubs in accord with the Operating Documents rule regarding Coach and Player movement. [Club mergers (in which boards are combined under advisement of the Regional Club Subcommittee, and rules, developmental plans, resources, and players are brought together in one Association) or



Association mergers that accomplish the same task are not considered individual team acquisitions.]

3. Will not engage in behavior so as to be suspended by any Washington Youth Soccer or RCL disciplinary body, and/or acquire enough accumulated disciplinary points so as to be required to stand before any Washington Youth Soccer or RCL disciplinary body;
4. Will not unnecessarily hamper the playing of any scheduled match at its originally scheduled time and place, or cause undue hardship should the re-schedule of a match become necessary;
5. Will encourage and exhibit good sportsmanship before, during, or after any sanctioned match or practice;
6. Will not accept players from another Club who have outstanding fees to another member of Washington Youth Soccer without appropriate documentation as described in the RCL rules;
7. Will not hire a coach from another Regional Club and allow said coach to coach the same age and gender of his/her previous association without prior approval from the Directors of Coaching of both Regional Clubs. Regional Clubs may not hire coaches from other Washington Youth Soccer organizations into the same age and gender groups they coached at non-Regional Clubs unless released by their current clubs under the Operating Documents rule regarding Coach and Player movement;
8. Will not practice outside of their Association boundaries without prior approval from the Association and Regional Club Director of Coaching that resides in that area;
9. No coach/player will have in his/her possession, or consume, alcoholic beverages or tobacco during any RCL competition or training.

1.3 Code of Conduct Violation Procedures

Upon receipt of an allegation of violation of this code of conduct on the part of a Regional Club, the RCL Disciplinary Committee will first request that the involved clubs attempt to resolve the conflict. If resolution cannot be reached, the Committee will require the Clubs to compile their evidence for submission to an RCS panel that review all submitted evidence and present a resolution to the RCS for discussion and resolution. The decision of the RCS is binding. Resolutions that sanction any Club three (3) times over a two-year period will be automatically reviewed and Club officials, including the Director of Coaching, will be asked to attend a hearing by the Committee. The Club at that time will be placed in the probation process. Subsequent failures to address persistent issues appropriately for one (1) year following the inception of the process will result in review and remediation to address the specific issues, including leadership. This review will be facilitated by Washington Youth Soccer, the Regional Club subcommittee, and the local Member Association.



1.4 Disputing Misconduct Reports

All protests must be handled according to the published Washington Youth Soccer Judicial – Operating Documents and RCL Operating Rules.

Regional Club Members alleged to be in violation of these, or any other stated USSF, US Youth Soccer, or Washington Youth Soccer Codes of Ethics will be required to stand before the Regional Club Subcommittee (RCS) who will act as the Code of Conduct Violation Committee. Allegations of code of conduct violations will be made in accordance with USSF, USYSA, and Washington Youth Soccer bylaws and operating procedures, with a copy sent to the Chair of the Regional Club Subcommittee. A written decision of suspension by a Washington Youth Soccer disciplinary body is automatically considered to be a written allegation of a Regional Club Code of Conduct Violation.

Notification of Receipt Rules and Regulations Document

I, _____, have read completely and understand this document as presented and will adhere to them as instructed by the Director of Coaching/Technical Director/Executive Director.

Coach/Volunteer Name Printed: _____

Coach/volunteer Signature: _____ **Date** _____

Club Director of Coaching/Technical Director/Executive Director

Signature: _____ **Date** _____