



UNITED FC BEACON OFFICIAL LEAGUE HANDBOOK

Rules of Play • Code of Conduct • Operations Policies
(IFAB-Based, Locally Modified Competition Framework)

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I. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

All United FC Beacon competitions are governed by the following hierarchy:

1. IFAB Laws of the Game
2. United FC Beacon Rules of Play (local modifications and competition rules)
3. United FC Beacon Code of Conduct (behavioral and disciplinary standards)
4. League Operations Policies (administrative rulings and live updates)

IFAB Laws apply in all situations unless explicitly modified within this handbook.

II. RULES OF PLAY

1. Match Formats

Outdoor Format

- 8v8 including goalkeeper
- 30-minute halves
- 5-minute halftime
- Minimum 6 players required to start
- Minimum 6 players required by halftime to avoid forfeit

Indoor Format

- 6v6 including goalkeeper
- Target total match duration: approximately 60 minutes
- Halves: 25 to 27.5 minutes (adjusted for facility scheduling constraints)
- Minimum 4 players required to start
- Minimum 4 players required by halftime to avoid forfeit

2. Ball Rules

- Only official United FC Beacon match balls are permitted
- Personal balls are not allowed in match play unless no official ball is available
- Players are responsible for retrieving balls that leave play

3. Substitutions

- Unlimited substitutions allowed on the fly
- Substitutions must not interfere with active play

- Referees may require players to reposition or remain in designated areas for safety and game control (indoor or outdoor at referee discretion)
- Disruptive substitutions result in an indirect free kick to the opposing team

4. Offside

The offside rule is not in effect

5. Set Pieces & Restart Rules

Free Kicks

- All free kicks are indirect
- Exceptions: penalty kicks & corner kicks

Goal Kicks

- Goal kicks may not travel beyond midfield in the air
- Violation results in an indirect free kick at midfield

Goalkeeper Distribution (Clarified Rule)

- Goalkeepers may not propel the ball over midfield in the air directly from their hands (throw, punt, or drop-kick)
- Goalkeepers may not immediately send the ball over midfield in the air as the originating distributor of possession
- Any distribution that crosses midfield in the air is only legal if the ball first touches the ground before crossing or originates from open play by a non-goalkeeper player
- Once the goalkeeper's team has transitioned into open play, normal field rules apply

6. Match Start & End Conditions

Outdoor

- Matches begin with a minimum of 6 players per team
- Matches proceed if both teams meet minimum requirements
- Teams may choose to play at full strength or not match opponent numbers at their discretion

Indoor

- Matches begin with a minimum of 4 players per team
- Same substitution and participation rules apply

7. Tie Breakers

When a winner is required:

- No extra time
- Penalty Shootout Format:
 - Outdoor: 5 kicks per team
 - Indoor: 3 kicks per team
 - If tied, sudden death (one kick per team) until a winner is determined

8. Match Abandonment / Walk-Off Policy

Any team that refuses to continue play or leaves the field before match completion will forfeit the match

- All forfeits are recorded as a 3-0 result
- This applies regardless of match time or current score

Referee Authority Clause

- The referee reserves the right to abandon or terminate a match at their sole discretion if playing conditions or gameplay integrity deteriorate
- Players and teams do not have the right to abandon a match

III. DISCIPLINE SYSTEM

1. Card System

Blue Card (Cool Down)

- 2-minute removal from play
- Team may substitute the player
- Referee controls timing and re-entry

Yellow Card (Controlled Suspension)

- 2-minute removal from play
- No substitution allowed during penalty period
- If issued to a bench player, a field player must serve

Red Card (Ejection)

- Immediate removal from match and facility
- Minimum 1-match suspension
- Two yellow cards in one match equal a red card

2. Enforcement Authority

- Referee decisions are final during matches
- League reserves the right to review incidents post-match
- Suspensions may be extended for repeat or severe violations

IV. CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Community Standard

United FC Beacon is a community recreational league. All participants must act respectfully at all times, recognizing that families, youth players, and spectators may be present.

Foul or inappropriate language may result in disciplinary action.

2. Competitive Integrity

“Everybody’s going to work tomorrow” standard applies

- Aggressive play must remain controlled and non-reckless
- Retaliation is strictly prohibited
- Safety takes priority over competition at all times

3. Captain Responsibility

Captains are responsible for managing team behavior.

- Must actively de-escalate conflicts
- Should remove or cool down escalating players
- Failure to manage conduct may result in team penalties, including league point deductions

4. Referee Authority

Referee decisions are final

- Only captains may respectfully seek clarification
- Dissent or confrontation may result in disciplinary action

5. Zero Tolerance Violations

The following are strictly prohibited:

- Discrimination or harassment of any kind
- Physical or verbal abuse of any participant or official
- Threats or intimidation
- Refusal to comply with referee decisions
- Excessive dissent or disruptive behavior
- Throwing equipment or aggressive displays toward officials
- Intoxication or substance use at facilities
- Smoking at facilities
- Property damage or facility neglect
- Fraudulent roster participation or identity misuse
- Participation in illegal activity
- Promotion of unauthorized competing leagues
- Any intentional violation of league rules or spirit of play

6. Enforcement Outcomes

Violations may result in:

- Warnings
- In-game disciplinary cards
- Match suspensions
- Multi-match suspensions
- League suspension or removal (with or without refund)
- Financial liability for damages
- Loss of captain privileges

V. LEAGUE OPERATIONS POLICIES

These policies may be updated during the season to preserve fairness, safety, and operational consistency.

1. Rosters

- Rosters lock within the first week of the season
- Once registration is full, no additional players may be added
- Unused roster spots cannot be converted into mid-season additions

2. Red Card Policy & Reporting

- All red cards are reported by referees immediately
- Players must leave the field and facility immediately upon ejection
- Minimum 1-match suspension applies automatically
- League may extend suspensions for repeat offenses
- Suspensions carry across playoffs and seasons unless otherwise stated

3. Score Reporting Procedure

- Referee confirms final score with both captains post-match
- Captains may sign official score verification
- Referee submits final score with photographic documentation

4. Game Start Timing

- Teams should be ready 10-15 minutes before kickoff
- Matches begin with minimum player requirements (6 outdoor / 4 indoor)
- Matches will begin on time unless both captains agree otherwise
- No obligation exists for teams to match opponent strength; this is a voluntary courtesy only
- Late starts do not extend scheduled end time; halves may be shortened if necessary

5. Weather & Field Conditions

- Matches proceed unless officially canceled
- Cancellation notices are issued via official league channels only
- If no cancellation is posted, matches are on schedule
- Referee determines field safety and playability
- Thunder or lightning requires immediate stoppage
- Rain does not automatically cancel matches unless conditions are unsafe

VI. FINAL STATEMENT

United FC Beacon is built to provide structured, competitive, and community-centered recreational soccer.

Participation in any league event constitutes agreement to all rules, conduct standards, and operational policies outlined in this handbook.