

Stratford Youth Soccer

2026 Referee Manual



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Club Head Referee

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House League Soccer

- Please arrive ready at the field no later than **15 minutes** before kickoff
- Uniform consists of a referee shirt (O'Neils, Avanti, or Adidas 2022/2016/2018 preferred), black socks, shorts, whistle, watch, coin, paper, pen, and red and yellow cards
- All games are at 6 & 7:15 pm and are assigned on the Soccer Ref Manager App (new this year)

Monthly pay

- Second week of the following month (via e-transfer)
- Fill out the referee log in the back after each game as evidence you were present at your assigned game

Division	Game Length	Pay
U8/9	2 x 20 min	\$25
U10/11	2 x 25 min	\$30
U13+	2 x 35 min	\$45 (referee) \$30 (assistant)
Referee mentor*	N/A	\$40

*Mentor forms available on SYS website

Important Dates

House League First Day: May 25th, 2026

House League Final Day: August 8th, 2026

STRATFORD YOUTH SOCCER CLUB
GENERAL HOUSE LEAGUE RULES

PLAYER EQUIPMENT

Equipment Regulation

- All players must wear **shin guards** under their socks, or they will not be permitted to play
- All players must wear their team uniform with numbers printed on the back of the jerseys
- All players U6 and older should wear soccer cleats
- Long hair should be tied back away from face

A referee may, at his/her discretion, disallow a player to participate in a game, or at any time during the game, if the referee determines the player's equipment, jewelry accessory or medical support device (such as, but not limited to, a cast, splint or brace) to be a danger to all participants of the game. Medic Alert bracelets are allowed but must be taped.

THE GAME – All Divisions

1. If one team has less players than the other opposing team, the opposing team will supply players to even out the numbers. Teams should always play games with equal number of players on each team.
2. Rain, thunder and lightning prior to the game doesn't mean the weather will be inclement when you are scheduled to play soccer. **There is a 30-minute delay in restart from the sound of the last thunder or sight of the last lightning. Everyone must return to their cars.** You should always show up for your games and practices, as they are not rescheduled due to rain. Games and practices for under 4 to under 13 players may be cancelled by the convener or the SYS Administrators due to severe weather such as lightning or flooded fields. Games and practices for senior players may be cancelled by the referees due to severe weather such as lightning or flooded fields. If fields are closed due to flooding, SYS will attempt to email all families through email, however, there will be a notice posted on the front page of our website 'Stratford Youth Soccer' and it will also be posted to our Facebook/Instagram page, so please refer to these sites for the most up to date information.

3. Abusive language and swearing will not be tolerated. Players will be shown the yellow card for dissent by word or action; if the referee feels the offense is of a more serious nature, a red card will be shown for using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures. Offending coaches or other officials will be asked to remove themselves from the game and the playing area. Spectators will be the responsibility of the coaches. Any effort to circumvent the referee's decision will result in the abandonment of the game.
4. If the referee fails to show up for the game, the coaches are to agree on who is take over as referee. They could ask a parent or share the responsibility and each ref one half of the game. Please inform the referee scheduler of ANY referee that is absent.
5. **TIE BREAKER FOR FINAL DAY STANDINGS:**
 - **Winner between tied teams in league play**
 - **Least goals allowed in all league games**
 - **Goal differential in all league games – maximum 5 goal difference per game**

THE GAME and RULES – Age Division Specifics

Under 8/9

1. **2 x 20 minute** halves, with a 5 minute break.
2. The game ball will be **size 3** (or 4 super light).
3. Teams will play **5 a-side** (including goal keeper).
4. One coach per team is allowed on the field during the first 3 games only.
Coaches must stay out of the play of the game. The referee can remove a coach from the field if they are interfering with the game.
5. Coaches will ENSURE that all players have the opportunity to participate and develop equally in all positions.
6. The goalie position should be shared amongst all players.
7. **Unlimited substitutions may be made on the fly or at designated stoppages.**
8. **No offsides** in this division.
9. All sideline restarts will be **pass-in or dribble-in**.
10. **All free kicks will be indirect (no penalty kicks).**
11. A foul committed by a player inside his own penalty area will result in an indirect free kick. All opponents must be at least five (5) metres (or six (6) yards) from the ball when the kick is taken.
12. **All opponents of the opposite team must be on the other side of the retreat line (1/2 of the field) during a goal kick.** They cannot cross the retreat line until a team-mate of the kicking goalie touches the ball or the ball crosses the retreat line.
13. Although players frequently come in contact with each other, pushing or tripping, are NOT permitted. In addition, un-sportsman like behaviour such as yelling and kicking will result in an indirect kick being awarded to the opposing team.
14. The referee will exercise discretion when calling a handball infraction especially when it is committed in a protective manner.
15. The referee will refrain from penalizing in cases where the offending team may gain advantage.
16. **No corner kicks.** A goal kick will be awarded anytime the whole ball crosses the goal line, regardless of last touch.
17. **Referee will not give Yellow or Red Cards to players.** The referee may warn, caution, or send off a team official if necessary.
18. No person shall stand behind the goal line (end of field).

