



CARMEL UNITED SOCCER CLUB POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Adopted June 2024

Revised March 2025: Added "Referee Abuse", Updated "Uniforms"

The policies contained herein may be amended and new policies may be added, as needed, at the discretion of the Carmel United Soccer Club Executive Board of Directors.

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Mission Statement

Last updated: June 2024

Carmel United is a volunteer-run, community-based, not-for-profit providing developmental soccer programs for the children residing predominantly within the Carmel Central School District footprint. We want as many children as possible FROM our community playing soccer IN our community. We strive to create a lifelong love for soccer through programs that provide both social and physical development for children of all skill levels in a supportive, safe, and positive development environment. We encourage and prioritize teamwork, good sportsmanship, education, and community with the objective of preparing our players to compete for our local high school soccer program.

Club Overview

Last updated: June 2024

Founded in 1980, Carmel United Soccer Club (of New York) is a volunteer-run, registered 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to soccer. As a not-for-profit, our board members and most of our coaches are not paid. We are not a school or town sponsored program, but our players predominantly come from within the Carmel Central School District footprint. The Club offers a competitive travel program for ages 8 through HS and an inhouse/rec program for ages 3 through 13.

Our Travel program will provide a higher level of play for more committed players where teams will be afforded the opportunity to play in competitive leagues. In conjunction with the Carmel Central School District, we strive to continually feed players from our Travel program into the Carmel High School soccer program, including Modified, Junior Varsity and Varsity teams.

Carmel United will always strive to operate to the best of our ability within the context of the following principles:

- To give all children an opportunity to play soccer
- To enhance player self-esteem, confidence, emotional development, and overall character
- To always put the best interest of all players above everything else
- To provide equal access to the appropriate developmental programs for both boys and girls
- To maintain a balanced perspective on the outcome of games and sportsmanship
- To assure that all adults associated with the program are exemplary role models of sportsmanship, leadership, and support

Parent Code of Conduct

Last updated: June 2024

I understand that Carmel United is a volunteer-run organization and they will not tolerate any abuse and/or disrespect directed at their volunteer coaches, administrators, or board members. They also do not tolerate abuse of any kind towards players, other parents, teams, referees, etc., and reserve the right to decline from participation, via suspension and/or expulsion, any individuals who violate those terms or the terms of this Code of Conduct.

As a parent, I realize that my ability to watch my child play is a privilege, not a right. As such, I agree to:

- Maintain a positive environment and be a role model for my child, his/her teammates, and other parents.
- Applaud good plays by my child's team and their opponents.
- Teach my child that doing one's best is more important than winning so that my child will not be defeated by the outcome of any game.

- Never ridicule or yell at my child or another participant for making a mistake or losing a competition.
- Encourage my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility, intimidation, or violence.
- Respect and show appreciation for the volunteer coaches who give their time for the benefit of my child.
- Make sure that my child arrives for scheduled games and practices at the time designated by the coach.
- Understand team objectives and goals as it relates to development and not give instructions to players as that is the coach's role.
- Encourage open communication (Player-Coach-Parent).
- Not interrupt a coach during a game or practice to resolve troublesome issues. I will discuss these issues privately and discreetly with the coach and if this is not prudent or satisfactory, I will contact the appropriate official in the Club.
- Inform the coach of any injury or physical disability that may affect the safety of my child or other children. I will also disclose any learning disabilities that require additional consideration by the coach.
- Obey any request by an official, coach, or Club representative for me or my guests to leave the vicinity of the field. The team or Club can be penalized for my misconduct and may result in a hearing and/or disciplinary action and can result in immediate loss of club eligibility for my child and/or myself.
- Adhere to the policies of my club and league and do my best to learn the rules of the game.
- Never question the official's judgment or honesty.
- Support all efforts to eliminate all types of abuse from the game of soccer.

This Parent Code of Conduct must be agreed to by every parent registering a player with Carmel United. In addition, all other parents, relatives, friends, and spectators who attend a Carmel United event are expected to adhere to this Code of Conduct.

Coaching Code of Conduct

Last updated: June 2024

As a coach, I realize that my relationship with Carmel United is "at will" and can be terminated at any time by either the Club or me for any or no reason. I realize that my ability to coach for the Club is a privilege, not a right. As such, I agree to the following:

- To be a role model for my players and their parents. In both victory and defeat, the behavior of a coach shall model composure.

- Soccer is the players' game. The paramount concern of coaches is the holistic development, welfare, enjoyment, and safety of their players. Coaches should keep the best interest and well-being of the children as their highest priority.
- To treat players with respect and should avoid negativity. The coach should use language appropriate for the age of the players and be constructive in their comments.
- To teach players to strive for success while playing fairly, observing the Laws of the Game, and the highest levels of sportsmanship.
- To treat officials with respect and dignity, and shall teach their players to do the same.
- Our opponents are worthy of being treated with respect. Coaches will model such respect for opponents and expect their players to do likewise.
- Running up the score is an act of poor sportsmanship. Winning by more than 7 goals is an act of poor sportsmanship and will result in disciplinary action by the League and/or the Club.
- To model inclusive behavior, actively supporting cultural diversity while opposing all types of discrimination, including, but not limited to race, sex, and religion at all levels of soccer.
- To refrain from all manner of personal abuse and harassment of others, whether verbal, physical, emotional, or sexual, and shall oppose such abuse and harassment at all levels of soccer.
- To honor those who uphold the highest standards and principles of soccer and shall use appropriate protocol to oppose and eliminate all behavior that brings disrepute to the sport – violence, abuse, dishonesty, disrespect, and violations of the Laws of the Game and rules governing competition.
- To be responsible for the actions of my team's parents and spectators and understand I can be carded during a game for their misbehavior.
- To encourage spectators to applaud and cheer for good plays by either team and remind them that only coaches can provide instruction to players.
- Understand that I am a representative of Carmel United and, as such, will do my best to maintain the integrity of the Club and uphold its reputation.
- To adhere to all Club policies, procedures, and decisions, without question. Failure to do so may result in my dismissal.

