

2026 PAL SOCCER LEAGUE REGISTRATION HANDOUT

WHEN COACHES WILL CONTACT YOU:

- **Start Smart Soccer:** Wednesday, September 9, 2026.
- **VIP:** Tuesday, September 1, 2026.
- **U6 – HS:** Saturday or Sunday, August 8 or 9, 2026.

If you have not been contacted by these dates, contact Howard Hill at 850-678-2182 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. 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. The referee may stop or suspend a game if there is an infraction by anyone.

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 a 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 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 or "forever" bracelets. 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 of prohibited equipment 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 the requirements under the COACHES tab on the PAL website.

COACHES' SHIRTS – Only registered coaches wearing shirts identified with a "2026 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 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. All meetings will be at Niceville Community Center, 204 N Partin Drive.

- U6: Saturday, August 8, 8:00 a.m.
- U8: Saturday, August 8, 9:00 a.m.
- U10: Saturday, August 8, 10:00 a.m.
- U12, U14 and HS: Saturday, August 8, 11:00 a.m.

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

PRACTICES – Start week of Monday, August 10 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: (More details available under 2026 SEASON tab on PAL website.)

- Start Smart Soccer: Six sessions, either on Tuesdays or Thursdays, from September 15 to October 22.
- VIP, U6, U8, U14 and HS: One game each Saturday, September 5 to October 24.
- U10, U12: One game each Saturday, September 5 to October 10, with the tournament October 12 to 29.

Possible weeknight games for U8 - U12 if there are an odd number of teams; TBD.

GAME SCHEDULES: U6 - HS game schedules will be available on Sports Connect prior to Labor Day.

END-OF-SEASON TOURNAMENT – For all U10 and U12 teams, with separate divisions for boys’ and girls’ teams. To be held on weeknights from Monday, October 12 through Thursday, October 29, and on Saturdays, October 17 and 24. Games may be played on Friday nights, but only if necessary. A random draw to determine teams’ placement on the schedules will be held at the coaches’ meetings.

GAME SITES: (Field layouts and locations available under PARENTS and COACHES tabs on PAL website.)

- Start Smart Soccer: The Niceville Recreation Complex (200 Campbell Drive).
- VIP, U10 and U12: The Niceville Recreation Complex (200 Campbell Drive).
- U6, U8, U14 and HS: Twin Oaks Park (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 representatives or coaches must pick up the uniforms for the entire team, at American Athletic Uniforms at 90 Eastview Avenue, Valparaiso. Uniforms for VIP through HS players will be ready on Wednesday, September 2. Uniforms must be inventoried, verified and signed for before departing the premises. Parents are responsible for any uniform sizing issues based on sizes selected during registration.

CONCESSION STANDS – Chick-fil-A will be operating concession stands at the game fields.

PHOTOS – PAL will not host an official photographer for the 2026 season. Persons who take photos of players other than their own should first ensure the subjects’ parents approve.

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 tournament for U10 and U12 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; time and talent you can contribute will reap benefits for our children.

COPY OF PAL RULES – Available on PAL website.

PAL WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK – www.nicevillepalsoccer.org. Excellent sources of additional information.