



# Americans Soccer Club Player/Parent Agreement

Updated: April 2018

## INTRODUCTION

One key ingredient to a successful youth soccer experience is clear, consistent communication between the Club, its teams and coaches, and all Club players and parents. This Player/Parent Agreement is one way of explaining, in detail, the Americans Soccer Club's (the "Club") expectations of you as a member of the Club and what you, in turn, can expect from the Club. The Player/Parent Agreement (the "Agreement") is intended to help you identify potential issues and at the same time answer questions about the Club's decision-making process. Please read the following pages carefully. This Agreement must be accepted and followed in order to be a player on a Club team. This Agreement covers the seasonal year that runs from August 1st through July 31st.

## TRYOUTS

Club tryouts are held annually and are open to all players who meet the pertinent age requirements. Each prospective Club team player will be given a fair opportunity to make the team he or she tries out for. The Club will announce the open tryouts to inform the public of the specific tryout dates and times.

## PLAYER EVALUATION AND SELECTION

Current Club team players are evaluated throughout the season during practices, scrimmages, and games, as well as during annual tryouts. Prospective Club team players are evaluated during annual tryouts, special clinics, scrimmages and under game situations when possible. Current and prospective Club team players will be evaluated, by independent trainers, in four areas:

1. Mental dimensions (character, discipline, and leadership);
2. Physical dimensions (endurance, strength, and speed);
3. Technical competence (skill level); and
4. Tactical awareness (understanding/reading game situations).

Trainers will base their decisions and selections solely on the four areas of evaluation.

## **PLAYER COMMITMENT**

The Americans Soccer Club is a competitive soccer club geared toward players who love the sport of soccer and are serious about their development as soccer players. It is important to recognize that players and parents invest significant time and resources in playing club soccer and expect the Club to create and foster an environment that will allow players to compete at the highest level of soccer possible given individual talent and commitment levels.

Your commitment to the Club and the Club's commitment to you are for one soccer year only and, toward the end of each seasonal year, you must try out again. At the conclusion of the year your commitment to the Club is over and you are free to leave the Club if you feel it is in your best interest. The aim of this policy is to create an appropriate competitive environment for the proper development of our players. The intention is not, however, to create an environment where coaches are unnecessarily recruiting large numbers of new players each year simply to win games and move up the competitive ladder of the league. Also, no player will be cut from a Club team during a seasonal year except as a result of disciplinary issues or failure to fulfill financial obligations.

Players are expected to commit to the Americans Soccer Club as their first recreational activity priority during the fall season. The Club encourages members to participate in other sports, particularly outside the fall season. If a player has a scheduling conflict outside the fall season due to the player's participation in another sport, it is the Club's policy and practice to manage and resolve the issue in an equitable manner that respects the player's participation in multiple sports.

We expect our players and parents to be ethical and honest and to honor their commitments. Therefore, you should only play for an Americans Soccer Club team if you are prepared to make the required level of commitment. Once your commitment is made, the Club expects your full participation and support for the entire soccer season. You should be mindful of the fact that when you make your commitment, the trainer or manager may need to inform another prospective player that he or she did not make the team. Please be sensitive to others and consider your decision carefully. If you have committed to the Club, the Club will also be ethical and honest, honoring its commitment to you.

In the event that a player, after signing the Player/Parent Agreement, fails to demonstrate the requisite commitment level to his or her team, the team trainer may recommend that the Board of Directors take disciplinary action, including but not limited to a player suspension. All decisions made by the Board of Directors in this regard will be final.

We will allow double carding in most circumstances however typically do not allow it for U10 players and younger. Requests for double carding must be made at the

beginning of the season. Any requests to be double carded during the season will be at the discretion of the Club to be approved.

### **PLAYER RESPONSIBILITIES**

Attendance at games, including scheduled tournaments, is mandatory. During games, players are expected to follow the instructions of their coaches (the team trainer and, in some instances, the team manager). Players not on the field are expected to sit and watch their teammates from the sideline. Players are expected to try their best within the rules of the game and compete aggressively but fairly at all times.

