

2021 PAL SOCCER LEAGUE REGISTRATION HANDOUT

COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS – All PAL Soccer players, coaches, parents and spectators should comply with prescribed disease prevention and mitigation protocols. We will send related updates through Sports Connect, the PAL website and the PAL Facebook page.

WHEN COACHES WILL CONTACT YOU:

- **Start Smart Soccer:** September 15, 2021.
- **VIP:** September 6, 2021.
- **U6 – HS (High School):** August 14 – 15, 2021.

If you haven't been contacted by these dates, contact Howard Hill at 678-2182 or at howard_hill@cox.net.

PAL OBJECTIVES – Provide a wholesome environment for development of players and enjoyment of soccer for all, promoting sportsmanship and proper conduct by coaches, players, parents and spectators.

BEHAVIOR AND CONDUCT – All PAL Soccer players, coaches, parents and spectators are expected to show proper respect to others and to display good behavior and conduct at all PAL practices and games. Coaches are responsible for their players and parents. Persons who violate this standard will be subject to disciplinary action by the PAL Board, up to and including suspension from PAL events and being barred from practice and game sites during PAL activities. The PAL/SAY Code of Ethics and Behavior for Parents, available on the PAL website, contains outstanding guidance.

RESPECT FOR REFEREES – All coaches, players, parents and spectators must show respect for the referees and their decisions. No one may interfere with, distract or yell at the referees during the games. Only PAL coaches should interact with referees concerning gameplay. Anyone with a complaint or concern about a referee should bring it to the attention of PAL President Howard Hill at 678-2182 or at howard_hill@cox.net.

PLAYER PARTICIPATION – PAL Rules require 50% playing time for each game, except for reasons of injury, illness, absence, discipline or lack of required equipment (i.e., shin guards, proper shoes). Players need to be at practices unless excused by the coach. Parents of players who participate in other activities must resolve with the coach any scheduling conflicts. Notify your commissioner or another PAL Board Member if you believe your player is not playing at least 50% of each game.

SAFETY AROUND SOCCER GOALS – Climbing, hanging or playing on soccer goals and nets (~~except U6~~) is DANGEROUS. Coaches and parents: Please warn your players and children and stop anyone you see abusing the goals and jeopardizing himself/herself and/or others.

SHIN GUARDS – (Not applicable to Start Smart Soccer.) All players must wear protective shin guards completely under and covered entirely by socks during all practices and games. Putting the shin guards on top of the socks and pulling the top of the socks over them is not acceptable. If the shin guards irritate the skin, use a thin sock under the shin guards; then put on the soccer socks. Shin guards need to be made of a suitable material and provide a reasonable degree of protection. Small, thin shin guards may be okay for young players, but parents should consider obtaining more substantial shin guards for older players (U12 and higher).

PROHIBITED EQUIPMENT – No ribbons, bows, ornamental items or hard items in a player's hair. No jewelry of any kind except for taped-down medical or religious bracelets or necklaces. No earrings and body piercings, even when taped over. No casts or splints (other than so-called inflated "air" casts or splints) even though covered with soft padding. A complete list can be found on the PAL website.

COACHES MUST BE REGISTERED – Anyone who coaches or assists on a recurring basis during practices or games must be registered by having been cleared and accepted by PAL to coach, by first completing a PAL Coach Application Form and an online coach training module that PAL will reimburse the cost of, as well as a level 1 background check PAL will pay for. Also, coaches must take a prescribed free online concussion training course plus free Safe Soccer training and submit copies of the completion certificates.

COACHES' SHIRTS – Only registered coaches wearing shirts identified with a "2021 PAL COACH" logo are allowed in the team areas during games. PAL provides shirts for the head coach and up to two assistants for each VIP and U6 through HS team.

MANDATORY COACHES' MEETINGS – Coaches will receive team rosters and will get to choose practice days/times/locations based on a lottery.

- U6: Saturday, August 14, 8 a.m., Niceville City Hall.
- U8: Saturday, August 14, 9 a.m., Niceville City Hall.
- U10: Saturday, August 14, 10 a.m., Niceville City Hall.
- U12, U14 and HS: Saturday, August 14, 11 a.m., Niceville City Hall

MANDATORY COACHES' CLINICS – TBD; coaches will be notified by the PAL Director of Coaching.

