



# Concord FC Handbook

Northern Chautauqua Soccer Association (NCSA)

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the Concord Futbol Club (CFC). CFC was established with the purpose of providing competitive travel soccer experiences to the youth of Northern Chautauqua County and the surrounding communities. CFC is the travel branch of the Northern Chautauqua Soccer Association (NCSA). CFC provides an opportunity to teach, learn, develop, and display life skills. Individuals must give of themselves to make a team cohesive and successful. How a player reacts to positive and negative situations is the standard of measurement for both team and individual success. Players must realize that as a member of CFC they represent not only the soccer team, but also their parents, coaches, and community. Being a part of CFC is a demanding responsibility. It is the goal of CFC to provide a high-quality developmental experience in a fun and safe manner for all the players participating in the program. As a volunteer organization, we look forward to your participation enabling our community's success as we compete with clubs across Western New York.

This handbook has been established by the CFC Travel Committee to help CFC grow and maintain uniform procedures. In order to have a fair and efficiently run organization, it is necessary to document these policies and procedures so that there is no misunderstanding on issues that may arise. It is not possible to document all issues and their potential resolution; therefore the collective good judgment of the Travel Committee will prevail in issues as they may arise.

## **COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

Concord Futbol Club (CFC) committee administers the competitive (travel) spring and fall soccer programs of NCSA. It is managed by a seven-member CFC Travel Soccer Committee to be led by a Director of Travel. The Director of Travel shall be appointed by the NCSA President and approved by the Board. The Director of Travel shall be responsible for appointing other members of the Travel Soccer Committee, including but not limited to a Travel Soccer Committee Financial Coordinator, who shall have duties similar to those of the Association's Treasurer but related to the travel soccer program.. Travel Committee meetings shall be held monthly with additional scheduled meetings as needed. A committee member who misses three consecutive meetings may be subject to removal.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

NCSA, including CFC, is a not-for-profit organization. Volunteer opportunities are available year round to help support various activities and initiatives. All families are encouraged to volunteer in whatever capacity they are able. NYSWYSA requires all volunteers with direct contact with players to submit and complete a background check. This includes all coaches, team managers, and committee members.

## **REGISTRATION**

Registration will begin in November of each year for the following spring travel season and in July of each year for the following fall travel season. Registration shall be online only. All players must be registered and have a current balance. Registration fees are determined during the Travel Committee's annual budget review process and, in general, are set to cover the costs associated with playing competitive soccer (e.g., insurance and league fees). Registration fees do not cover the following: uniforms and tournaments.



## LATE REGISTRANTS

**Spring:** Late registrations will only be honored when roster space is available on a team in accordance with the number of players per team limits. Late registration decisions will be approved by the Director of Coaching and Coaching staff related to the age group and gender that the player(s) desire to play for and may be subject approval by a league's board. If, under the judgement of said leadership, adding player(s) to a roster will have a developmental negative effect based on where they are in the season, a late registration may be denied even if there is technically a roster space available. This is done to honor team cohesion and the commitment all the other players made to be part of the program from the beginning. If the incoming player has the immediate availability, appropriate ability, and necessary maturity as assessed by the DOC and team's coaching staff, they may be placed on the team with an open roster spot at that point. If the late registration occurs after the midpoint of the respective league, a player may pay a prorated fee as determined by the Travel Committee at the beginning of the season. **Fall:** Late registrations will only be honored if there is availability on a team.

## NUMBER OF PLAYERS PER TEAM

The number of players on any given team will be in accordance with BWNYSJSL, STTSL & Fall Travel League guidelines and the US Soccer Player Development Initiative. [See Late registrants also]

## TEAM CREATION AND PLAYER PLACEMENT

**Spring:** Travel team players are required to attend "try-outs" to be evaluated. "Try-outs" is a comprehensive evaluation system to assist coaches in placing the child on a team appropriately. Note, a child must attend the try-out period to be considered for a CFC Travel team. The only exception to this rule is if a coach deems it necessary to place additional players on a roster that could not attend a try-out. In those instances, the coach's decision will be based on their knowledge of the player through having seen them play prior, or through coaching contacts of their choice, that support these decisions. The Director of Coaching and the team coaches will review all data for each player. Players will be assigned to play in their age group according to US Soccer & CFC guidelines. In order to meet the minimum requirement for players on a team, age levels may need to be combined. No family will be required to register until their child is placed. An athlete's placement and/or playing time will be constantly evaluated and may change throughout the entire season. These decisions are made in the best interest of the athlete and their development as a person and player. The decision of the coach and club is final. **Fall:** Equal ability teams will be formed after players are evaluated by the Fall coaching staff in the practice sessions leading up to the season.

