

# ITS Official Soccer Rules

All general rules of soccer apply as governed by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), unless otherwise noted below.

Adopted 09-08-11  
Amended 6-22-20

## 1. PLAYING FIELD AND EQUIPMENT

- 1.1. Facilities: Coaches, players and fans are expected to demonstrate appropriate respect for the various game locations by following the rules displayed at each site.
- 1.2. Playing Field: The field dimensions shall vary based on each division (See Appendix A). The four corners of the field should be marked with cones or flags. The midfield should be marked with a regular line and a circle. Goal areas and penalty areas will be marked as regular soccer.
  - 1.2.1. *A, B & C-League*: 60 yards in length by 40 yards in width
    - 1.2.1.1. Center Circle: extend in an 8-yard radius in the center of the field.
    - 1.2.1.2. Penalty Arc: extend in an 8-yard radius from the penalty mark.
  - 1.2.2. *D-League*: 40 yards in length by 30 yards in width
    - 1.2.2.1. Center Circle: extend in a 6-yard radius in the center of the field.
    - 1.2.2.2. Penalty Arc: extend in a 6-yard radius from the penalty mark.
  - 1.2.3. *A, B, C & D-League*: Corner arcs: extend in a 1-yard radius at each corner of the field
- 1.3. Goals: Portable goals will be provided by Inter Tribal Sports. If official goals are not available, approximate dimensions should be agreed upon by both teams and approved by referee prior to the start of each game based on the following criteria:
  - 1.3.1. *A, B & C-League*: no more than 7'x14' and no less than 4'x8'
  - 1.3.2. *D-League*: no more than 4'x8' and no less than 3.5'x6'
  - 1.3.3. *Alternative*: In D-League only, if goals are not available two cones shall be placed no more than six (6) feet apart to serve as the goal
- 1.4. Goal/Penalty Area: The goal and penalty kick area will serve the dual purpose of the boundaries for the goalkeeper in which "hands" may be used and when awarding a penalty kick to the opposing team when a foul occurs within this area. At each end of the field and centered directly in front of the goal, the goal/penalty area shall measure 10 yards (30 feet) x 15 yards (45 feet).
- 1.5. Penalty Kick Line: A two (2) foot penalty kick line shall be drawn 12 yards from the goal (two yards beyond the goal/penalty area).
- 1.6. Goal Box: A goal box will only be used for D-League. The goal box shall be ten (10) feet wide by six (6) feet deep directly in front of the goal.
- 1.7. Substitution Zone: The substitution zone is the area in which players can freely come on and off the field during play without waiting for a game stoppage. This area will be designated by a set of cones on both sides of the field at the midpoint extending approximately 5 yards in either direction of the

midpoint (10 yards in length). The zone shall extend up to 5 yards outside the field of play and will be marked by cones.

1.8. Game Ball: The game ball will be provided by Inter Tribal Sports. If an official game ball is not available, a game ball should be agreed upon by both teams and approved by referee prior to the start of each game based on the following sizing criteria:

1.8.1. *A & B League*: size 5 ball

1.8.2. *C League*: size 4 ball

1.8.3. *D League*: size 3 ball

1.9. First Aid Kit: The host site should have a first aid kit readily available. Essential supplies include ice packs, bandages, and gauze wrap.

## 2. PLAYERS AND TEAMS

2.1. Divisions: Teams will be divided into coed age appropriate divisions as defined as follows. Inter Tribal Sports reserves the right to adjust or combine divisions as participation dictates.

2.1.1. *A-League*: 18 years and younger

2.1.2. *B-League*: 14 years and younger

2.1.3. *C-League*: 11 years and younger

2.1.4. *D-League*: 7 years and younger (5 years & under with approval of the parent and tribe)

2.2. Eligibility: All players must be of the appropriate age on the day of the first official game of the season. If a player's birthdate falls on opening day they are considered the older age for that day and rest of the season. Those turning older during the season will be eligible to continue playing for the team with which they began the season. Players may not play down to lower age divisions but may play up with parental consent.

