



## PCSL COACHES MANUAL Updated for Fall 2025 Season

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### FC Central Illinois/PCSL Executive Board

President – Kirt McReynolds  
 Vice President – Matt Frank  
 Treasurer – Matt Frank  
 Secretary – Roger Bedeker  
 Director – John Lambert

## Important Dates

**FIRST DAY OF PRACTICE** (teams are **not** allowed to practice prior to this date) **League office will determine and distribute at [pcslsoccer.org](http://pcslsoccer.org) ,**

**SCHEDULES** – The schedules will be posted on the PCSL web site on the [Match Schedules Page](#) under the age division and coach's name. The League reserves the right to change the schedules as needed. It is the coach's responsibility to distribute the schedule to the parents. Be sure to give them your name, age group, the Field # and its location. With the age division and coach name, parents will be able to reference the [www.pcslsoccer.org](http://www.pcslsoccer.org) website for the schedule, field location and up-to-date changes and information.

## COACHING REQUIREMENTS

### VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION

All coaches, head coaches and assistants must complete all volunteer requirements **prior to receiving your roster**. All volunteers are required to register as a [PCSL volunteer](#), submit to the office a [IYSA Emergency Medical Release and Liability Waiver](#), complete IYSA coaching requirements including coach membership, background check, concussion training and Safe Sport training. Coaches will be notified by email of what they need to complete.

### ROSTERS AND IYSA EMERGENCY MEDICAL RELEASE & LIABILITY WAIVER

The IYSA player forms are electronic now, so you do not need to collect from players. **It is crucial that you are only playing and practicing with players that are on your roster.** Only PCSL players registered through the Sports Engine account may play for and practice with PCSL players. Your roster is electronic and available through the sports engine program. Please reach out to the office immediately if you encounter a discrepancy.

### TEAMS

**PCSL does not assign players based on last year's team, carpooling arrangements, coach preferences, scheduling conflicts, or other individual requests.** PCSL forms teams based on location code. Additional factors determining a player's placement are the closest available volunteer coach, the school a child attends and when the player registered.

Inform the office of:

- Your assistant coach, practice times and location.
- Changes to a player's team assignment or status (such as dropouts or additions) are to come through the PCSL office in writing. **If a coach has a child playing on their team that was not assigned to that team by the league, they will automatically forfeit their position as a coach. This is a major liability**

## DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE

To distribute any literature that is not PCSL Board approved at practices, games, via the phone, email or mail is prohibited. The team roster is the sole property of PCSL and is not to be used to generate mailing lists for any other business except that of PCSL.

## UNIFORMS

PCSL's uniform sponsors are **Jimmy John's , Clemmons and Associates and Jasper's Java!** We are excited to have them as part of the PCSL family. **Uniform shirts can only be purchased through the online store.** There is also other soccer essentials offered (shorts, socks, spirit wear, ball) that can be purchased as well from the on-line store. All online orders will be delivered directly to the home.

Required PCSL Uniform:

- PCSL shirts - 1 sky blue and 1 grey (**purchase online only**) Link is [here](#) to order.
- Shorts - 1 black (purchase online or locally)
- Sock - 1 black (purchase online or locally)
- Shin Guards (purchase online or locally)
- Soccer cleats/athletic shoes (purchase locally)

## SOCCER BALL

Every child should bring their own soccer ball to all practices. The required ball size for the age group is listed below. Balls can be purchased online through the online store or locally.

Under 6 - Under 8	size 3
Under 9 - Under 12	size 4
Under 14 - HS	size 5

## PRACTICE POLICY

Coaches are expected to support PCSL's philosophy, "Everyone Plays." Our program's goal is for kids to play soccer, so we mandate that every player on every team must play at least 50% of every game regardless of practice or game attendance.

**The coach is responsible for establishing the time and place for practices and communicating it to their team.** Fall 2025 Bloomington Parks and Normal Parks can be arranged through PCSL office. School fields must still be arranged through the school office. It is advisable to check with the school's office or other owner of the site to see if times are available. **Be sure to share the space so everyone has somewhere to practice.**

If proof of insurance is needed to gain authorization for a particular location, please contact the office and an insurance certificate will be provided. When you contact the office, please have contact/address information ready for the property including a fax number or email address to where the certificate should be sent.