**Amended by resolution 1/9/19**

## TRYOUT GUIDELINES

The tryout process will be conducted by team coaches and may be with the assistance of the Technical Director and/or Director of Coaching, who will evaluate players based on several factors such as, but not limited to, ability, attendance, punctuality, attitude, effort, behavior, social skills, emotional control, physical maturity, and focus. The tryouts will be conducted during the first two weeks of Spring travel training to afford the greatest opportunity for as many players to attend as possible. All players must attend the tryout period. Provisions shall be made, when possible, to accommodate players who miss tryouts because of injury, illness, family emergencies, or other reasons acceptable to the CFC Travel Committee.

**Amended by resolution 1/9/19**



## **NOTIFICATION OF TEAM ASSIGNMENT**

All players trying out for a travel team will be notified of their team placement via email.

## **PLAYER MOVEMENT POLICY**

In all cases CFC “playing up” forms must be completed. In no instance may a player play “down,” that is, in a younger age group. For purposes of this policy, “playing up” refers to a player rostering on a CFC team other than his/her available age group. CFC will not guarantee that a player may play up on another CFC team. If it is in the best interest of the child, CFC and all teams affected, CFC staff may allow players to play up to another team. Any parent may apply to play their child up. If application is approved, a waiver will be completed. A one – year move up does not guarantee moving up in subsequent years. Forms may be downloaded from the NCSA website.

## **PLAYING TIME/PLAYER DEVELOPMENT**

Competitive soccer is geared toward players who are looking for a more challenging soccer environment. Players are selected and rostered based on several factors. Three key areas of focus for CFC will be the players availability (commitment to attend practices, games, and tournaments as scheduled), ability (players technical proficiency deemed at level in which participation is deemed an appropriate fit), and maturity (we insist on the highest standard of sportsmanship on and off the field by players and their immediate families). In the competitive level, scores are kept, results matter, and the need to outperform others increases. Players who play at the competitive/travel level usually have personal goals, such as playing for the high school varsity team, playing at the college level, becoming a professional player, or playing for the National Team. Hence, the main objective of the competitive program is to help each player reach his/her potential and achieve his/her goals. This should be done in a fulfilling and supportive way that continues to nurture their love of the game. As the player’s closest support network, both the coach and the parents bear a great responsibility in helping the player attain his/her goals. Whether playing club or high school, there is a lot riding on the decisions of the coaches during the selection process. Players have to understand that in a competitive level their development is important to make a team/ club successful. Players are evaluated on several other factors such as, but not limited to, ability, attendance, punctuality, attitude, effort, behavior, social skills, emotional control, physical maturity, and focus.

Coaches want well rounded soccer players as they formulate a team. Sometimes it is about selecting a group that plays well together, sometimes it is balancing players of particular positions, sometimes it requires looking at a large number of players for only a few spots. When a player is ready to seek feedback, we can encourage them to ask the coaches to give specific guidance for how the player can improve. Parents and coaches play a key role in helping a soccer player reflect on why they play the game. If the player who was cut wants to improve, then they need to make time to not only work on the suggested ideas from assessment/evaluation, but also constantly improve on the areas of opportunity to develop their skills. Parents and coaches can help players become students of the game by modeling such behavior as watching high-level soccer, or by asking questions that cause all of us to think and see the game differently such as on the Internet, on ESPN, at SUNY-Fredonia Blue Devil games, on other Soccer Channels, or in your community. Parents and players can study what the top players do — especially when they don’t have the ball.