2.2.1. *18-Year-Old Participation*: **All 18-year-olds are required to have a background check in order to participate as a player.**

2.2.2. *A & B-League Eligibility*: The soccer program is open to all communities of each participating tribe/tribal organization. However, some restrictions have been placed on individuals that play in the A & B-League. The following summarizes those restrictions as outlined in **100.1 Eligibility Policy** (see policy for more details):

2.2.2.1. Participants must self-identify as Native American or

2.2.2.2. Be an immediate family member of a tribal member (child, stepchild, foster child, sibling, step-sibling, half-sibling, etc.) or

2.2.2.3. Live on the reservation or

2.2.2.4. Attends a school on a reservation. NOTE: In order to participate in the A & B-League under the on-reservation school student provision, any non-native youth must have previously participated in at least one sport in two different calendar years.

Teams may lodge a protest of ineligible players with the site supervisor and then must complete a formal protest form within 24-hours of the game. Teams found in violation of the eligibility rule will be subject to forfeiture of games and non-credit for all other eligible players for each game in which the infraction occurred.

2.3. Rosters: Team rosters and player paperwork must be submitted to the ITS office by the published due date. Player additions and deletions can be made throughout the season, but all appropriate paperwork must be submitted by the established deadline in order for a new player to be eligible to participate in games. (See **100.2 Registration Policy for more details**)

2.4. Players: Due to the modified field dimensions, teams will have a varying number of players on the field. A minimum number of players are required to start and finish the game. No changes or adjustments will be made to the rules to accommodate the decreased number of players.

2.4.1. *A League*: five (5) players maximum and four (4) players minimum

2.4.2. *B League*: five (5) players maximum and four (4) players minimum

2.4.3. *C-League*: five (5) players maximum and four (4) players minimum

2.4.4. *D-League*: four (4) players maximum and three (3) players minimum.

2.4.5. *Additional Player for A, B, and C-League*: An additional player may participate in the game, for a total of six (6) players, provided both coaches agree prior to the start of the game.

2.5. Player Equipment: Players may choose to wear items such as soccer shoes, beanies, bandanas or hair ties during game play without penalty.

2.6. Shin Guards: To ensure the safety of all players, Inter Tribal Sports requires the use of shin guards by all players entering the field.

2.6.1. *Eyeglasses*: Players that wear eyeglasses must secure them with a safety strap.

2.7. Illegal Player Equipment: Players will not be permitted to wear any item that may cause a safety concern. This includes but is not limited to jewelry such as rings, bracelets, necklaces, earrings or other body jewelry; hard plastic, front toe cleats, metal cleats; open toe shoes; hard splints or casts; hats with rigid bills or visors. The player must remove the illegal items prior to the start of game play or when requested by league officials.

2.7.1. *Metal Cleats*: Due to extreme safety concerns, metal cleats are prohibited for use at all times.

2.8. Uniforms: Players must wear the ITS-issued uniform in order to be eligible to play which includes jersey and shorts. Jerseys must be tucked in at all times. If a uniform issue is noticed during the game, the player shall be permanently removed from the game or given the opportunity to comply with the **100.4 League** Uniform Policy. Failure to do so will result in a forfeit. All uniform issues must be resolved before the end of the game, disputes will not be permitted after the game has ended.