**The PCSL facilities may not be used for practice at any time.** Listed are some suggested local sites for practices. Please keep in mind that it is not a complete list as parks and other areas for practice are popping up all the time:

## **Updated fall 2025**

This list was updated in cooperation with the City of Bloomington and Town of Normal

\* indicates no permanent goals

ALL CAPS INDICATE A UNIT 5 SCHOOL PRACTICE ARRANGED WITH SCHOOL

### **BLOOMINGTON**

Airport Park  
Bittner Park \*  
Cedar Ridge Full field  
Cedar Ridge Small field  
Clearwater Park\*  
Ewing Park 3 \*  
Gaelic Park \*  
Miller Park \*  
Oakland School \*  
Stevenson School  
Suburban East Park \*  
Tipton Park \*

FOX CREEK SCHOOL

PEPPER RIDGE SCHOOL

### **NORMAL (GOAL LIST BELOW)**

Carden Park (Prairieland School)  
Fairview School  
Martin Luther King Jr. Park (Sugar Creek School)  
One Normal Plaza-East Side  
Rosa Parks Commons  
Underwood Park  
COLENE HOOSE SCHOOL  
GLENN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
GROVE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
OAKDALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
PARKSIDE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL  
Cedar Ridge School

The Town of Normal would like you to contact the PCSL office to reserve fields for fall 2025.

Follow the link to the Town of Normal's online guide for all soccer fields in parks: <https://www.normal.org/1480/Soccer-Fields>. Follow the link for a list of Bloomington parks and amenities: <https://www.bloomingtonparks.org/facilities/advanced-components/facility-directory-standard-map>

**Schools in ALL CAPS above must be arranged through school office. Contact them to inquire about use.**

## **MATCHES**

For U9-HS divisions: Players should be at the match site 10-15 minutes prior to the match.

For U9/U10, one coach from each team will be allowed to be on the field to help players with organization during the first half of each game. For U12 and up, no coaches may be on the playing field during the match. Coaches and players who are sitting out should be on one side of the field; spectators on the other. Coaches on the players' side of the field are limited to no more than three; one coach and two assistants. Coaches must stay on their designated one half of the field. Parents are to be 6 feet behind the touchline to give the linesperson adequate room to move up & down the field, so as not to interfere with the progress of the match. When a referee is not available for a match, each team provides a designated referee (other than the coach) for each half of the match. The coach should report any lack of referee or any problems with a referee with a note in the match report or in writing to the office at [league@pcslsoccer.org](mailto:league@pcslsoccer.org).

For U7 & U8 divisions: One coach may be on the field during the match but should try to not shout instructions and only manage the match. Please have your team arrive no more than 15 min. before game time. This will help to control the in & out process and help to cut down on congestion between games.

## **MATCH REPORTS 9U and older**

Scores are reported on the Match report form by the referee at the end of each match. Coaches are asked to sign the match report at the end of the game. Please leave any comments in the space provided and return to the referee. The referee will turn in the completed match report to the Referee Director.

If a referee is not present at the game, please fill out the form and indicate that the referee did not show. Forms can be obtained from the Referee Director who will be present each game on Saturday. Please complete and return back to him. **This information is important to the league's organization.**

## WEATHER

Matches are played in most weather conditions. The officials and coaches can call a match that is underway because of thunderstorms or severe weather. In case of lightning, the match or practice is called immediately and not resumed. Matches may be cancelled prior to the game time because of the weather. There are several ways to learn of cancellations but the quickest will be a message sent through the Sports Engine App. **We will use the Sports Engine App to notify all coaches, who can communicate with their teams.**

Check the PCSL website ([www.pcslsoccer.org](http://www.pcslsoccer.org)), follow us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/PCSLsoccer>) for notification.

If the League has cancelled games, do not play even if the weather clears. Once matches are cancelled, they will not be rescheduled or resumed the same day. Do not call the office for cancellation information.

## FIELD INFORMATION

**Eastview Christian Church Soccer Fields (U9-HS):** See the map included at the back of the manual or visit [www.pcslsoccer.org](http://www.pcslsoccer.org) for a map of the fields. Few reminders

- **NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, SMOKING ON THE PROPERTY**
- **NO PETS ARE ALLOWED ON THE PROPERTY.** (IYSA insurance forbids)
- Please leave the field free of litter after your match.

**Game Time Gym (U7/U8):** See the map included at the back of the manual or visit [www.pcslsoccer.org](http://www.pcslsoccer.org) for a map. Reminders: **We rent this space so as good tenants:**

- **NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, SMOKING**
- **NO PETS ARE ALLOWED ON THE PROPERTY.** (IYSA insurance forbids)
- **Food & drink are not allowed on the turf, only on concrete areas.**  
*Instruct the parents and children to pick up after themselves and use the trash containers.*
- **Players should not sit or climb on the inflatable divider between the fields.**  
*If you are coaching alone, perhaps ask one of your parents to monitor the players sitting out.*

Please inform your parents that seating is available all-around indoor fields. There is also an upstairs viewing area where spectators can sit for field #1. The field closest to the entrance is field #1.

