

## **2025 Fall Invitational Tournament**

### **PEABODY YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION**

#### **Tournament Operating Rules**

Tournament Headquarters: 83 Pine Street, Peabody MA 01960

Mail to Address: P.O. Box 2015, Peabody, MA 01960

Tournament Director:

Kathleen Minette

#### **I. PLAYERS/COACHES**

**A. AGE GROUPS:** The 2025 Fall Invitational Tournament offers competition for boys and girls in the following age group on October 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025:

- Grade 3 / 4: Grade 4 or Lower AND Born on or after January 1, 2015

**B. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY:** All players must be registered or affiliated with Essex County Youth Soccer ("ECYSA"), Massachusetts Youth Soccer Association ("MYSA"), United States Youth Soccer Association ("USYSA") or other national association and must be under the respective ages as noted above. No player will be allowed to be rostered on more than one team participating in the tournament. All players must show proof of affiliation or registration by showing picture identification (e.g. roster). If picture identification is not available, a town / group / league roster form certified by the town / group / league registrar may be substituted. The players not able to show the above credentials cannot be allowed to play in the tournament. MYSA dual rostering rules apply.

Up to 3 guest players are allowed per team in the Grade 3 / 4 division. A guest player is any player from a town or organization different from that of the team who does not play for that team in regular league play.

**C. COACH AFFILIATION:** The head coach / assistant coach must be affiliated with ECYSA, MYSA, USYSA or other national association. All coaches must show proof of affiliation by showing a picture identification card, or a town / group / league roster form certified by the town / group / league registrar. Non-affiliated coaches will not be allowed to participate in the tournament. All coaches must show coach credentials from affiliated soccer organizations at the time of team registration.

**D. PLAYER VIOLATION:** The head coach / assistant coach of a player in violation of Rule I, Section B, who willfully attempts to participate in the tournament, shall be suspended from further participation in the tournament. Any further violations will result in the removal of the entire team from the tournament and forfeiture of all matches played or to be played.

**E. COACHES' SIDELINE:** Coaches must remain on the coaches' sideline during the game or face ejection from the game. The number of coaches allowed on the coaches' sideline during the match may be limited to two at the referee's discretion but in no case will more than three be permitted.

Spectators **MUST** be on the opposite side of the field from players and coaches.

## **II. REGISTRATION**

**A. OPEN REGISTRATION:** Peabody Youth Soccer Association ("PYSA") will run electronic registration for all individual players from July 15, 2025 through September 20, 2025. Players not registered at this time will not be added to team rosters and not be able to participate in the tournament. During registration players will agree to MYSA Codes of Conduct and liability waivers. The 2025 Fall Invitational Tournament is an in-state tournament. Only teams registered or affiliated with Massachusetts and MYSA will be allowed to participate.

**B. COACH CHECK-IN:** Coaches will check-in with the tournament registrar or designee no later than 30 minutes before the team's first game is played. Check-in will consist of affiliation verification, roster verification, tournament patch distribution and any last minute scheduling or field changes. All rosters, player cards, medical release forms or other affiliation forms and certificates may be verified by the registrar before the first game played. Failure to do so will prohibit a team or organization from competing in the tournament. The tournament registrar shall have the right to refuse any forms not properly meeting affiliation criteria. Only official USYSA, MYSA, ECYSA or town / group / league forms will be accepted.

**C. AGE VERIFICATION:** The tournament registrar has the right to request age verification. A team roster with one coach and a minimum of seven (7) players for Grade 3/4 must be submitted for a team to be accepted into the tournament. The maximum number of registered players per team roster shall be sixteen (16) for Grade 3/4 teams. Any deviation from the max roster size will be managed on a case-by-case basis. The maximum number of registered coaches per team shall be three (3). A team consists of all registered players and coaches. *A team may be composed of players of both sexes, but a mixed team will be registered as a boys' team. Mixed gender teams must be brought to the attention of the Tournament Director at the time of registration.*

**D. FEES:** All fees must be paid at the time of application. Fees for the tournament are as follows:

- Grade 3/4 teams (7v7) = \$400.00

If any event or condition outside the control of the tournament organizers including but not limited to pandemic, weather conditions, national emergency, or natural disaster, precludes the completion of the scheduled minimum number of guaranteed games, a pro-rated refund based on the number of games the team has completed, less a \$75 administration fee, will be offered.