There are major differences, but those differences aren't really about winning or losing... they are about commitment to soccer and the passion to learn soccer from, in most cases, professional coaches. Competitive soccer or "committed soccer" is successful for the growth of the players because of the following reasons:

1. Players get to really know his/her teammates, they become like family.
2. Players get to train a lot under the watchful eye of a person that is passionate about the sport and who has a wealth of knowledge and patience.
3. The passion is contagious. Who doesn't want their child to find and embrace something that can give them many life skills? The life skills that can be learned are:
  - Understanding teamwork – very important for careers when they get older
  - Passion – how to love something and want to do it as much as possible
  - Discipline – doing things that are tough to get better
  - Dedication – The will to work hard to get better at a desired activity
  - Physical fitness – you run constantly in soccer, you begin to understand your body and what fitness really is about
  - Friendships – built in almost every activity at practice, on the field, and off in the community
  - Responsibility – on the field, at practice, and in the community
  - Determination – how to impart your will in the game
  - CONFIDENCE – ability to take on difficult situations, interact with many different people, speak in groups

CFC teams play in a competitive soccer program. The goal is to enrich players' lives by increasing their soccer skills at both the individual and team levels.

## **COACHES**

Coaches are crucial to the success of the soccer club. Without the dedication, time commitment, and ongoing development of coaches we would not be able to develop our players. All coaches are required to obtain at least a the age appropriate USSF License before the first game of the current season and are encouraged to advance to a D license. The coaches are additionally required to attend any trainings presented by the Technical Director and/or Director of Coaching. The burden of proof to verify and establish valid coaching license credentials lies with each individual coach. Therefore, CFC will pay 100% of the fee for an F, any "grass roots" module, and/or D license. Failure to complete the training will require the coach to reimburse CFC for the total cost of training. The Director of Coaching must approve head coaches and assistant coaches. All coaches are required to complete a coaching application, coaching policy and a background check via NWYSWA Risk Management.

Coaches are expected to comply with and have read these CFC and League Policies and Procedures as well as the NCSA bylaws and coach application. Each coach will have a different coaching style, but the desire to improve player development by providing the best possible player-centered experience must be evident. Starting in our youngest age groups, a positive attitude is essential. Coaches are expected to communicate with players and parents at the beginning of the season. Communication throughout the season will be as needed and made with the assistance of the team manager. Teams should meet a minimum of twice per week once training begins. Coaches are expected to attend coaches training and meetings when scheduled by the club. Failure to attend these trainings could result in removal of coaching duties or could impact their future of coaching with CFC.

**Amended by resolution 3/6/19**



## **TEAM MANAGERS**

Coaches are encouraged to recruit a team manager (often a parent of a player). Each coach may have different expectations for this position but in general a team manager serves as the liaison between the parents and the coach. Managers will be primarily responsible for communicating with families but may be asked to help the coach out as needed. Team managers require a background check via NYSWYA.

## **TRAVEL TOURNAMENTS**

CFC teams will participate in tournaments as recommended through the US Soccer Player Developmental Initiative. Prior to the start of the season, the coach/manager will coordinate with CFC's Tournament Coordinator and shall inform the parents and players of tournament options for the season. Tournament registration is an additional cost to the team, which shall be divided equally by all players. Coaches and/or team managers will be responsible for entering the teams into tournaments and promptly providing the CFC financial coordinator with invoice for payment. The Director of Travel will also be notified of all tournaments intended to be attended. Once that is done, CFC will send online invites to selected players for the tournament for their parents to pay the player tournament fee. All registration fees must be paid prior to participation in the tournament. Failure to do so may result in a player being replaced on the roster with another player by the coaching staff with an alternate player of their choice. That player must also have their fee paid prior to participation if invited to play. Failure to do so may result in suspensions from subsequent tournaments. This will be decided on a case by case basis, with the head coach of the team making that decision based on their working knowledge of the situation. It is not our hope to keep kids out of tournament play, but simply to honor the financial structure all families have agreed to, so that no outstanding balances need to be collected at a later date. That is unfair to our volunteers, and part of maintaining an honor-based organization that values each and every person's time and talents they bring to CFC.

## **GAMES**

Game rules or the "Laws of the Game" are based on FIFA and respective league rules. These rules can be reviewed online. Buffalo & Western New York Junior Soccer League (B&WNYSL) will set the game schedules with regard to dates, locations, and game times. Until the schedules are generated, CFC does not know where or when games will be. Game dates are set by the respective leagues and can only be changed pursuant to league rules. Transportation to all games is the responsibility of the families.

