



SUFFIELD SOCCER CLUB

Travel Team & Tryouts Policies

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to provide basic information about our travel team program and tryout procedures. Please feel free to contact the Suffield Soccer Club President or any Board Member if you have additional questions.

Suffield Soccer Club (SSC) is a member of the Connecticut Junior Soccer Association (CJSA) and the United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA). As such, we operate under the rules of those organizations. For CJSA inter-club competition in leagues and tournaments (i.e., travel teams), players are divided into age groups according to their birth year at the beginning of each Seasonal Year, August 1st.

The age brackets for the current seasonal year can be found on the SSC website at www.suffieldsoccer.com.

CJSA groups all their member clubs into districts based on geographical proximity. The CJSA districts administer independent travel team leagues. SSC is a member of the North Central District.

SSC strives to field at least one team for each gender, at each age level, from U-9 through U-14. Should not enough players be available to form a team, age groups may be combined for that seasonal year. SSC may also offer U-16 through U-19 teams for high school players each spring. (CICA rules make fall teams impractical for high school players.) Age groups could be combined depending upon the number and ages of players that register each season.

Unlike bylaws, these policies may be amended by a simple vote of the Suffield Soccer Club Board of Directors.

II. TRAVEL TEAMS

Travel teams are divided into brackets, an A bracket (designated as the Blue team), and a B bracket (designated as the White team). A C bracket (designated as the red team) will be made if there is enough player interest. All travel teams will have similar schedules of activity.

As of the Fall 2016 season, SSC does allow Premier Players to be rostered on SSC Travel Teams for North Central District League play and for tournaments, including the CT Cup, ***as long as the Commitment Requirements in section A.4 (below) are followed.*** Development (Pre-Premier) players are also allowed to be rostered to, and participate on, SSC Travel Teams. For clarification on what SSC considers Premier and Pre-Premier please read the Premier Policy document (available at www.suffieldsoccer.com on the



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Policies page). Prior to U-12, Premier games and practices should not take precedence over SSC games and practices. At U-12 and above, it is expected that Premier does take precedence, however it does not need to replace SSC opportunities. Communication between coaches and parents is the key aspect to minimizing conflicts.

Preference will be given to the establishment of single age group teams of the same gender. If there are an insufficient number of players to form single age group teams, a decision as to how to align teams by possibly combining age groups and/or genders will be made by the Board of Directors.

A. Teams

Teams shall be assembled each seasonal year (fall and following spring) as the result of competitive tryouts.

1. Teams Offered (subject to player and district league availability):

- Boys: U-9 through U-14/15 (Spring and Fall), U-16,U17,U18 or U19 (Spring Only)
- Girls: U-9 through U-14/15 (Spring and Fall), U-16,U17,U18 or U19 (Spring Only)

2. Staff:

- Coach: Parent volunteer selected by the SSC Board each June for a one year term, or a paid approved coach- as long as there is 70% approval by parents of the team and a paid coach is available.
- Assistant Coaches: Parent volunteers chosen by the coach and approved by the Board.
- Manager: Parent volunteer chosen by coach and approved by the Board.

3. Player Selection (more detail in Section III.6):

- Tryouts (Once per seasonal year, held in June)
- Players that register after the June tryouts may be eligible for any open spots on the team if available, per the procedure described in the Tryouts section below.
- Players that move into Town after tryouts are eligible for selection onto either team after a special tryout is conducted by the Director of Coaches or another Board member.



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4. Commitment Requirements:

- Participation in Suffield Soccer requires a significant commitment on the part of each player and their parents. Each player is expected to make soccer his or her primary sport during the fall playing season. All players are therefore expected to attend all practices and games during the fall season.
- A player may be disciplined or removed from an A team if they miss a significant amount of games and/or practices without cause, or show disrespect for coaches, referees or fellow players. Discipline includes, but is not limited to, reduced game playing time or removal from a team. Removal from a team is done through the SSC Disciplinary Committee.
- Good sporting behavior at practices and games is important. Failure to maintain positive behavior at these events can result in discipline up to and including banning a parent from practices and game.
- Parental support is also expected. Parents are expected to volunteer 4 hours of their time at SSC events where help is needed/requested.

5. Fees:

- \$225 registration fee for the year. A player joining after the Fall season for an open spot in the Spring season will be charged \$75. These fees are subject to change.
- Registration fees include one outside tournament. All other tournament fees are not included.
- Uniforms (2 jerseys, shorts, and socks) are an additional cost.

