



**AYSO Region211 - Kalamazoo | Parchment | Oshtemo**

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# Coach Handbook

## Region 211: Michigan (Kalamazoo, Parchment, Oshtemo)

Welcome to AYSO Region 211! The Region 211 Board would like everyone to enjoy each moment they spend coaching AYSO soccer. This handbook contains information to inform, guide, and help you during the coming season, as well as to emphasize the AYSO philosophy of "Everyone Plays, Balanced Teams, Open Registration, Positive Coaching and Good Sportsmanship."

(Returning Coaches -- Please note: required team positions (see below) - you must turn in names of volunteers for your team's required positions with their required volunteer forms at equipment pickup.)

## PARENT MEETING / REQUIRED TEAM POSITIONS

Upon receipt of player names, it is your responsibility to call a parent meeting at your house or at another suitable place. This meeting is to help you get organized for the coming season, to get your parents organized to help with the team, and to pass on information about AYSO rules and procedures. Before this meeting, make copies of the team player list to distribute to each family.

The following items should be covered at this meeting:

1. Explain that we are a volunteer organization and we need their support. At the meeting, ask parents to commit themselves and their children to every game and practice. Stress commitment from child and parents for the whole season of both Fall and Spring games.
2. You **MUST** recruit a team parent to help manage the team, to communicate with other parents any changes of schedule or other news, to line up parents for refreshments at games, to line up parents to work in the concession stand, to coordinate team picture taking, and to assist in other arrangements. If preferred, these jobs can be split among several parents. You will also need to recruit volunteers for fund raising and concessions duty. These volunteers can be organized by the team parent.
3. For all divisions you **MUST** recruit at least one assistant coach who should be present at all practices and games. Designation of a second assistant coach is a good idea to cover times when either the coach or the first assistant coach cannot be present at a practice or game. Experience is not essential. AYSO provides help through books, videotapes, and coaching clinics. The more people involved, the easier it is for you.
4. For Divisions U8-U19 you **MUST** recruit a parent referee. New referees who have not had AYSO training must attend one of the basic referee clinics. Referees with some AYSO experience are also encouraged to attend clinics.

5. For Divisions U8-U19 each team must supply a linesperson for each game. It is strongly advised that you also recruit a backup linesperson. Explain that this is an easy task; they just have to spot who last played the ball over the touchline. (They do not call penalties or offside.) Recruit a linesperson if your team is from one of these divisions.

6. For Divisions U5-U8, each team is responsible for setting up pylons for one of the fields, and for returning the pylons to the concession stand after the game. For Divisions U10 and U12, portable goals will be used and stored along the west, south, and east perimeter of the Complex. During games, coaches will be responsible for acquiring and moving the goals into position and returning them to their original location.

7. For Divisions U10 through U16-19, each team is responsible for turning in their Lineup card ("Official Lineup Form"), complete with game scores, recorded substitutions and sportsmanship score, at the equipment building after each game.

8. Give a copy of the team player list to each family. Explain that transportation problems, if any, are to be resolved among parents from the list provided. It is the responsibility of each parent to insure that the player is present for practices and games. The coaches are not chauffeurs or baby sitters. Firmly notify parents that you expect players to be on-time for practices and to arrive at games fifteen minutes before kickoff. Stress that parents are also expected to be present when games and practices end. Encourage parents to attend all games. The players like parents to be at all the games and welcome their parents' encouragement.

9. Explain to the parents that you expect the parent, not the player, to call you the day before if a practice must be missed. Also tell them you need at least 48 hours notice if a player will be absent from a game. (You cannot plan your lineup and substitutions if you do not know who will be present.) Absences from practices and/or games may, at the coach's discretion, have a bearing on the players' participation in the games to follow. If a player misses three games, he/she is subject to be dropped from the team.

10. Explain to the parents our Sportsmanship Program. (See link on our website HOME PAGE)

10. a. Stress to the parents that a positive attitude is very important at all times. Explain the AYSO "everyone plays" policy, and how this will affect substitutions at games. Stress that you are the coach, and that parents are not to attempt to coach their players from the sidelines. Cheering for players during the game is encouraged strongly. However, making negative remarks about players on your team or the opposing team is strictly forbidden. Explain that having fun, learning soccer skills, and learning to play safely as a team are the important AYSO themes, and that winning games, while nice, is not the main objective.

10. b. Instruct your parents to support, or at least not openly oppose, all decisions made by the referees at games. Tell them to bring any complaints to you personally. All AYSO referees are trained and unpaid volunteers, just like coaches. They are trying to do their best, but like all of us, they sometimes make mistakes. Our referees give freely of their time, and deserve our support and thanks.

10. c. Discuss with your parents selected items from the "Region 211 Guidelines" which follow in this handbook. Especially stress PROPER ATTIRE, including the shin guard requirement. Please mention that alcoholic beverages and pets are not allowed at games or practices. Stress that Region 211 encourages a no-smoking philosophy at practice and games.