The Coaching Code of Conduct must be agreed to by every coach registered with Carmel United Soccer Club.

Referee Abuse (US Soccer Policy 531-9)

Last updated: March 2025

Referee abuse is a real issue in youth sports. US Soccer has a very strict policy with stringent penalties for coaches:



REFEREE ABUSE PREVENTION

POLICY 531-9 PENALTY OVERVIEW / YOUTH & AMATEUR

The Penalties Matrix defines consequences associated with physical and non-physical offenses against Referees.

NON-PHYSICAL OFFENSES of gross misconduct, abuse, and / or assault

NON-PHYSICAL*	MIN. GAMES	TIME
Insulting, Belittling, Insinuating or Taunting Behavior Undermining Referee Authority	2	
Harassment, Intimidation, Retaliation, Abusive, or Threatening (Non Physical) Language	4	
Aggression, Attacking, Derogatory, Cyberbullying, Doxing or Threatening (Physical / Violence) Language	6	6 - 24 Months
Offensive or Discriminatory Act	10	12 - 24 Months

KEY PENALTY FACTORS

- Single offenses are at **minimum the prescribed game penalty or time penalty** for non red zone offenses
- Penalties can be **both game and time depending on severity** / circumstances
- Second time offenders receive **double punishment**
- Third time offenders receive a **lifetime ban**
- More than one offense at the same time is **at least the punishment for the most serious offense**
- Offenses against minors are automatically subject to a **"minor multiplier"** resulting in triple punishment
- One offense warning per league to be managed by states and leagues collaboratively
- Game consequences are **inclusive of 1 game penalty for any red cards given**
- Optionality for **50% penalty for first offense from a minor**

PHYSICAL OFFENSES of gross misconduct, abuse, and / or assault

PHYSICAL*	MIN. GAMES	TIME
Minor or Slight Deliberate Touching	3	1 - 6 Months
Pushing, Grabbing, Pulling, Squeezing, Pinching, Lightly Slapping, Use of Object in Non Striking Manner, or Physical Property Damage	10	6 - 24 Months
Hitting, Punching, Elbowing, Kicking, Biting, Spitting, Choking, Tackling, Throwing or Use of Object or Any Part of Body (Forearm, Knee, Head) in a Striking Manner		12 Months - Lifetime

(*) Disclaimer: These are only a few examples of abuse – other actions or statements may also fall into this category.

Eastern New York Youth Soccer Association, the state association in eastern New York, has set forth the following matrix for violations and penalties:

Coaches, Bench Personnel, Players, Managers, Trainers - Non-Physical Abuse				
Level	Description	Examples	Minimum Penalty	Jurisdiction
Level 1: Verbal Taunting	Speech or gestures that belittle the referee, damage credibility, or undermine authority.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Do you even know the rules?" • "Did you forget your glasses?" • "What's the other team paying you?" 	2-game suspension [†]	ENYYSA Arbitration Hearing*
Level 2: Harassment / Intimidation	Language or body language meant to make a referee feel unsafe, without explicit threats of violence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using expletives ("That call was complete \$h*tl!") • Personal attacks ("You're a F-ing joke!") • Getting in the referee's face 	4-game suspension [†]	ENYYSA Arbitration Hearing*
Level 3: Threats / Derogatory Language	Aggressive, attacking, derogatory language, cyberbullying, doxing, or threats of violence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I'll see you in the parking lot." • "You better watch your back!" • Social media posts attacking the referee 	6-game suspension and/or 6-24 months [†]	ENYYSA Arbitration Hearing*
Level 4: Offensive or Discriminatory Act	Discriminatory or derogatory words or actions based on race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, disability, sexual orientation, language, or religion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racial/ethnic slurs • Offensive gestures • Homophobic or sexist language 	10-game suspension and/or 12-24 months [†]	ENYYSA Arbitration Hearing*
Coaches, Bench Personnel, Players, Managers, Trainers - Physical Abuse				
Level	Description	Examples	Minimum Penalty	Jurisdiction
Level 1: Minor or Slight Touching	Unwanted but minor physical contact with the referee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tapping the referee's shoulder to get their attention. • Touching the referee's chest with a finger. • Lightly bumping into the referee. 	3-game suspension and/or 1-6 months [†]	ENYYSA Arbitration Hearing*
Level 2: Intentional Confrontation	Using physical contact to intimidate or provoke a confrontation, or causing property damage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoving the referee. • Forcefully grabbing the referee's arm or jersey. • Throwing a water bottle near the referee. • Dumping the referee's bag into a trash can. 	10-game suspension and/or 6-24 months [†]	ENYYSA Arbitration Hearing*
Level 3: Violent Contact	Malicious, violent physical contact meant to cause harm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Punching, kicking, elbowing, or spitting on the referee. • Choking the referee. • Throwing objects at the referee with intent to hit. • Intentionally tackling the referee. 	12-game suspension up to a lifetime ban [†]	ENYYSA Arbitration Hearing*

[†]For 2nd time offenses penalty is doubled. If the referee is a minor the penalty is tripled.

