



## PARENT EXPECTATIONS and CODE OF CONDUCT

Thank you for joining the Fighting Irish Soccer Club! We look forward to partnering with you in the support and development of your child's soccer skills.

While what follows may be chalked up to general "common sense", we appreciate your understanding that with so many players and parents we need to keep everyone on the same page regarding expectations. If you have any questions or concerns about the following provisions, please do not hesitate to ask. Our goals are to ensure your child has fun, develops their soccer skills and that players and parents alike have an overall positive experience. You play a very important part in making sure these goals are met.

### EXPECTATIONS of PARENTS

- **Ensure players are on time and attend practice, training sessions and games.** In the event a player cannot attend a scheduled event they must notify the coach in advance AND provide the reason. Consistent unexcused absences will most likely result in the player's position with the club being in jeopardy.
- We recognize players, and families, have many priorities. We also understand soccer is simply a game and sometimes missing a soccer event cannot be avoided for legitimate reasons. Your team's Head Coach and the Club will decide what reasons are legitimate. Obvious reasons include but are not limited to illness, death in the family, academic reasons, accidents, injury that prevents athletic participation, etc. We understand there are numerous other life events far more important than youth sports.
- Reasons that are not legitimate include, but are not limited to, having another game for a different team at the same time, working the annual family garage sale, had tickets to the a Cardinals game, did not have a ride, player's sibling had a birthday party, etc. Someone will always help share rides, just reach out to the

other parents or coach. We will always work with parents who communicate with us regarding legitimate reasons for a player to be absent.

- Assume another player already has a legitimate reason for missing a game. The coaches must be concerned with not only making sure they have the minimum number of players but also that they have the combination of players that gives them the best chance for competing. Not all players can play all positions. Just because there are “enough” players does not mean that the correct combination of players is available. One person missing causes a domino effect.
- **Conduct themselves with class and maturity at all events.** Supportive parents are the backbone of successful youth sports. Alton Irish parents agree to the following:
  - **At games, practices and training sessions parents should be seen, not heard.** Parents will not coach from the sidelines. Parents who are vocal to the point of being disruptive and/or disrespectful will cause their son or daughter to suffer. As a parent becomes more vocal their son or daughter’s playing time may be reduced.
  - Occasional supportive statements such as “good job”, “way to go”, etc. are always encouraged. We say “**occasional**” because it is not necessary, counter-productive to a child’s development and often embarrassing for a child to be cheered publicly for performing the simplest of tasks.
  - Negative statements toward their own child, another child on your team, another child on another team, the parent of team member, the parent of a player on an opposing team, coaches or referees are never permitted and will reflect negatively upon the adult, the player and the Club.
  - Absolutely no directional statements are permitted, such as “pass”, “dribble”, “shoot”, “run” “go left”, etc. We realize many parents have competitive soccer experience, however, using that experience during your child’s game is not helpful. Please keep in mind your players are receiving very specific training and instruction. They are learning when and how to utilize that experience in a competitive environment. In doing so, they will make many mistakes. They will develop faster by learning to make mistakes on their own. A parent encouraging a player to dribble when they have been taught to pass is particularly unhelpful to a player’s development and will most likely negatively impact your child’s team.

- Negatively vocal parents are embarrassing to their children and cause them anxiety and stress. Negatively vocal parents are also embarrassing to the team, parents, coaches and club. Even positive vocal support which is so loud as to be heard above other activity on the field causes children embarrassment, anxiety and stress. Youth sports are stressful enough, parents should be the last people contributing additional stress.
- Parents are not allowed, per league rules, on the bench side of the field or behind the goal and must keep a distance from the sideline.
- Parents are encouraged to not pace back and forth on the sidelines. Please find a seat and stay there.
- If a parent has an issue with playing time, positions, etc. they will schedule a time to speak with their coach away from the game or practice and will follow the 24 hour rule – not confronting a coach until 24 hours has passed from the end of practice/game with which the parent has an issue.
- If a vocal parent is causing problems for the first time, that player's playing time may be reduced immediately and without warning or notice until the parent stops. However, the Alton Fighting Irish Soccer Club does not want to punish a player for the actions of their parents. If this problem continues and in the rare event that a parent is not able to follow the expectations above, parents will be asked to watch from their vehicle and/or not be present during their child's game.
- In the event a parent has violated any of these guidelines they may be sanctioned by being asked to not attend the following game(s). Such discipline will be determined by the Discipline Committee and/or Club President. The Discipline Committee will be made up of an odd number of members who will make a recommendation to the Club which may be accepted, in whole or in part, or rejected by the Club.
- Avoid, discourage and not participate in "drama" or the rumor of the day. If you have a concern, please address it with the head coach or Club at the appropriate time.
- In the event a player and/or parent has a problem develop with another player and/or parent please first discuss this issue with your coach and/or the Club President. We do not encourage parents to confront each other unless and until advised to do so by the club.

