



**2025 ILLINOIS FC  
TOURNAMENT RULES**

**1. LAWS OF THE GAME:** All games will be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game as issued by FIFA/ USYSA and the Illinois Youth Soccer Association. The following rules supplement the laws of the game.

**2. AGE GROUPS AND TEAM INFORMATION:**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Players on the Field</b>	<b>Game Length</b>	<b>Ball size</b>	<b>Max Roster size</b>
U8	4 v 4	Two 20-min halves	4	10
U9 - U10	7 v 7	Two 25-min halves	4	14
U11 - U12	9 v 9	Two 25-min halves	4	16
U13 - U15	11 v 11	Two 30-min halves	5	18
U16 - U19	11 v 11	Two 35-min halves	5	22 (18 per game)

Each team is allowed up to 5 guest players. Players from within the same club do not count against the guest player limit. Official State Rosters with ID/Player Pass Cards, Medical Release Forms (IYSA only), and approved Travel Permits Forms (if required, for out of state teams only) are required of all teams at registration. Players must be born within the calendar year for the division in which they participate, unless they are playing up. Each team must have a designated, carded coach. US Club teams must present a completed "Form NT" during registration.

All games will be running time. There will be 5 minutes between halves. The referee will not stop the clock except for serious injury, and at his/her discretion. The tournament committee reserves the right to alter game length due to weather, injuries, or other delays. The first team on the schedule is the home team and should wear lighter colored uniforms, if possible.

**3.KICKOFF:** Home team takes north/west bench and takes kickoff

**4. SUBSTITUTIONS:** Teams may substitute without limitation, with referee approval, during the game at times allowed under FIFA rules, with the following exceptions:

Substitutions may take place:

- Prior to a throw-in (only the team in possession, unless both teams are ready to sub)
- Prior to a goal kick for either team
- At the beginning of any period of play
- After a goal by either team
- After an injury to either team when the referee stops play

A player must be removed when blood is present. The tournament medical staff reserves the right to limit participation of a player based on suspected injuries. The referee will not allow a player to return after a head injury unless checked by medical staff for a concussion.

**5. EJECTIONS AND CAUTIONS:** Any player or coach ejected from a game will be ineligible to participate in the team's next tournament game, with additional penalties possible as determined by the tournament director. Anyone ejected for violent conduct will be subject to ejection from further tournament participation. No substitution will be permitted for an ejected player.

**6. FORFEITS:** A game will be declared as a "forfeit" if a team cannot begin play within 5 minutes of the scheduled start of the game. A team must begin play if 7 or more players (5 or more for U9-U12) are present at game time. Any team dropping below the minimum of 7 players (5 for U9-U12) during the course of the game will be forced to forfeit. Forfeited games are scored 3-0.

**7. UNIFORMS, EQUIPMENT, AND GAME RULES:** All players must wear shin guards with socks completely covering them. Each player must have the same uniform, each with an individual number. No jewelry is permitted with the exception of medical alert bracelets or necklaces. Both teams must report to the field marshal 30 minutes prior to game time for equipment and player ID check. The home team on the schedule will be responsible for changing colors in the event of a conflict. Referees have final approval on all uniform and equipment issues. After each game, the winning coach must sign the game card.

**8. PROTESTS AND FINAL ARBITRATION:** The Tournament Director is the final interpreter of the rules and reserves the right to issue final decisions on all matters pertaining to the tournament. To protest a tournament situation, a team must present its protest in writing to the Tournament Headquarters within one hour of the completion of the game. A protest bond of \$100.00 must accompany the protest. If the Tournament Director upholds the protest, the entire protest bond will be returned. If the Tournament Director denies the protest, then the bond will be forfeited. A referee's judgment is not a basis for protest. The Tournament Director's decisions and/or interpretations are final.

**9. ADDITIONAL RULES AND REGULATIONS:** In accordance with US Soccer and the Illinois Youth Soccer Association, purposefully heading the ball in any U11 and under age group will result in an indirect free

kick awarded to the opposing team.

No pets, smoking, or alcoholic beverages are permitted on tournament grounds/facilities. Parking is allowed only in designated areas.

#### **10. U9/U10 FLIGHTS:**

Players will retreat to the halfway (center) line on the opposing team's goal kicks and when the opposing team goalkeeper obtains possession of the ball in his or her hands during the run of play. If a "build out" line is marked on the field, the referee may use that line instead of the center line. Additionally, if there is a foul and the restart is a free kick to be taken anywhere in the penalty area the players will also retreat to the buildout line. No punting is allowed by the goalkeeper. Opposing players may not cross the build out line until the ball is released (i.e., the goal kick is taken or the keeper rolls the ball). Opposing players do not need to wait for a player to receive the ball. This helps promote the game being played on the ground out of the back with limited pressure. It also is in line with U.S Soccer standards as there is no heading at this age.

