

Boys Soccer Manual



SY26



Introduction

Please review the included Boys Soccer Manual document for key program information, requirements, and rules and regulations as it relates to the season, to the Chicago Public League (CPL), and to the Illinois High School Association. ([IHSA Boys Soccer](#))

Non-compliance with any of the following information may result in the forfeiture of coaches' season stipend.

Any and all questions can be directed to the Athletic Program Administrator (APA) listed below.

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OSA Mission Statement

The Office of Sports Administration (OSA) oversees the equitable implementation of sports programs across all elementary schools and high schools within the Chicago Public School District (CPS) and Chicago Public League (CPL). Through effective sports policy creation and program management, OSA helps create an environment for schools to provide essential athletic and academic development for each student-athlete. It is the goal of OSA to promote sportsmanship, teamwork, integrity and a sense of community as we prepare students for the next level in athletics and in life. Our students will be able to learn the importance of **Academic, Athletic, and Social Awareness** as they advance through our program and become leaders in their communities.



League Governance & Key Links

The official rules of the National Federation of High Schools Association shall govern all Public League competitions. Any exceptions to these rules are listed in these Terms and Conditions.

The Chicago Public League is governed by the [Chicago Public Schools Athletics Constitution and By-laws](#). All coaches must read this document in order to be informed about CPL policies, procedures and expectations.

Whereas the specific Terms and Conditions are listed in this document, the following links that make up the [General Chicago Public League Rules](#) are an appendix to this document, which lists issues of general governance, coach expectations, roster management/vertical movement/eligibility and eligibility certificates, and other issues of league contest management.

The [2025 Boys Soccer Resource Sheet](#) contains other logistical information regarding the season for coaches and athletic directors, including the coaches directory.

Calendar

CPS Regular Season Information

Season Starts—1 st Practice	August 11, 2025
Team Roster Loaded to ASPEN Deadline	August 22 2025
First Contest Allowed	August 25, 2025
Hard Copy Central Office Record Sheets (CORS) Due	Sept 26, 2025 (Fall)
CPS Regular Season Competition Starts	August 25, 2025
CPS Regular Season Competition Ends	September 24, 2024
Mandatory Make-up Day for competition	N/A

CPS Calendar—Post Season & Championship Information

Team/Individual Rosters for Qualifier Rounds Due	September 26th, 2025
CPL Playoffs Start	September 29th, 2025
Championship Seed Meeting	N/A
Playoff Dates	
(Different rows for secondary tournaments as needed)	
Phase Matches (Mini-Tournaments)	08/27 to 09/23
CPL	09/29 to 10/15
Windy City	10/06 to 10/14
Midway Cup	09/30 to 10/14
CPL Championships	10/15

IHSA Series Calendar

On-Line Season Summary Form Deadline (Wed. 10:00 a.m. Week 13)	Oct. 1
Regionals (Wed. Week 16)	Oct. 20 - Oct 22
Sectionals (Mon. Week 17)	Oct. 27 - Oct. 29
State Final (Fri.-Sat. Week 18)	Nov. 7 - Nov. 8



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Season Ends (Sat. Week 18)	Nov. 8

Team Approval (Protocol and Expectations)

Team Approvals consist in a series of tasks that must be completed by the Athletic Director and Head Coach from each

team. Failure to complete the following tasks will result in the resignation of coaching stipends or delayed payments.

Anticipated team approval will be reflected in the [Inventory](#). It is the responsibility of the school Athletic Director (assisted

by the head coach) to communicate with the appropriate Athletic Program Coordinator regarding the confirmation of team

Approval.

- A. Teams must have at least 15 student-athletes listed as “Eligible” in the ASPEN program and submit a hard copy [Central Office Record Sheet](#) to the Office of Sports Administration by the specified deadline.
- B. Teams must compete in all CPL-regulated matches, including conference games, phase matches and CPL playoffs (*2 forfeits in a season result in loss of team approval*).
- C. Teams are expected to compete in the IHSA Series, if signed up. For teams who sign up and do not show up to games, there is a \$500 penalty fee that must be paid directly to the IHSA. [Online Entry Process for the IHSA Series](#)
- D. Teams looking to join the League for the 2025 season must complete the Google form, [School Request to Add a Sport/Level](#).