## EQUIPMENT

New coaches will receive basic equipment at the start of the season. All returning coaches should have their equipment from the previous season to use. We will no longer be collecting equipment following each spring season. Please keep and use it as long as you are coaching PCSL and return once you are done with your PCSL coaching career.

## FIRST AID & PLAYER SAFETY

The league recommends that every coach carry a basic first aid kit to every practice and game. The equipment box at the fields will have more extensive first aid supplies if needed. Be aware of any medical condition that your players may have and encourage the parents to let you know.

Prior to each practice and match, coaches should examine the practice area/field for anything that can make it unsafe for play, or represent a potential injury to players, volunteers, and spectators.

- Unsafe playing field including dry, hard playing field or large holes or divots or too wet or saturated
- Permanent hazards (move playing area) Sprinklers, utility access covers, pipes/faucets, drains
- Debris (clear before each practice/game) glass, rocks, gravel, bottles/cans, pencils/pens, trash
- Playing fields should have room around the sidelines. Check for fences, poles or posts, trees or shrubs, and concrete edging. Bikes/toys too close to touchlines or field equipment from other sports or playgrounds

After each practice and match, coaches are responsible for ensuring that players find their parents, guardian or prearranged ride. Older players may be allowed to transport themselves to and/or from team activities.

Discuss with your players the importance of not hanging onto the top of a goal post. Improperly secured goals can tip over and injure or kill a player. **Please notify the league if you find a goal which has come loose from its anchors.**

No jewelry including earrings, hats, hair ornaments (ie. barrettes), watches, fitness bands or other items that can poke or injure a child are allowed. Medical information tags, if worn, have to be taped against the body. Soccer shoes or gym shoes are required; no other type of shoes or cleats are allowed (in particular, football or baseball). Players wearing orthopedic casts, air-splints, or metal splints will be able to participate if foam padding (minimum ½” thick) is wrapped around the entire cast or splint, and the padding is then wrapped in an “Ace” type bandage.

## INCIDENT REPORTING

An IYSA Incident Report Form should be used whenever there is a personal injury, damaged property and threats of or actual physical violence surrounding a PCSL game, practice, event or property. This form should be completed by the league administrator to document an incident/injury. Please submit an email to the League Administrator at [league@pcslsoccer.org](mailto:league@pcslsoccer.org) when you have an incident report.

## INSURANCE

The Illinois Youth Soccer Association (IYSA) will extend, at no extra charge, its secondary player medical insurance for currently registered IYSA teams providing the team consists of only currently registered players, for participation in non-IYSA/US Youth Soccer games, including indoor games. The claimant needs to contact the PCSL office if secondary insurance is needed. Claim forms need to be submitted within 30 days from the date of injury.

## COACH & PARENT EXPECTATIONS

Positive Coaching is a fundamental philosophy because of the crucial role that a coach has. It is the responsibility of coaches to Honor the Game, Show Respect, and Lead by Example as we enrich the lives of children in our community. All coaches are expected to abide by the PCSL's **Coach Pledge**. This pledge was included on the Coach Sign Off form that you were asked to read through, sign and turn in prior to receiving your team roster/coach packet. A copy of that same sheet with the sign off/Coach Pledge is included at the end of this manual.

Parents also have the responsibility as the coach, to Honor the Game, Show Respect and Lead by Example for the children. Hold a "Parent Meeting" prior to or at the first practice to go over team information and expectations. Parents are expected to honor PCSL's Philosophies and read through the [PCSL Parent Manual](#) that can be found on the PCSL website on the [Parent's page](#).

## LEAGUE INTERVENTION

The primary interests for Prairie Cities Soccer League are the well-being and development of our community's children. As a PCSL Coach, your behavior serves as an important example for your players and their families. You are expected to help children build soccer skills, develop good sportsmanship, play their best and have fun. **We will have a site supervisor at each game location on game days. They will make an office report as should coaches.**

Coaches and parents contribute to a positive atmosphere with a calm demeanor and positive encouragement. Any discussions during matches between coaches and referees are best conducted at halftime breaks. You are expected to remain respectful of the referee's authority under all circumstances. Any problems or concerns on the field should be reported to the League office in writing. The FC Central Illinois/PCSL Board will investigate the incident with possible sanctions for inappropriate behavior including warning, reprimand, suspension and expulsion.

