

WAA Outdoor Recreational Soccer Rules

Updated 3/2025



Wheatland Athletic Association

2323 Liberty Street Aurora,
IL 60502

630-978 -2855
www.waasports.org

GOAL SAFETY WARNING

Goals ***MUST NOT BE MOVED*** by players or coaches for any reason.

If the goals on your practice field or game field are not securely staked into the ground DO NOT PLAY on the field until the goals are secured.

Unsecured goals are very dangerous and can cause injury. Please report any unsecured goals to the W.A.A. office at 630-978-2855. Please do not allow children to hang on the nets or crossbars.

We appreciate your cooperation on this important matter.

Wheatland Athletic Association
Board of Directors

Firearms and Weapons of any kind are not permitted at any WAA **facility or event** including but not limited to practices, camps, clinics, meetings (of any kind or nature), games or tournaments (**collectively "Events"**). This policy is in place at all **buildings** and locations (**and adjacent parking and storage facilities**) that WAA owns, operates, maintains, rents, **is licensed or permitted to use and/or enjoy (collectively "Maintains")**, including but not limited to any facility, **property** or field that a WAA Event is held **or utilizes property that WAA Maintains**. A violation of this policy will result in immediate notification of police and removal of the violator from the event or facility. Notwithstanding, the WAA reserves its, sole and absolute, right to terminate the membership (or further restrict or prohibit) the attendance of any member, family or household member from an event or facility, or the participation therein of a minor child of a member or household violating any of its policies.

WHEATLAND ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

PHILOSOPHY

WAA's goal is to provide children with an opportunity to learn the basic skills of soccer in a safe and nonthreatening environment. Our intent is for the children to have fun and learn to enjoy the game. Every child should walk off the field feeling like a winner. For this reason, winning will not be a major emphasis of our program and the WAA will not keep standings.

WAA Code of Conduct Players

I will learn the rules of the sport and follow them to the best of my ability; I will respect my coach, be courteous, listen and perform to the best of my ability; I will respect my teammates and treat all other players the way I would like to be treated; I will respect my opponents.

I will respect the officials and let them do their job; I will compete fairly and demonstrate good sportsmanship no matter if my team wins or not; I will only use social media in a positive manner.

Coaches

I will be a positive role model for my team by learning and following the rules of the game/league, encouraging sportsmanlike conduct, showing respect, courtesy, and positive support of the players, officials, other coaches, and spectators at each game and practice; I will not engage in or encourage any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct; I will remember that children participate in sports to have fun and will work to organize practices that are fun and challenging to my players; I will treat each player as an individual and consider the large range of emotional and physical development for the age group; I will teach my players to respect the officials and I will respect the officials at all times; I will teach my team that doing one's best and working as a team, are the most important goals of youth sports; I will only use social media in a positive manner and encourage my players and parents to do the same; I will never physically, sexually, or verbally abuse any player, coach, official, or parent; I will never be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while participating in a WAA event; I will never use tobacco products at any WAA event.

Parents

I will be a positive role model for my child and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials, parents, and spectators at every game and practice; I will not engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, coach, player, parent or spectator; I will teach my child to play by the rules and follow the player's code of conduct.

I will teach my child that doing one's best and working as a team is more important than winning; I will only use social media in a positive manner and encourage my child to do the same; I will inform the coach of any physical limitations that may affect the safety of my child or the safety of others; I will refrain from coaching my child or other players during the games and practices, unless I am the team coach;

I will demand a sports environment for my child and other children that is free from drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and will refrain from their use before and at all sports events.

We urge everyone to help keep the fields neat and clean. Please respect residential property when using or visiting fields. No alcoholic beverages are allowed on park and school property at any WAA games.

SOCCER RULES

2025

Field of Play

- Our fields are preset. The nets should be checked before each game. Any dangerous condition should be corrected immediately if possible. Please notify the WAA Office of any conditions you think require attention.
- WAA reserves the right to change program parameters based on number of registrations in order to provide a balanced program.