*The league is free to add additional fines or penalties for violations of league rules or codes of conduct. The league is free to assess other penalties for non 531-9 issues such as parents insulting players or coaches arguing with each other....etc

In addition to US Soccer and ENYYSA, Carmel United has the following policy for coaches:

- The Club will pay the fine to the governing body but the money will be deducted from the team account. If there is not enough money in the team account, the Club will cover it and the coach will be required to pay the shortage within 30 days. This is how we would handle any fine related to a team and/or coach.
- First violation (Non-physical): Besides the governing bodies' punishment, the offending coach will be put on probation, not specific to referee abuse, for one year.
- Second violation (Non-physical): If the violation was within 12 months of the first, the coach will be dismissed.
- First violation (Physical): The coach will be dismissed.

Most coaches will never get to Step 1. Those who do will be allowed to learn from their mistake, so they never get to Step 2. I hope everybody understands how important this is. We all need to maintain our composure and be professional.

SPECTATORS:

In conjunction with US Soccer's 531-9 policy, which pertains to coaches and team personnel, ENYYSA and Hudson Valley Youth Soccer League have put forth the following matrix for violations and penalties as relates to referee abuse from Spectators:

Parents - Spectators - Fans - Verbal/Physical Abuse				
Offense		Penalty		Jurisdiction
**Gross mistreatment as defined by US Policy 531 for Verbal abuse	1st Offense	Adult Referee - \$250 Minor Referee - \$750		League
	2nd Offense	Adult Referee - \$500 Minor Referee - \$1500		League
	3rd Offense	Adult Referee - \$1000 Minor Referee - \$3000		*ENYYSA Supervisory Hearing
**Assault or abuse as defined by US Policy 531 for Physical abuse		Adult Referee - \$1000 Minor Referee - \$3000	Reported to ENY	*ENYYSA Supervisory Hearing

*Additionally, if it is determined that the team officials (coaches, managers, club officials, etc.) either failed to act appropriately to control the sidelines or failed to control the sidelines after instructions from a referee, the coach will be suspended for 3 games.
*The League is free to add additional fines or penalties for violations of League rules or codes of conduct. League is free to assess other penalties for non 531-9 issues such as parents insulting players or coaches arguing with each other...etc.

For reference, US Soccer defines gross mistreatment as follows:

Any deliberate, non-contact behavior that is expected to cause harm to a Referee. Gross mistreatment includes, but is not limited to, the following actions or behavior committed against a Referee or Protected Parties:

- *Severe or repeated harassment, including hate speech or discriminatory remarks based on race, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, disabilities, or any other legally protected characteristic.*
- *Extreme verbal attacks that would cause emotional harm to a reasonable person.*
- *Approaching a Referee when they arrive or depart the venue with aggression (e.g., intimidation).*
- *Any form of cyberbullying, including spreading false information about the Referee, sharing the Referee's personal information (aka doxing), or publicly posting content that ridicules or mocks the Referee or uses hate speech.*
- *Questioning the Referee's character, integrity, honesty, truthfulness, or impartiality.*
- *Yelling insults, taunting, making, or expressing derogatory/belittling remarks towards a Referee.*
- *Pervasive action that belittles or undermines the Referee's authority or is intended to cast doubt on the Referee.*

The first offense for gross mistreatment by a spectator will result in a \$250 fine from the league if toward an adult referee and a \$750 fine if toward a minor referee. The amounts double with each additional offense. In addition to the financial penalties, there is also the potential for the coach to be suspended.

US Soccer defines assault and abuse as follows:

Referee assault is any deliberate physical action against a Referee. Referee abuse is extreme, deliberate, and non-contact behavior that causes a Referee or Protected Party significant harm. Actions in this category may be subject to an immediate suspension, meaning that the perpetrator cannot appear at the next sanctioned match. Assault and abuse include, but are not limited to, the following actions or behavior committed against a Referee or Protected Parties:

- *Imposing physical harm upon a Referee or a Protected Party, including by use of objects or equipment.*
- *Any act that endangers the Referee's physical wellbeing, whether deliberate or merely reckless.*
- *Any form of unwanted physical contact, including but not limited to pushing, hitting, striking, kicking, choking, or spitting at the Referee.*
- *Any behavior that constitutes a criminal offense under any applicable law.*
- *Threatening, either directly or in insinuation, physical harm, including by use of objects or equipment, to a Referee or a Protected Party or property. Threatening is defined as any statement or action that instills reasonable fear of acts of violence to a person's safety or property.*
- *Threats of harm or any retaliatory action against the Referee or their Protected Parties, including threat of exclusion from assignment or future participation opportunity.*

Carmel United fully supports protecting all referees. We do not want a reputation for referee abuse from our coaches or spectators, and we will not tolerate it from either. Parents and spectators should NOT speak to or about the referee, nor should they approach the referee, under any circumstances. It doesn't matter that your child may have just been fouled, even if the referee didn't call it. Fouls are part of the game; your reaction is not.

Carmel United will handle violations by spectators as follows:

- Any fines resulting from a spectator's gross mistreatment of a referee will be paid by their affiliated Team via that team's account. It will then be up to the individual coach to determine how they wish to collect payment from the individual.
- If the same spectator commits a second offense, in addition to the fine, they will not be allowed to attend Carmel United games. This applies to ALL games, not just home games.
- If an individual team has a perpetual issue with overall spectator behavior, that team will be prohibited from having spectators at their games.
- An assault or abuse violation by a spectator will result in that spectator's immediate ban from all Carmel United events.
- Failure to comply with any sanctions will result in the suspension of the related player(s) until compliance is met.

This is a serious problem in sports and needs to be taken seriously. As a Club, I hope we never experience these issues. Youth soccer is for the kids, not the spectators. Bring a chair, sit down, and just enjoy watching your child play. The opportunity to do so will be gone before you know it.

