



# AJAX UNITED

# 2018-2019 Parent

# Handbook

*Information & Guidelines*

## Who We Are

**Description & History:** Modesto Youth Soccer Association (MYSA) is the parent organization for Ajax United. MYSA-AJAX currently offers recreational, mini-season, and competitive soccer (Ajax United), as well as adult leagues. Our core values are honesty, integrity, respect, and hard work.

Ajax United is a competitive soccer club based in Modesto. The majority of our players are from the Modesto metro area but we also draw some players in from all the way from Merced to Sacramento.

Ajax United was founded in 1981. The celebrated success of our club includes state cup champion teams, collegiate candidates, National team members like Tisha Venturini & Heath Pearce, and thousands of players who had the opportunity to grow their love of the game of soccer.

## Mission, Vision, Goals, & Philosophy

**Ajax Mission** - Ajax provides players the highest quality coaches, uncompromising in their path to develop the player's techniques, tactics, and character as we ultimately foster a lifelong passion for the game.

**Ajax Vision** – Ajax United is recognized as an educational soccer club where players receive elite coaching from the most educated and licensed coaches in our area. We provide an opportunity for players of ages 4-23 for superior training and a path for development based on a club curriculum that fosters creative, attacking players who attract colleges offering opportunities for our players to continue playing.

**Ajax Goals** - For the competitive program, policies and decisions will be guided primarily by the following primary goals:.

- Roster three teams in each age-group/gender for the U8-U12 team
- Roster two teams in each age-group/gender for the U13-U19 teams
- Increase financial aid & scholarship fund by 10% within the next two years
- Have all coaches with a minimum of USSF D or NSCAA Level 6 License within one year

**Ajax Philosophy** -Ajax believes in a style of play that involves dynamic attacking players who are willing to take chances to be successful. Our coaches will not focus solely on wins at younger ages as they work to develop techniques and creativity, but ultimately will produce players who are able to problem solve on the fly and break down opponents, leading to more sustainable success at older ages when wins become more relevant. We believe risk taking will allow our players to express themselves and gain confidence that will carry into all aspects of their lives. We apply this philosophy of player development through a tier structure focusing on unique stages of development. While our methods and goals are different within each of these stages there are several guiding principles that envelope our philosophy: love of the game, risk-taking, and hard work.

## **Ajax Club Development Plan**

The Ajax Club Development Plan covers three main areas to strengthen our family's & player's experience while in Ajax.

- Long-Term Player Development Plan
- Coach & Parent Education
- Public Relations

We are taking specific steps to improve each of these aspects. Below are some concepts we are implementing this upcoming year that will have an immediate impact.

**Long Term Development Plan** - Ajax player development plan will incorporate a new season calendar and written player evaluations as described below.

### *Player Evaluations*

Player evaluations are an important part of the development package. In order for players to know where they are excelling and where they need to put in a little more work, they must have the feedback from their coaches. Normal day-to-day interaction suffices most of the time but a formal evaluation process is absolutely necessary to make sure the coaches opinions are communicated clearly and thoroughly to the player and parents. What is that formal evaluation process or what can parents expect in terms of player evaluations?

**Coach Education:** Ajax United believes that a well functioning club includes ongoing coaches and parent education opportunities.

Each year our coaches are required to complete additional coaching education. The goal of this program is not only to increase the licenses and knowledge of our coaching base but also to keep our methods and exercises up with modern developments in the

game. The DOC offers some hours as internal education but for the remaining hours our coaches are asked to attend formal outside education courses. Most often these courses are provided by the two most widely acknowledged soccer organizations in the U.S.A., the National Soccer Coaches Association of America (NSCAA) and the United States Soccer Federation (USSF).

**Public Relations** - MYSA-Ajax is committed to developing a positive and visible public image through communication and marketing.