Host Arrangements

- A. For Chicago Public League contests, it is the responsibility of the school that is designated to be the home team to procure the playing facility. A legitimate option if the school does not have a home facility is to schedule the game at the opponent’s home site.
- B. The host school is responsible for assisting the visiting team on their departure. The coach is responsible for all players until they have left the playing site.
- C. In the case where a school is playing at their home site, the home school must provide the following equipment in good condition:
 - 1. A set of two official-size (*8 ft high by 24 ft wide*) anchored soccer goals with nets.
 - 2. A set of four soccer corner flags/cones.
 - 3. Three (3) official game balls. Field markings should be specified as in the most current National Federation of High School Association [Soccer Rule Book](#).
- D. The home school should provide two (2) ball retrievers.
- E. Schools that do not have the specified regulation equipment will not be allowed to host home games and must travel until equipment is repaired or replaced and deemed safe.

Coach Expectations

- A. Coaches are expected to review the [Chicago Public League Coaches’ Code of Conduct and General Expectations](#)



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- B. Coaches must complete IHSA and CPS certification requirements before coaching student-athletes. [Certifications for all coaches](#) - Note, all coaches must be at least 21 years old.
- C. All coaches (paid or volunteer) must register with OSA as coaches of record for the team/level for which they working through the [CPL High School Coach Registration Form](#).
- D. The Chicago Public League requires all of its students, officials, coaches, spectators and school staff to promote sportsmanship before, during and after every game. Offensive language, including profanity and/or derogatory or intimidating remarks of any kind directed at officials, event staff, student-athletes, coaches or team representatives, will not be tolerated. In order for sportsmanship to prevail, all coaches, students, staff, and spectators must display respect and civility in an effort to enthusiastically support our student-athletes to create a safe and inclusive environment. [Sportsmanship Guidelines](#).
- E. The coaching staff is expected to organize and prepare athletes through consistent practice/workouts specifically designed to enhance their performance in soccer matches.
- F. The coaching staff is responsible for the following Game Management for every contest:
 1. Confirm contest logistics with the opposing coach.
 2. Preparing a printout (preferably laminated) of emergency contact information identified for each student (name and jersey number) for quick reference by medical personnel. *This must be presented to CPS Stadium management personnel for all games in CPS municipal stadiums.*
 3. Possessing an ASPEN Generated Eligibility Certificate. *Only students listed on this certificate are eligible to participate in that contest.*
 4. Possessing an accurate numerical roster identifying student-athletes by jersey number for the in-game PA announcer for OSA event use.
 5. Reporting the score of the game to the Office of Sports Administration designated score reporting mechanism within 24 hours of the contest.
 6. Rating the IHSA officials assigned to the contest through the IHSA Schools Center. It is highly recommended to wait 12 hrs after the game before submitting an official's rating report. *In addition to reporting the score and schedule (Conference and Non-conference Games), the Head Coach is responsible for talking with officials after their game to confirm the names of all yellow/red carded players.*
 7. Refraining from using tobacco products, drinking alcoholic beverages, or being under the influence of alcoholic beverages or any illegal substance at any time while performing their coaching duties.

Playing Regulations

	Varsity	JV	Soph/Frosh
Contest Limitation exclusive of the IHSA Series	25*	25	25
Minimum Contests for Team Approval	7	6	5
Length/Time of Contests	Two-40 minute halves with 10 minute intermission	Two-35 minute halves with 5 minute intermission	Two-30 minute halves with 5 minute intermission
Maximum Students on the Roster	Unlimited but only 25 can dress per game	Unlimited but only 25 can dress per game	Unlimited but only 25 can dress per game



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Minimum Students on Roster	15	15	15
Minimum Students Needed on Game Day	11	11	11

