



Bourbonnais Township PARK DISTRICT

Bourbonnais Township Park District Soccer League League Rules

The Bourbonnais Township Park District, in collaboration with MLS Go is dedicated to providing a recreational youth soccer program that is inclusive and a high-quality experience for all.

The following are goals and objectives of the BTPD League.

1. Make soccer fun and affordable, ensuring more kids have the opportunity to play.
2. Provide participants an opportunity for a recreational soccer experience where players are met at their developmental level.
3. Foster a league centered around sportsmanship and teamwork.



Rules

MLS GO follows age-and-stage appropriate rules and standards as set out by U.S. Soccer Player Development Initiatives and/or MLS. These guidelines help young players appropriately learn the fundamentals of the game, achieve, and maintain early success, create a fun playing experience, and provide enhanced long-term development.

Laws of the Game & Modified Rules

Laws of the Game

Unless otherwise provided in the MLS GO Rulebook or Handbook, all games shall be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game enforced at the time of the MLS GO Competition and as set forth by the International Football Association Board, which can be found at theifab.com.

Pre-game Rules

A minimum of fifteen minutes of warm-up time should be allowed on the playing field. If less than fifteen minutes is permitted, there should be adequate warmup space outside of the playing field.

Post-game Rules

Coaches are expected to create and promote good sportsmanship. At the conclusion of each match, players and coaches will shake hands and thank the referee.

Build-Out Line

The purpose of the build-out line is to allow players more time and space with the ball at their feet near their own goal (to build out of the back in a less pressured setting). MLS GO recommends a build-out line be used for 3v3, 4v4, and 7v7 game formats.

Playing Format

Every age group has an ideal playing format based on MLS Go recommendations. Due to enrollment size, these formats may be changed before the season begins.



Ages 3-6

3v3 ideal playing format

- Size of Ball: 3
- Field dimensions: 25-35 yards (length) by 15-25 yards (width)
- Goals: no larger than 4 feet (height) x 6 feet (width)
- Corner flags: not needed, cones can be used
- Game format: 3 field, no goalkeeper
- Game time: Four 10 minute quarters, 5 minute breaks between
- Referee provided if available. BTPD staff will be provided if there is no referee, but coaches will self-officiate.
- No added time.
- Substitutions are unlimited and can occur at any stoppage of the game.
- The build-out line should be 5-7 yards from the goal line.
 - Prior to a goal kick, the opposing team must move behind the build-out line.
 - Once the opposing team is behind the build-out line, play can restart.
 - After the ball is put into play, the opposing team can cross the build-out line and play resumes as normal.
 - Quick restarts: Ideally, the player taking the goal kick will wait to put the ball into play once all opponents are past the build out line. However, the player can put the ball into play sooner, but he or she does so accepting the positioning of the opponents and the consequences of how play resumes.
 - If a player from the opposing team crosses the build-out line before the ball is put into play, the goal kick is retaken.

Game rule modifications

- Kick-offs, free kicks, throw-ins, goal kicks, and corner kicks are used to start or restart play.
- Kick-ins and/or dribble-ins are recommended as restarts when the ball has gone out over the sidelines.
- If field markings are absent, goal kicks and corner kicks should be taken in the general vicinity of the respective goal or corner.
- If used, all free kicks are indirect.
- Opponents should be 10 feet away from the ball on all restarts.
- No penalty kicks.
- No offside.