## **III. RULES OF COMPETITION**

**A. RULES OF THE GAME:** The current United States Soccer Federation ("USSF") Referee Administration Handbook rules shall be in effect, except as specifically stated otherwise in these rules.

**B. ROSTERS:** A minimum of seven (7) players shall constitute a team. No match may be started with less than seven (7) players per team. A team will play with no less than six (6) players. If at any time the number of players' drops below six (6), the game will be temporarily suspended. If after a

reasonable amount of time, the team cannot field six (6) players, the game shall be abandoned.

**C. PLAYING PERIODS/BALL SIZE:** Grade 3/4 will play two (2) 22-minute periods. Periods may be shortened as deemed necessary by the tournament committee to complete all matches scheduled. Game balls shall be provided by the tournament. Grade 3/4 will use a size 4 ball.

**D. SUBSTITUTION:** Substitutions shall be unlimited. Upon consent of the referee, substitutions may be made: Prior to any goal kick, after a goal by either team, at half time by any team, prior to the throw-in by either team provided the team with possession substitutes first. After an injury resulting in stoppage of play, the injured player must be substituted for (this includes the goalkeeper). ONLY the player injured may be substituted for. When a team substitutes, the substitutes must be ready to enter the field and will enter at mid-field.

**E. POINTS:** Grade 3/4 will play in friendly round-robin format. Records will not be kept for wins, losses, ties.

#### **IV. FIELD RULES**

**A. RULES OF THE GAME:** The current USSF Referee Administration Handbook shall be in effect, except as specifically stated otherwise in these rules.

**B. TEAMS:** Each team must be represented by a registered / affiliated coach. Teams MUST arrive within five minutes past the scheduled kick-of time. Failure to do so will result in a FORFEIT.

**C. UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT:** Uniform jerseys must be all the same color and have a minimum three (3) inch number on the back (goalkeeper excluded). Shirt numbers should be unique to each player. SHIN GUARDS ARE MANDATORY FOR ALL PLAYERS AT ALL AGE LEVELS. NO PLAYER WILL BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN A TOURNAMENT GAME WITHOUT SHIN GUARDS. ALL SHIN GUARDS MUST BE FULLY COVERED BY STOCKINGS. It is recommended that shorts and socks match and that safe footwear be worn. Jewelry (Rings, Watches, Earrings, etc.) will not be allowed to be worn at a tournament game. No splints or casts are allowed and no decorative beads in hair or exercise trackers. Soft hair ornaments (yarn, rubber bands, and cloth ponytail holders) will be allowed within safety limits. Home team must change uniforms in the event of color conflict with the opponent. First team listed in the pairings sheet is considered the home team.

During cold weather the following provisions may apply: Sweatshirts or jackets may be worn under the team jersey as to expose the number and team color. Sweatpants will be worn over shorts.

#### **V. REFEREES**

**A. PROVIDED BY:** Referees will be provided by a USSF certified referee assignor for Grade 3/4 matches.

**B. PREGAME ACTIVITIES:** Referees or tournament officials will check the safety of each player's footwear, shin guards with stockings covering them entirely (mandatory), and require removal of all jewelry before all matches. Player and coach identification cards are to be present and available at all matches.

**C. POSTGAME PAPERWORK:** Referees will fill in the score, names of EJECTED AND CAUTIONED players /coaches. The card must be turned into the scorekeeper's tent immediately after the game.

**D. MISCONDUCT REPORTING:** Referees must notify the referee coordinator and the Tournament Director immediately after the completion of a game of a team member ejection and / or referee assault (Assaults must be reported to MYSA and Massachusetts State Referee Committee ("MSRC")).