PRACTICES – Start week of Monday, August 16 for U6 through HS. (See PAL Rules for allowed practice frequency/duration.) U6 through HS head coaches establish their teams' practice days/times/locations, based on availability and a lottery.

PLAYING SEASONS:

- VIP, U6, U8, U14 and HS: One game each Saturday, September 11 to November 6.
- U10, U12: One game each Saturday, September 11 to October 23, with playoffs to follow.

Possible weeknight games for U8 – U12 if an odd number of teams; TBD.

GAME SCHEDULES – Game schedules will be available on Sports Connect prior to Labor Day weekend.

END-OF-SEASON PLAYOFFS – For all U10 and U12 teams, with separate divisions for boys' and girls' teams. To be held weeknights from Monday, October 25 through Thursday, November 4, and on Saturdays, October 30 and November 6. Games may be played on Wednesday nights, Friday nights and Sunday afternoons, only if necessary. Generic schedules based on teams' regular season standings to be available by Monday, October 18 and final standings and schedules to be made available shortly after Saturday, October 23 games.

GAME SITES:

- VIP, U10 and U12: The Niceville Recreation Complex (200 Campbell Drive).
- U6, U8, U14 and HS: Twin Oaks Park (College Boulevard and 601 Highway 85N).

WEATHER – We play in wind and rain, even when it's cold, but not in thunder and lightning. We will normally make the decision to play/suspend/cancel on the field unless there is compelling evidence to do so ahead of time, e.g., an imminent hurricane.

TRANSPORTATION OF PLAYERS – Parents are responsible for getting their players to practices and games on time and picking them up within 15 minutes of the scheduled finish time.

UNIFORMS FOR START SMART SOCCER – Toddler-sized t-shirts will be issued at the first session.

UNIFORMS FOR VIP AND U6 AND HIGHER – A Uniform Sizing Chart can be found on the PAL website. VIP, U6, U8, U10, U12, U14 and HS players get jerseys, shorts and socks. Team coordinators or coaches must pick up the uniforms at American Athletic Uniforms (AAU) at 90 Eastview Avenue, Valparaiso. Uniforms for VIP through HS players will be ready by Wednesday, September 8. Contact AAU beforehand at 729-1205 to arrange pickup; uniforms must be inventoried, verified and signed for before departing the premises.

CONCESSION STANDS – PAL will not be operating concession stands at the game fields.

PHOTOS – Shot In Focus will be taking individual pictures. Please ensure your player shows up for pictures, which will be used to create team pictures for the sponsors' plaques. Individual and team pictures will be available for purchase from Shot In Focus but parents do not have to buy any. Persons who take photos of players other than their own should first ensure the subjects' parents approve.

SPONSOR'S PLAQUES – PAL will supply a plaque for each sponsor near the end of the season. Coaches or team coordinators may pick up their plaque for delivery to the sponsor but must sign for it. PAL Board Members will deliver any plaques not picked up.

SPONSOR SUPPORT – Sponsor donations help underwrite our program and keep our registration fees low. Many sponsors are businesses whose owners don't have children playing PAL but still support us. Each chance you get, thank our sponsors and use their services. Also, sponsors are not to be solicited for additional funds or support, but any support offered by the sponsor may be accepted.

PLAYER AWARDS/TROPHIES – Optional and up to each team. PAL provides individual and team awards only for the winners and runners-up in the end-of-season playoffs for U10 and 12 teams.

FUNDRAISING – PAL teams/parents/players may not solicit, seek donations or do fundraising on behalf of PAL and/or any PAL team.

VOLUNTEERS – PAL's success is derived from our volunteers. We are a non-profit organization staffed solely by unpaid volunteers and we need more, especially parents of current players. Join us; any time and talent you can contribute will reap benefits for our children. Contact Howard Hill at 678-2182 or at howard_hill@cox.net.

COPY OF PAL RULES – Available on PAL website. If you don't have internet access and want a copy of the PAL Rules, contact Howard Hill at 678-2182 or at howard_hill@cox.net.

PAL WEBSITE – www.nicevillepalsoccer.org.