### 3. GAME PRELIMINARIES

- 3.1. Coin Toss: Winner of coin will kick off in the first half. Opposite team will kick off at the beginning of the second half of play. Direction of play automatically changes for second half.
- 3.2. Late Arriving Teams: *The following is a summary of the **600.5 Late Arriving Teams Policy**, see the complete policy for additional details.* If a team that has not arrived or is not ready to play at the scheduled game time, the late-arriving team policy may be enacted by the game official. As stated in the policy, the game clock will start and one (1) point will be awarded every 5 minutes or increment therein until the game begins. The game clock and the awarding of points shall be monitored by the game official and/or ITS staff. If the game has not begun after 25 minutes, at which point the score would be 5-0, the game will officially be considered a forfeit and the final score shall be recorded as 5-0. The game clock will not be stopped once it has started.
- 3.3. Adverse Weather: *The following is a summary of **600.2 Weather Condition Policy**, see the complete policy for additional details.* Three days prior to the games or event, the weather forecast will be checked at [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov) to determine if cancellation of game is a possibility. The National Weather Service's website will be the standard resource to access the forecast for the zip codes for the outdoor game sites. No later than 1:00 pm on the day before the scheduled games, the weather forecast will be evaluated according to the criteria detailed in the policy, a final decision will be made, and all affected teams will be notified of any schedule changes via a phone call and email.
- 3.4. Protests: Game protests are only permitted for ineligible players (see Rule 2.2.2.).
- 3.5. Player Check-in: Coaches are responsible for checking in their players on the designated ITS scoresheet. The scoresheet is the official document used to track games played. Coaches must account for all players present in order to earn credit; this includes any players that arrive late. The coach must initial the certification statement on the scoresheet to verify player attendance.

#### 4. SCORING

- 4.1. D-League Scoring: Score of the D-League games will not be kept. Therefore, league standings will not be tracked.
- 4.2. Goal Scoring: A goal is scored when the whole of the ball has passed over the goal line between the goal posts and under the crossbar, provided it has not been intentionally thrown, carried or propelled by hand or arm of the attacking side. A goal may be scored by either an offensive or defensive player within the attacking team's offensive half of the field. In the event two cones are used in place of portable goals (Rule 1.3.3), the referee in their judgment will determine if a goal was made based on the approximate height of the ball in relation to the established goal dimensions in Rule 1.3.1 and 1.3.2.
- 4.3. Tie Games: In the event that a game is tied at the end of regulation play, the match will be considered a tie for all regular season games. During the championship tournament, a five (5) minute overtime period will be played.
  - 4.3.1. *Penalty Kicks*: If the game remains tied after the overtime period, penalty kicks will be used to determine a winner. Three different players from each team will kick from the

penalty kick line. Goalkeepers are permitted. Teams will alternate turns and continue this process of three penalty kicks each until a winner has been determined. All players must be used in the rotation before a repeat player may kick again.

## 5. GAME PLAY

- 5.1. Duration of Games: Games consist of two 25-minute halves with a 5-minute half time. Running clock except for officials' timeouts. ITS Staff or the host site will provide the game clock however, the officials have final authority on game clock.
- 5.2. D-League Coaches: The D-League is considered a non-competitive introduction to the sport. In order to keep the focus on teaching the fundamentals of the game one (1) coach will be permitted on the field. Coaches must not interfere with game play. In the event coach's interference occurs, play will be stopped, and a free kick will be given to the opposing team.
- 5.3. Kickoffs: At the start of each half kick-offs will occur from midfield, which should be marked by a center circle on the field. No player on the kicking team may cross the midfield line until the ball has been kicked.
  - 5.3.1. *A, B, C League*: All opposing players must be at least 8 yards from the ball at the time it is kicked.
  - 5.3.2. *D League*: All opposing players must be at least 6 yards from the ball at the time it is kicked.
- 5.4. Throw-in (sidelines): The opponent of the last team to touch the ball prior to it going out of bounds on the sideline will inbound the ball with an overhead throw-in. Players must use the proper throw-in technique to be legal. Both hands are to remain in the ball, straight over the head (no angles), both feet must remain in contact with the ground while throwing (foot may be dragged) and the feet cannot cross the inbounds line at any time.
- 5.5. Corner Kick: A ball that is last touched by the defensive team and crosses the goal line will result in a corner kick for the offensive team. The ball must be placed on the ground in the immediate proximity to the corner of the field. All opposing players must be at least 8 yards from the ball at the time it is kicked.
- 5.6. Goal Kick: A ball that is last touched by the offensive team and crosses the goal line will result in a goal kick for the defensive team. The ball must be placed on the ground in within 5 yards of the goal. All opposing players must be at least 8 yards from the ball at the time it is kicked.
- 5.7. Free Kick: Free kicks will take place after any foul or official's time out. The ball will be placed on the ground at a spot determined by the official. The player kicking the ball may not touch the ball a second time until a teammate or opposing player has touched the ball. All opposing players must be at least 8 yards from the ball at the time it is kicked.