*Communication* Ajax is expending a lot of time and energy to make sure we communicate effectively with our members (you families). The most obvious place of information is our club website. This is a great place to start to see the most important events in our club. Below is a list of other communication tools that are in use. We also regularly send out emails of upcoming events, any policy changes, or other important club news. Please make sure that you maintain an updated email address with us so that you can continue to receive that information. We also encourage you to communicate any problems or concerns you have to your team coach, the Director of Coaching, or an MYSA-Ajax Board member.

**Website:** [www.MYSA-AJAX.org](http://www.MYSA-AJAX.org)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/modestoajax](http://www.facebook.com/modestoajax)

### *Marketing*

In addition to communicating with our current group of players and families, it is extremely important that we continue to promote the MYSA-Ajax Club. The most important and relevant way of promoting our club is through you the parents who positively and openly communicate to others about their experiences with MYSA-Ajax and the programs we offer. Additionally, we sell apparel advertising both our MYSA and Ajax programs and encourage families to support our club by proudly wearing such apparel. Finally, our staff are continually seeking sponsorships from community members and organizations who understand the benefits our club offers to the community.

## **Conflict Resolution**

Our path of communication is extremely important to make sure that problems are addressed in an appropriate and timely manner. If you ever feel your player is in an unsafe or potentially harmful situation then you should immediately contact your team coach, the Director of Coaching, or an MYSA-Ajax Board member. All discussions will be kept confidential if requested by the parent. If the issue is not a circumstance of player safety then we urge you to follow the path of communication identified below

under *Player or Parent Concerns*. We are working with our coaches to have an open door policy with regard to player and parent concerns. We urge you to bring up questions or concerns you may have without having fear of a backlash toward you or your child. Nonetheless, MYSA-Ajax has a 24 hour cool off period- this means no conversations, calls, texts or emails immediately following a game except in circumstances in which a child is unsafe or in a potentially harmful situation. The following is the path of communication that needs to be implemented:

**Player or Parent Concerns:** You must first talk with the **Coach**. If the problem cannot be solved you will speak with the DOC, Carlos Zavala. If the issue still cannot be solved it will be heard in front of the **Ajax United Committee**. Again, if the issue is still not solved it will go to the **Board of Directors**, if necessary.

**Coach Concerns:** The following path of communication is for the Coach, either with a player or parent concern. The coach will first talk to the **player** and/or **parent**, trying to solve the issue. If the issue cannot be solved, or the inappropriate behavior does not cease, the coach will contact the **Ajax Committee**. Again, if the issue is still not solved it will go to the **Board of Directors**, if necessary.

## **PLAYER REVOCATION-SUSPENSION PROCEDURE**

MYSA-Ajax recognizes each player as representatives of the Club and thus holds each member to the highest standards of integrity, sportsmanship, and professionalism. Consequently, MYSA-Ajax reserves the right to revoke a player's membership on a competitive team or suspend a player for a specified period of time should a situation arise that the coaching staff, Director of Coaching and/or Executive Director deem such action necessary. Situations that might provoke this process include violations of MYSA-Ajax player and/or parent codes of conduct or other game-related player violations. MYSA-Ajax does not take such action lightly. The procedure for determining whether such action is warranted is outlined below.

### **I. Recognition of Incident:**

- a. The MYSA-Ajax Executive Director shall contact the MYSA-Ajax player and/or parent representative to request additional information regarding the alleged violation, as the MYSA-Ajax Executive Director deems necessary or

appropriate.

- b. The MYSA-Ajax member shall promptly, but not later than ten (10) business days after such contact, provide all information requested by the MYSA-Ajax Executive Director. The failure to submit such requested information timely may be construed by the MYSA-Ajax Executive Director as an acknowledgment by, or on behalf of, the player of the occurrence of the violation as alleged.

**II. Formal Reporting:**

- a. The MYSA-Ajax Executive Director shall deliver a report (oral or written) to the Ajax Committee regarding the facts of the violation including any disciplinary action taken by other certifying organizations against the MYSA-Ajax member.
- b. This report may be delivered before the MYSA-Ajax member has responded to the request for information, however the MYSA-Ajax Executive Director shall update the report to include such response whenever it is received.