Under 10/11

1. **2 x 25 minute** halves, with a 5 minute break.
2. The game ball will be **size 4** (or 5 light).
3. Teams will play **7 a-side** (including goal keeper).
4. Coaches will ENSURE that all players have the opportunity to participate and develop equally in all positions.
5. The goalie position should be shared amongst all players.
6. **Substitutions can be made at any stoppage (e.g., kick off, throw in, goal kick) with the referee's permission.**
7. **No offsides** in this division.
8. All sideline re-starts will be **pass-in or dribble-in.**
9. **All free kicks will be indirect, except penalty kicks.**
10. A foul committed by a player inside his own penalty area will result in a penalty kick. All other players, except the goalkeeper, must be behind the ball and outside the penalty area when the kick is taken.
11. **All opponents of the opposite team must be on the other side of the retreat line (1/3 of the field) during a goal kick.** They cannot cross the retreat line until a team-mate of the kicking goalie touches the ball or the ball crosses the retreat line.
12. Although players frequently come in contact with each other, pushing or tripping, are NOT permitted. In addition, un-sportsman like behaviour such as yelling and kicking will result in an indirect kick being awarded to the opposing team.
13. The referee will exercise discretion when calling a handball infraction especially when it is committed in a protective manner.
14. The referee will refrain from penalizing in cases where the offending team may gain advantage.
15. The entire ball must cross the line before it is out of play or a goal is scored.
16. **Referee will attempt to avoid the use of Yellow or Red Cards on players.** The referee may warn players and manage behaviour through instruction.
17. No person shall stand behind the goal line (end of field).

Under 13+

1. **2 x 35 minute halves**, with a 5 minute break.
2. Teams will play **11 a-side** (including goal keeper).
3. The game ball will be **size 5**.
4. Coaches will ENSURE that all players have the opportunity to participate and develop equally in all positions, including a minimum of 2 different goalies per game.
5. **No goalie shall play more than 30 minutes per game.**
6. **Substitutions can be made the following stoppages with the referees permission: kick off, own throw in (piggyback is allowed), and goal kick.**
7. **Offside will be called**; foul throws will be taken by the opposing team.
8. All sideline restarts will be **throw-ins**.
9. **A foul committed by a player inside his own penalty area will result in a penalty kick.** All other players, except the goalkeeper, must be behind the ball and outside the penalty area when the kick is taken.
10. There is **no retreat line**.
11. Although players frequently come in contact with each other, pushing or tripping are NOT permitted. In addition, un-sportsman like behaviour such as yelling and kicking will result in a free kick, either direct or indirect as instructed by the referee.
12. The entire ball must cross the line before it is out of play or a goal is scored.
13. **Referee may use Yellow or Red Cards on players.** The referee may warn players and manage behaviour through instruction.
14. No person shall stand behind the goal line (end of field).

Inclement Weather Policy

Rain, thunder, and lightning prior to the game doesn't mean the weather will be inclement when you are scheduled to referee.

You should always show up to your scheduled games unless otherwise notified. Games and practices for House League may be canceled ahead of time by the convener or the SYS

Administrators due to severe weather such as lightning or flooded fields. **If they are not canceled beforehand, it is up to the referee to cancel the game at the field.**

- If you hear thunder, you can get hit by lightning
- **If you hear thunder or see lightning, immediately cancel the match and ensure all players and coaches leave the field**
- If you cancel a match at 6:00pm and have a match at 7:15pm, you must return to the field for your second match (unless you have been notified in advanced that it has been canceled)

Travel Soccer (Southwest District)

- Please arrive ready at the field no later than 30 minutes before kickoff
- Uniform consists of a referee shirt (O'Neills, Avanti, or Adidas 2018 preferred, in that order), black socks, shorts, whistle, watch, coin, paper, pen, and red and yellow cards
- Referee is responsible to supply flags to Assistant Referees
- Assistant Referees should also bring their own flags (if they have them)

