



Bethel Recreation Association

SPRING- 2026 Youth Soccer Rules

The goal for this year's spring soccer program is to provide the kids with the opportunity to exercise and have fun participating with their friends in a safe environment. The program will follow FIFA/High School Soccer Rules with the following exceptions.

PLAYERS AND EQUIPMENT

1. Ball Size- Kindergarten- 2nd grades **#3** 3rd - 6th grades **#4**
2. Every member of a team must wear the Bethel Recreation shirt issued unless one is not available a like color shirt may be worn.
3. **All players must wear shin guards.** Socks must be worn up and over the shin guards.
4. Goalkeepers must wear a different color shirt than the other uniforms on the field. Coaches can choose to use any type of shirt that stands out or is different from the original uniform color. A pinnie may be loaned out at games for those teams that don't have their own goalie shirts.
5. Standard approved soccer cleats or athletic shoes may be worn. A player may not play in their bare feet, stocking feet, sandals, or any shoe that is not an approved soccer or gym shoe.
6. Clothing is subject to referee's discretion. All or any member(s) of a team may wear extra protective clothing against the cold, including gloves provided that:
 - a. The proper team uniform is worn outermost.
 - b. Any hat should be without peak, bill or protruding object of any kind.
7. ***Jewelry is prohibited. This includes earrings (taping jewelry is NOT acceptable).*** Religious and medical-alert medals are not considered jewelry. A religious medal must be taped and worn under the uniform. A medical-alert medal must be taped and may be visible. Hard barrettes and bobby pins in the hair that are securely fastened are allowed. ***Temporary plastic earring retainers can be worn in the ear in place of studs.***
8. A player shall not wear anything that may be dangerous to other players or themselves. This includes casts/splints, plastic face shields, etc. No player wearing a cast or splint shall be permitted to play.
9. Coaches are required to play all players in each half and provide equal playing time to the best of their ability. Exception- It is appropriate to give players who show up to practice more playing time than those who do not. If a player refuses to play the officials and opposing coach must be notified and no penalty will be given.

THE FIELD

1. Field size for K & 1st grades will be approximately: 20 (yards) W x 30 (yards) L
Field size for 2nd, 3rd & 4th grades will be approximately: 30 (yards) W x 45 (yards) L
Field size for 5th-6th grades will be approximately: 40-60 (yards) W x 55-75 (yards) L
2. Approximate goal size:
K-2nd Grades: 4'x4' - 4'x6' 3rd-4th Grades: 6'x6' – 6'x12' 5th -6th Grades: 6'x12' – 8' x 24'

TEAMS

1. Kindergarten - 1st grade (co-ed): Will play **5 on 5** with one of the five as a goalie.
2nd-4th grades: Will play **6 on 6** with one of the six as goalie.
5th & 6th grades: Will play **7 on 7** with one of the seven as a goalie.
EXCEPTION-if both coaches agree, teams may play with 1 more or 1 less player on the field than what is listed.

SUPERVISION/OFFICIALS

1. Bethel Rec. will assign one to two officials for 2nd-6th grade games. Kindergarten-1st grade games may only have 1 BR official assigned as 1 coach will be on the field for each team. Both coaches will ensure game runs smoothly. In the event that a referee is not present, both coaches will mutually agree upon one person to referee. If one cannot be agreed upon, each coach will referee one half.

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

1. When playing on the grass fields, teams and their own spectators will be positioned on the **same side** of the field. Spectators must be 6 feet from the field of play positioned behind the painted 6-foot line.
2. **No one is allowed to stand behind the goals or on the end lines.**

3. Turf Fields- Only 2 coaches and players are allowed on the turf fields.
4. **Practices-** K – 4th grade teams can practice twice a week for up to (1) hour long & 1.5 hours long for 5th-6th grades.
5. **Games-** Teams will play most games on Saturdays with an occasional weeknight (Monday-Thursday). Teams will have a five (5) minute warm-up before the start of each game.
6. **Game Time-** Games will consist of two (2) twenty (20) minute running clock halves with a 5-minute half time. (The clock will only be stopped for an official's timeout and injuries, **not substitutions**. The running clock rule is to ensure that all games start on time.
7. A team is allowed to start and finish a game with one (1) less player than is normally on the field for that age group. A ten-minute grace period from the scheduled time will be granted prior to the game being forfeited. If after 10 minutes a team does not have enough players, that team must forfeit the game. *If after 10 minutes a team has enough players to play the game, the game will start with reduced game time to two (2) fifteen (15) minute halves.*
8. **Coaches-**
 - **Only 2 approved coaches are allowed on the sidelines with the teams.**
 - K-1st grades- 1 coach must be on the field but may not enter the goal box. Coaches are asked to not touch the ball, interfere or hinder the game. They are on the field to help the players and ensure the game is played according to our soccer rules and that soccer fundamentals are used by the players.
 - 2nd-6th- Coaches are not allowed on the field but may help players change into their goalie shirt.
9. **Substitutions**
 - **ALL GRADES-** Substitutions may be made prior to any throw in, a goal kick by either team, after a goal, or after an injury or half time. Substitutions may **not** be made during corner kicks.
 - Substitutions shall be unlimited with each player expected to play 50% of the total playing time.