- **Understand that by accepting a position with this club, your son or daughter has joined a TEAM.** In doing so they have made a commitment that impacts many other people including coaches, trainers, the other players on the team and their parents. When someone misses a game, especially for an unacceptable reason, the team is negatively impacted. The team depends on each player to attend events and be prepared to contribute to the success of the team. **The SLYSA league will assess your team a forfeit fee of \$170** if a game is forfeited. Additional forfeits will cause the team to be removed from the league by SLYSA.
- Support their players by making sure players arrive at events *on time and ready to play*.
- Support their sons and daughters by attending games and being supportive.
- Understand their sons and daughters are playing in one of the premier soccer leagues in the country. Games are designed to be competitive. Even lower division games will be more competitive than a “rec” game. Many factors contribute to success. To have a chance of getting something positive out of each practice, training or game, players should arrive prepared, which US Soccer defines as well rested, well hydrated and well fed.
  - **Well rested.** Hosting or attending a team sleep over the night before a game is generally not a good idea. Coaches can spot a player who is not well rested within the first couple minutes of pre-game warmups. Fatigued players will simply not be able to compete physically in this league.
  - **Well hydrated.** “Players who drink soda and other sugary drinks up to and including several hours before a game will not be well hydrated. Sports drinks are best for after the game, **not before or during**”.
  - **Well fed.** The club does not expect players to eat like a professional athlete. However, US Soccer advises to “avoid sugary, greasy, fatty, fried foods and milk 3 hours before an event”. For example, players who arrive at a game having not eaten at all or who had a Slurpy and a glazed donut before the game will most likely not be able to compete and will harm their team.
- Playing a game for a rec team *before* a Club game is not allowed.
- Players at the U10 (2008) level and above are not allowed to play for a rec team.

- Participating in a practice, game or similar activity for a rec team that conflicts with a Club event - without permission from the Coach and Club - does not demonstrate commitment to the team concept and may result in being removed from the team. Speak with your coach about conflicts.
- Club players are not permitted to play for any other club.
- Club families will not schedule an event that conflicts with a Club event. For example, scheduling a birthday sleepover the night before a game, the day of the game, or similar event that causes the Club or players to have a conflict.
- Equal playing time is not guaranteed or promised. Our Club goal is to make sure all players play a minimum of 30% of the game. However, this guideline will be at the discretion of the coach and will be dictated by skill, effort, attitude, game situations, strategy and academic performance - among other factors.
- Parents will work with coaches to ensure that a player is never left alone, or alone with an adult who is not their parent. An example of this is at the end of practice or training, a parent will wait until the last parent has arrived before leaving.

By signing my name I attest that I am the legal guardian of the player and Club participant who is listed below and I agree to all of the provisions herein. I agree and understand that soccer is a physical sport, the playing of which may causes injuries. I agree to be responsible for allowing my child to participate in the sport, indemnify and hold harmless the Alton Fighting Irish Soccer Club for any injuries that may arise.

I further understand and agree that by accepting the position offered to me after tryouts I am obligated to pay all fees due in full by the due date, that there are no refunds should I decide to leave the Club, and that I understand club fees do not cover the cost of indoor soccer, tournaments or uniforms.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent name, print \_\_\_\_\_

Player name, print \_\_\_\_\_