- A. Equipment and Uniforms
 - 1. Uniforms - [IHSA Approved](#)
 - 2. Size 5 Balls
 - 3. An AED must be on-site for all games with personnel trained to operate the machine.
- B. The official start time of contests is 4:30 pm for Varsity & JV games, with a 5:00 pm start for only Varsity games, unless otherwise approved by the Office of Sports Administration.
- C. All games are to be played as scheduled. Games may not be canceled or changed without impunity for any reason without the authorization of the Office of Sports Administration.
 - 1. The Coordinating Athletic Program Administrator (APA) of Soccer must approve all rescheduled games.
 - 2. Varsity and JV games can be scheduled to be played on the same day at an earlier time. Initial arrangements should be reported to the Coordinating APA of Soccer and included with the formal release of the final schedule. Changes in the order of games played on a given day must be reported to the APA at least 24 hours prior to the matches.
 - 3. All rescheduling requests must be submitted through the [2025 Boys Soccer Resource Sheet](#) tab.
- D. Forfeiture of Games
 - 1. A school forfeiting two (2) or more conference games on the basis of lack of players will lose team recognition. A letter to the principal, athletic director and coach shall notify the school of the impending action, which will include forfeiture of the coaching stipend.
 - 2. *If a team and faculty representative is not ready to play within thirty minutes of the scheduled time of the contest, the host school must contact the Coordinating APA of Soccer for a determination of the status of the game.*
- E. All non-conference games should be contracted with the opposing school.
- F. Officials will wait on site for approximately 30-45 minutes if communication has been made by the home team. If officials do not hear from the school, they will leave 15-20 minutes past game time. If the game starts 30 minutes past the agreed start time, the officials will be allowed to cut the 2nd half 10 minutes short (or any other agreement between ALL parties involved on site). In order for a game to be considered officiated, the first half must be played. In case of a seven (7) goal differential, the remaining time will be cut in half. A nine (9) goal difference will result in the immediate termination of a game.
- G. When parties must be suspended from competition(s), the teams' remaining schedule will be determined as the immediate schedule upon access by Office of Sports Administration personnel when the suspension is determined. Any games added to the schedule after this time will not be considered pertaining to serving the suspension.
- H. Games affected due to a work stoppage will be managed according to the IHSA Constitution and Bylaws.
- I. All signage intended to be posted in CPS municipal stadiums must have approval from the Office of Sports Administration prior to posting.

Officials

	Varsity	Varsity Playoff	JV	JV Playoff	Soph
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Number of Game Officials	2	3	2	2	2
Fees	\$85.00 each	\$95.00 each for Semi and Final	\$75.00 Each	\$80.00 Each for Semi and Final	\$65.00 Each

Officials will be paid through Arbiter and confirmed for payment by the assignor

A. Selection of Officials

1. The APA for Soccer shall designate an assignor of referees for all Chicago Public League conference and playoff games. Schools/Coaches will contract their referees for all non-conference games, from a list of approved referees, provided by the APA from OSA.
2. No official is permitted to work a match in which one of the teams is from the school which he or she is employed, coached in the past, or officiate any of the Varsity playoffs.
3. The coach shall rate and evaluate each official on the official eligibility certificate and on-line to the IHSA (www.ihsa.org – see Athletic Director for assistance) after each match. [IHSA Schools Center](#)

B. What if Officials do not show?

1. If neither official arrives, both coaches can officiate or mutually agree on an official (Assistant coach, JV coach). Contact the APA in charge of soccer or the assignor to try for a resolution to the issue.
2. If there is only one official, the game must be played and the official is to be paid an additional \$20.00 for each match officiated. At least two (2) officials shall be assigned to all Chicago Public League games.
3. In the event of a game-day forfeit, the scheduled officials will be paid as if they officiated the game.

Student Eligibility

A. A student is eligible to participate in a contest when listed as “Eligible” on an ASPEN-generated Eligibility certificate (or otherwise documented pertaining to Charter Schools).

1. [Student-Athlete Eligibility](#)
2. [Home School Student Eligibility](#)
3. [Newcomer Student Eligibility](#)
4. Students who have transferred to your school since the end of the previous season are ineligible for **interscholastic competition without a ruling from the Office of Sports Administration or the IHSA.**

B. Competitive Levels

1. Varsity teams shall consist of students in the first, second, third, or fourth year of attendance who will not reach their 20th birthday at any time during the sports season.
2. A Junior Varsity team (Freshman, Sophomores, Juniors, Seniors) shall consist of students eligible to play on the Varsity team. There shall be free movement of players between Varsity and Junior Varsity levels leading up to the Round of 32 of the CPL Championship and IHSA Championship tournaments.
3. Varsity and Junior Varsity players **must have separate** eligibility sheets. Players may **NOT** appear on both Varsity eligibility roster and a Junior Varsity eligibility roster on the same day.
4. Sophomore level players **will have separate** eligibility sheets.