11. Complete your list of team volunteers. Get your assistant coach, linesperson and referee to fill out volunteer registration forms. There is no charge, and they gain supplemental accident insurance coverage from AYSO. The volunteer list and volunteer forms must be turned in when you pick up your equipment.

## **TEAM ROSTER**

**IF A PLAYER DROPS:** Notify the Registrar as soon as possible. Mark "DROPPED" on your copy of the registration form, and return it to the Registrar.

**REFUNDS:** A player assigned to your team who drops is eligible for a refund of AYSO registration fees only if - 1) the player has never practiced or played, 2) the reversible jersey or unused new uniform is returned to the region, and 3) the parent notifies the region within 14 days of the first registered game. There is a \$25 non-refundable administrative fee which the region keeps in all situations.

**TO ADD A PLAYER:** If you are short a player, or if you know someone who would like to play, contact your Registrar. Your Registrar is responsible for assigning players to teams in your division, and must approve changes. The Registrar may have a list of players waiting for an opening. You must have the signed Coach's Copy of the registration form for an added player before that player may practice or play.

**REGISTRATION FORMS:** You must bring your copies of the player registration forms to all practices and games. These forms are essential if a player must receive emergency medical treatment in the absence of a parent or guardian.

**ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE NUMBER CHANGES:** If addresses or telephone numbers of players change, please notify the Registrar (353-7000), so that the regional database is updated, and the family continues to receive their AYSO mailings.

## **STARTING THE SEASON**

**PRACTICE SESSIONS:** Practices should occur only once a week. Practices should also start two weeks before the first game on both spring and fall sessions. At least two adults must attend all practices. These adults should be the coach and assistant coach who have completed volunteer forms. In special circumstances this requirement may be fulfilled with other parents of team players.

**PRACTICES:** Coaches should aim to combine well organized drills with enjoyment for the players. Coaches should try to emphasize one or two aspects of the game in each practice so that players learn the game, develop playing skills and learn to interact as a cooperative team.

**COACH TRAINING:** Region 211 provides coach training sessions and practical clinics for all coaches. Coaching videos are also available on the website.

**CHILD VOLUNTEER PROTECTION TRAINING:** All coaches must receive this training and be certified. This is for your protection and protection of our children and ensures AYSO insurance coverage.

**EQUIPMENT PICK-UP:** Dates for team equipment pickup are posted on the regional website. Equipment can be collected at the Kalamazoo Community Soccer Complex before the Fall session and can only be collected once completed and signed volunteer forms have been handed in. At the end of the Fall session, coaches should collect team shirts and then redistribute the shirts at the start of the Spring session. This helps AYSO to reduce loss of team shirts. Players like to keep their shirt numbers, so keep a record of names and numbers on a game card.

**UNIFORMS:** Each coach in divisions U10 and above will be supplied a uniform set (jersey and socks) for each player at the start of the season. Shorts are to be SOLID BLACK and purchased by the player. Each coach will receive a set corresponding with the total number of players allowed on the team. Uniforms are the coach's responsibility and are only to be given out to registered team players. Each player gets one uniform set only. Additional sets must be purchased from the region.

## **GAME ACTIVITIES**

**GAME CARDS:** Fill them in prior to your arrival at the field. Anyone who does not show up can be crossed out. Ensure that their numbers are correct--there is no need to write down all the positions. Be sure to write in all players and have the sportsmanship portion completed.

**DANGEROUS OBJECTS:** Ensure players are not wearing bracelets, necklaces, earrings, etc. Glasses are O.K. if required, but may need a safety band.

**CAPTAINS:** Select a captain for the coin-toss and advise him/her what to do if he/she wins the toss. Captains should be rotated weekly.

**SUBSTITUTES:** Substitutions are made at the end of a quarter, at half time, or for an injury. Mark the first quarter's substitutes by an "x" in the first "Qtrs Played" column on the Game Card. Give the card to the referee at the end of the game for the referee's signature.

**STARTING TIME:** Get your team to the field and in position by kickoff time. Games are scheduled to start not later than the time indicated on the schedule. If your match starts late, (it may be shortened to allow the next game to start on time) remember that it will make all the following matches late. Referees will give permission (when asked) for late arrivals to enter the field if your team has less than a full team playing.

**LINESPERSON:** Except for divisions U5, U6 and U8, the referee will ask each coach to supply a linesperson. Linespersons call out-of-bounds, not penalties or offside.

**IF NO REFEREE:** There will be instances when a scheduled referee will not show up. Don't abandon the game! Have fun and play on--you and the other coach know the rules--so both of you can referee half the game, or use parent referees. Make sure the game cards are filled out and turned in at the concession stand.

**GAME BALL:** Bring your game ball to assure that you will have a game ball for your game. Mark your ball with your Division Number and Team Number so that someone doesn't mistakenly walk away with it.

**FORFEITURES:** Please make every effort to avoid forfeiting a game. If you have too few players to make a team then play with a reduced team. However, both teams **MUST** play with equal number of players on the field. The AYSO emphasis is on playing and having fun. If you have several substitutes not playing a quarter encourage them to play for an opposing team with insufficient players. Coaches are strongly encouraged to ensure that as many players as possible participate.