- 5.8. Goalkeepers: The goalkeeper has certain privileges not given to any other player. This includes handling (catch, carry, strike, or propel) the ball with the hands or arms only within the confines of the goal area. The use of goalkeepers will vary by league, based on field dimensions and size of the goal.
- 5.8.1. *A, B, & C-League*: A goalkeeper is permitted.
  - 5.8.2. *D-League*: Since D-League is considered a learning league and to prevent unnecessary injury, no goalkeepers will be permitted. In addition, teams may not use a defensive player to “stand guard” on the goal within the confines of the goal box.
- 5.9. Changing Goalkeepers: The referee shall be notified when a goalkeeping change is made, either by another player on the field changing places with the goalkeeper or by substitution from the team bench. A teammate on the field of play may change positions with the goalkeeper. Provided the referee is notified in advance, a teammate on the field may change places with the goalkeeper for the taking of a penalty kick; however, a goalkeeper substitution from the bench is not permitted.
- 5.10. Goal Box and Game Play: In D-League no player may touch the ball within the goal box, however, players may move through the goal box. If a defender touches the ball within the goal box a point will be awarded to the opposing team. If an offensive player touches the ball within the goal box a goal kick is awarded to the defensive team. If the ball comes to a complete stop within the goal box, a goal kick is awarded to the defensive team.
- 5.11. Substitutions: Each team may substitute players freely; provided that, during play, players exit the field within the proximity of the substitution zone (see Rule 1.7). Incoming substitutes may not enter the field until the exiting player has passed into that zone.
- 5.11.1. *Touch Penalty*: Neither the substitute entering the field nor the player exiting the field may play the ball while the other is on the field. If either substituting player plays the ball, a free kick is awarded to the opposing team at the spot of the illegal touch.
  - 5.11.2. *Too Many Players*: If the referee observes more than the maximum number of players permitted on the field for a team, the referee will direct the coach to remove a player from the game. In the event a goal was scored immediately preceding this observation, the goal will not be permitted, and a free kick will be given to the opposing team at the midfield.
- 5.12. Multiple Division Rule: Players cannot move from 1 team to another during games scheduled to start at the same time, even if the first game has ended.

## 6. FOULS & PENALTIES

- 6.1. Fouls: All fouls, including tripping, pushing, and hands, will be called at the referee’s discretion. When calling fouls, the referee should take the opportunity to explain the infraction. In the case of hands, the referee may elect to allow play to continue if it determined that the infraction was unintentional.

6.2. Penalty Kicks: The use of penalty kicks will vary by league.

6.2.1. *A, B, C-League*: Penalty kicks shall be awarded when a foul, which ordinarily results in the awarding of a free indirect free kick, occurs within the boundaries of the defending team's goal/penalty area. All players except the kicking and opposing team's goalkeeper shall be within the field of play. The goalkeeper shall stand on the goal line until the ball is kicked. The goalkeeper may move laterally but may not step or lunge forward for the ball until it is put into play by the kicker.

6.2.1.1. Infringement or encroachment by the defending team may result in a retake of the kick, only if the goal was unsuccessful.

6.2.1.2. Infringement or encroachment by the attacking team when the goal is successful, the goal does not count, and the kick shall be retaken. If the kick is unsuccessful, no re-kick will be permitted.

6.2.2. *D-League*: There will be no penalty kicks in D-League. In cases where the free kick would occur less than 10 yards from the opponent's goal, the referee shall spot the ball at least 10 yards from the goal. All opposing players must be at least 8 yards from the ball at the time it is kicked and may stand in front of the goal.