Player Development Philosophy

Last updated: June 2024

Carmel United believes strongly in Player Development. Our philosophy is anchored on the following tenets:

1. Coaches should NEVER give up on players. Players develop in their own time, not anybody else's. Some players show noticeable development very young and then taper off. Some start more slowly at first and then make larger strides as they get older. Some take a steady path. Some zig-zag. Every player's development timeline is different. What's important is that players are improving, engaged, and having fun.

2. Success should be measured by effort, improvement, and engagement, NOT by wins and losses. U8 through U12 ages, even in Travel, are considered "developmental", not "competitive". At developmental ages, winning should never be the priority. It's called "developmental" for a reason, which is the same reason that there are no league standings at these ages. Nobody wins a championship and nobody comes in last place. It's about developing players. When the focus is on winning, player development goes out the window. However, when the focus is on player development, winning will eventually happen organically.
3. For U12 and under teams, every player MUST receive at least half (50%) playing time of each game at all events as long as the player is in good standing. This is not the same thing as "equal" playing time, but there is no reason that every player should not be able to get half a game every game at developmental ages.

For U13 and older teams, it is also our recommendation that every player receive an average of 30 minutes playing time per game for all games 70 minutes or longer as long as the player is in good standing. Players develop by playing, not by sitting and watching. Not only do we want to develop a player's ability, we also want to develop their love for the sport.

Some feel that Travel soccer should be super-competitive where you put your best players on the field and sprinkle in the weaker ones for a few minutes here and there. Unfortunately, those "weaker" players are not getting the necessary touches and game experience to promote their development.

Our goal is to develop ALL our players, not just the ones who are considered stronger at the moment. Often what people consider to be "stronger" at younger ages is a misperception due to the relative age effect and a player being physically bigger, stronger, or faster, not necessarily being more skilled or having more aptitude.

4. Players should NOT be positioned until U13 or older. To become a complete soccer player, players should be exposed to and learn all positions on the field. Nobody knows where a player should be playing at young ages, even if they look good in a position right now. As players develop long-term, there will come a time when they should start to specialize but that is not at the developmental ages.

The above is predicated on a player being selected for a Travel team and applies while the player is on the team. Players must try out and be selected for the team each year. Being selected in one year does not guarantee being selected in subsequent years.

This is what should be expected from Travel soccer in Carmel United. If it is not what is experienced, parents should speak to their coach. Coaches who fail to take corrective actions with this policy will receive disciplinary action.

Travel Parents Escalation Policy

Last updated: June 2024

Drama really has no place in youth sports except for on the field, though it unfortunately occurs. Open communication is important and coaches should try to be as transparent as possible with parents. While sideline conversations are inevitably going to happen amongst parents, spreading negativity is not going to result in a positive experience for anybody and impacts overall team morale.

At some point this season, you are going to disagree with your team's coach. Should any parent have any questions, concerns, issues, problems, etc., the parent needs to bring it to the team's head coach directly. Issues should not be brought to any other team parents, managers, or administrators. That is NOT their responsibility.

Any issues brought forth should be strictly about the player: what they can do to improve, problems that may affect their training or performance, problems they have with other players, injuries/health concerns, etc. Topics that should not be discussed include: coaching decisions, positioning (U13+), playing time above the required amount, opinions about other players, team formations, etc.

Parents should follow a 24-hour rule. Unless the concern is an emergency situation, players and parents should refrain from presenting issues until at least 24 hours have passed since the issue occurred. 48 hours would be even better. This is typically more conducive to a positive and less confrontational discussion. Immediately before, during or after a game, or during a practice, is not the appropriate time to have these discussions unless it is scheduled and agreed to beforehand with the coach.

Also note that as players mature, they should be expected to advocate for themselves to some degree and try to resolve issues without parental intervention. Obviously, this is not always possible, especially at the younger ages.

Our hope and expectation are that these types of incidents will be few and far between, or completely non-existent altogether. However, should an issue arise, you should take action as soon as possible. Do not wait to act until you have already reached the point of no return. If you have an issue in Game 2, do not wait until after Game 9 to bring it up. At that point, it is likely too late to satisfactorily resolve the issue.

Should an issue arise, these are the appropriate steps to take:

1. Have an amicable and respectful conversation with the team's head coach. Most of the time, this will provide a resolution. Sending an email is not recommended unless you intend to follow it up with a personal conversation. Face-to-face is always best.
2. If after that conversation you are not satisfied with the outcome, or the resolution discussed has not been implemented as agreed upon, you should contact the Club at info@carmelsoccer.com.
 - a. You should provide the player's name, team, and a brief summary of the issue, along with the best contact phone number where you can be reached.
 - b. A Club representative will reach out to you to find out more about the issue and will work with the Head of Travel and/or Club Head Coach to try to mediate a resolution.
 - c. If unsuccessful, the Board will decide whether they need to hear the issue and, if so, try to mediate a resolution.

Our goal is to attempt to mediate a resolution to a concern before it escalates into a larger issue. This requires parents to bring up their issue sooner rather than later and to act in a civilized manner when speaking to coaches and/or Club representatives, as well as other parents.

We also want to remind you that coaches are volunteers. They have stepped up to run a team where, in many cases, nobody else was willing to. They are not professional coaches and will not do everything perfectly. Unfortunately, coaching is a thankless job. It is also virtually impossible to make decisions that make every single parent and player happy. And like many things in life, coaches are typically only presented with things they've done "wrong". We ask that you keep all of this in mind when speaking with your coach regarding your concerns.

Travel Team Formation Policy

Last updated: June 2024

Travel teams will be formed and players assigned based on evaluations made at tryouts, as well as other factors and considerations. Our goal is to form competitive teams while also keeping a positive team dynamic that will best represent Carmel United and our community. This is not a "sign up and play" program. Players must try out and demonstrate the skills or aptitude necessary to make the team. They must also demonstrate the commitment and personality traits expected for that team.