**E. AFFILIATION:** Referees will be USSF certified for Grade 3 / 4.

## **VI. DIVISIONAL MAKE-UP**

**A. DIVISION:** Teams shall be organized in competitive divisions at the discretion of the competition committee. The competition committee will take into consideration the requested placing of the team by the coach, the season record, if available, the placement of the team during the regular season, and the age of the players. Decisions of the competition committee will be final.

**B. GROUPS:** Teams will be placed in three or four team groupings within a division. Grade 3/4 shall play four (4) non results orientated round robin matches. There are no semi-final or finals matches for Grade 3/4.

## **VII. SMALL SIDED SOCCER**

**A. RULES OF THE GAME:** Federation International Football Association ("FIFA") laws shall apply with the following exceptions:

### **Grade 3/4 (7v7):**

1. Grade 3/4 age group shall play seven versus seven (7 v 7) including the goalkeeper.
2. Field of play:
  - a) Field of play will be 40 yards by 50 yards
  - b) Markings:
    - i. Goal lines and touchlines.
    - ii. Goal area 18 yards on the goal line. 6 yards onto the playing field.
    - iii. A 14-yard line parallel to the goal line running from touchline to touchline (not to be called penalty area). A goalkeeper can handle the ball anywhere in this area.
    - iv. Halfway line and center circle (8-yard radius).
    - v. Corner flag and corner quarter circles.
    - vi. Goal sizes 6 feet high and 12 feet wide.
3. The ball size will be a number 4.
4. Seven (7) players including the goalkeeper on the field for each team. A team will play with no less than six (6) players. If at any time the number of players' drops below six (6), the game will be temporarily suspended. If after a reasonable amount of time, the team cannot field six (6) players, the game shall be abandoned.
5. The game will have two (2) twenty-five (22) minute playing periods.

6. The defending team must be in their own half of the field until the ball is struck for the goal kick.
7. The offside law applies to the attacking team only in the opponent's side of the field between the goal line and the 14-yard line.
8. A ball set into play as a goal kick or released (throw, punt, or drop kick) by the goalkeeper within the 14-yard line must touch the ground or another player before it crosses the halfway line. If it does not touch the ground or another player, an indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team at the point where the ball crossed the halfway line.
9. FIFA laws of the game shall apply to direct and indirect free kicks with the following exceptions and additions:
  - a) For kick-offs, free kicks, and corner kicks, opponents must be at least 8 yards from the ball.
  - b) If the attacking team commits a foul between the defending team's goal line and 14- yard line, no attacking players may be between the defending goal line and 14- yard line on the restart;
  - c) No Penalty kicks will be taken;
  - d) For any foul committed by the defending team between their goal line and the 14- yard line, the attacking team will be awarded a direct or indirect free kick outside the 14- yard line at the point closest to where the foul was committed. A player who takes a throw-in or a kick-off improperly will be given a second try.

## **VIII. DISCIPLINE**

**A. EJECTIONS:** If a player or coach is ejected from a match, they must leave the playing area immediately. An automatic one game suspension will be applied. The suspension prohibits the player / coach from participating in ANY MANNER in the match from which he / she is suspended. A team member shall be ejected for the following reasons: violent conduct or serious foul play, uses foul and abusive language, continuing misconduct after having received a caution (Yellow Card), violation of current FIFA rules that require EJECTION. Issuance of three (3) individual Yellow Cards without the issuance of a Red Card will result in a one game suspension of the next match scheduled. If a team member leaves the bench to participate in a disturbance on the field and thereby is ejected by the referee, that team member shall automatically be suspended for the DURATION OF THE TOURNAMENT. Any assaults on the referee will be referred to the state associations (MYSA, MSRC and ECYSA). If one or both coaches are ejected from the same team and no affiliated coach (with card) is available to take over, the match shall be considered a FORFEIT. If one or both coaches are ejected from both teams and a situation exists where no affiliated coach is available, both teams are awarded a FORFEIT loss. ALL CARDS WILL BE REVIEWED BY THE TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR.

OFFICIALS TO DETERMINE FURTHER DISCIPLINARY ACTION. The Tournament Director or referee assignor will hold the player / coach identification pass for the duration of the suspension. The tournament committee may take additional disciplinary action against a team or individual for serious offenses, including suspension from the remainder of the tournament and non-eligibility for future tournaments of the tournament committee.