GENERAL RULES OF PLAY

Start of Play/Kick Off

1. The visiting team will take the first kick off. The ball will be placed at the center mark of the field by the referee. All players, except the player taking the kick-off, must be in their own half of the field.
2. All opposing players must remain at least 20 feet (2nd-6th) 10 feet (K & 1st), from the ball, until the ball is kicked in play.
3. The game will start after the referee blows the whistle. **The ball is in play when it is kicked by a visiting team player and clearly moves either forward or backward.**
4. The kicker shall not play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player. If violation occurs, kick off shall be retaken.
5. A goal shall not be scored directly from a kick off without the ball being touched by at least one other player on either team.

Restart of Play

1. After a scored goal, the game shall be restarted in like manner by a player of the team that gave up the goal.
2. A player of the home team will start the 2nd half with a kick off from the center of the field.
3. Restarting play after temporary delay (injury or unusual situation): If one team is clearly in possession of the ball, a sideline throw will be awarded. Should there be no clear possession at the time play is suspended – there will be a drop ball at the spot where the ball was declared dead. The ball shall be deemed “in play” when the ball has touched the ground.
4. After a handball is called, the other team will get an indirect kick at the spot of the infraction.

Ball In and Out of Play

1. The ball is out of play when it has entirely crossed the goal line or touchline. (Referees discretion)
2. The ball is out of play when the referee has blown the whistle and stopped the game.

Scoring

1. A goal is scored when the entire ball has crossed the goal line (officials' discretion) on the ground or in the air between the goal posts and under the cross bar. If a goalie carries the ball over the goal line, it is a goal.
2. In the event that cones are used for markers, the height of the cross bar will be determined by the height of the goalkeeper's arms.
3. No score will be kept for Kindergarten–2nd grade.

4. For 3rd–6th grade: Score will be recorded by the official and league standings will be kept. Coaches will be emailed a link and both coaches need to update the score within 24 hours.
5. Scores may end in a tie. No overtime periods or penalty kicks.
6. No player shall make physical contact with the goal keeper, harass the goal keeper or attempt to play the ball once the goal keeper has control of the ball in any manner and to any degree whatsoever (also included in “having control of the ball” is if the goal keeper holds the ball on the ground with one or both hands).

Offside Rule

1. The offside rule will **NOT** apply. Cherry picking will be called if it is deliberate. Coaches must teach proper defensive and offensive positions.

Fouls and Misconduct

1. **Direct kicks** – NO direct kicks will be awarded. Indirect kicks will be issued in place of direct kicks.
2. **Indirect kicks**- indirect kicks will be taken at the spot of the infraction. Exceptions: The kick is taken from where the infringement occurred, unless the offence was committed within the goal area of the team awarded the kick, in which case the kick may be taken from anywhere within the goal area. An indirect free kick within the opposing team's goal area is taken from the goal area line, parallel to the goal line, nearest to where the infringement occurred (i.e., at least 6 yards from the goal line).
 - A. Opposing players must be approximately 10-15 feet away from the ball depending on grade level.
 - B. A goal cannot be scored on an indirect kick unless the ball has been played or touched by another player before passing through the goal.
 - C. An indirect kick shall be awarded for fouls and misconduct that include but are not limited to the following offenses:
 - Dangerous play (high kicking)
 - Charging fairly (shoulder to shoulder) when the ball is not within the playing distance of the players involved.
 - Hand ball
 - Obstructing the goalkeeper (there will be NO INTENTIONAL physical contact with the goalkeeper in the “goal area”.)
 - Lying on the ball and not allowing others to play it.
 - Unsportsmanlike behavior including elbowing, pushing, tripping, etc.
 - **Slide tackling** - The referee should inform the player of the infraction that was committed.
3. **Hand Ball in the goal box**- A hand ball committed purposely within the goal box to block a goal from being made- Penalty- A goal will be awarded and a yellow card issued. Official discretion.
4. **Yellow & Red Cards**- may be used for fouls and misconduct in the 5th - 6th grade divisions.