If we have enough players, we will form two teams in the same age group to maximize the number of

players playing Travel soccer. We will not form an “A” and “B” team as we do not feel that is in the best interest of players in developmental age groups (U12 and under). Instead, we will form two balanced (as possible) teams with a focus on developing all the players equally.

Carmel United maintains the philosophy that players are best served by playing age-appropriate whenever possible, especially at developmental ages (U12 and under). Please refer to our [Travel Play-Up Policy](#) for details. If there is no age-appropriate team, a player will be allowed to try out for the older team (1 year up only) with the understanding that if an age-appropriate group does form in the future, they will be placed on their age-appropriate team. If a player has been rostered on an older team for two or more consecutive years, they will be grandfathered onto that team as long as they continue to make the team at Tryouts each year.

Players will be notified as tryouts are completed for an age group and teams are formed. Players accepted on a team must be registered within 72 hours of notification or risk losing their roster spot. New travel players are required to supply a copy of their birth certificate and a photo within one week of registration, if not provided at tryouts.

Players who do not attend a scheduled tryout may forfeit their opportunity to play on a team in that gender/age group if sufficient players are available to form a team. Players not accepted on a travel team have the option to play in our Inhouse program if an appropriate age group exists.

Evaluators at Tryouts will not be associated with players on a team in the age group. Players should try out for their appropriate gender and age group unless instructed otherwise by their coach or the Tryout Committee.

Tryouts for high school-aged teams (U16 and up) may not adhere to the same tryout process as other travel teams in the Club. Tryouts may be organized by the individual team and evaluations may be made by the team's coaches.

Travel Play-Up Policy

Last updated: June 2024

Carmel United maintains the philosophy that players are best served by playing age-appropriate whenever possible, especially at developmental ages (U12 and under). This is for several reasons:

- Even one year at a young age can make a significant physical and emotional difference. Some players, while skilled, are not physically or emotionally ready for the older age.
- Socialization: Most players want to play with their friends and those whom they go to school with, most likely in the same grade. Playing on an older team can have a negative impact on socialization.
- Players develop at different rates and in different timelines. A player who may be able to play on an older team this year may not be good enough to play on that same team next year. This causes issues with team formation and continuity.

Carmel United's Travel program starts at U8. No player younger than U8 will be permitted on a Travel team.

We do NOT allow players to play up at developmental ages (U8-U12) unless there is no age appropriate team for them, in which case they can play up one year. In the extremely rare case where the coaches and administration (not the parent) identify a player who they feel would truly be better served playing on an older team, the player would be permitted to try out for that team but would need to score in the top three to be considered. The Tryout Committee and Coaches would then make a determination.

At U13 and older, a player may try out for an older age group (1 year up only). However, to be considered for the older team, the player must score in the top five at Tryouts for the older team. Simply being the best player in their age-appropriate group does not qualify them for the older team. They must be one of the best five players in the OLDER age group to even be considered for that team. Even if they are good enough in terms of skill, the Tryout Committee and Coaches will determine if the player should be placed on the older team.

Travel Team Switching

Last updated: June 2024

Carmel United does not cannibalize our own teams. In the event that we have more than one team in an age group, players are not permitted to leave their team to go play for the other team.

If the teams need to be re-balanced or if one team is more in need of players, the Club would make the decision whether any players should be moved from one team to another.

If a player leaves the Club and returns at a future date, they would still only be permitted to play for their original team unless that team no longer exists.

If a player wants to leave their team to play for an older team, the Club's [Travel Play-up Policy](#) would apply.

Non-Rostered (Training) Players Policy

Last updated: June 2024

Our Travel program is not intended to be an Academy program or to provide supplemental training. The intent is for Travel teams to train the players registered and committed to that team. "Non-rostered players" refers to any player that is not currently on a team's roster or not expected to be on a team's roster. The following criteria must be met before a non-rostered player will be permitted to train with one of our Travel teams:

1. The player must NOT be currently playing for, or registered with, another club or team.
 - a. We should not be training players for other clubs.
 - b. This also puts us in a position of potentially being accused of poaching, both externally or internally, which affects our reputation.
2. The player must be eligible to play for the team.
 - a. Age-appropriate.
 - b. No restrictions preventing registration.
3. Both the player's and the coach's intentions must be for the player to eventually join that team.
 - a. The player can't train just to get extra training; the player's goal must be to join and play for the team.
 - b. The coach can't just have a player train with no intention of ever adding the player to the team; the coach's goal must be to eventually put the player on their roster.
4. All players would need to register with the Club for insurance purposes before being allowed to participate:
 - a. External players would need to register for a specially-created Inhouse group.
 - b. Internal Inhouse players would need to be registered for Inhouse for that year.

Internal Travel players should not train with other teams in the Club unless there are extenuating circumstances.

- Most coaches don't want their players training with another team but they may not be willing to say it. This puts the coach in an uncomfortable position. Internal poaching is just as real as

external poaching. Even though we do not allow it to happen, perception is reality and a small ripple can eventually cause a big wave.

- Training opportunities need to be equitable. We cannot be selective... if a coach is willing to allow one player from another team to train with their team, they must be willing to allow ALL players from the other team to train with their team. They cannot pick and choose.
- Exceptions will be made if a player is confirmed to be guest-playing or Club Passed with another team for a specific event.
- Exceptions may be considered for siblings registered to different teams in the Club on a case-by-case basis.
- Both teams' coaches must be in agreement with any decision.

All scenarios regarding training of non-rostered players must be brought to the Travel Director for his/her approval before implementation.