**III. Disciplinary Action:**

- a. The Ajax Committee may, upon receipt of such report, take any or all of the following actions:
  1. Immediately suspend or revoke the membership of the MYSA-Ajax member pending further review by the MYSA-Ajax Board at the next regularly scheduled meeting.
  2. Privately censure the MYSA-Ajax member. The Executive Director shall advise the Board of the decision to censure in the form of a brief written report at the next scheduled meeting.
  3. Recommend that the Board suspend the membership of the MYSA-Ajax member for a period of time recommended by the Executive Director and/or Ajax Committee.
  4. Recommend that the Board revoke the membership of the MYSA-Ajax member.
  5. Determine that no violation has occurred and deem the matter closed.
- b. Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, the Board of Directors is not limited to accepting or rejecting the recommendation of the Ajax Committee and may impose on the MYSA-Ajax member any of the above penalties that the Board deems appropriate.

**IV. Notification and Appeal:**

- a. The Executive Director shall notify the MYSA-Ajax member of actions taken by the Ajax Committee.

- b. The MYSA-Ajax member or parent representative may submit a written appeal to the MYSA-Ajax Board of Directors within sixty (60) days of the Ajax Committee's decision.
- c. Upon receipt of the appeal, the Board of Directors will ask the Chair of the Ajax Committee to submit a written report explaining the reasoning behind the disciplinary recommendation.
- d. The Board of Directors will decide regarding the appeal within sixty (60) days of receipt of the appeal in writing.
- e. The Board may authorize the censure, suspension, or revocation of membership of the MYSA-Ajax member prior to such appeal.
- f. Except as otherwise specifically set forth herein, no MYSA-Ajax member shall have any right to be present at any meeting of the Board where discipline of any MYSA-Ajax member is being considered, though the Board may, in its sole discretion, permit such attendance.

**V. Suspension and/or Revocation of Membership:**

- a. Upon suspension or revocation of membership, the MYSA-Ajax member:
  - 1. Is no longer permitted to use the MYSA-Ajax designation and must immediately cease using the MYSA-Ajax designation;
  - 2. May not participate in any MYSA-Ajax member events; and,
  - 3. Shall be deemed to have immediately resigned from any positions with any MYSA-Ajax chapters or affiliates, boards, committees and/or teams.

**VI. Reinstatement:**

- a. Any MYSA-Ajax member whose membership is either suspended or revoked may apply for reinstatement at the earlier of the end of the suspension or five (5) years from the date of the Board's initial decision.

Nothing in this policy is meant to prevent or limit the ability of the Executive Director, the Ajax Committee or the Board to promptly respond to any alleged violation of MYSA-Ajax player and/or parent codes of conduct or other game-related violation, nor does this policy give any MYSA-Ajax member any right to appeal any final decision of either the Ajax Committee or the Board to any regulatory body, legislative body or court. Each MYSA-Ajax member specifically waives any right to pursue any legal or equitable remedy against MYSA-Ajax, its directors, employees, agents and representatives with respect to any aspect of any disciplinary procedure.

The Board, the Executive Director or the Ajax Committee may delegate any or all of such party's responsibilities under this policy to one or more individuals who are directors, officers, employees or agents of MYSA-Ajax.

## Play Up Policy

A player that would like to play-up in an older division must submit a written request to the AJAX Committee and Director of Coaching. The AJAX Director of Coaching must receive the written request with plenty of time to review prior to tryouts. The parents must also discuss their child's request with the Director of Coaching prior to the beginning of tryouts.

Upon approval by the Director of Coaching, the player may tryout for an older division team. The player will be evaluated during tryouts along with other players trying out for the desired team. An under aged player may be placed on a team based on the following:

- Players who were allowed to play up prior to implementation of this policy may continue to play up with their current teams.
- Players may only request to move up in age by 1-2 years.
- The player must be evaluated during the scheduled team tryout period.
- The player must demonstrate the mental, psychological, and physical maturity required to perform at an older age group.
- The player must be determined by the evaluators to be an "impact player" for the older division team. An impact player is generally defined as one of the top 3 players on the team.