## **DURING THE GAME**

**SUBSTITUTIONS:** Keep all subs sitting down near you. Make sure you know where they are when you need them. (Subs standing too near the field get mistaken for players.)

### **COACHING:**

a. **SIDELINES (TOUCHLINE)** - FIFA rules prohibit coaching from the sidelines. National AYSO rules are no different in this respect. When beginners are playing in our Region, however, referees will allow some sideline coaching.

b. **GOAL LINE** - Coaching from behind the goal line is not allowed, nor is coaching inside the 18-Yard Line.

**INJURIES:** If a player is hurt, the referee will allow that player to be substituted at a designated stoppage of play. Coaches should not enter the field, until the referee signals them on.

**ENTERING THE FIELD:** Coaches and spectators must not enter the field of play without the referee's permission. PLEASE ADHERE TO THIS RULE.

**REFEREE DECISIONS:** The laws do not oblige referees to explain their decisions, but referees in our region are encouraged to do so. Referees are all trained in the proper interpretation of the laws of soccer, and part of their job in AYSO is to help educate players, coaches, and spectators. This doesn't mean that you can discuss or argue a point in the middle of the game, though. You and your players must accept the referee's decision as final, even if you saw the incident differently.

## **TIME: Referees keep the OFFICIAL TIME.**

**WHISTLES:** Teach your team to "play the whistle." Referees will often let an infringement go unpenalized if they believe it was unintentional, or did not result in an advantage (or if they didn't see it). Don't let your team stop playing the ball until they hear a whistle (unless the ball has OBVIOUSLY gone over the touchline, for example). Above all, don't yell "offside" or "hands" yourself, because that will surely make your team stop playing.

**SPECTATOR CONTROL:** Keep spectators at least 3 feet from the touchlines and on the opposite side of the field from coaches and players. The line area is used by the players, coaches, and the linesman.

## **SUBSTITUTION TIME**

**QUARTERS:** Approximately half way through each half the referee will call for substitutions. Be ready to get this done quickly.

**ENTERING THE FIELD:** Coaches are not encouraged to enter the field at substitution time. Attempt to not use the time for general reorganization.

**PARTICIPATION:** All players present throughout the game must play at least 3 quarters unless the number of players prohibits this. The referee will check this by ensuring that no player is marked as a sub for more than 1 quarter. In the spirit of the AYSO everyone plays philosophy, you should make every effort to divide the "out time" equally among all players, regardless of ability, over each half season. You should also make every effort to rotate players to different positions.

## **AFTER THE SEASON**

**GAME JERSEYS:** Collect the game jerseys (Divisions U5, U6, and U8 only) at the end of the Fall season and redistribute to players in the Spring. Please collect all jerseys at the last game in the Spring and turn them in with the rest of the equipment. Make sure to remind your players to bring another shirt to wear after they turn their jersey in.

**EQUIPMENT:** At the end of the last game of the Spring season, turn in all the equipment which has been issued to you (game ball, flag, jerseys, bag, etc.) to the equipment building.

## **TEACHING PLAYERS THE RULES**

1. There is a definite need for coaches to teach new players the very basic rules of the game. Other rules will soon be picked up in game situations because the referee will explain what is happening as the game proceeds.

2. There are a few strategies that relate to the rules that referees cannot legitimately explain during a game because it would benefit one team more than the other. As your players become more experienced, ensure that they understand the following:

2a. No offside from throw-ins. The forwards can take advantage of this rule when their side has a throw-in by getting down the field past the last fullback. Once they have the ball, though, normal offside rules prevail.

2b. Don't wait for a whistle to put the ball into play, except for kick-offs and penalty kicks.

3. Goalkeepers can hold the ball for up to six seconds. Once the goalie puts the ball on the ground (for example to roll it), the goalie cannot pick it up or touch it with his/her hands again. Once the ball is placed on the ground, the goalie has to play the ball like a regular player until the ball touches another player.

4. Goalkeepers may not be harassed while holding the ball. Attacking players should be instructed to move from the goalkeeper and not interfere when he/she is attempting to clear the ball. However, once the ball is placed on the ground the goalie has to play it like a regular player (see 3 above) and opponents of the goalkeeper can go after the ball.

5. THERE WILL BE NO SLIDE TACKLING region wide. The penalty for slide tackling is an indirect free kick.

## **SAFETY**

1. Be sure you have in your possession at all practices and games, the signed registration forms for each player on your team

2. In the event of an accident, the coach or the referee must fill out a Preliminary Accident Report Form in consultation with the Safety Director.

3. Coaches should have a First Aid Kit with them at all practices and games.

4. Coaches should arrange to have ice available at practices. For games, ice will be available for serious injuries at the concession stand.

## **TEAM PICTURES**

Team pictures are required. They may be purchased by team members. The pictures will be taken as announced on our website. You will be notified of the date and time scheduled for your team. Please have your team present early so as not to delay the start of the games.

## **CONCESSION STAND**

At some time during the season, each team will be required to furnish workers for the concession stand. Please have your team parent/manager have people available when your turn comes.