6.3. Slide Tackles: Due to the wide age ranges in ITS leagues, and the inherent danger, slide tackling is not allowed.

6.4. Offside: Offside infractions will not be called.

## 7. CHAMPIONSHIPS

7.1. Championship Eligibility: In order to be eligible for play-offs or tournament play, players must play in at least 50% of the regular season scheduled games. **Game forfeiture credit, game day credit given to ineligible players that participate in a game, may not exceed 30% of the scheduled games per season.** Any team found to be playing with ineligible players will forfeit all games in which the ineligible player participated. **A registered player can receive one game day credit for every missed regular season game they are scheduled to play due to participation in ITS sanctioned events. The ITS office must be informed of any players no later than one week after games have been played.**

7.1.1. *Multiple Division Rule*: Players will be permitted to participate in multiple divisions during championship play provided they qualify under Rule 7.1 & Rule 2.1. Adjustments to game schedules will not be made to accommodate such players. Players cannot move from 1 team to another during games scheduled to start at the same time, even if the first game has ended.

7.1.2. *Multiple Team Rule*: Players are permitted to play for multiple teams for the same tribe within the same division during the regular season. For the purpose of championships, players may only participate on the original team they were registered.

7.2. Championship Seeding: Teams will be seeded in the championship tournament based on the regular season standings win percentage ([www.intertribalsports.org](http://www.intertribalsports.org)). In the event of a tie, head to head record will serve as the primary tie breaker. If a tie still remains the tie breaker will be determined by fewest average games allowed per game during the regular season. In the event that more than 2 teams are tied, the tie breaker will be determined by the fewest average points allowed per game during the regular season. In the unlikely event a tie remains, a coin toss will be the final tie breaker.

## 8. OFFICIATING

8.1. Referees: Inter Tribal Sports will hire referees for regular season and championship games for A, B & C Leagues. In the event that hired referees are not present, ITS staff and/or community volunteers will referee. ITS staff, coaches or volunteers will referee for D-League games. Calls should not be disputed by coaches or players.

8.2. Scorekeepers and Timekeepers: An ITS staff member or official volunteer will be responsible for keeping score during all regular season and championship games for A, B, and C Divisions. However, if a referee is not available and the ITS staff member must officiate, each team is required to provide one volunteer for one half of the game (visitors for the first half; home team for the second half) to keep the official score and time during their scheduled A, B and C league games. If a volunteer is not available at the scheduled start time, late arrival procedures (Rule 3.2) will be followed until a volunteer is present. In the event of a dispute, the site supervisor and/or referee will make the final determination. **Volunteers 18 years or older are required to have a background check. Please see policy 300.1 Background Check for further information.**

## 9. CONDUCT AND SPORTSMANSHIP

9.1. Sportsmanship: Prior to and following each game, players will move to the center of the court and shake hands with their opponents.