Guest / Club Pass Players Policy

Last updated: June 2024

Guest players refer to the "borrowing" of players who do not currently play for Carmel United Soccer Club. Guest players can only be used for tournaments. They are not allowed for league games. The rules surrounding the use of guest player are determined by the tournament host. If guest players are allowed by a tournament, the head coach of the team must get permission from the guest player's coach for the player to participate and follow all the necessary steps required. In addition, the Travel Director should be informed that the team is using guest players.

Club Pass players refer to the "borrowing" of players who currently play for Carmel United Soccer Club. Club Pass players can be used for both league games and tournaments. To use a Guest Pass player, the head coach must get approval from the player's coach. There is a limit to the number of Club Pass players that can be used and there are restrictions around who can/can't Club Pass based on the age and division of the team and the players. This is subject to change by the league:

- No more than 3 players can be used by a borrowing team in a club-pass situation per game.
- Upon club approval, teams will allow their players to play in any division higher than their team within their age group, or up one age group in any division within the same club. If there is no team one age group higher within the club, the player may play up two age groups based on the player's birthdate. (Ex. A 2010 player playing on a 2009 team cannot play on a 2007 team even if there is no 2008).
- U15 are eligible for all High School age groups within their division or higher. U09 and U10 players within the single 'competitive' division (typically B or a color designation) cannot be borrowed on regional teams within their age group but are eligible for any division one age group higher.

All Club Passed players must be approved and assigned by the Travel Director. No players should be playing for a team other than their assigned team for any events without explicit permission from the Travel Director.

Uniforms

Last updated: June 2024

All Carmel United Travel teams/players are to wear the full branded uniform kit (jersey, shorts, socks) to every game and tournament. There is not a Home vs. Away jersey.

- The Royal Blue jersey is our PRIMARY game jersey and should be worn to every game.
- The Pink jersey is our alternate game jersey and should only be worn if the blue jersey conflicts with the other team.
- Players should always bring BOTH jerseys to every game. You never know when you might have to change jerseys due to a team wearing a similar color.
- The black practice jersey should be worn to every practice.
- The use of any other uniform must include proper Carmel United branding and be approved by the Travel Director.



Other uniform items really should not be worn to practices as they risk being damaged and are costly to replace, but that decision is ultimately the parents to make. Players are also not to wear any kind of jewelry (chains, watches, earrings, bracelets, etc.) during practice or games.

In addition to uniform, players should also wear proper footwear and equipment:

- Outdoor grass fields:
 - Soccer cleats
- Indoor gym floors:
 - Indoor soccer shoes
 - Sneakers
- Turf fields (indoor or outdoor):
 - Turf cleats
 - Indoor soccer shoes
 - Sneakers
 - Regular soccer cleats may or may not be allowed depending upon the facility
- Shin guards
 - Must be worn to every game and practice (indoor and outdoor)
 - Should be worn UNDER socks (not over)
 - Players without shin guards will NOT be able to participate!

Weather Policy

Last updated: June 2024

Do not assume a game is canceled because it is raining. If the weather is an issue, the home team's club will make a decision that morning and notify the coaches if they decide to cancel games. Some clubs close their fields very easily; others do not. We probably fall into the latter category. If you do not hear from anybody, the game is on. If the game is not canceled that morning, it then becomes a game-time decision by the referee. Teams must show up! If the referee feels the conditions are not suitable for play, he/she will cancel the game at that time. The following process will be followed:

- On game day, should there be a weather event, the Club will check our home fields by 9:30 AM (or by 2 hours before the first game if it is scheduled for earlier than 11:30 AM). If we decide to close a field, a Club representative will contact the coach and the referee assigner. The coach would need to contact the opposing team and the league's Age Group Coordinator. If the referee reached out to the coach ahead of time, the coach should also contact the referee.

- Unless a coach hears from the Club, they must assume the game is on and show up with their team at the designated time.
- Fields may be playable at 9:30 AM (or earlier) but be unplayable by game time. At that point, it becomes a game-time decision by the referee. Understand that rain, itself, is not a reason to cancel the game. Only if field conditions are unplayable or dangerous should the referee cancel the game.
- For away games, the opposing team's coach would need to let our coaches know if they are closing fields on their end. Coaches may want to reach out to the opposing coach ahead of time to confirm the game is still on before they leave. Otherwise, the same rules apply. Teams must show up and the referee will decide whether the game will be played. Unfortunately, that means driving to an away game only to potentially have it be canceled when you arrive, though this is a very rare occurrence.

Canceled games will be made up and could be rescheduled for a Saturday, Sunday, or even a weekday in some cases. It's best to reschedule games ASAP. Within 2 days of the cancellation, you should contact the opposing coach with potential make-up dates. You need to check with the Club's Travel Director first to ascertain field availability.

Again, rain itself is not a reason to cancel a game. Be prepared to play in the rain.

Indoor Practice Cancellation Policy

Last updated: June 2024

Indoor practices are held at Carmel Sports Club. Because field space at Carmel Sports Club is expensive, the following is our policy regarding cancellations:

- Every team is allowed to cancel practice up to 2 times without penalty. After that, the team will be charged the cost of the field rental for any cancellations.
- If a team is not using their time on any given day, they need to let the Travel Director know with as much advanced notice as possible. Another team may be able to utilize the space.
- If a coach does NOT notify the Travel Director of a cancellation, the team will be responsible for paying the Club for that time even if it is only their first or second cancellation. We need procedures to be followed and we cannot afford to have field space go unused.
- If a team cancels excessively, in addition to the financial penalties, that team may not be offered a slot next year.
- If weather becomes an issue, we do not cancel automatically. We will let coaches know ahead of time if the facility is closed or if we recommend canceling, in which case teams will not be penalized nor will it count as a canceled practice.