**Amended by resolution 1/9/19**

## **UNIFORMS**

Families are responsible for the purchase of a CFC travel uniform kit and training jersey. A uniform kit consists of: a home jersey, an away jersey, a pair of shorts, and two pairs of socks. Socks matching the uniform kit are required to be worn during all games. All players must wear the current CFC uniform to all games and training jersey to all training sessions. Cleats and shin guards are required to be worn at every game and are the responsibility of the player. Mouth guards are optional and are the responsibility of the player. If necessary, an eye wear strap is acceptable. All players are expected to bring water to every training and game.

**Amended by resolution 3/6/19**



## FAMILY EXPECTATIONS

Families should be a source of support for the player and the CFC program. Families are role models for all the players and are representatives of CFC. As such, they are expected to exemplify good behavior by treating all players, coaches, fans, officials, and other families with respect and dignity. Families must insist that players abide by rules and guidelines established by CFC, its coaches, NCSA, BWNYJSL and NYSWSA. Families should be positive in support of their own team and recognize the achievements of the opposing team. Vulgar, racial, derogatory, or disparaging remarks are never acceptable. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in fines and potential suspensions of players, coaches, or spectators assessed by the Buffalo & Western New York Junior Soccer League. Any player, coach, or spectator shall be responsible for reimbursement of any fines levied against CFC. Failure to make payment to CFC for such fine(s), could result in a player(s) removal from CFC team(s).

Families should allow their athletes to enjoy the benefits of competition, remembering that not everyone can be the star, be on the starting line, or have equal playing time. Proper perspective should be given to both winning and losing. Athletic programs are primarily designed for students to learn and have fun. Players who do their best are to be commended even if their best may not be good enough to win.

Additional family expectations:

- Arrive to trainings and practice on time, preferably 10 minutes early.
- Be prepared to start training and matches by having all equipment and uniforms on prior to the notified start time of each activity
- Learn the skills, rules, and strategies of soccer.
- Ensure players uphold player conduct expectations.
- Let the players' play, the coaches' coach, and the referees' referee. Remember it is a *game* for the kids, not the parents.
- Encourage players to play alone or in small groups outside of trainings.
- Register players and pay fees in a timely manner.
- Ensure players attend all trainings and games and assist with travel as necessary. Remember that travel soccer requires a much higher level of commitment than summer recreation.

**Amended by resolution 3/6/19**

## PROBLEM/CONFLICT RESOLUTION

As part of the leadership team for Concord FC, the coaches, managers and committee members, all want to do what is best for each individual player whenever possible. We care a great deal about your son or daughter and want to contribute to his/her individual development in a positive way. When a problem or conflict arises, we cannot promise that all of your concerns can be resolved to your liking, but we promise that we will listen to your concerns and respond to the best of our ability. In order for our programs to be successful, we must all work together -parent, coach, participant, committee, and club. To allow for an appropriate exchange of opinions when the need arises, a procedure has been developed to create an open line of communication between the club, parent/guardian, player and coach. Most conflicts are better resolved with an appropriate cooling down period. No conflict between a parent/guardian, player, official, and/or coach should be addressed during or immediately after an event. The event site is not an appropriate place to handle conflict. If you have a concern you wish to raise with the coach, please wait at least 24 hours before requesting a meeting. The objective of this 24-hour cooling off period is to deter any person from acting in haste; it provides all parties the opportunity to rethink and review the circumstances and details of the incident. Your meeting can be



addressed in a non-public setting, by e-mail, or by telephone. The following procedure will allow for an exchange of opinion in a respectful manner.

Every organization has and needs an orderly process to use when problems/issues arise. The Escalation process for CFC is:

- Player (13U and older) contacts Coach
- Parents contact Coach
- Parents contact Director of Coaching
- Parents contact Travel Director