9.2. Coach Conduct: Coaches are required to sign and adhere to the Coaches' Conduct Agreement.

9.2.1. Coaches' **Online Certification**: Coaches are required **to complete the online coach's certification form.**

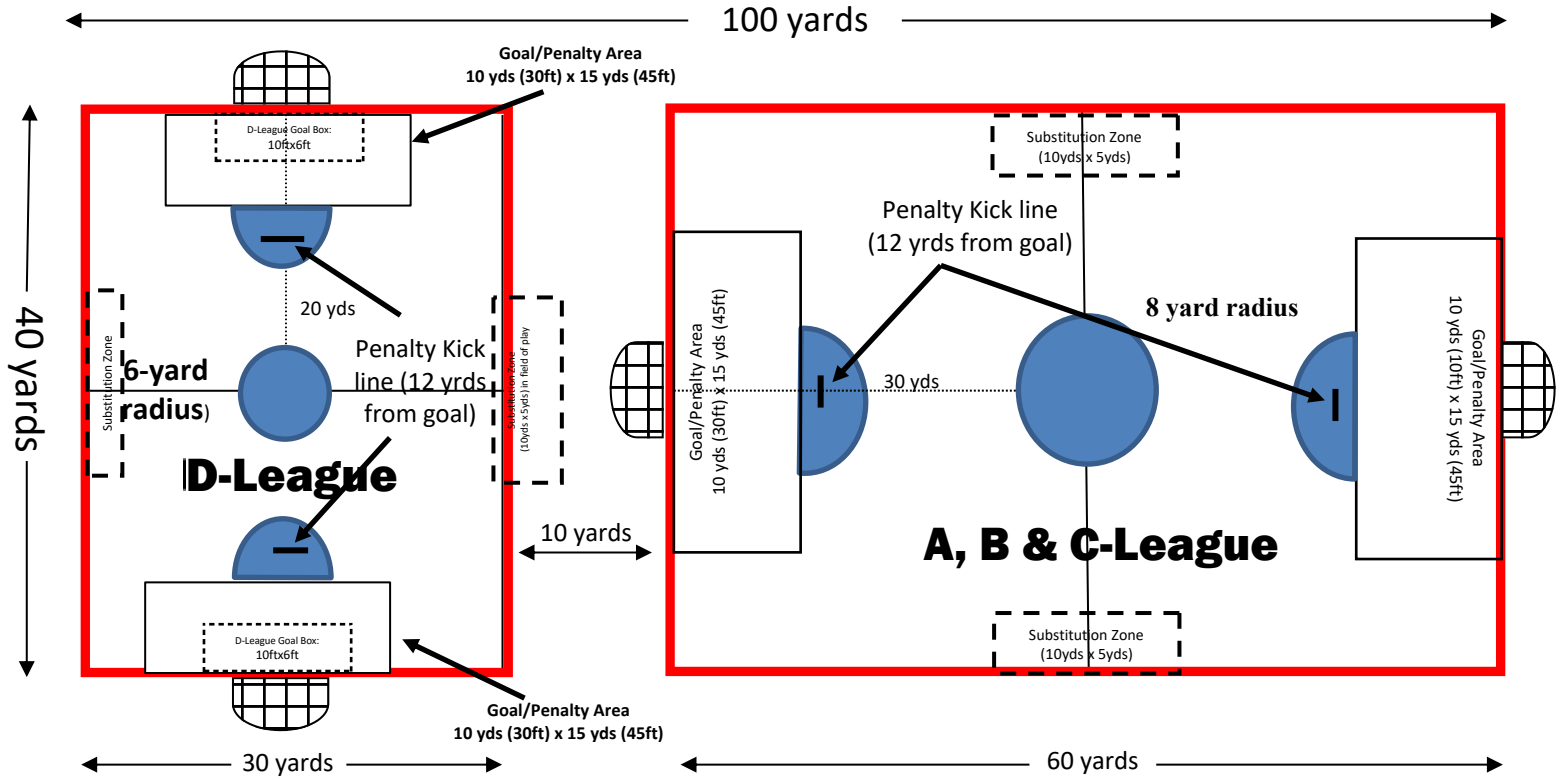
9.2.2. Coach Certification: The following is a summary of the 200.2 Coach Certification Policy. Please see the complete policy for additional details. In order to be eligible to coach, head and assistant coaches must be in good standing and submit all required forms to be certified. Eligibility requirements include **but not limited to: background check, Coaches Online Certification, register online as a coach, agree to and abide by the 200.3 Coaches Conduct and Ethics Policy, and attend pre-season meeting/coaches clinic, if any. Coaches that complete the certification process shall receive an ID**