### Coaches

Coaches are a key role in the success of PCSL. You help foster the PCSL philosophy with your demeanor during practice times and games. The office can assist you with concerns and communications with players families. Please communicate your concerns to administration so that we are informed. Also communicate positive sportsmanship that you see from others in the program. Referees, coaches, staff and others are all doing their very best to keep the program running smoothly, help acknowledge this.

Do not play non-rostered players in games or at practice. This is a liability for PCSL and the program. Please adhere to timelines of practices (start and stop) to ensure equity. Thank you for all you are doing!

## Rules for PCSL Coaches/Referees – Fall 2025/Spring 2026

In addition to FIFA rules for games the following additions apply in PCSL games:

1. The Ball:

Under 6 through Under 8	Size 3
Under 9 through Under 12	Size 4
Under 14 through HS	Size 5

2.

Age division	Ball size	Number of players	Playing time	Substitution rules
7 and Under	3	5 players	8-min quarters	At quarter or injury
8 and under	3	5 players	8- min quarters	At quarter or injury
9 and under	4	7 players	12- min quarters	At any legal sub or injury
10 and under	4	7 players	12- min quarters	At any legal sub or injury
12 and under	4	9 players	25- min halves	At any legal sub or injury
14 and under	5	9 players	30- min halves	At any legal sub or injury
HS	5	7 players	30- min halves	At any legal sub or injury

**In addition, both teams must play with the same number of players on the field.**

In other words, if a U7 team only has 3 players show up, the other team can only play with 3 players. If a U14 team only has 7 players show up, they both play with 7 players on the field. However, if a team wants to “share” its players with the other team so that both sides can play with the maximum number of players allowed, that is acceptable. Remember, this is a recreational league designed for the kid's enjoyment.

**Both coaches must agree upon number of players playing if it is less than the maximum allowed.**

3. **Player Equipment:**

Soccer shoes or gym shoes are permitted. **No baseball or football cleats.** Leather street shoes with molded rubber or plastic type soles are illegal. Medical information tags, if worn, have to be taped against the body. Artificial limbs and knee braces are permitted but must be completely padded with no metal or hard material exposed. No earrings, watches or fitness bands allowed. Players wearing orthopedic casts, air-splints, or metal splints will be able to participate if a foam padding (minimum ½” thick) is wrapped around the entire cast or splint, and the padding then wrapped in an “Ace” type bandage.

The referee shall be the SOLE judge of what constitutes illegal equipment in instances that are not covered in the preceding paragraph.

4. Linespersons/Assistant Referees:  
If assistant referees are not provided by the league, each team coach is responsible for supplying linespersons. Linespersons are to work with and follow instructions of the referee and are not permitted to coach while participating as linespersons. **Linespersons should be age 12 or older.**
5. Throw-ins:  
Under 7 and Under 8 will be allowed to re-throw an incorrect throw-in once, **after a correct throw-in has been demonstrated.** Under 9 and above, an incorrect throw will be determined to be a foul throw and result in a throw in for the opposing team.
6. Misconduct:  
**Yellow cards** – Player should leave field of play and be substituted for. The player can return at the next allowable substitution for the team.  
**Red cards** - It is an immediate send off, the player cannot return and is to sit out the next match. The player cannot be replaced.
7. Offside:  
The offside rule does not apply in Under 7 & 8. For Under 9 & 10, the build-out line will be used by the referee to determine offside.
8. Slide-Tackling:  
Slide tackling is not permitted in the Under 10 Division and lower. In these divisions, the player will receive a verbal warning on the first infraction. The second infraction will result in an automatic yellow card and an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team for dangerous play. In the upper divisions, contact with the ball **MUST** occur **FIRST**; otherwise it is a penal foul.  
  
SLIDE-TACKLE - A maneuver in which one or both feet slide on the ground in an attempt to tackle the ball, which is in possession of an opponent. Additional Comments:  
The player attempting to take the ball away from an opponent must slide from the side or the front, so that the defender could reasonably be within the view of the player. **LEGS** must be down, and **CONTACT** the **BALL**. If the ball is trapped so that the player with the ball trips over it, or if the ball is cleared so that the player who had the ball then trips over the defender by **HIS/HER** own forward motion, the tackle is fair.  
  