C. Vertical Movement

1. **Vertical movement between Varsity/JV and Soph levels is not allowed.**
2. **Vertical movement between Varsity and JV levels on the same day is not allowed.**



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3. *There is flexibility for goalkeepers. JV GKs can play with Varsity and JV on the same day. Fr/Sph GKs can play with JV and still be eligible to play at the Fr/Sph level. A goalkeeper can't play with a lower-level team.
 - a. If a player has game time and is ineligible for any of the above reasons mentioned, the responsible team automatically forfeits the game with a 3-0 defeat.
 - b. **Lower-level teams will not be recognized unless the minimum number of participants appears on the varsity roster. An official recognized team shall have a minimum of fifteen (15) players.**
- D. Coaches must distinguish between varsity and JV players on ASPEN rosters. Once a student appears on the varsity eligibility certificate, that student is ineligible for the lower levels. Once the student appears on the Varsity/JV eligibility certificate, the student is ineligible for the Sophomore level.
- E. While a member of a school team, a player shall not be allowed to represent any other organization in that sport during the official sport season. Cease non-school practice and competition by week 7 of the IHSA calendar
- F. Contest results can be protested according to [Article XI – Infractions and Protests of the Chicago Public Schools Athletics Bylaws](#) if there is some irregularity or infraction of the rules occurring during the contest.

League Structure & Conference Standings

The Chicago Public League alignment is found in the [2025 Boys Soccer Resource Sheet](#)

- A. Once the league schedule begins, any adjustments to the final schedule must be communicated to OSA, but administrative responsibility will not fall on the Office of Sports Administration. The home team of the games in question must procure the alternative site, confirm the new date with the opposing team, and hire the officials.
- B. The playing format for all conferences shall be a single round-robin format.
- C. In the event a scheduled game is not played, the game will be recorded as "no-contest" and neither team will be awarded any points. *Rescheduled games shall be played only on the assigned "make-up dates," or otherwise approved by the Coordinating APA of Soccer.*
- D. Standings:
 1. Standings are determined by the ranking of teams according to the number of points earned. +3 points for a win. +1 point for a tie. 0 points for a loss.
 2. The Score of a Forfeit is 3-0.
- E. In case of a tie in Division standings, the higher place shall be determined by:
 1. Head-to-head competition results.
 2. Number of regulation time wins.
 3. Goal differential, with a maximum of five (5) goals per game.
 4. Most goals scored in favor.
 5. Greater number of shut-outs.
 6. Least number of goals scored against.
 7. Team with least number of cards.
 - a. Red Cards
 - b. Yellow Cards
 8. Coin toss conducted by the APA (or Referee Assignor) in the presence of the tied teams.
- F. There is promotion & relegation across all CPL divisions. Each conference in each division will go through the promotion and relegation process (*Premier teams cannot be promoted & Open Division teams cannot be relegated).



1. **Promotion:**
 - a. Premier: Highest Division. No promotion.
 - b. First: Teams with the most points from each conference will play a promotion match. (1st vs 4th and 2nd vs 3rd).
 - c. Second: Teams with the most points from each conference gets promoted to the First Division.
 - d. Open: Teams with the most points from each conference will play a promotion match (First N vs First NW & First C vs First S).
2. **Relegation:**
 - a. Premier: Teams with the least amount of points will be relegated to the first division.
 - b. First: Teams with the least amount of points from each conference gets relegated to the Second division according to the conference.
 - c. Second: Teams with the least points from each conference will play a relegation match (First N vs First NW & First C vs First S).
 - d. Open: Lowest division. No relegation.

Chicago Public League Playoff & Championship Structure

A. Qualification Criteria

1. The Office of Sports Administration will support post-season tournaments/matchups for all Divisions.
2. All teams, from all divisions have a chance to compete in the CPL Tournament.
3. Lower division teams must win their match-ups in their mini-tournaments in order to earn a ticket for the CPL tournament.
4. In case of a forfeit during the League games, the team will face further disciplinary action. Including probation to enter the CPL Tournament the following season.
5. In case of a tie during the regular time, both teams will go straight to penalty kicks. 5 shooters per team, best out of 5 wins. No overtime.