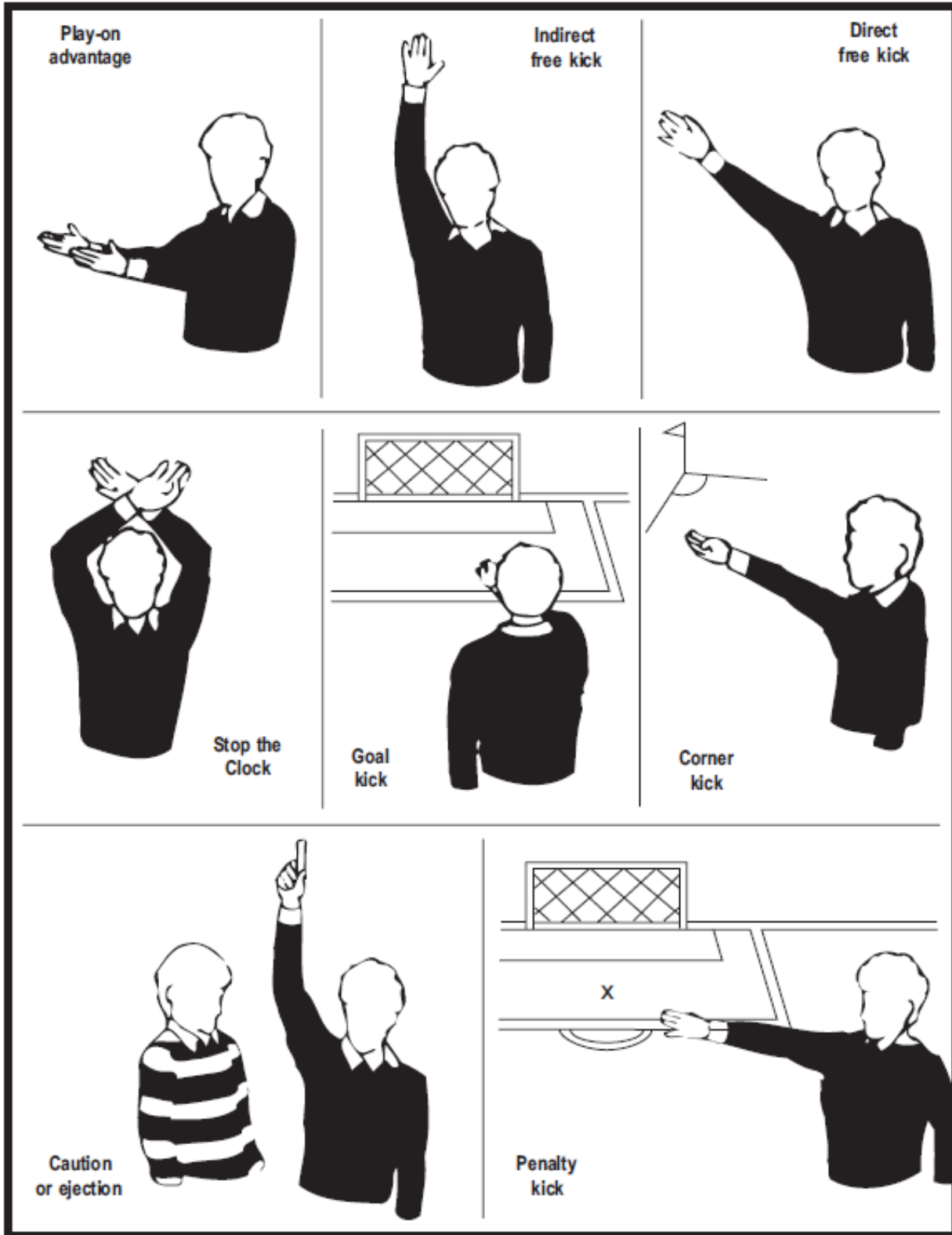
**badge as specified by the 200.4 Identification Badge Policy. The ID badge must be clearly displayed at all times during league games. Coaches without ID badges will not be allowed to coach or be present in the immediate area of the playing surface or field (i.e. bench, dugout, or sideline).**

- 9.3. Player Conduct:** Players are expected to display good sportsmanship at all times. Trash talking, profanity, cheap shots, and fighting will not be tolerated. **Please see policy 100.5 Player Conduct for further information.**
- 9.4. Fan Conduct:** Coaches and/or Board representatives are responsible for the behavior of their team's fans. Unruly or unsportsmanlike conduct by fans will not be tolerated and will result in a technical foul against the fans' team. In addition, fans may be subject to ejection from the facility. This may further result in forfeiture of the game or expulsion of team from the league.
- 9.5. Board Review:** The Board Disciplinary Committee will review cases of poor sportsmanship and conduct issues and has the authority to issue penalties against players and coaches at their discretion.