Tournaments

Stratford's Graham Bunting Classic (U13-21): **June 6th-7th, 2026**

Stratford's Tony Hunter Festival Cup (U8-12): **August 16th, 2026**

Zero tolerance policy

- If officials are abused, a report must be filed with the League (Southwest District Soccer League) and provided to Ontario Soccer at matchofficials@ontariosoccer.net

Undergarment colors for players

- All teams must wear the same shade (dark if short/shirts are dark and light if shorts/shirts are light)

Game Sheets

- **Must be entered online on Ref Centre and emailed/faxed to office addressed on game sheets within 48 hours**

Southwest Soccer Fee Schedule

Game Official Fees	Referee	Assistant Referee
U8 – U9 Development	\$ 30.00	N/A
U10 – U11 Development	\$ 35.00	N/A
U12 Development	\$ 40.00	\$25.00
U13 Development	\$ 55.00	\$ 40.00
U14 – U15 Youth Competitive	\$ 60.00	\$ 45.00
U16 Youth Competitive	\$ 65.00	\$ 50.00
U17 – U18 Youth Competitive	\$ 70.00	\$ 55.00
U21 Senior Competitive	\$ 85.00	\$ 65.00
Open Age – Recreational (TMSL)	\$ 80.00	\$ 60.00
Open Age – Recreational (KDSL)	\$ 85.00	\$ 65.00

- Games are assigned on RefCentre and **payment is made via e-transfer direct deposit from SWRSA the following month** (or whatever league you refereed the game for)
- If you have not yet set up your direct deposit with Ontario Soccer, please do so ASAP (can find the forms on your RefCentre account under Payment → Payment Forms)

How to set up your Ref Centre Account

Setting up your Ref Centre account involves 3 steps:

1. Registration
2. Setting your preferences
3. Setting your availability

Please follow these instructions as soon as possible in order to be assigned games.

1. Registration

You are registered after you take the small sided or entry level referee course – no further actions are needed.

2. Setting your Preferences

Please follow these instructions accurately. If you do not, you will not receive any game offers from Ref Centre.

Put your cursor on the "Preference" menu item at the top of the page, and select "Districts" from the sub menus that appear under it. Please note your home district that is displayed at the top of the page that loads. It should read "**Home District: South West Region**" If this is incorrect, please contact you Club Head Referee. If you wish to guest referee in other districts, select them here by checking off the appropriate check boxes and pressing the "Submit" button.

Select the "Leagues" link from the list of preference options that appear in the far left column. The League page will open with a series of leagues that will be on Ref Centre this summer. Check off the leagues that you would like to officiate in and click the "Submit" button to save your league preferences. If you would like to referee district travel games in Stratford (i.e., you are a grade 1+), you can select Southwest Region Soccer League. If you want to referee provincial travel games in Stratford (i.e., you are a grade 6+), you can select Ontario Soccer League, Ontario Women's Soccer League, and the Ontario Youth Soccer League.

Now select "Club" from the links on the left. The Club page will open with a series of clubs that will be on Ref Centre this summer. Ensure "Stratford Youth" and "Stratford

City Soccer Club" are checked off and click the "Submit" button to save your league preferences.

Now select "Divisions". The Divisions page will open showing you the leagues that you selected.

Click on each league and the divisions for that league will appear.

You have 3 options for each division: Referee and AR, AR Only or None. The default is None.

If you select None, Ref Centre will not offer you a game in that division. If you select AR Only, Ref Centre will only offer you an AR appointment in that division. If you select Referee or AR, Ref Centre could give you either position for that division.

If you see a dash (-) in the Ref or AR column, it means you are not graded high enough to referee that division. If you see a dash in the AR column, it means that division does not use AR's.

Select your choices for each league and click the "Submit" button to save the choices.

Your preferences are now set up. You may change these settings at any time. Now you need to set up your availability.

3. Setting up your Availability

Please follow these instructions accurately. If you do not, you will not receive any game offers from Ref Centre.

Put your cursor on the "Games" menu item at the top of the page, and select the "Availability" option.

The calendar for the current month will appear. Check off the days that you wish to be available for that month.

If you leave the day unchecked, Ref Centre will not offer you any games on that day.

Important: make sure that you click on the "Update" button to save your changes.