Ages 7-8

4v4 ideal playing format

- Size of Ball: 3
- Field dimensions: 25-35 yards (length) by 15-25 yards (width)
- Goals: no larger than 4 feet (height) x 6 feet (width)
- Corner flags: not needed, cones can be used
- Game format: 4 field, no goalkeeper
- Game time: Four 10 minute quarters, 5 minute breaks between
- Referee provided if available. BTPD staff will be provided if there is no referee, but coaches will self-officiate.
- Substitutions are unlimited and can occur at any stoppage of the game.
- The build-out line should be 5-7 yards from the goal line.
 - Prior to a goal kick, the opposing team must move behind the build-out line.
 - Once the opposing team is behind the build-out line, play can restart.
 - After the ball is put into play, the opposing team can cross the build-out line and play resumes as normal.
 - Quick restarts: Ideally, the player taking the goal kick will wait to put the ball into play once all opponents are past the build out line. However, the player can put the ball into play sooner, but he or she does so accepting the positioning of the opponents and the consequences of how play resumes.
 - If a player from the opposing team crosses the build-out line before the ball is put into play, the goal kick is retaken.

Game rule modifications

- No added time-offs, free kicks, throw-ins, goal kicks and corner kicks are used to start or restart play.
- Kick-ins and/or dribble-ins are recommended as restarts when the ball has gone out over the sidelines.
- If field markings are absent, goal kicks and corner kicks should be taken in the general vicinity of the respective goal or corner.
- If used, all free kicks are indirect.
- Opponents should be 10 feet away from the ball on all restarts.
- No penalty kicks.
- No offsides.



Ages 9-12

7v7 ideal playing format

- Size of Ball: 4
- Field dimensions: 55-65 yards (length) by 35-45 yards (width)
- Goals: no larger than 6.5 feet (height) x 18.5 feet (width)
- Game format: 6 field, 1 goalkeeper
- Game time: Two 25 minute halves, 10 minute halftime
- No added time.
- Referee provided.
- Substitutions are unlimited and can occur at any stoppage of the game.
- The build-out lines should be equidistant between the penalty area line and halfway line.
 - Prior to a goal kick or once the goalkeeper has the ball in his or her hands, the opposing team must move behind the build-out line until the ball is put into play.
 - Quick restarts: Ideally, the goalkeeper will wait to put the ball into play once all opponents are past the build out line. However, the goalkeeper can put the ball into play sooner, but he or she does so accepting the positioning of the opponents and the consequences of how play resumes.
 - If a player from the opposing team crosses the build-out line before the goalkeeper puts the ball into play and interferes with play, an indirect free kick is given to the goalkeeper's team.
 - The build-out line will also be used to denote where offside offenses can be called.

Game rule modifications

- Game may not start or continue if there are less than 5 players on a team.
- No punts or drop kicks are allowed by the goalkeeper.
- All other laws of the game should be followed.

Ages 13-14

9v9 ideal playing format

- Size of Ball: 5
- Field dimensions: 70-80 yards (length) by 45-55 yards (width)
- Goals: no larger than 7 feet (height) x 21 feet (width)
- Game format: 8 field, 1 goalkeeper
- Game time: Two 30 minute halves, 10 minute halftime
- Referee provided- two if available.
- No added time.
- Substitutions are unlimited and can occur at any stoppage of the game.

Game rule modifications

- Game may not start or continue if there are less than 6 players on a team.
- All other laws of the game should be followed.



Sideline Requirements

- MLS GO recommends no more than two to three coaches are allowed on the bench.
- Coaches shall not enter the field of play unless requested by the referee.
- The top/left team on the schedule shall be the home team.
- The bottom/right team on the schedule shall be the visiting team.
- During games, teams will sit on the same sidelines opposite from parents and bystanders.
- If standing on the sideline and facing the field, the home team will sit on the left half sideline/bench and the visiting team will sit on the right.
- The bench area is reserved for Players and Coaches only. Any person in the bench area during an MLS GO game must be registered as a coach/volunteer and be in compliance with the documentation requirements under the MLS GO Handbook.
- At least one person, age eighteen or older, must be on the bench at all times.