Travel Team Expenses / Disbursement Policy

Last updated: June 2024

Travel soccer requires not just a commitment of time but also of money. Here's how it works. You pay your registration fee to Carmel United Soccer Club. This money goes towards fixed costs that the club, as a whole, incurs such as field space and maintenance, league fees, equipment, indoor practice space, referee fees, insurance, etc.

If you need a new uniform (blue jersey, pink jersey, practice jersey, shorts, socks), the cost for a complete set is about \$100 or items can be purchased individually. The same uniforms can be used each year as long as they fit and as long as our uniform is not changing.

Anything the team wants to do must be paid for by the team. Each travel team has an account with the Club into which all team funds are placed and from which all team expenses are paid. This account is fully funded by the team. Your potential expenses would be training, tournaments, winter league, etc.

- Tournaments are pretty straight forward. Any tournaments a team participates in have to be paid for by the team. Tournaments generally run between \$400 and \$600.
- Having trainers work with teams is a real benefit in terms of development, especially for younger players, but is not a requirement. Of course, this isn't free either. Each one-hour session can cost anywhere from \$80-100.
- Teams may also participate in an indoor winter league. This will keep the kids playing competitively during the off-season months. Team registration fees for these leagues are generally in the \$1200 range for an 8-10 week season.

Team funds can only be released for soccer-related expenses (training, tournaments, winter league, team apparel, equipment, etc.) Parties and such are not considered soccer-related and therefore team funds cannot be used to pay for them.

Fundraising Policy

Last updated: June 2024

Carmel United Soccer Club offers two fundraising opportunities: Sponsorships and Cheesecake Catalog Sales.

- Parents can sell Club sponsorships to local businesses or perhaps they have their own business. There are two levels of sponsorship: \$150 and \$200, both of which are tax deductible. Each travel team is required to sell one Club sponsorship for the Club. After that, the money goes to the team for any additional sponsorships sold.
- The cheesecake fundraiser requires each family to sell cheesecake products from a brochure of items, of which 43% of whatever is sold will go into your team account. Teams may set a minimum amount that needs to be sold or they may leave it open-ended.

Teams are also allowed to do their own fundraising, but you need to get approval from the Club before doing so. The Club's name is tied to anything your team does and we need to make sure there aren't any issues with what you are planning, as well as any relevant logistics that might be necessary. Provide the details of what you are looking to do to the Travel Director for approval.

Field Policies

Last updated: June 2024

The following rules must be followed at all Carmel United events and facilities the Club uses. These policies apply to both practices and games, as well as any other types of events held by the Club, inclusive of both our Travel and Inhouse programs:

- Dogs are not permitted at any Club events unless they are an ADA-defined [Service Animal](#).
- The use of tobacco or tobacco-related products is strictly forbidden anywhere on the property, including fields, parking lots, surrounding grounds, and buildings. This includes traditional cigarettes, cigars, pipes, etc., as well as vaping products and e-cigarettes.

- Alcoholic beverages are not permitted.
- Please use trash receptacles for all garbage. We need to leave the fields the same way we found them.

These policies apply to every event at any field or facility Carmel United uses, including but not limited to George Fischer Middle School, Matthew Paterson Elementary School, Carmel High School, Kent Elementary School, Patterson Town Park, Patterson Recreation, Paladin Center, Camarda Park, and Carmel Sports Club.

You should probably use these rules as a guideline for ALL towns and fields your team may visit, as well, since most have similar expectations.

Please understand that these rules are in place to protect the health and well-being of all players, coaches, and their families. These are not only Club policies but are also the expectations of the school district and towns who permit us to use their facilities. Failure to comply with these policies puts the Club's relationship with these providers, as well as our field use, at risk.

If you are found to be in violation of any of these policies, you will be expected to comply or leave the premises immediately. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Service Animals Policy

Last updated: June 2024

The following is how the Americans with Disabilities Act defines "service animals":

Service Animal Defined by Title II and Title III of the ADA

A service animal means any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Tasks performed can include, among other things, pulling a wheelchair, retrieving dropped items, alerting a person to a sound, reminding a person to take medication, or pressing an elevator button.

Emotional support animals, comfort animals, and therapy dogs are NOT service animals under Title II and Title III of the ADA. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability. It does not matter if a person has a note from a doctor that states that the person has a disability and needs to have the animal for emotional support. A doctor's letter does not turn an animal into a service animal.

Examples of animals that fit the ADA's definition of "service animal" because they have been specifically trained to perform a task for the person with a disability:

- **Guide Dog or Seeing Eye Dog** is a carefully trained dog that serves as a travel tool for persons who have severe visual impairments or are blind.
- **Hearing or Signal Dog** is a dog that has been trained to alert a person who has a significant hearing loss or is deaf when a sound occurs, such as a knock on the door.
- **Psychiatric Service Dog** is a dog that has been trained to perform tasks that assist individuals with disabilities to detect the onset of psychiatric episodes and lessen their effects. Tasks performed by psychiatric service animals may include reminding the handler to take medicine, providing safety checks or room searches, or turning on lights for persons with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, interrupting self-mutilation by persons with dissociative identity disorders, and keeping disoriented individuals from danger.

- **SSigDOG (sensory signal dogs or social signal dog)** is a dog trained to assist a person with autism. The dog alerts the handler to distracting repetitive movements common among those with autism, allowing the person to stop the movement (e.g., hand flapping).
- **Seizure Response Dog** is a dog trained to assist a person with a seizure disorder. How the dog serves the person depends on the person's needs. The dog may stand guard over the person during a seizure or the dog may go for help. A few dogs have learned to predict a seizure and warn the person in advance to sit down or move to a safe place.