If the defender contacts the player with the ball first or slides in with one leg up so as to kick or trip the player, this is a **PENAL** foul for which the team fouled is awarded a direct kick. Sliding past the ball and then tripping or fouling a player is not legal also. The player falling over the defender by his/her own **FORWARD** motion after the ball has been cleared, this is not a foul.
9. Offenses against Goalkeepers:  
The goalkeeper has possession of the ball when one or either hands or arms is holding the ball. Possession is also a finger, hand, arm, or leg on a stationary ball brought under the control of the goalkeeper. A goalkeeper in possession of the ball cannot be charged, obstructed, or interfered with by the opposing players. Violators will be cautioned on the first infraction and appropriately carded on subsequent infractions. This is considered unsporting behavior.
10. Goalkeeper substitutions:  
Goalkeepers must be replaced at least at the half. A goalie can only be goalie for a maximum of half the game. No goalkeeper substitution is permitted on a penalty kick unless the keeper is injured or ejected. If there is a penalty against a team resulting in a penalty kick, the goalkeeper that was playing at the time of the foul remains in the goal for that kick.

11. Timekeeping:

There are no time outs. The referee may stop the clock for injuries, lost balls, etc. The clock will not be stopped for goals unless the referee feels one of the teams are deliberately wasting time. Time will be extended to take a penalty kick awarded as time ran out.

12. Heading:

**Heading is not allowed in age divisions U12 & below.** When a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick (IFK) 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.

13. U7-U8 Small Sided Games:

Field will be marked with a center circle for defending players to be behind during a kickoff. The field will also be lined with a small goal box/arc where goal kicks will be taken from on the side of the goal the ball went out of bounds. The defending team should retreat back to half field prior to the goal kick being taken. The defending team may move forward once the goal kick has been taken and the ball is touched by the attacking team. This allows the players an opportunity to advance the ball forward from a goal kick and is consistent with US Youth Soccer SSG recommendations. Corner kicks will be taken from the corner of the side the ball went out of bounds. All free kicks will be indirect to allow the game to flow.

U9-U10 Small Sided Games:

The use of the Build-Out Line promotes playing the ball out from the defensive third in a less pressured setting. When the goalkeeper has control (with his/her hands) of the ball during play, the opposing team **MUST** move behind the Build-Out Line until the ball is released (put in play) by the goalkeeper. Once the opposing team is behind the Build-Out Line, the goalkeeper can pass, throw, or roll the ball into play (punts or drop kicks are NOT allowed). After the ball is put into play by the goalkeeper, the opposing team can cross the Build-Out Line and play resumes as normal. Also, the opposing team **MUST** move behind the Build-Out Line for a goal kick restart and may only cross the Build-Out Line once the ball is in play (meaning that the ball has left the penalty area).

For both, U9 & U10 matches, one coach from each team will be allowed to be on the field to help players with organization during the first half of each game.

Age Group	Recommended Training to Match Ratio
U7 & U8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 2:1</li> <li>▪ Two practice &amp; one game each week</li> <li>▪ Duration of practice: 45 to 60 minutes</li> </ul>
U9 & U10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 2:1</li> <li>▪ Two practices &amp; one game each week</li> <li>▪ Duration of practice: 1:00 hour</li> </ul>
U12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 2:1</li> <li>▪ Two practices and one game each week</li> <li>▪ Duration of practice: 60 to 75 minutes</li> </ul>
U14-HS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 2:1</li> <li>▪ Two practices and one game each week</li> <li>▪ Duration of practice: 75 to 90 minutes</li> </ul>

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# COACH PLEDGE / SIGN OFF FORM

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**In my words and action, I pledge to:**

1. Enthusiastically support and practice the PCSL philosophies
2. Stay informed about sound principles of coaching and child development
3. Respect the game and know the Laws
4. Emphasize to my players that they must abide by the Laws of the Game at all times
5. Develop a true respect for the judgment of all referees
6. Develop a team respect for the ability of our opponents
7. Ensure a safe environment for my players
8. Never yell at or ridicule a player
9. Always set a good example
10. Remember that soccer is a game and all games should be fun

I \_\_\_\_\_ have read the above PCSL Coach Pledge and received the Prairie Cities Soccer League Coaches Manual for the 2023/2024 season. I understand the coaching requirements asked of me and accept the responsibility of abiding by the procedures, regulations and expectations of the League.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

CONTACT INFO.

EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

ALTERNATE EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE# \_\_\_\_\_ CELL/WORK# \_\_\_\_\_

PRACTICE LOCATION \_\_\_\_\_

PRACTICE DAYS & TIMES \_\_\_\_\_