Referees

- Registered and certified referees are not required for ages 4-8 (3v3 & 4v4 Game Formats). Coaches are expected to manage the game environment from the touchline using the standards of play outlined in this rulebook, if a referee is not available.
- For 7v7 game format (ages 9-12) one center referee is required.
- For 9v9 game format one center referee is required. Where possible, a two man referee system is preferred.
- MLS GO recommends all referees have a U.S. Soccer Grassroots Referee license.
- Referees should officiate in accordance with the current version of the MLS GO Rulebook.
- Referees should facilitate a fair, fun, and safe game for the players by enforcing and applying the Laws of the Game.
- Referees shall officiate keeping player safety as the main priority.
- Referees should exemplify professional appearance. Referees should wear a distinguishable shirt, preferably a referee specific shirt.

Respect of Officials

- Referee's Decisions: No Protests may be made about the referee's decisions regarding facts connected with play; such decisions are final.
- If you have a concern regarding a referee, please contact Lindsey Laskey (LindseyL@btpd.org) with the details (date, time, field, etc.). Again, please keep in mind that there is a shortage of referees and without them the Park District will not be able to provide officials for future games. Let's do our best to promote a positive atmosphere for our sports officials and athletes. Thank you for your cooperation and commitment to good sportsmanship in our community.



Behavior Management Policy

1. **All coaches, players, and spectators are expected and required to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner. Any behaviors or actions deemed inappropriate by Bourbonnais Township Park District Staff may result in the offending party being ejected from the game, or asked to leave the playing area and/or sideline.** Anyone removed from a match/game must leave the field immediately. The referees, site supervisors or Recreation Supervisor on duty at that time, will handle all problems and have final say. Each head coach is responsible for the behavior of themselves, all assistant coaches, players, and parents, and should assist staff by discouraging inappropriate behavior by any member or spectator of the team.
2. All participants, coaches, and spectators are expected to adhere to the Bourbonnais Township Park District rules and philosophies as well as local, state and federal statutes at all times. Any individual who violates these rules will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including removal from the program.
3. Behavior contrary to the Park District policy will not be tolerated. The Park District does reserve the right to limit coach/parent/participant participation in the youth athletic programs. Violation of the above rules will result in the following:
 - a. Any player/coach/or spectator who is ejected from a match or removed from the sideline is subject to:
 - i. 1st Offense: Minimum 1 game suspension.
 - ii. 2nd Offense: Minimum 3 game suspension.
 - iii. The Recreation Supervisor has final say on all disciplinary decisions, and will notify the offending party (or if applicable, a parent/guardian) in writing (electronic or mail) OR telephone.
4. Any coach, player, or parent removed from a game for disciplinary reasons will be required to communicate with the Recreation Supervisor prior to reinstatement. Any individual who has been administered a disciplinary action has the right to an appeal. This appeal must be in writing and received within 24 hours of the disciplinary action. The Park District will review this appeal in a timely fashion and all disciplinary action will stay in effect while the appeal is reviewed.
 - a. Appeals should be directed to: **Bourbonnais Township Park District** Attn: Lindsey Laskey, Recreation Supervisor



Concussion Initiative

Head Injury Substitution: All substitutions relating to head injury shall be handled in compliance with the Concussion Protocol outlined in the MLS GO handbook

- Heading of the ball is banned for all players 11 years old and younger.
- Consistent with U.S. Concussion Initiative, if a player is suspected to have a head injury the referee (coaches and parents in 3v3 and 4v4 game format when no referee is available) is instructed to stop play to allow for treatment/evaluation as needed.
- If the player leaves the field of play for additional evaluation, a substitution can be made in that moment.
- The player with the suspected head injury may not return to the game unless a Health Care Professional (HCP) or Certified Athletic Trainer (CAT) has cleared the player.
- Any coach or parent insisting on returning the player to the game without approved clearance will result in the referee ending the game.
- If a player heads the ball in a game, whether deliberately or accidentally, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense.
 - If a 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 nearest point to where the infringement occurred.
- In a controlled and individual environment (where heading is an isolated skill being taught away from any form of opposition or other aspects of the game), the use of lightweight balls (foam, balloon, etc.) would be acceptable for teaching heading technique.