Grade	# on Field	Roster Recommended Size	Roster Max. Size	Substitution
K	5v5	8	10	On the Fly
1 st	7 v 7	10	12	On the Fly
2 nd	7 v 7	10	12	On the Fly
3 rd	7 v 7	10	12	On the Fly
4 th	7 v 7	11	12	On the Fly
5 th	7 v 7	11	12	On the Fly
6 th -8 th	9 v 9	12	13	On the Fly

Game Cancellations

Weather Related Cancellations --- WAA will cancel games if lightning is observed or the directors consider weather conditions to be extreme. Please check the WAA website/Rainout Line for any weather related field cancellations at www.waasports.org

Equipment

- K-2nd grade divisions use a size 3 ball
- 3rd- 5th grade divisions use a size 4 ball
- Middle school (6th through 8th grade) divisions use a size 5 ball.

If a ball should become unplayable, it should be replaced by a new ball approved by the referee and the match should be restarted with a drop ball at the point nearest to where the ball was when play stopped. If this occurred during a stoppage of the game (i.e. place-kick, penalty kick, corner kick, or throw-in) the game should be restarted accordingly.

Player's Equipment

- WAA UNIFORM IS MANDATORY. (1) WAA Green (Away) and (1) WAA Yellow (Home) jersey comprise a player's uniform. Shirt, shorts, and socks available for purchase at the WAA office.
- **Shin guards are mandatory and must be worn under socks. No shin guards = No Play.**
- Jewelry is not to be worn, no earrings!
- Sweatshirts and pants and soft knit caps, ear wraps, and gloves are permitted for cold weather.
- NO POCKETS OR BELT LOOPS on pants.
- The goalkeeper must wear **colors that distinguish** him/her from the other players and the referee. WAA provides goalkeeper jerseys in the coach equipment bag.

- The player shall not wear anything that is dangerous to themselves or another player.
- Jewelry is not permitted to be worn, with the following exceptions:
 - Medical Bracelet or Chain: The bracelet or chain must be taped down to the body.
- Eyeglasses are not recommended, however for the safety of the players, **shatterproof sport goggles are strongly recommended.**
- No metal cleat shoes or street shoes are permitted.
- Casts are permitted if padded in a fashion so as to be safe for all players.
 - Padding must be approved by the referee.
- **If a player's uniform does not comply with WAA's policies, they shall not be allowed to play until the discrepancy is corrected.**

Officials

• Coaches

1. Practices -- Coaches should have at least one practice a week no longer than 1.5 hours. Coaches should not exceed two practices a week. We do not recommend practices for Kindergarten.
2. Games -- Coaching during a game should be "positive encouragement" in a constructive manner. **Negative statements to own team or opposing team will not be allowed. See Harassment & Swearing Rule**
3. **No one is to coach from outside the coach's box**, which is usually within the 25 yard line to the 50 yard line. Please do not have a coach or parent down by the goalkeeper, or behind the goal, coaching the goalkeeper and other players on the team. **The referee will ask you to have this person move from behind the goal.** If this "coaching" continues the person will be asked to leave and if they refuse to leave the game will be a forfeit.
4. **Only WAA coaches (maximum of 3 at one time) will be allowed on the sideline** with the team. All other parents are to sit on the **opposite** sideline.
5. All players will start at least one game during the season. There will be no unwritten rule of which players are "starters" and "non-starters".
6. All players will get equal playing time as much as possible every game or at least equal playing time throughout the season. If, however, a player consistently misses practices or is otherwise

• Referees

Referees have jurisdiction over each game. **A referee's word is final.** Questions of the referee may be made in a polite manner and away from players during a game stoppage, at half time or at the end of the game. It is the referee's responsibility to:

1. Enforce the rules
 - a. Referees must control the physicality of the game by calling fouls when they occur, especially if player safety is at risk. **REFEREES ARE REQUIRED TO TELL THE PLAYER WHAT IS BEING CALLED (pushing, tripping, slide tackle from behind).** If a player continues to foul repeatedly after being told to stop/shown what is wrong, the referee is required to (in order to keep other players safe) send the offending player off the field. The coach may send a substitute player onto the field. The referee must talk with the coach to decide whether the offending player will be allowed to return to the field or stay on the team sideline.
 - b. **Referees must send off the field** (send player to team sideline), any player who is **guilty of violent conduct, serious foul play, or the use of foul or abusive language.** The coach may send a substitute player onto the field. The referee must talk with the coach to decide whether the offending player will be allowed to return to the field or stay on the team sideline.
 - c. Referees are obligated to report any misconduct of **coaches** or **spectators** to the Referee Supervisor, but when dealing with these individuals, yellow and red **cards must not be used. The individual should be informed that they may be required to completely leave the premises if**

the misconduct persists. The referee has the authority and responsibility to terminate the game should the individual refuse to leave the field. If a coach or spectator is told to leave the field they will be suspended from **at least** the following game and the incident will be reviewed by the Soccer Directors.