6. Practice & Training:

- 2 practice sessions per week in the Fall, 1 or 2 practice session per week in the Spring (dates determined by coach each season).
- SSC may offer optional training sessions with professional trainer.

7. League Games:

- Games are Sundays (normally between 9 am and 5pm).
- Games involve travel to towns within the North Central and Central District.

8. Tournaments:

a) CJSA CT Cup (U-11 and up)

- Single elimination tournament that each U-11 and up team decides to enter for the Fall and Spring Season.
- Cup games are played on Saturdays.



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b) Regular Tournaments

- One tournament per seasonal year paid by SSC. All additional tournaments are the team's responsibility.
- Dates: Columbus Day Weekend, Memorial Day Weekend, Labor Day weekend, and other weekends.
- Locations: CT most often; NY, MA, NJ and VA possible.

9. Playing Time:

- SSC allows coaches discretion on playing time.
- The head coach should have a meeting at the beginning of the season to cover their philosophy & approach for working with players among other things.
- Coaches, when deciding playing time, may consider among other things, a player's individual effort in practice and games, the ability to perform skills and strategies taught during practice, sportsmanship, injuries, attendance at games/practices, quality of the opposing team and any disciplinary issues that may arise.
- Playing time may also be adjusted during Cup games and tournament matches. This possibility should be communicated to all the players and parents prior to the season.

III. TRYOUTS

A. Open tryouts are conducted for all teams.

1. When Are Tryouts:

- Once per seasonal year, in June, prior to the start of the seasonal year.
- SSC announces tryout dates in May.
- With a few exceptions, there will be two sessions per team.
 - Players are strongly encouraged, but not required, to attend both sessions.
 - The second tryout session may be canceled if determined it is not required based on turnout at the first session, or due to inclement weather.
- Supplemental tryouts may be required for the spring season to fill open spots on teams. In the event this occurs, all age appropriate players registered at the time a tryout is deemed necessary will be notified and given the option to attend.
- Under no circumstances may a player participating in the tryouts wear a Suffield Soccer Club team jersey.



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2. Conditions To Attend Tryouts:

- Players must be fully registered prior to tryouts by the SSC published deadline.
- All registration fees must be paid in full prior to the player attending tryouts.
- Players and Parents must understand and accept Team Commitment Requirements. (see Section II.A.4)

3. Who Can Attend Tryouts:

- Age appropriate players.
 - Players may only tryout for a team that is at their birth year.
 - Children who are not age eligible to tryout out for the U9 team in the fall may be eligible to participate in Suffield Soccer for the purpose of completing a team formation at the U9 age level. If additional players are needed, SSC will send out a request to parents of children entering second grade inquiring about interest.
 - Since the child as referenced above would be playing in an age above his/her level, SSC will consider which players to place on the team.
- Players from out of Town may try out and be placed on a team that is at their appropriate age level only under the following conditions:
 - There is no cut of a Suffield resident, AND
 - Additional players are needed or there is no team for that child to play on in their home town
 - Players from out of Town can be placed on either an A or a B team.
 - Once an out of Town player plays for a Suffield team, that player will no longer be considered an out of town player for future tryouts.
- Players that also tryout for Premier Teams, but want to assure they have a place to play in case they are not selected to be on a Premier Team.
 - Players accepted on a Premier Team will receive a full refund of their SSC registration fees as long as SSC is notified in writing by an established floating date that will be set when tryouts are announced. SSC must be notified via e-mail to the Secretary and Registrar for Suffield Soccer Club. Afterwards, the standard SSC refund policy for Travel Team Players applies.
- If a player is unable to attend tryouts due to injury or a family emergency, and they inform the Club President in writing via e-mail prior to tryouts, they may be considered for selection on an age appropriate team pending a special tryout.



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4. Coach Selection:

- Adults interested in coaching must complete and submit the following forms:
 - A Coaches Code of Conduct (available at www.suffieldsoccer.com on the Documents page)
 - A 1x1 Photo
 - A Coaching Application (available at www.suffieldsoccer.com on Documents page) *New Coaches Only*
- Coaches are selected by the Board based on:
 - Previous coaching/playing experience;
 - Level of coaching certification;
 - Coach Evaluation feedback from parents;
 - Previous disciplinary action;
 - Service to the Suffield Soccer Club
 - Good role model and the ability to demonstrate good sporting behavior and fair play;
 - A coach's win-loss record will not be a significant criterion by the Board when deciding to reappoint a coach or assistant coach.
- Preference is given to returning coaches for purposes of team continuity. Current coaches should notify SSC of their desire to continue with the team by June 1st of the seasonal year.
- Any incumbent coach is subject to removal for:
 - Code of Conduct/CJSA Rules Violation
 - Foul or abusive language and/or behavior
 - Ineffectiveness
- A paid coach/trainer may be hired as a coach if 70% of the parents approve and a paid trainer is available. The coach/trainer must be approved by the Director of Coaches. The cost of the paid coach/trainer will be reimbursed to SSC by the team utilizing the paid coach/trainer.
- A parent coaching his/her own child is a voluntary position and will not be considered a paid coach. A qualified parent wishing to be a paid coach for any team that his/her child is not on may contact the Director of Coaches for consideration.
- Head coaching candidates new to the SSC as of September 2016 are encouraged to have their CJSA E License within 2 years.
- Each coach is expected to make him or herself available at the time of tryouts to be called upon to act as an independent assessor. A coach is NOT considered an independent assessor of his or her own team.

5. Tryout Format:

- Tryouts consist of several drills that focus on different aspects of player performance.



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- The drills often include, but are not limited to:
 - Skill Drills
 - Small Sided Games

- Evaluation Criteria
 - Technical: Dribbling, first touch, ball control, passing and shooting.
 - Tactical: field sense, positioning, anticipation, communication
 - Assertiveness: aggressive instinct for the ball, passing under pressure, finishing (attack), pressuring, delaying, opportunistic tackling (defense)
 - Speed: quickness, ability to break away (attack) or ability to quickly close down opponents (defense)
 - Agility: the ability to accomplish techniques quickly with efficient and fast movements.

6. **Player Selection:**

- At least two Board appointed independent assessors evaluate the players and provide assessment scores and rankings for each player to the SSC Board of Directors.
- The Director of Coaching or designated Board member will compile the assessments as well as utilize input from the coaches, as appropriate, and produce a single rank listing for each age group.
- From that listing, the top candidates are selected for each team.
 - If a coach desires not to have a player from the assessor's list of candidates on the team, the coach must provide written justification for Board approval.
 - The coach must have valid justification to support his/her request which can include, but not be limited to attitude, teamwork, commitment, desire, maturity, team needs, coach-ability.
- All proposed rosters must be reviewed and approved by the SSC Board before any player is notified of their selection status.
- All tryout candidates will be notified of their selection status in a timely manner, following roster approval by the SSC Board. Normally, this will be around July 1st.
- It is possible that positions may become available on teams in the spring season due to injuries, a Board approved roster size increase, player transfers, etc. In this event, the Club will attempt to fill the positions:
 - First, registered age appropriate players will be contacted by the Club to determine if they are interested in the open positions.
 - If necessary, a small tryout will be held prior to



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the Spring season to select the players needed to fill open positions. The Director of Coaching and at least one independent assessor will evaluate the players.

- Next, with age appropriate players that tried out for the team but were not selected. Selection will be based on their previous tryout ranking.
 - If there are not enough age appropriate registered players interested, the Club may advertise the open positions in an attempt to fill them.
- Players not selected for an A team will be placed on a B team if numbers allow for a full roster.

IV. GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The Suffield Soccer Club (SSC) includes children, parents, coaches and other individuals who serve the club and/or participate on intramural or travel soccer teams. The SSC community has historically achieved success in the resolution of disputes by the parents, players and coaches without the intervention of the SSC board members. **The SSC Board encourages the resolution of issues (conflicts, grievances and discipline) to occur within each team.** It is important to remember that the SSC is an organization generally staffed with volunteers from the community who have made an extraordinary commitment for the benefit of the children in our community. Without these volunteers the SSC would not be possible. The following outlines SSC's policies and procedures relating to the reporting and handling of grievances:

A. DESCRIPTION OF GRIEVANCE

Grievances most often concern an incident that occurs during a game or practice. A grievance may include inappropriate behavior by a coach, player, parent or other individual affiliated with or attending a SSC event. Concerns relating to coaching style are often answered by speaking directly with the coach in a non-judgmental and respectful manner.

B. GRIEVANCE PROTOCOL

SSC encourages parents not to approach coaches immediately after a game. It is well recognized in youth sports that a "cooling off" period is in everyone's best interest after a game has ended. These types of grievances may be presented only after a 24 hour cooling off period. The objective of this cooling off period is to



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deter any person from acting in haste and enables the person or persons filing the grievance the opportunity to rethink and review the circumstances and details of the grievance before final submission to the SSC. Patience, understanding and respect go a long way in cultivating a productive and positive relationship between players, coaches and parents.

C. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

- **Step 1:**
 - Report the grievance directly to the head coach or team manager after the appropriate 24 hour cooling off period. Remember that most coaches are volunteers with busy lives. The vast majority of complaints can be resolved by simply expressing them. This can be done, in person, via phone, or email. If this fails to resolve the issue then proceed to Step 2.
- **Step 2:**
 - Report the grievance to the SSC Director of Coaches. This can be accomplished in person, via phone, or email. If this fails to resolve the issue, or is not feasible, then proceed to Step 3.
- **Step 3:**
 - Report the grievance by completing and submitting the Grievance form on the website. This form will then be distributed to all the SSC board members. The VP of the SSC will convene the Disciplinary Committee per the SSC bylaws to address the issue. This grievance form may also be shared with all the parties involved, including the head coach. The coach or coaches involved may be asked to respond to the issues. The Disciplinary Committee will pass final judgment on the case and determine what action will be taken. All decisions made by the Disciplinary Committee are final.

D. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

In order to resolve disputes, the SSC Disciplinary Committee may conduct investigations as deemed appropriate to resolve the issue(s) involving its players, coaches, parents and officials. Investigations may include and without limitation, convening meetings involving the parties indicated by the grievance and any other interested parties. The Disciplinary Committee may interview other players, parents or SSC members that may have witnessed the grievance. The SSC Board



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of Directors reserves the right to take any action it may deem appropriate in response to the grievance including and without limitation, suspending or expelling players, coaches, parents or others from future SSC events.

E. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

In cases where there may be a conflict of interest for a SSC board member, said board member will recuse himself/herself from the grievance procedures. Board members, however, may be interviewed as part of the investigation.

F. CONFIDENTIALITY

The SSC recognizes the sensitive nature of certain grievances and will take all reasonable steps to insure that the information reported and gathered through the investigation be kept confidential and only shared with those individuals necessary to resolve the grievance.

V. OTHER TRAVEL TEAM POLICIES:

A. PLAYING UP:

- SSC does not usually allow for a player to try out for an age level up prior to entering High School. U15 and older age groups will play according to their ability and based on tryouts. There may be Board exceptions to this rule and the circumstances will be examined on a case by case basis.
- On occasion, the Board may require players to play up one or two age levels in order to play at all. In this event, player/parents will be notified and given the choice to play up or withdraw their registration and receive a full refund (less applicable fees)

B. DOUBLE ROSTERING:

- Players may not double roster on two SSC teams.
- Exceptions may be made at the Club's discretion in order to place all registered players.

C. GIRLS PLAYING ON BOYS TEAMS:

- Girls may play on age appropriate boys teams with special Board approval. Reasons for Board approval include, but are not limited to:



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- There is an open position that no other age appropriate male player is interested in filling;
- There are no girls' teams to play on.
- Girls wishing to play on a boys' team must submit a written request for Board approval via e-mail to the SSC Registrar.
- Boys are not allowed to play on girls' teams.

D. DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS:

● YELLOW CARDS

- In the event a yellow card is issued to a SSC player, the coach for that team must notify the Vice President within 24 hours.
- The Vice President will track all yellow cards given during each season.
- Players accumulating four (4) yellow cards during a season will be subject to review by the Disciplinary committee for possible suspension.

● RED CARDS

- In the event a Red Card is issued to a SSC player, the Coach for that team must notify the Vice President within 24 hours after the end of the game.
- CJSA policy mandates a 1 or 2 game suspension of the same competition depending on the reason for the issuance of a red card.
- SSC Players receiving a red card will be subject to review by the Disciplinary Committee for further suspension.

● EJECTION OF A COACH

- In the event a SSC Coach is ejected from a game, he/she must notify the Vice President **immediately** after the game.
- In the event a coach is sent off (ejected) by the Referee, CJSA mandates a minimum 2 additional game suspension.
- SSC Coaches ejected from a game will be subject to review by the Disciplinary Committee for further suspension and/or removal from the team.



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- **REMOVAL OF A PARENT/RELATIVE**
 - In the event a parent or relative of a SSC player is asked to leave the field during a game or practice, the Coach must notify the Vice President within 24 hours.
 - The SSC Disciplinary Committee will review the incident to determine actions for future games and practices up to and including banning a parent/relative from attending SSC related activities.