The general rule is: if the player is NOT in the top 3 (impact players) on an older team, he/she should be playing age appropriate for several reasons. Playing up as an "impact player" can have several advantages to a player and his/her development but playing up as a "role player" does not typically benefit the player and may cause the player to regress psychologically and physically (playing time), which in turn will hinder tactical and technical abilities/experience.

Proposed exception to this policy must be presented to the Ajax Committee and Director of Coaching for review. The Director of Coaching can make exceptions to this policy based on roster or developmental needs. The decision of the Ajax Committee and the Director of Coaching concerning team assignment is final.



## **Ajax Club Guest Play**

### **Guest players from other clubs:**

Using guest players from other clubs is strongly discouraged unless an Ajax team is in need of additional players that cannot be recruited from within the club. The conditions under which this may occur include 1) lack of available players and/or 2) level of play involved. Recommendations should be submitted to the Ajax Committee and Director of Coaching with reasonable time for review. If approved, coaches must balance the playing time between guest players and Ajax players with the expectation that coaches should not take significant playing time away from Ajax players.

### **Ajax players guest playing outside of the club:**

Guest playing for other clubs is generally discouraged, however MYSA-Ajax recognizes that such action may be appropriate under certain circumstances, particularly those related to level of play. Ajax players interested in guest playing for other clubs must seek formal permission from the Ajax Committee and the Director of Coaching through the following procedures:

- A written request must be made to the MYSA-Ajax Director of Coaching by the outside club's Director of Coaching
- The MYSA-Ajax Director of Coaching must make a recommendation to the Ajax Committee. The Ajax Committee is responsible for granting formal permission to guest play for other clubs.
- Players will not be allowed to guest play for another club if their Ajax team is already scheduled to participate in a game/tournament the same day/weekend of if the request would require them to play against another Ajax team.
- Coaches and Managers are not allowed to give permission to any player to guest play unless the Ajax Committee and its Director of Coaching have granted permission.
- Permission will be granted for one game, unless otherwise specified.
- Consideration is given to whether the requesting club is part of District 8. Permission is less likely to be granted if the requesting club is part of District 8.

**Written requests should be submitted to the Ajax Committee and Director of Coaching with reasonable time for review. The Ajax Committee meets monthly.**

## Ajax Player Movement

Ajax competitive teams may experience different rates of players' growth and development. Our Ajax coaching staff manages player personnel on a case by case basis and base their decisions on the best developmental interest of each player being moved and teams that are involved. Player movement is based on the development and improvements that players display on the field during practices and games throughout each season. In order to be moved up or down, the coaching staff of the teams involved and the Director of Coaching will evaluate the impact in games of each player being considered, the needs of the teams involved, coaches' input, individual evaluation, speed of play of the player and team, the overall soccer awareness of the player, and other appropriate developmental factors based on age and skill level. We understand that moving players from team to team is a very sensitive issue. We take every decision very seriously. Once decisions are made, the coaching staff will request to meet with parents about the decisions and/or development of each child. If you have further questions about this issue, please contact the Director of Coaching. Player movement may take place if necessary.

## Club Pass Movement

Player Selection Process:

- Head coaches of each age group will identify players to be moved.
- Managers will identify game conflicts of the age groups and teams involved.
- Players will be club-passed based on the needs of the team in need of players.
- Director of Coaching will approve the "Club Pass" movement. The recommendation(s) will be submitted from the coach, not from parents.
- Managers will communicate the movements to the parents.
- MYSA-Ajax administration and Managers will perform administrative requirements for each player.
- Transactions should be made 7-14 days in advance in order to avoid conflicts. In case of last minute emergencies coaches, managers, and MYSA-Ajax administration should expedite the paperwork process to ensure that teams have sufficient players.
- Coaches must be able to work together to ensure that all teams have enough players at each game.

## Club Expectation

- Ajax United is a FULL ONE-YEAR commitment.