2. Keep time.
3. Stop play for serious injury.
 - a. If, in the opinion of the referee, a player has been seriously injured, play shall be immediately stopped. Safety of the players is our main concern. **Signs of serious injury include screaming, crying, or prolonged inability to walk.** Play is restarted with a drop ball, at the place where the ball was, when play suspended.

Rules of the Game

- ***Number of Players***

Teams must have at least 2 fewer than required players to begin the game and one player must be a goalkeeper. If a team does not have the required number of players, it would be **permissible to use players from the opposing team to fill in.** If this cannot be done, the game can try to be rescheduled amongst teams. Our purpose is for the kids to have a good learning experience, so make every effort to play the game as scheduled.

- ***Duration of the Game***

K-5th play 4 – 10-minute quarters 2 minutes between quarters with a 5-minute halftime.

Middle school (6th through 8th grade) **divisions:** play 2 – 25 minute halves with a 5-minute half-time.

Half-time in all divisions is not to exceed 5 minutes. **All games will begin on time as scheduled. Have your team warmed up and starting line-up set prior to your game time as the referees will start the game clock at your assigned game time. Referees will not provide extra time to warmup and get your starting line-up set.** If a game is running late, time will be made up by taking an even number of minutes off each quarter.

Off-side is not enforced for 1st grade, 2nd grade, 3rd and 4th grade divisions.

Rules not detailed in this Handbook should align with USSF Laws of the Game [HERE](https://soccerrefereeusa.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/laws-of-the-game-made-easy.pdf)
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- All restarts will be indirect with the exception of corner and penalty kicks.

Additional WAA Amendments

- The goalkeeper has possession of the ball when one or either hands or arms are holding the ball. Possession is also a hand, finger, arm, or leg on a stationary ball brought under control. Goalkeepers in possession of the ball cannot be charged, obstructed or interfered with by opposing players. **WAA EMPHASIZES SAFETY OF THE GOALKEEPERS AND REFEREES ARE INSTRUCTED TO ERR ON THE SIDE OF CAUTION AS IT RELATES TO A GOALKEEPER HAVING POSSESSION OF THE BALL.**
- **Slide tackling is not permitted.** A tackle from directly behind the opponent or with both feet will not be allowed.

Cherry-picking (goal scrounging) is not permitted in the 1st- 4th On the Fly

- th Grade Divisions. Cherry-picking is when an offensive player remains near an opposing team's goal when the ball is being played on the other half of the field. Since off-side is not enforced for 1st through 3rd grade divisions, please do not have any offensive player purposely stay in an off-side position. Referees are instructed to stop play and disallow any goal that results from this type of tactic.
- Spectators should occupy the opposite side of the field from the teams and must be at least 6 feet back from the sidelines.
- No spectators or coaches are permitted to occupy the area behind either goal-line, including behind or near the goal.
- If a ball is put out-of-bounds over the goal-line (excluding the area between the goal posts) and the referee is unable to determine which team last touched the ball, a goal-kick in lieu of a corner-kick shall be awarded. A corner-kick is considered a direct scoring advantage and should not be awarded in this situation. Awarding of a goal-kick to the defending team is not considered a scoring advantage.
- Soccer *IS* a contact sport. The players must play the ball and not the other players; however, unintentional contact does occur. Blowing the whistle for every minor infraction disrupts the flow of the game. In youth soccer, a referee's primary objective is to insure that the game is played in a safe and instructional manner. **Offering words of support and instruction is advised.**
- **WAA recommends that coaches meet with the official prior to the game and discuss how to handle a lopsided game. In the event a team takes a three goal lead, one of the solutions should be agreed upon prior to the start of the game to occur for the duration of the three goal imbalance:**
 1. The team behind adds a player to the field.
 2. The team ahead should position its scoring player(s) in a defensive position (i.e. center back, goalkeeper).