While Emotional Support Animals or Comfort Animals are often used as part of a medical treatment plan as therapy animals, they are not considered service animals under the ADA. These support animals provide companionship, relieve loneliness, and sometimes help with depression, anxiety, and certain phobias, but do not have special training to perform tasks that assist people with disabilities. Therapy animals provide people with therapeutic contact, usually in a clinical setting, to improve their physical, social, emotional, and/or cognitive functioning. Even though some states have laws defining therapy animals, these animals are not limited to working with people with disabilities and therefore are not covered by federal laws protecting the use of service animals.

Carmel United Soccer Club needs to be concerned about the safety of ALL of our players, families, spectators, coaches, and referees, as well as our field conditions. We also need to be cognizant of the rules set forth by the facilities we use. Dogs are not permitted at any of the facilities we are permitted to use. As such, regardless of how domesticated or docile an animal may be, they are not permitted at any of our events or fields unless they meet the requirements of an ADA-defined service animal as outlined above.

While Federal and State laws prohibit us from specifically asking about a person's disability, we are permitted to ask (1) if the dog is required because of a disability and (2) what task the animal has been trained to perform?

We all love our pets but we cannot bring them to the soccer field.

Board Trustee Roles

Last updated: June 2024

In addition to the five Executive Officer roles defined in the Club's Bylaws, the Executive Board of Directors of Carmel United also includes eight Trustee-level Board positions. The roles and responsibilities of which are as follows:

- **HEAD COACH, U13-U19** – He/she will be responsible for the vetting and approval of new Travel coaches and Trainers. He/she shall plan and organize player evaluations for the Travel program. He/she shall be the first point of escalation for Travel coach-related issues and be responsible for Travel coach development. He/she will also organize any supplemental training and/or academy programs offered by the Club.
- **HEAD COACH, U8-U12** - He/she will help new Travel coaches properly onboard and be an available resource for guidance regarding responsibilities. He/she will make sure coaches understand and can adequately complete the necessary administrative responsibilities, provide ongoing support/guidance, and attend coaches' training sessions or invite them to attend his/hers to help them run more effective sessions with their team. He/she shall be the first point of escalation for Travel coach-related issues and be responsible for Travel coach development for his/her age group.

- **REFEREE COORDINATOR** – He/she will be responsible for maintaining high standards with existing referees and recruiting new referees. He/she will be the Club's Referee Assignor with the State's Referee Association and will assign referees to In-House and home Travel games as directed by travel leagues. He/she will maintain a list of referees certified to referee Club games.
- **TRAVEL COORDINATOR** – He/she will be responsible for assisting with any activities pertaining to the Club's Travel program.
- **INHOUSE COORDINATOR** – He/she will be responsible for assisting with any activities pertaining to the Club's In-House program.
- **FIELD COORDINATOR** – His/her primary responsibility would be to get the fields set up at the start of each season, create a field lining schedule, remind coaches about who is responsible, stock sheds with paint, and maintain fields and equipment.
- **MARKETING COORDINATOR** – He/she shall be responsible for coordinating all direct marketing and advertising activities for the Club, including online, print, social media, and email campaigns to support all programs offered by the Club. He/she will also oversee the maintenance of the Club's website and email accounts, including internet domain registration and renewal. He/she may appoint a third party, non-board member, for this purpose.
- **FUNDRAISING COORDINATOR** – He/she will be responsible for coordinating all club and team fundraising programs and Club events, including sponsorships, and make recommendations to the Board for fundraising activities. He/she will be the lead on any said fundraising activities.

These roles and responsibilities are subject to change based on the needs of the Club at any given time but there will always be eight non-Officer positions unless modified in the Bylaws.

Board Member Conflict of Interest Policy

Last updated: June 2024

Policy Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to formalize the Carmel United Soccer Club's Board of Directors' commitment to act honestly, in good faith, and in the best interest of Carmel United Soccer Club when faced with a conflict of interest or a perceived conflict of interest. This policy applies to all Officers and Directors serving on the Club's Board.

The Club is committed to: (1) Avoiding conflicts of interest where possible; (2) acting in an open and transparent manner when a conflict is identified; and (3) keeping the Club and its Members' best interest first in all decision-making.

Policy and Practice Requirements:

1. Officers and Directors must declare conflicts of interest (perceived or actual) when the conflict is relevant to a decision being considered by the Board.
2. In the event that a conflict of interest (perceived or actual) is identified, the following process shall be followed: (a) The party shall call the conflict to the attention of the Board; (b) such person shall be permitted to discuss the matter but must abstain from any vote on the matter; and (c) the meeting minutes shall reflect that these requirements have been met.
3. All Officers and Directors are also required to declare a conflict of interest when the conflict arises after a contract or arrangement has been made with another company, firm or organization in which the individual acquires an interest or significant involvement. In this situation, the Officer/Director is to declare the conflict at the first Board meeting after the interest/significant involvement arises.

Contacting the Board

Last updated: June 2024

If you have an issue that you feel the Board should be made aware of or would like to provide feedback, please email info@carmelsoccer.com and your message will be distributed, as appropriate. We may reach out to you for more information.

The Board of Directors typically meets on the 4th Monday of each month via Zoom. If there is an issue that you would like to place on a Board meeting agenda, you must email us at info@carmelsoccer.com at least 14 days in advance of the meeting and provide details on the topic and reason. If your request is approved, you will be contacted with a time and link to join the meeting. The Board reserves the right to defer or deny any requests due to intent or time-constraints.

We do not use Board meeting time to hear feedback and/or opinions on resolutions and decisions the Board has already decided on.