Per US Soccer on the 7 v 7 fields offsides offenses will only be called when a player is between the build-out line and the goal. However, these are single referee games and the referee will not be straight across from the second to the last defender. So, the referee should call offsides when it is obvious that the player is offside, not when he is barely or marginally offside which will be very hard or next to impossible to do from the referee's angle. It is one of those situations where the referee is absolutely right in calling it when it is noticeable and not guessing if the player may or may not be offside due to the referee's positioning. These are 8 and 9 year olds, and while we want to get offside correct every time, with a one man crew, perfection cannot be expected.

**11. BRACKETING, SCORING AND STANDINGS:** Teams will be placed into brackets based on the number of teams accepted in each age group. Some brackets will play a "round-robin" style tournament, while others will have a preliminary round followed by a championship round. Each team will be awarded points as follows: Win = 3 points; Tie = 1 point; Loss = 0 points The following procedure will be used to determine winners and/or advancement:

- Most points
- Winner in head to head competition between two tied teams
- Goal differential (goals scored minus goals allowed, maximum of 4 per

game)

- Fewest goals allowed
- FIFA “kicks from the spot,” at a time and location determined by the tournament director.

Three-way ties will be decided by goal differential, then goals allowed. Tiebreakers reset after one team is advanced or eliminated. Head-to-head therefore comes into play once one team is advanced or eliminated.

## **12. Semi-Finals and Finals**

- If tied, then the teams will employ FIFA “kicks from the spot” to determine a winner. No overtime.

**13. PLAYER, COACH, PARENT, AND SPECTATOR CONDUCT:** Both teams and their coaches shall be on the same side of the field. Each team and their coaches shall remain between the midfield and the 18-yard marking (penalty area) on their designated half. All spectators and parents will remain on the opposite side of the field. All players, coaches and spectators except those players waiting to be substituted will remain 2 yards from the touchline. No one will be permitted to stand at the goal ends of the field.

Coaching is not permitted from the spectator side of the field. Coaching must be in accordance with FIFA rules and thus limited to designated technical areas. Arguments between parents/spectators or with the referee will not

be tolerated. Derogatory remarks about or to the opposing team, players or coaches, the referee, the parents or spectators are not appropriate.

Team coaches and/or managers are responsible for the conduct of players, parents, coaches, and spectators at the field, hotel, or other locations for the duration of the tournament. If Illinois FC receives complaints regarding the misconduct of any player or person associated with the teams, the Tournament Director or Committee may ask any and all individuals to leave the tournament.

**14. INCLEMENT WEATHER:** If there is severe weather, only the Referee Assignor or the Tournament Director may halt matches. If we halt a match, then the following rules will be in effect.

If the weather delay is from 1 to 15 minutes

- All games will resume from point of stoppage
- However, if there is less than 5 minutes to completion of the match, then the Referee will declare the game complete.

- If the game is a tie with less than 5 minutes to go, then the Referee will call the game a tie.
- However, if the game is a semifinal or final game, then the game will resume with a shoot-out.

If the weather delay is from 15 to 30 minutes:

- If the match is in the first half, the match will begin with the second half and the second half will be 15 minutes in length.
- If the match is in the second half with less than 15 minutes played, the match will continue with 10 minutes remaining.
- If the match is in the second half with more than 15 minutes completed, then the Referee shall declare the game complete. If a semifinal or final game is tied then the match will go directly to a shoot-out.

If the weather delay is more than 30 minutes:

- If the match is in the first half, the match will begin with the second half and the second half will be 15 minutes in length.
- If the match is in the second half, then the Referee shall declare the game complete. If a semifinal or final game is a tie, then the match will go directly to a shoot-out.
- The Tournament Director will adjust times so that all teams will be able to complete their games. This may mean moving a game to another field or shortening the duration of all remaining games.
- Team Coaches or Managers must check at the tournament headquarters to receive final instructions.
- Do not leave the playing area unless told to do so by the Referee Assignor or the Tournament Director. Do not take the word of the Field Marshall. Stop by the Referee's tent before dismissing your players.
- If your team is not present at the resumption of play, your team will forfeit the match.

The Tournament Director may adjust the inclement weather rules based on special situations.

**15. GUARANTEED NUMBER OF GAMES:** The Tournament Director and Committee have the authority to make changes in games including: duration, location, schedule, and length in order for all teams to be able to complete their current or remaining games. The Tournament Committee agrees to provide the guaranteed number of games or refund tournament application fees based on games not played to total games played, less unrecoverable expenses. All decisions, rule interpretations, and/or rule adjustments made by the Tournament Director and Tournament Officials are final. If the tournament is completely canceled due to an "act of nature," the entire tournament fee, less a 15% administrative fee, will be refunded.