Throw In's

1. When the entire ball is out of bounds, either on the ground or in the air, it shall be put back in play by a throw in where the ball crossed the line, by a player of the opposing team.
2. The thrower must face the field of play and must keep both feet on the ground while releasing the ball. He/she shall use both hands on both sides of the ball to deliver the ball from behind and over his/her head.
3. Only one re-throw will be allowed if an incorrect throw occurs. The referee shall provide instruction. After the second incorrect throw in, the other team will then be awarded the ball to throw in.
4. The thrower may not play the ball until another player has touched it. If the thrower plays the ball a second time before another player has touched it, the throw shall be awarded to the opposing team (referee shall provide instruction after the first throw in).
5. A goal shall not be scored directly from the throw in.

Goal Kicks

1. A goal kick is awarded when the entire ball passes over the end line, (either in the air or on the ground), without a goal having been scored, having been last touched by an attacking player.

2. A goal kick is also awarded to the defending team when the ball is struck directly into the goal by the attacking team from an indirect free kick.
3. A goal kick may be taken from any point inside the goal area.
4. **Any defending player, including the goalkeeper, may take the goal kick.**
5. The ball is in play when it crosses outside the goal box.
6. The kicker shall not play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player.
7. A goal may not be scored directly from a goal kick.
8. All opposing players must be at least 20 feet outside the goal box until the goal kick is taken.

Corner Kicks

1. A corner kick is awarded when the entire ball passes over the end line, without a goal having been scored, having been last touched by a defending player. A player of the attacking team shall have a corner kick.
2. The ball shall be placed within a three (3) foot arc from the corner flag or cone and shall be kicked into play from that position by an attacking player. The cone/flag may be moved out of the way for the kick.
3. A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.
4. All defending players must be at least 20 feet away from the corner arc until the corner kick is taken.
5. If the player who takes the kick, plays the ball a second time before it has been touched by another player, a re-kick is taken. On the second violation the referee shall award an indirect kick to the opposite team from a spot where the violation occurred.

Miscellaneous Rules

1. Headers will **NOT** be allowed. An indirect kick will be awarded. Incidental contact to the head will not be penalized. Official discretion.
2. Drop kicking and punting will not be allowed. Goalie may throw or kick the ball from ground.
3. Slide tackling is NOT allowed.
4. Good judgment, sportsmanship and fair play should govern the decisions and actions of all the coaches, referees and spectators.
5. When playing at Art Crate Stadium, all spectators will be expected to sit in the stadium bleachers when playing at Art Crate Stadium. No parents are allowed in the field area. **Only two approved coaches are allowed on the field per team.** Stadium rules will be enforced at all contests. Water only will be allowed on the fields, absolutely no exceptions. No coffee, food, seeds etc. will be allowed on the turf fields.
6. Excluding lightning and thunder, weather will not cause game cancellations. Games will be played rain or shine. Check our website, bethelrec.org for updates.

BETHEL RECREATION CODE OF CONDUCT

ALL Coaches, players, and spectators: MUST follow all rules and regulations including- **NO DRONES**, use of alcohol, tobacco, smokeless and vapor/e-cigarettes, marijuana and **NO animals including DOGS** on BSD property.

- **may not disrespectfully address or yell at an official, other coaches, players, parents or spectators.**
- may not attempt to influence an official's decision or confront officials before, during or after a game.
- may not use profane or inappropriate language or obscene gestures.
- may not disrespectfully address, bait, or taunt an opponent.
- The head coach is responsible for the conduct and behavior of their own players, bench personnel and spectators.
- At no time shall a coach, player or spectator make a threat of physical harm or use physical force towards an official, supervisor, staff, or other coaches or players.
 - If family or friends come to practices or games, please make sure children/siblings are supervised, all the garbage (including water bottles) is picked up and absolutely no dogs allowed on school property.

If coaches or spectators have questions regarding particular calls, rules, or a referee, or wish to give feedback please contact: During Games: **Supervisor** Before or After Games: **Bethel Rec. Director**

PENALTY: Any coach, player or spectator who fails to comply with the above rules will be subject to disciplinary action. Depending on the severity of the violation, supervisors and officials have the authority to remove individuals.