Players are expected to condition themselves both during the season and in the off-season. Failure to be in good physical condition will necessarily affect a player's ability to perform and will likely cut a player's playing time during the season. Likewise, players are expected to work on soccer skills year round either on a formal or informal basis. Players need touches on the ball as much as possible throughout the year in order to develop. Practices are mandatory and should only be missed on account of illness, religious obligation or other special circumstances. Please inform your trainer and/or manager in advance if you cannot attend a practice. Players should use the bathroom prior to practice and should be prepared to train when they arrive, with shoes tied, shin guards in place, and adequate water to drink throughout practice.

Nutrition and rest are also the responsibility of the player. We expect players to eat nutritious, healthy food in a timely fashion so as not to interfere with performance. If you have questions about which foods are best for performing athletes, please ask the team trainer.

As a member of the Americans Soccer Club, you are responsible for your own performance and conduct. Honesty, communication, and reliability are expected at all times. The Club asks that you care about yourself and the sport of soccer. This requires that you maintain a healthy lifestyle and a healthy team attitude. Any use of drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes is not acceptable to the Club and may result in temporary suspension or removal from the Club. In addition, the Club will insist that you maintain a positive team attitude and a personal sense of sportsmanship and fair play.

### **OFF THE FIELD**

Americans Soccer Club players are expected to carry themselves as ladies and gentlemen both on and off the field. At tournaments, player behavior is expected to be exemplary before, during and after games. As elite athletes, players are further expected to conduct themselves with dignity and respect at home and at school. Disrespect of adults, including teachers and parents, will not be tolerated. Poor behavior by one player reflects badly on a player's teammates and the Club.

## **SCHOOLWORK**

Part of the commitment of playing for the Americans Soccer Club is a commitment to being able to handle all the obligations that a student has in his or her daily life. It is expected that all players be prepared to play soccer at Americans games and practices. This demands that players do their best in school and budget their time in order to fulfill their obligations as students. Players who are not doing their best in school and/or are not meeting their homework obligations are jeopardizing their position on their team and letting their teammates down.

## **PLAYING “UP”**

With respect to players temporarily playing for an older team, all teams must follow the rules of the leagues in which they play. Per Northern Counties Soccer Association (“NCSA”) rules, every player in a lower flight is allowed to play “up” at most three times during the fall and three times during the spring seasons (six times during a seasonal year). Club team players may only play “up” for another Club team only if the player playing “up” would be playing for a team in an older age group (e.g., a U8 player playing “up” for a U9 team) or one in a higher flight (e.g., a U12 player rostered to a C flighted team playing “up” for a U12 B flighted team). Girls can play “up” for boys’ teams, but NCSA rules prohibit boys from playing “up” for girls’ teams. JAGS/MAPS do not permit playing “up.” Club policy will allow players to tryout to permanently play for an older team, however the player would need to be ranked in the top 5 of the older age group’s rankings in order to be allowed to play up.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

As a member of the Americans Soccer Club, you are responsible for your own performance and conduct. Honesty, reliability and appropriate communication will be expected at all times. There will inevitably be times during the season when trainers make decisions that result in players doing things they may not understand. If you have issues or concerns such as the amount of playing time your son or daughter is receiving, whether or not he or she is starting, what position he or she is playing, etc., please do not hesitate to speak with your trainer. All Americans trainers have an open door policy with respect to such issues or concerns and they encourage and expect you to communicate when you have such issues or concerns. At the appropriate time, parents should feel free to communicate with the trainer and/or manager to ask questions about your child. Please note, however, that Club policy prohibits parents from communicating with the trainer and/or manager until twenty-four hours after a game or practice about any issue arising during that game or practice, except in the event of safety issues.

Players are also encouraged to talk with their trainer so they can gain a better understanding of why certain decisions are being made and what is expected of them. Your son or daughter and your trainer may not ultimately agree on such matters, but everyone should have a better understanding of each other and what needs to be done to resolve any issues through open communication. Ultimately, if you feel your trainer is

treating your son or daughter unfairly, you may contact the appropriate Club age group coordinator to look into the matter.

You are responsible for knowing what is going on with your team. There are times when changes are made (sometimes last minute) to practice and/or game dates, times and/or locations. Most teams communicate primarily via e-mail, so you must check your e-mail daily. If you are unable to attend a practice or game (or if you plan to arrive late or leave early), you must notify your trainer and/or manager as early as possible.

