

CLAYTON PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

2025 FALL SOCCER LEAGUE RULES

This program is intended to provide an organized Recreation Program that is fun for the participants and provides opportunities to teach all players the skills, fundamentals, teamwork, strategy, and sportsmanship of soccer. **Competition is not the primary objective; therefore, a strong commitment should be made to emphasize the improvement of skills and enjoyment of the game.**

I. League Administration

- A. The Clayton Parks and Recreation Department will administer the league. N.C. High School Association rules will be used with the following modifications.

II. Eligibility

- A. Players must register and play in their respective age group except for those granted by the Athletic Program Supervisor.
 - i. 4-5 COED – 4- and 5-year-olds as of October 31
 - ii. 6-7 COED – 6- and 7-year-olds as of October 31

III. Equipment and Uniforms

- A. Numbered uniform shirts will be provided by the Clayton Parks and Recreation Department. Players will be responsible for their own shorts, shin guards, cleats/shoes, and socks.
- B. Molded rubber cleats are required. Metal cleats, sandals and bare feet are not permitted.
- C. Shin guards are **MANDATORY**.
- D. No Jewelry will be permitted.

IV. League Rules

- A. Field of Play – 20 yards by 35 yards
- B. Size 3 balls will be used for both age groups.
- C. Length of Game –
 - i. Four eight (8) minute quarters
 - ii. Approx one minute between quarters
 - iii. Five (5) minute half time
 - iv. No overtime
- D. Number of players
 - i. 4-5 COED – 5 v 5
 - ii. 6-7 COED – 5 v 5

- iii. **No goal keepers shall be used. This includes not putting a player at the top of the goal arch.**
- iv. **No player shall be used for defense only. Players must move up and down the field.**
- v. No shot shall be taken inside of the arc located directly in front of the goal.
- vi. Games may begin with 4 players.
- vii. If one team does not have enough players, both teams should divide up to play.
- viii. Substitutions can be made on any ball stoppage, throw-ins, goal kicks, corner kicks, free kicks, after a scored goal, and between quarters.

E. Mandatory Playing Rule – each player must play 2 full quarters, or half the game. (Exceptions – injury, illness or discipline).

F. Games will be officiated by the coaches. The coaches will officiate and abide by the normal duties outlines in the rules and the official rulebook. A Parks and Recreation staff will be onsite to assist as needed.

G. Offsides will not be called.

H. Game Play/Definitions

- i. **Kickoffs/Start of Game/Quarters.:** a kickoff is the method of starting a soccer game, or restarting after a goal has been scored. The game ball will be placed at the center of the field. During the kickoff, both teams must be on their halves of the field, outside the center circle. The offensive team will begin with 2 players inside the circle, one kicking the ball and the other receiving the kickoff. Once the ball has been kicked off, players may enter the circle to pursue the ball. To start the game the team listed first on the schedule will begin the game on offense. This team will also kick the ball off the start the 3rd quarter. The team listed second on the schedule that does not start off the game with the ball will do the kickoffs to start the 2nd and 4th quarter.
 - 1. Kickoffs will also be used after every scored goal.
- ii. **Throw-Ins:** a prescribed method of returning the ball into the field of play that has traveled out of bounds over the **sideline** of the field. The ball must be held with two (2) hands and released directly over the head. Both feet must be touching the ground when the ball is released.
 - 1. Three (3) attempts will be allowed to throw the ball in correctly. On the 3-attempt play will resume whether the throw in was correct or not.
- iii. **Corner Kicks:** when the ball is kicked out of bounds at the **end line or baseline** of the field (the line in which the goal is located) by a **defensive player**, then the ball is placed at the corner of the field at which the ball is kicked out of bounds. The offensive player may kick the ball back into the playing field from this position.

iv. **Goal Kicks:** when the ball is kicked out of bounds at the **end line or baseline** of the field by an **offensive player**, then the ball is placed in the goal box. The defensive team kicks the ball back into play. **Defensive players must start on their side of mid field while the offensive player is doing the goal kick.**

- I. Rain Outs: The Clayton Parks and Recreation Department will try to decide during the day whether a game is going to be played if inclement weather occurs. The Recreation Department will notify the coach as soon as the games are cancelled. The coach will need to notify his/her own players. If a parent or coach has any questions about whether a game is going to be played, they may go to the athletic website at www.teamsideline.com/claytonparksandrec. Updates will be posted no later than 4:00 PM on weekdays, and 7:00 AM on Saturday.
- J. Make Up Games: Rained out games will be made up only if possible.
- K. There will be NO HEADERS allowed!
- L. SPORTSMANSHIP – All players and coaches are to always demonstrate good sportsmanship. Lining up at the end of the game to shake hands with the other team is mandatory and only a small token of sportsmanship. Remember to demonstrate good sportsmanship from the beginning to the end.