



# **RULES OF COMPETITION & PLAYING FORMATS**

*Last Updated March 2024*

# GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

## **(1) PARK RULES**

No alcoholic beverages, smoking/vaping, or pets are allowed inside the fenced in areas that include the playing fields, bathrooms, and concession/pavilion within Athletic Complex/Park.

Parking is only available in designated spots and curbs. No parking is permitted in “No Parking Areas”, in crosswalks, or blocking fire hydrants.

## **(2) REGISTRATION**

Registration will be available using an online system and the “regular registration” period will be a designated time frame (normally 4 to 6 weeks) before the start of team formation. Late registration (registering any time after the end of the regular registration period) may result in an additional fee per player. Acceptance of late registering players solely depends on availability of openings on teams. Unpaid balances may result in a player’s removal from a team until the balance is resolved.

## **(3) DIVISIONS**

Howell Soccer Club is a school grade-based program. From time-to-time, it may be appropriate to place a player in a different division based on the actual age of the player. Such placements are at the sole discretion of Howell Soccer Club, and in any case, must not void insurance coverage or cause extenuating risk to the Club.

## **(4) PLAYER ASSIGNMENT**

The Registrar will make every attempt to assign players to the team/coach requested by the parent/guardian at registration. However, all requests may not be accommodated due players-per-team and the Club’s goal to evenly distribute the players by age, gender, and approximate skill level throughout each division. If no specific request is made, the players will be assigned randomly. The team coach(es) will be assigned to the same team as their own children. Siblings within the same division are assigned to the same team by default unless the parent/guardian specifically requests otherwise.

## **(5) CONDUCT**

All players, coaches, and spectators must abide by the Howell Soccer Club Code of Conduct. Individuals in violation of the code are subject to sanctions and/or fines by the HSC Board of Directors.

## **(6) ELIGIBILITY**

To be eligible for games and practices, players shall be registered with Howell Soccer Club for the applicable season, be in good standing (e.g., all dues paid and no suspension), and participate in accordance with the rules and regulations of HSC. Players shall only participate with the team that they are assigned. “Guest Playing” for other teams may occur with the consent of Club leadership on-site.

# GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

## **(7) PLAYING TIME**

Each player shall play at least half the game. This rule will not apply if a player is injured, sick, or makes the choice not to 'enter the game'.

Players may only play as a goalkeeper for no more than half of the game without the expressed consent of the opposing team and/or referee.

## **(8) STANDINGS**

Given the recreational nature of the Club, no official standings or scores are kept by Howell Soccer Club. From time-to-time, referees and/or coaches may report scores to the Club for the purpose of team balancing and sportsmanship. Games may end in a tie, as no winner is needed.

## **(9) NUMBER OF PLAYERS ON THE FIELD**

Games for all age groups will always be played with an equal number of players on the field for each team. The number of players should be first determined by allowing each team to have at least one substitute on the bench and also having the minimum number of players on the field that is outlined in the rules.

The exception to this rule is if a player receives a red card during the course of the game. A team cannot replace a player that has been sent-off because of a red card and must play 'short' for the remainder of the game.

Coaches shall prioritize a balanced game. Teams can divide/borrow players from the opponent in an effort to play a more balanced game (e.g., even number of players, skill, etc.).

## **(10) EQUIPMENT**

Players are not allowed to wear jewelry (earrings, bracelets, necklaces) for any reason (except medical or religious). In the younger age groups, sneakers are permitted in place of soccer cleats. Sharpened or burred soccer cleats and/or baseball cleats are not permitted. Shin guards must be worn and placed under the sock. Players in violation of the equipment rules are not permitted to play until the violation is corrected.

## **(11) SLIDE TACKLING**

Due to the recreational nature of the Club, players are not permitted to 'slide' to challenge for the ball in any division. Slide-tackling shall result in a yellow card, at minimum, and a red card depending on the severity of the challenge.

# PLAYING FORMATS AND MODIFICATIONS

## LITTLE KICKERS & FUTURE STARS

- **Number of Players:** 4 versus 4 with no goal keepers.
- **Ball Size:** Size 3 Ball (Provided by HSC)
- **Game Format:**
  - Start with a 20 Minute “Practice” at the scheduled game-time,
  - Play 3, 10-Minute Periods with 3 Minute Breaks In-Between.
  - *The format is flexible and should be discussed between the coaches before each game.*
- **Modifications:**
  - Begin each period with a kick-off.
  - Defend one side of the soccer field for the entire game.
  - No goalkeepers or ‘guarding’ is permitted.
  - Players may not ‘head’ the ball.
  - Substitute players “on the fly” (e.g., the game doesn’t need to stop).
  - Throw-Ins, Corner Kicks, and Goal Kicks are permitted and awarded by the coaches. There is no offside – coaches should be mindful of ‘goal hanging’.