### **THE PARENTS**

Parental support and involvement in the Club are essential. Parents must ensure that their child attends all team events (practices, games, meetings, etc.). We understand there will be times when conflicts cannot be avoided and that your son or daughter simply cannot attend a team event. The Club requires your communication, planning, and understanding so we can minimize conflicts. It is the team's responsibility to present a periodic schedule to allow time for your planning. When parents or players have an unavoidable conflict, the Club expects timely communication to allow the Club or team adequate time to make any possible adjustments. The manager will make final decisions as to scheduling after careful consideration of the needs of the team.

### **SIDELINE COACHING**

With the exception of the team manager, who may be asked to assist the team trainer during games, there will be no coaching by parents. "Go," "shoot," "pass," "send it," and the like are interpreted as instructions and as such are not desirable. No matter how good your intentions are, the Club insists that there be no shouting of instructions to your child or any other player on the team. We also insist there be absolutely no yelling or complaining to referees or officials during or after games. Your vocal support and positive encouragement are welcome after good play. Please do not criticize or "moan" with disappointment when mistakes are made either by players or game officials. The players are well aware of mistakes they make, and we strive to teach our players that overcoming and learning from mistakes are important parts of the learning process.

It is important that players not be distracted at practices or during games and that players are given only one set of instructions by one voice before, during, and after games. For this reason, the Club insists that the trainer and/or manager be the only voices before, during and after all games. No one other than those listed on the official game roster may sit on or near the team bench before and during games. Please respect the space and privacy necessary for the coaches and team to carry out their game responsibilities.

Please respect all of the other players on the team and do not make critical remarks to others about other players on your team. Many times, these comments are overheard by the players or others and can be quite hurtful and foster an unhealthy team environment.

Please respect your trainer and manager and do not make negative remarks to others about coaching decisions. The Club's first priority is the growth and development of our players as individuals along with their soccer abilities under pressure. Team and player development take priority over winning, especially in the younger age groups. Parents must understand this and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with this philosophy in order to maintain a healthy team environment. Playing only to win without taking team and player development into account benefits no one.

The Americans Soccer Club believes in and teaches players the benefit of having mental toughness to guide their intense focus on the game of soccer. We will instruct your child to ignore adverse conditions such as bad referees, name calling, foul language, rough play, cheating, poor weather, negative behavior by parents or opponents, etc. We expect our parents (as well as our trainers and managers) to have this same mental toughness.

### **THE MANAGER**

A team manager is ordinarily a parent with a player on a given team who has volunteered to manage the team's scheduling, finances, participation in tournaments, etc. Please cooperate fully with your team manager at all times. Be courteous and respond to telephone calls and e-mails in a timely fashion in order to allow the manager to fulfill his or her important role.

### **THE TRAINER**

Trainers retained by the Americans Soccer Club are instructed to conduct themselves first as teachers and second as soccer coaches. Nothing positive will come of the Club's efforts if we produce world-class players who do not know how to conduct themselves as successful human beings. In this regard, you can expect Americans Soccer Club trainers to conduct themselves as positive role models and display appropriate behavior. Our trainers recognize they are dealing in an important way with young people and cannot overlook the impact they have on players' lives. Trainers are responsible for the conduct of their teams, both on and off the field, whenever the team is together as a group. We insist that our players are polite, well-behaved and respectful. Players and parents can expect honesty, appropriate communication, consistency, and reliability from the trainer. The Club and the trainers are committed to giving players the tools and skills to enable them to become as good as their ability, desire, commitment, and effort allow. Trainers are committed to creating an environment that is conducive to the development of quality competitive soccer. We recognize that in life there are far more important things than soccer. In terms of priority, family and school work come first. However, if the trainer sees that you are not willing to put soccer above other recreational activities during the season, it may affect your playing time and/or your status with the Club. Do not expect trainers to praise everything you do well. After a time there are things the trainer will come to expect from every player. There are times when trainers will say very little, and times they may yell out instructions. There are times they will be critical of players, and other times they will be generous with praise. Players and parents are

expected to take constructive criticism along with praise for a job well done, and be able to deal with both. The trainer will attend practices and will coach at games. In situations where conflicts do occur, which is inevitable, the Club will attempt to designate another trainer to cover that particular practice or game. It is important for players and parents to understand that coaching in soccer is overrated. Once players reach a certain level of skill, maturity and experience, they become more important to the team's success than the trainer.