E. FIELD CANCELLATION POLICY:

- Scheduled games will be played in inclement weather unless the fields are closed by SSC.
- The team coach or manager must contact the Referee Assignor at least 3 days before a scheduled game to cancel the game. If the deadline is not met, SSC is responsible for paying the referee's for that match. SSC may look to a team to recover referee fees if an ongoing problem is identified.
- If a game is cancelled with less than 3 days' notice and the reason for the cancellation is based with the Suffield team, this game will count towards the allotted friendly games for that season.
- If both teams are present, the referee has the final say on whether the game is cancelled due to poor field conditions.

F. UNIFORMS (Available through the SSC Online Store):

- Standard Uniform
 - Consists of two jerseys (white jersey is primary), one pair of shorts and one pair of socks.
 - The second jersey (blue jersey is the alternate) is used when there is a color conflict with another team.
 - Used by all SSC travel teams for U9-U14.
 - High School teams may have optional uniform choice each Spring.
 - Cleats and shin guards are required in all games and practices.
- Additional items may be available through the SSC online store.
 - Warm-ups, back packs, sweatshirts and other items are typically available during all seasons.



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- Specialty items such as league championship and Cup championship shirts may be available with Board approval.

G. Financial Aid Policy:

- It is the desire that every Suffield child, regardless of financial status, be afforded the opportunity to play soccer in our program.
- Financial assistance can be requested and written documentation supporting the necessity of the request will be required. All paperwork should be submitted to the President of SSC.
- The request should be submitted with all paper work during registration for tryouts.
- Factors in determining financial assistance will include, but not be limited to, participation in the Town Free and Reduced Lunch program, the State Husky Insurance program or Food Stamps offered by the State.
- All information will be kept strictly confidential. Final determination for financial aid will be determined by a majority vote of the Board.
- Financial Aid awards are only intended to cover SSC fees.

H. Concussions:

- It is the requirement of the SSC Board that all SSC coaches participate in a concussion education program. Online educational materials can be found [here](#) or through the CJSA website.
- SSC has adopted the US Soccer and US Youth Soccer protocol for suspected concussions. Compliance is mandatory for all SSC and/or CJSA related activities effective April 1, 2016.
- The following is the SSC adopted concussion protocol when a **Health Care Professional (HCP)** is **present** at a game or practice:
 - Any player who sustains a significant blow to the head or body, who complains about or is exhibiting symptoms consistent with having suffered a concussion or is otherwise suspected of having sustained a concussion, must be evaluated on the sideline by an on-site HCP engaged in this capacity for the competition who will perform applicable testing
 - Any player suspected of suffering a concussion will not be allowed to return to play until he or she is cleared by the



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- HCP. Coaches, parents/guardians or players may not overrule the HCP.
- If a coach seeks to allow a player to re-enter a game who has been removed from a game for a concussion assessment and who has not been cleared to return to play by the on-site HCP, the referee shall issue a warning to the coach. If a coach persists in seeking to allow such player to re-enter the game after having been issued a warning, the referee may take other disciplinary measures against the coach as are permitted under the rules applicable to the competition.
 - Unless an HCP determined that the player has not suffered a concussion and clears the player to return to play, the player will not be permitted to return to practice or play until the player has successfully completed the return to play protocol and has been cleared to return to play by a Physician.
- The following is the SSC concussion protocol when a **Health Care Professional** is **not present** at a game or practice:
 - Where a HCP is not present at a game or practice, any player who sustains a significant blow to the head or body, who complains about or is exhibiting symptoms consistent with having suffered a concussion or is otherwise suspected of having sustained a concussion, must be removed from play and evaluated by an HCP before the player will be allowed to return to practice or play.
 - No coach shall permit a player who has been removed from a game for a concussion assessment to return to play until cleared to do so by an HCP.
 - If a coach seeks to allow a player to re-enter a game who has been removed from a game for a concussion assessment and who has not been cleared to return to play by the on-site HCP, the referee shall issue a warning to the coach. If a coach persists in seeking to allow such player to re-enter the game after having been issued a warning, the referee may take other disciplinary measures against the coach as are permitted under the rules applicable to the competition.
 - Unless an HCP determined that the player has not suffered a concussion and clears the player to return to play, the player will not be permitted to return to practice or play until the player has successfully completed the return to play protocol



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- and has been cleared to return to play by a Physician.
- Documentation of the clearance must be provided to the coach prior to playing.
- Definition of Health Care Professional
 - Health Care Professional (HCP) are licensed professionals such as an Athletic Trainer Certified (ATC) or Physician (MD/DO), with skills in emergency care, sports medicine injuries and experience related to concussion evaluation and management.