**B. REFEREE SUPPORT AND CONTROL OF SPECTATORS:** PYSA and ECYSA have adopted the MYSA Codes of Conduct and Zero Tolerance Policy, including the referee abuse prevention policy (Policy

531-9), as currently posted on the MYSA website. The policies will be strictly enforced at the tournament. All reported incidents will be reviewed by the tournament committee to determine further discipline or penalty. If a referee abandons the game a forfeit may be awarded by the tournament committee. All players and coaches must stay within ten (10) yards of the midfield line. Spectators must be three (3) yards from the touchline. No spectators will be allowed behind the goals or end lines. Penalties for unruly fans could include having a team play without any spectator support. All safety protocols must be adhered to as specified by State, CDC, Public Health and local town specified guidelines.

**C. REPORT OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION:** Reports of disciplinary actions will be filed on the post tournament report made to MYSA.

**D. PROTEST-APPEALS:** There are only two acceptable causes for protesting a game AFTER it has been played. Causes for appeal may only include: (A) a team knowingly plays an unregistered, ineligible, or suspended player; or (B) there has been an obvious error made in the application of the laws of the game that directly affects the outcome of the match, and the referee ADMITS it. No protests can even be entertained if they are based on judgment decisions made by the referee during play. The laws of the game clearly state in Law V (Referees) that ...“A referee shall be appointed to officiate each match...his decisions on points of fact connected with the play shall be FINAL, so far as the result of the game is concerned.” A match cannot be protested because one coach, or both for that matter, thinks the referee was incompetent. Any protests relating to the grounds, goal posts, crossbars, or other appurtenances of the match shall not be entertained by the tournament committee.

**E. GUIDELINES - PROTESTS, DISPUTES AND APPEALS:** All protests, disputes and appeals must be in writing and will not be accepted otherwise. All protests must be made within thirty (30) minutes of the end of the protested game, and delivered to the tournament committee consisting of the Tournament Director, referee assignor, and the field marshal coordinator. The decision of the committee shall be final.

## **IX. MISCELLANEOUS**

**A. TOURNAMENT SPECIFIC:** No changes will be allowed after the team has registered. Equipment will be checked by the referee and/or linesman assistant referees or appropriate tournament official. Only team uniforms will be allowed on the field. No headgear, such as head bands or kerchiefs will be permitted. No other items of clothing will be allowed unless consistent with the team uniform. Uniform color conflicts require the designated home team to change (Peabody Youth Soccer will make alternate pullovers available on request). Coaches will be held responsible for the actions of their spectators. All spectators will stay behind the spectator line along the side of the field and may be asked to leave the facility for violation of this rule. The athletic trainer or other emergency medical technician (“EMT”) will provide a first aid unit for the duration of the tournament. Coaches will not remove any injured player from the field, the athletic trainer or EMT will attend to all downed players who cannot walk off the field.

Note: An EMT is not authorized to tell a player to return to play, only a medical physician, dentist or athletic trainer is authorized to clear a player to return to tournament play. If an EMT pulls a player off the field, that player cannot return to the game.

**B. DISCLAIMER:** Refer to the 2025 Essex County Youth Soccer Association Rule Book for any errors, omissions or clarification to these tournament specific rules.

**C. MATCH DELAYS, SUSPENSIONS, and CANCELLATIONS:** In the event of weather or other situation that causes a match to be delayed, suspended or cancelled, the tournament committee consisting of the Tournament Director, referee assignor and field marshal coordinator shall have final decision making authority on the outcome. Possible outcomes include rescheduling the match or matches, replay of the match or cancellation of matches.

**D. GENERAL RULES**

- Smoking is not permitted at any tournament facility.
- Charcoal and gas grills, or any other potential fire or safety hazard is strictly forbidden.
- Alcoholic beverages are not allowed at any of the playing fields.
- Pets are not permitted at any event site.
- No verbal abuse of anyone is permitted at any time.
- Parents and coaches not complying with the regulations will be asked to leave the facility.