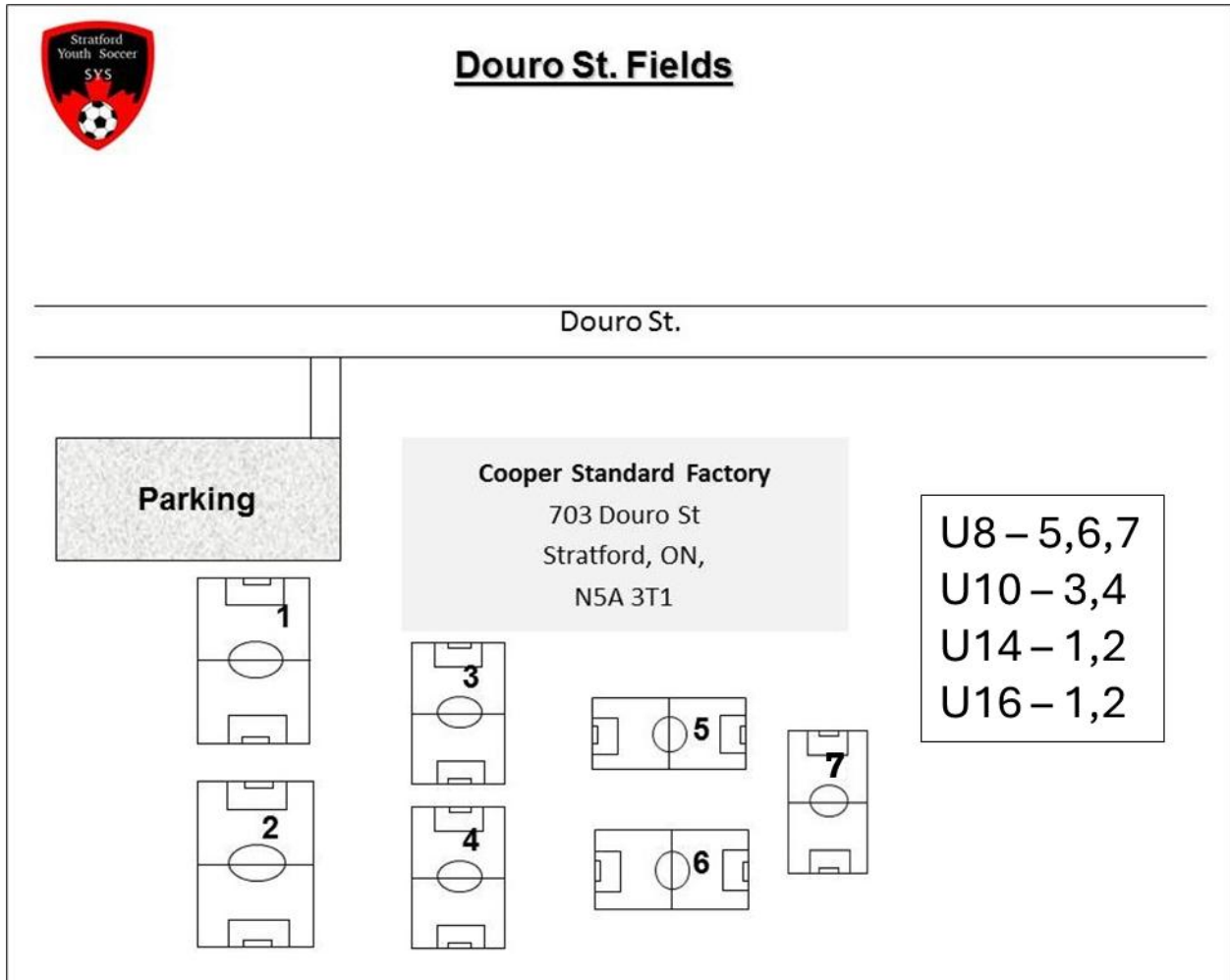
Now change the month to the next month in the season and set up your choices for that month. Again, click the "Update" button to save your settings for that month. Continue this for as many months of the season as you can.

If you have followed these instructions, you will be set up to start receiving game offers.

Stratford Youth Soccer Home Facilities

COOPER STANDARD (DOURO STREET FIELDS)

703 Douro Street, Stratford, ON, N5A 3T1



FESTIVAL HYDRO COMMUNITY PARK

1030 Erie Street, Stratford, ON, N4Z 0A1



SERC FIELDS

240 Oakdale Avenue, Stratford, ON, N5A 7W2