# Appendix A: ITS Soccer Field Dimensions

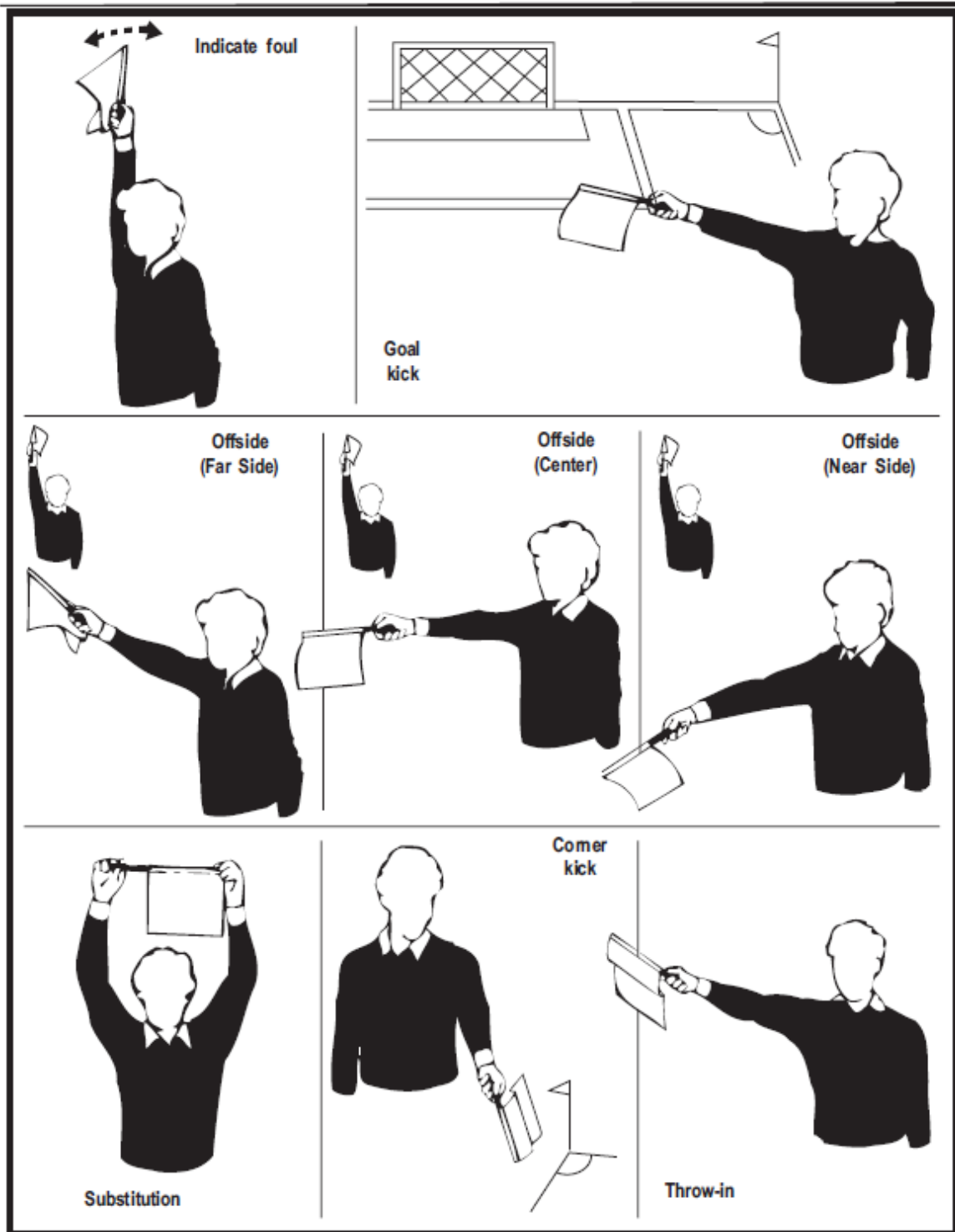


## Appendix B: Referee Signals



*NOTE:* Referee gestures are based on officially recognized signals. Not all signals apply or will be used in the ITS Soccer League.

# Appendix C Referee Signals Sideline Assistant



**NOTE:** Referee gestures are based on officially recognized signals. Not all signals apply or will be used in the ITS Soccer League.