The trainers will make decisions as to player selections, game lineup, player positions, amount of playing time, etc. Players must be positive in fulfilling the role they are asked to perform for the team at any moment, even if that role has them coming off the bench or playing a new position. If conflicts or issues arise between a player and/or his or her parents and the team, then the trainer will be responsible for addressing and responding to the conflicts or issues and making decisions for the good of the team. These decisions will be made at the trainer's absolute discretion. The trainer's decision will be final. The player and his or her parents must agree to abide by the trainer's decision.

There are some trainers who train two or more Americans Soccer Club teams. All such trainers will attend all training sessions and games to the extent possible. There will be times when conflicts occur and, in those situations, a backup trainer will be asked to cover the pertinent training session or game.

The Club holds the trainers it secures to the highest standards. There may be times when you do not agree with the trainer's conduct. If you have tried to communicate with the trainer about an issue that is of concern to you and you are still unsatisfied, please contact the appropriate Club age group coordinator to look into the matter.

### **PLAYING TIME**

Except for younger players, there is no guaranteed amount of playing time and there are many factors that can affect the amount of playing time for a particular player. The policy of the Club is that playing time is earned and not given. Starting positions and playing time are both earned by coming to practice regularly and by working hard, competing and concentrating during practices and games. Should you have any questions or concerns about playing time issues, please discuss such issues with your team manager at the appropriate time. Please note that the Americans require that players on small-sided teams play at least one-third of each game, provided they are "in good standing," i.e., that they have demonstrated an appropriate level of commitment through their attendance at practices and games, that they exhibit good behavior and a positive attitude at practices and games, etc.

### **FEES**

The Club and teams are financially supported through seasonal player dues. The Club registration fee will be the same for all players. However, the team fees may vary

depending on the number of players on a given team and participation in tournaments or other activities. Although total fees per player vary based on the above factors, the Club has found that total fees per player are generally in the range of \$1,500 per year. Included in this figure are fees associated with league registration, referees, insurance coverage, training equipment, league dues, tournament entry fees, professional training, etc. Each player will also be responsible for the cost of a uniform. Should a player quit or leave his or her team to join another club or team, he or she will still be responsible for the payment of team fees. There will be no refunds once any payments are made for team fees.

### **DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

The Club's attempt with this Player/Parent Agreement is to present in clear detail what will be expected of you and what you can expect of the Club, the team and the trainer. If you are uncertain as to what is expected, please contact the manager for clarification. Knowing and understanding these things, your participation in the Club will be positive for you as you develop your soccer abilities to the highest level possible. We have high expectations of the Club, the teams, the trainers, and you. It is imperative that all players abide by the Club's rules, regulations and policies, including those contained in the Club's By-Laws and this Player/Parent Agreement. Everyone has issues that arise from time to time, and we will make every effort to work with you to help resolve any issues you may have. After we have exhausted all efforts to resolve issues that have been identified, we will have no alternative but to pursue disciplinary action as outlined below. The same procedures will apply to situations where the actions of parents or trainers are adjudged by the Board of Directors to warrant appropriate discipline.

1. The trainer will discuss the issue directly and privately with the player, with the assumption that the problem will be corrected immediately.
2. If the issue persists, the manager will communicate with the player's parents to discuss the issue and the lack of an appropriate response on the part of the player. Parents will have the opportunity to be involved with correction of the issue at this time.
3. If the issue persists, the manager may temporarily suspend the player. If the situation warrants, the manager may recommend to the Board of Directors that the player be removed from the Club. The parents will be notified by the Board of Directors of the manager's recommendation.
4. The parents of any player recommended for removal from the Club may request to meet with the Board of Directors.

### **MARKETING "OPT IN" – PLAYER LIKENESS USEAGE**

In order to market the Americans Soccer Club, representatives of the Club might take photographs or videos of training sessions or league games. These photographs and/or videos may be used for various marketing opportunities such as the Club website, printed and electronically distributed program flyers, and Club marketing videos.



The Club will NEVER provide names of our boys and girls and connect the likeness of them with their names or other identifying characteristics. The Club will ensure that it gets parent written approval before publishing any videos where the children might be speaking.