*As a general rule of thumb for the pre-k and kindergarten divisions, keep the game moving and avoid long stoppages due to the technical elements.*

## INSTRUCTIONAL

- **Number of Players:** 7 versus 7 with goalkeepers.
- **Ball Size:** Size 3 Ball
- **Game Format:**
  - Play 3, 15-Minute Periods with 3 Minute Breaks In-Between.
- **Modifications:**
  - Begin each period with a kick-off.
  - Defend one side of the soccer field for the entire game.
  - Goalkeepers cannot drop-kick or punt the ball.
  - Players may not ‘head’ the ball.
  - Substitute players “on the fly” (e.g., the game doesn’t need to stop).
  - All free kicks are ‘indirect’ (e.g., you can’t score directly from it).
  - Handballs shall only be called if the player intentionally uses their hand and/or gains an advantage.
  - There is no offside – coaches should be mindful of ‘goal hanging’.
  - The build-out line will be used in accordance with the rules.
- **The Build-Out Line:**
  - All Attacking players must retreat behind this line when the goalkeeper has possession or there is a goal kick and may not enter this area until the goalkeeper releases the ball or the ball leaves the penalty area on a goal kick.
  - If the goalkeeper releases the ball before players retreat behind the build out line, the ball is considered in play and players may challenge for the ball.

# PLAYING FORMATS AND MODIFICATIONS

## PEEWEE

- **Number of Players:** 9 versus 9 with goalkeepers. A minimum of 6 players constitutes a game.
- **Ball Size:** Size 4 Ball
- **Game Format:**
  - Play 2, 25-Minute Halves with a 5 Minute Break In-Between.
- **Modifications:**
  - Teams shall switch halves after halftime.
  - Goalkeepers cannot drop-kick or punt the ball. Goalkeepers may not 'play the field.' An indirect free kick is awarded for either of these infractions.
  - Players may not 'head' the ball.
  - Substitute players "on the fly" (e.g., the game doesn't need to stop), but a player must not enter the field until the playing *leaving* has stepped off.
  - Offside is introduced and called by the referees.

## NOVICE

- **Number of Players:** 11 versus 11 with goalkeepers. A minimum of 7 players constitutes a game.
- **Ball Size:** Size 5 Ball
- **Game Format:**
  - Play 2, 30-Minute Halves with a 5 Minute Break In-Between.
- **Modifications:**
  - Teams shall switch halves after halftime.
  - Goalkeepers may not 'play the field.' An indirect free kick is awarded for this infraction.
  - Substitute players "on the fly" (e.g., the game doesn't need to stop), but a player must not enter the field until the playing *leaving* has stepped off.
  - Offside is called by the referees.

## 3M LEAGUE

- Players, coaches, and spectators shall follow the rules of 3M as posted on the league's site. All HSC members are subject to the HSC Code of Conduct at home and away games. Severe incidents of misconduct may be referred to the NJYS Discipline & Appeals Committee, outside of the Club jurisdiction.

## HOWELL SOCCER CLUB CODE OF CONDUCT

Youth sports programs play an important role in promoting the physical, social and emotional development of children. It is therefore essential for parents, coaches and officials to encourage youth athletes to embrace the values of good sportsmanship. Moreover, adults involved in youth sports events should be models of good sportsmanship and should lead by example by demonstrating fairness, respect and self-control.

Attendees and participants are therefore responsible for their words and actions while attending, coaching, officiating or participating in a youth sports event and shall conform their behavior to the following code of conduct:

1. Attendees will not engage in unsportsmanlike conduct with any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee.
2. Attendees will not encourage their child, or any other person, to engage in unsportsmanlike conduct with any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee.
3. Attendees will not engage in any behavior which would endanger the health, safety or well-being of any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee.
4. Attendees will not encourage their child, or any other person, to engage in any behavior which would endanger the health, safety or well-being of any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee.
5. Attendees will not use drugs or alcohol while at a youth sports event and will not attend, coach, officiate or participate in a youth sports event while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
6. Attendees will not permit their child, or encourage any other person, to use drugs or alcohol at a youth sports event and will not permit their child, or encourage any other person, to attend, coach, officiate or participate in a youth sports event while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
7. Attendees will not engage in the use of profanity.
8. Attendees will not encourage their child, or any other person, to engage in the use of profanity.
9. Attendees will treat any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee with respect regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or ability.
10. Attendees will encourage their child to treat any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee with respect regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or ability.
11. Attendees will not engage in verbal or physical threats or abuse aimed at any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee.
12. Attendees will not encourage their child, or any other person, to engage in verbal or physical threats or abuse aimed at any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee.
13. Attendees will not initiate a fight or scuffle with any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee.
14. Attendees will not encourage their child, or any other person, to initiate a fight or scuffle with any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee.

By attending a Club activity, game, practice or, event, attendees that fail to conform conduct to the foregoing while attending, coaching, officiating or participating in a youth sports event will be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to the following in any order or combination:

1. Verbal warning issued by a league, organization or club official.
2. Written warning issued by a league, organization or club official.
3. Suspension or immediate ejection from a youth sports event issued by a league, organization or club official who is authorized to issue such suspension or ejection by the youth sports organization.
4. Suspension from multiple youth sports events issued by a league, organization or school official who is authorized to issue such suspension by the youth sports organization.
5. Season suspension or multiple season suspension issued by the youth sports organization.