- Ajax United teams will participate in NorCal leagues and tournaments.
- Ajax United teams will start training in June.
- Ajax United will take two weeks off in December/January
- Ajax United will take two weeks off in June/July.
- Soccer is considered the primary sport for Ajax United players. When scheduling conflicts arise, they are expected to attend their scheduled Ajax United games and tournaments.
- All players will be trained by a member of the Ajax United coaching staff.
- Our Ajax United coaches routinely attend NorCal coaching education courses and attend monthly clinics hosted by our DOC.

## Ajax Club Fees

### Registration Fees

**\$150 Registration- due at the time of accepting team position or the initial team meeting.**

The registration fee is used to cover direct registration costs and program administrative costs. This includes association membership fees, contribution to coaching education, staff and administrative costs, website fees, and marketing costs.

### Club Service Hours Deposit

**\$150 Fully Refundable Deposit (Option to split into three payments of \$50)**

Modesto Ajax serves over 375 players from more than 300 families on 28 teams. Our program would become overly expensive if all tasks of the club were completed by paid staff. Lots of volunteers are needed to provide our players and families with a high quality program filled with fun and personal development.

**Ajax requires each family to perform at least five (5) hours of club service.**

Parents must keep track of their own hours using the attached volunteer service hour form. As an incentive to participate, Ajax assesses a \$150 fully-refundable club service deposit at the time of registration. If your family performs five or more hours of club service work, that deposit is credited to your player account.

At the approved event, upon completion of your hours, make sure to get a signature from the event coordinator (see attached form). Hours will not qualify if not accompanied by the event coordinator's signature.

Activities that qualify are listed below. In addition to the list, you may receive special calls for club service with those hours qualifying. However, activities that only benefit the team will not be counted toward completion of club service hours except for work done by the Team Manager or an Assistant Coach. While team volunteer work is very

important for your team, the goal is to have involvement of families with the running of the club.

**Club Service Opportunities Include, but not limited to:**

<u>Annual Roles</u>	<u>One Time Opportunities</u>	<u>Annual Team Positions</u>
· MYS/AJAX Board of Directors	· Tryouts	· Assistant Coach
· AJAX Volunteer Staff Member	· Camps	· Team Manager
· Recreational Team Head Coach	· Club Events	

\*Note – Annual Roles all exceed the 5 hour minimum requirement but are offered 50% off all Ajax Camps

**Player Service Hours**

The purpose of this Ajax activity is to encourage all players to help improve our club. All activities will be age appropriate. The required number of hours per player is:

- 1 hour per player on Developmental Academy Teams
- 2 hours per player on Pre-Academy Teams
- 3 hours per player on Academy Teams

Upon completion of any Club service hours, player hours and scholarship hours if applicable, please mail or go to the MYS/Ajax office and drop off the signed form. At the time that all hours are completed and completed forms are received, these funds will be applied to your players account.

**Club Fees**

- Ajax registration is due at the first Team Meeting Night in May/June: \$150
- Club Service Deposit: \$150- Three(3) \$50 installments to be paid in July, August, and September.
- 2011 Teams: \$150 per month (June-February)
- 2010 Teams: \$155 per month (June-February)
- 2009 Teams: \$160 per month (June-February)
- 2007-2008 Teams: \$175 per month (June-February)

- 2005-2006 Teams: \$170 per month (June-February)
- 2000-2004 Teams: \$150 per month (June-October & February-May)
- Puma Uniform packages for new players- will last until May of 2019= \$110
- Players who join the teams after teams have been formed, their Ajax Registration and Club Service Deposit fees will be adjusted appropriately. Your team monthly fees will remain the same.

Ajax United monthly fees will cover the following

- Practice rental-two nights per week training throughout the year at Mary Grogan as scheduled by the club.
- Game fees
- Referee fees
- Tournament- each team will have a specific budget for tournaments and coach's travel for the year.
- League and/or Playdate fees
- State Cup (U9-U19)
- Coaching Fees
- Summer Clinic (U8-U14)
- Teamsnap fees
- Team Equipment Fees- Each team will have a specific budget for equipment needs for the year.

