



## **Youth Soccer (7v7) League Rules & Guidelines**

### **I. General**

- a. The YMCA League focuses on skill development, fun, and a sense of team in a semi-competitive environment. Scores and standings are not kept.
- b. Except where otherwise noted in these rules, National Federation Rules (High School) shall govern competitions in YMCA youth leagues.
- c. Practices and games will be held on the same day. There are 45 minutes of practice, followed by a 45-minute game.

### **II. Coach/Parent/Player Expectations**

- a. Late Policy: It is imperative for games to start on time. Nevertheless, there is a 5-minute grace period for the start of the game if a team does not have at least 4 players. Teams can start with 4 players.
  - i. All teams must be at the center and ready to begin the match at the appointed kick-off time.
  - b. Coaches, parents, and players are expected to uphold YMCA values in both victories and defeat.
    - i. Coaches/Parents/Players will ensure and promote a culture of celebration. Taunting or demeaning behavior will not be permitted.
    - ii. Coaches/Parents/Players must address referees respectfully and professionally. Coaches must hold all questions about calls until a stoppage in play.
    - iii. Coaches/Parents/Players will refrain from using profanities while representing the YMCA.
  - c. Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their players, parents, and fans and must model positive behavior.
  - d. Coaches and players should understand both standard soccer rules and YMCA-specific rules.
  - e. All players must play a minimum of one guaranteed half (either first or second half).
  - f. Coaches must remain on the sidelines and on their half of the field during play.
  - g. Coaches must complete all onboarding requirements, including background checks and YMCA meetings.
  - h. Coaches are volunteers; administrative support and equipment will be provided by the Anaheim Family YMCA.
  - i. Player Safety: All jewelry must be removed before games. Shin guards are required.

### **III. Teams**

- a. Teams will be formed based on:
  1. Age/grade at evaluation day
  2. Friend/coach requests
    - b. Players will remain on the same team throughout the season.
    - c. Teams will have no more than 15 players.
    - d. Games will be played in a 7 vs 7 format, including one goalkeeper.
    - e. A minimum of 4 players is required to start a game.
    - f. Only players on official YMCA rosters may participate.
    - g. YMCA uniforms are required for all games.
    - h. Only turf shoes or athletic shoes are allowed; no screw-in cleats.
    - i. Play must stop immediately for injuries.
    - j. Each team may designate captains to communicate with referees.

### **IV. Game Play**

- a. All players must play at least one half of each game.
- b. Player Rotation/Substitutions:

- i. Each team will have 7 players on the field (6 field players and 1 goalkeeper).
- ii. Substitutions may occur during stoppages in play.
- c. Timing of Game:
  - i. Each game will consist of two 20-minute halves with a 5-minute break in between.
- d. Start of Game:
  - i. Each half begins with a kickoff at midfield. After a goal, play restarts at midfield. The ball must move backward on kickoff.
- e. Ball Play:
  - i. The ball is in play unless ruled out by the referee.
  - ii. No slide tackling is allowed; violations result in an indirect free kick.
  - iii. Only the goalkeeper may use hands within the penalty area.
- f. Goalkeeper Rules:
  - i. Goalkeepers may only use hands inside the penalty area.
  - ii. Handling the ball outside the area results in a penalty kick.
  - iii. The ball may not be passed back directly to the goalkeeper without touching another player.
  - iv. Goalkeeper changes must be approved by the referee.
  - v. Goalkeepers may shoot on goal.
- g. Free Kicks:
  - i. Free kicks for fouls are direct; others are indirect.
  - ii. Opponents must stand at least two yards away.
- h. Penalty Kicks:
  - i. Taken 3 yards from the goal line as directed by the referee.

## **V. Timeouts**

- a. Each team is allowed one 30-second timeout per half. Timeouts do not carry over.

## **VI. Referees**

- a. YMCA officials will enforce all rules.
- b. Referees may remove any individual disrupting the game environment.
- c. Ejections result in at least a one-game suspension and possible further review.
- d. Referees may stop or terminate games if necessary.

## **VII. Disciplinary Rules**

- a. Yellow and red cards may be issued at the referee's discretion.
- b. A red card results in at least a one-game suspension.
- c. Serious offenses may result in additional suspensions.
- d. Teams reduced to three players will forfeit the match.
- e. The referee's decision is final in all gameplay matters. The Anaheim Family YMCA reserves the right to enforce or modify rules to ensure fair play.

## **YMCA Youth Sports Key Philosophies**

- Everyone plays at least one half of every game
- Coaches are volunteers
- Focus is on fun and skill development
- Sportsmanship above all
- We promote a family-friendly environment

## **YMCA YOUTH SPORTS KEY PHILOSOPHIES**

Everyone must play an equal amount of time. Coaches are volunteers. They are not paid. Our focus is on fun and skill development. Sportsmanship above all. We promote a family atmosphere.

***\*By volunteering to be a coach, you have chosen to be a role model for all participating children and to represent yourself and the YMCA at all games and practices.***