Parents/players are mandated to follow this chain of command whenever an issue arises concerning a coach. If a concern is not resolved to your satisfaction at one level, you are encouraged to go to the next level in the escalation process. It is likely that as you were to ascend to the next level of communication, someone will ask you to share how you weren't able to resolve the conflict at a previous level. If it is determined that you have skipped a level in this process, you will be referred back to the appropriate level to have that conversation first. All concerns should begin with the coach and then advance up the chain of command. Vulgarity, raised voices, and accusational-based approaches will result in that interaction being terminated, and reported to the next level in the chain of command immediately. In short, have a conversation not create a confrontation. And keep in mind that most every time there are a pair of eyes and ears of a young one much closer than you think. This is an opportunity for all of the adults in the process to model excellent problem-solving, decision-making, and critical thinking skills behavior for children.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT/MEDICAL RELEASE**

NYSWSA requires that every player submit a current picture and, when registering for the first time, a copy of the player's birth certificate. In addition, CFC requires a medical release to ensure immediate medical attention should your player require it if the family is absent from a training or game.

In order to provide for a positive youth soccer environment, CFC will take the following steps to minimize injuries and adverse experiences:

- Coaches will have first aid kits at all trainings and games.
- All players are required to wear shin guards.
- No jewelry or sharp hair accessories are allowed to be worn.
- Players must provide their own full water bottles for use at trainings and games.
- Whenever possible, player safety will be included in coach training, and may include discussion lead by qualified medical personnel to include such topic as player conditioning, stretching and stopping overly aggressive play.
- Travel teams with mixed age groups and/or genders that may have possible safety concerns will be carefully explained to the parents/guardians of the players involved and will proceed only with their full consent.
- Games and trainings will not be played in unsafe weather conditions such as thunder, lightning, or other extreme weather.
- All coaches and any volunteers working with the players must be approved through the NYSWYSA risk management process.
- Directors and Travel Committee members will actively monitor coach and other volunteer or parent behavior for any inappropriate or abusive behavior.
- Completion and submission of written medical information forms for all players are required. Coaches are required to keep these and use them in case of injury at trainings or games.



- Drugs, alcohol, or any illegal substance will be prohibited from being used at the fields.

## **RESTRICTIONS AND SAFETY ISSUES**

CFC follows all NYSWYSA policies and procedures regarding safety and conduct. These policies and procedures can be found at [www.nyswysa.org](http://www.nyswysa.org). Everyone who participates in CFC soccer, including players, coaches, administrators, and spectators, are expected to comply with these policies. NCSA is committed to promoting an environment that is free from harassment and violence in any form; verbal or physical intimidation; vandalism; drug, alcohol, or tobacco use; gambling; and inappropriate language. These NYSWYSA policies apply to all players, coaches, parents and extended family, spectators, club officials or administrators. These policies shall be enforced at all NYSWYSA, BWNYSJSL, STTSL, and US Youth Soccer sponsored or sanctioned activities, including, but not limited to, league games, State Cup games, invitational tournaments, district and state tournaments, and SS/ODP competition.

## **DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE/PLAYER BEHAVIOR**

Players are expected to come to all trainings and games with a positive attitude. Players that are disruptive to the team can be removed from a team upon the request of the coach. The Travel Committee will review all such requests. The player will be given one verbal warning by the coach that their position on the team is in jeopardy. A second warning will be a letter to the family of the player from the Travel Committee, at which time a Travel Committee member reserves the right to attend trainings and games to witness the player conduct. If the player does not improve his/her behavior, the result will be a second letter from the Travel Committee indicating the player has been removed from the team. No refunds will be issued as a result of this removal and a player release will not be granted for the current season.

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY**

**Alcohol.** A player shall not use, possess, or obtain a beverage containing alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. In addition, a player shall not use, possess, buy, sell, or give away drug paraphernalia. Medications such as Tylenol or Advil (or their generic equivalents) are allowed with parental consent. Players who violate this rule shall be suspended from participation in all team/club sponsored activities for the time specified below.

### **Penalties**

- First violation: After confirmation of the first violation, the player shall lose eligibility for the next two (2) consecutive events or two (2) weeks of a season in which the student is a participant, whichever is greater.
- Second violation: After confirmation of the second violation, the player will be suspended for the remainder of the season or opt to take 3 drug and alcohol educational sessions before the player can resume playing on the team during the season. If they are dismissed from the team, a refund will not be provided.
- Third violation: After confirmation of the third and any subsequent violations, the player will be suspended for a minimum of one calendar year. After that time, the student may petition the club for reinstatement of his/her eligibility. No refunds will be provided.



## CFC CONTACTS

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