### **Timing & Method of Payment**

Registration must be paid before player registration will be initiated. Training Fees and Field fees are due by the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. Payment may be made online or paid in the MYSA-Ajax office during business hours. If a player account is delinquent 30 days he/she will receive notification that payment must be received within 5 days or the player pass will be surrendered. Once a pass has been surrendered, the player will not be allowed to participate in games. If an account is delinquent 90 days, the player will no longer be able to train with the team until the account is current or arrangements are made. Special circumstances do occur and if this is the case, arrangements need to be made with the Bookkeeper. **Any player fees that remain unpaid for 90+ days are subject to being sent to an outside collection agency.**

## **Ajax Player Financial Assistance**

### **Financial Aid**

We are all sometimes faced with financial difficulties. Therefore, Ajax United has created the Financial Assistance Fund. Our goal is to make sure we have an option for families that are facing financial obstacles. Historically, Ajax provides about \$14,000 annually in financial aid to families in need. Over 30 players annually received assistance last season and we aim to increase the fund every year. We gladly accept tax-deductible contributions for the fund.

### **Scholarship Fund**

Please contact the Ajax United committee for more information. There is a volunteer requirement to the Club associated with acceptance of financial aid.

### **How is Need Determined?**

Financial aid is awarded based on the application form you turn in. Please apply in cases of serious hardship, for example receiving federal aid is serious hardship, not wanting to withdraw money from your nest egg is not. What the league and club wish to provide is an opportunity for players that would otherwise be unable to participate. This is NOT a merit scholarship program; this is financial aid for those who truly need it. Being laid off or unemployed is not an automatic condition for receiving aid. The board members review the applications privately and your information is kept confidential. Families need to provide proof of income by submitting tax forms and/or pay stubs as available. All forms can be found at [www.MYSA-AJAX.org](http://www.MYSA-AJAX.org) Forms, required information must be turned in by correct age group due date to be considered.

## **Ajax Injury/Illness Policy**

If player is injured or develops a debilitating illness during the season, fees can be reviewed and adjusted. The injury/illness must require the player to miss at least 60 consecutive days and a doctor's note must be submitted to the office in order for a fee adjustment to be made.

## **Player and Parent Behavioral Expectations**

**As a soccer player of AJAX United Soccer Club we will:**

- Give 100% at practices and games, do your best to help others.

- Be early to practice, have soccer gear on and ready
- Wear the assigned practice jersey to practice
- Remember uniforms and equipment on game days
- Be 60 minutes early to games
- Watch the game and encourage players on the field when a substitute
- Show good sportsmanship at all times.
- Encourage your teammates at all times and play fun and fair.
- Have fun!
- If you are not going to be at training you must let the coach or manager know 24 hours (or as soon as reasonably possible) before through a call
- Bring a drink, water or a sports drink is essential

**As a Parent of AJAX United Soccer Club we will:**

- Arrive on time to practices and games
- Refrain from accessing other players (and reporting your assessment, if negative, to their parents)
- Encourage practice at home/practice with players at home
- Always stay positive, win, lose or tie
- Express interest, encouragement, and support to your child
- Remember who the player is: your child.
- Respect your child on and off the field, they will be stressed out if you demand performance for your approval
- Always lend a hand when a coach/official asks for help, they have very demanding jobs working with many players
- Let the referee do their job, do NOT make comments to the referee or yell at the referee
- Watch the game from the 'parent's side' away from the opposing team parents
- Be good examples of good sportsmanship, if you have issues with a game please wait 24 hrs to "cool off" and be kind with words. This is to be a fun experience for all.
- During games keep comments to positive encouragement.
- Please remember to let the coach do the coaching of the team. Please, no coaching from the side.
- At practice let coach and the players practice. Please don't interrupt during the practice, this will distract the players and change their attention.
- Enjoy the Experience.
- Travelling Protocol: No adult may share a room alone with an unrelated player. There are to be no unsupervised minors in hotel rooms, players are always chaperoned.