B. Championship Tournament Structure

1. The CPL Varsity Championship Playoff Tournament will be played with the thirty-two (32) teams that meet the qualification criteria. The Tournament will consist of knock-out games. Knock-out games consist of 1 game elimination, and the winner advances on to the next round. In case of a tie, there will be a set of penalty kicks. 5 shooters per team, best out of 5 wins, in case of a tie, pks will continue in rounds of 1. ****The CPL Championship Match will go to two 10-minute halves OT in case of a tie. If the tied score still remains after OT, both teams will go straight to penalty kicks. 5 shooters per team, best out of 5 wins.*
2. Seeding for the Championship Tournament will be based on Conference record. The 32 teams entering the City Playoffs are: All Premier Division teams, and the 8 victorious teams from the phase II mini-tournaments.

In case of a tie in Conference standings, the higher place shall be determined by:

- a. *Head-to-head competition results.*
 - b. *Goal differential, with a maximum of five (5) goals per game.*
 - c. *Most goals scored in favor, with a maximum of five (5) goals per game.*
 - d. *Greater number of shut-outs.*
 - e. *Least number of goals scored against, up to five (5) per game*
 - f. *Team with least number of cards.*
 - g. *Drawing lots by coaches' committee members.*
3. The round of 32 will be structured as designated in the resource sheet: [CPL Championship Bracket](#)
 4. The City Championship Series shall be played in five (5) rounds.



5. The winning coach has the responsibility of calling the game scores into to the appropriate reporting protocols (as designated by OSA), and submitting the results to the [2025 Soccer Resource Sheet](#) immediately following the match.
 - a. Round of 32 - The higher seed will host.
 - b. Round of 16 - The higher seed will host.
 - c. QUARTERFINAL - The higher seed will host.
 - d. SEMIFINAL - The four winners of the quarterfinal games will advance. Both matches will be played at a CPS stadium. OSA will assign the stadium.
 - e. FINAL – The two winners of the Semifinal games will advance. One field will be arranged by the
 - f. APA in charge of Soccer and the committee.
- C. Other Post-Season Play
1. Post-season tournaments and matchups will be scheduled for teams that lose in Phase IV and CPL Champions Bracket round 2 (*Round of 16*) of the CPL tournament.
 - a. Midway Cup - Consists of teams that were eliminated in Phase IV. This tournament will start with Quarterfinals.
 - b. Windy City Cup - Consists of teams that were eliminated in Round 2. There will be an 8-team secondary knockout tournament. It will start at the Quarter-finals phase.
- D. Special Rules
1. If a team does not have its playoff roster, the game will be played under protest. The offending team **MUST** create a hand-written roster in front of their opponent and the referees. Each athlete will print and sign their name and write their date of birth and School ID number. This hand-written roster must be emailed to the APA in charge of Soccer for comparison with the field School team’s Playoff Roster. If names on both rosters do not match, the offending team will lose the game by forfeit.

Media and Social Media Expectations

The Chicago Public League is proud to offer in-depth coverage of CPS teams and student-athletes across each sports season. In order to continue to publish these stories, the CPL Sports Communications team asks the following of all participating athletics staff members and student-athletes:

- A. Ensure all student media consent forms are signed via the standard CPS enrollment packet
- B. Ensure coaches and/or players are available as requested for pre- and post-game interviews
- C. Share accomplishments and milestones with the CPS Sports Communications team so your teams and athletes can be recognized
- D. Interact and follow all CPL athletics content via our website CPSAthletics.com or via [Social Media](#).

CPS Sports Communications Team:

- A. Communications Manager: Joey Gelman – jdgelman@cps.edu
- B. Communications Specialist: Dominic Scianna – dscianna@cps.edu
- C. Communications Specialist: Michael Wojtychiw – mmwojtychiw@cps.edu
- A.

Digital Citizenship Expectations



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Being a good digital citizen means that athletics staff members and student-athletes are positively contributing to the digital space, respecting other people’s views even if in disagreement, and reporting issues that disrupt a positive digital environment.

A digital footprint and reputation is left online when videos and pictures are uploaded, and when posts and comments are made on websites and social media. Athletics staff members and student-athletes must consider the temporary and/or permanent effect actions online can have for themselves and their community both in the digital space and in person.

That is why the Chicago Public League asks all athletics staff members, coaches, and student-athletes to engage in respectful and positive social media interaction. Should there be any inappropriate social media being created or shared in your community, please report it to CPS administration within your school building so the situation can be properly assessed and appropriate action can be taken as necessary to ensure a safe environment for all those involved.