

Pickering Football Club



Recreational Coach Guide

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WHO IS THE RECREATIONAL COACH?

Pickering Football Club Recreational Coaches are all volunteers. Coaches in the program may be parents, siblings, friends or university/high school students. All of the Club's Recreational coaches share common traits:

- ✓ They want to make a contribution to the Pickering FC and the community that they live in
- ✓ They have a passion for the game and understand the importance of having a leader and point person for their team
- ✓ They have a knowledge of the game and a desire to learn more about soccer

As a Parent Coach;

It's about enjoying a season of soccer with their child and getting to meet the parents of the players on the team and growing their group of friends. Over the course of their child's time playing soccer a coach can develop a coaching relationship with another parent who in the future they will coach with.

As a Student Coach;

They volunteer so that they can coach a sibling, give something back to the game and also stay involved in the game. High School students can get volunteer community hours as well as develop leadership skills that can benefit them in terms of using on a resume for a job or in applying to specific programs for college and university. For the college/university student coaching is a way to complement the program that they are studying and be a helpful resource for entrance in to the work force and/or college/university programs where leadership skills are a key component for success.

In addition, coaching is a way for all to expand their network. Whether it be a group of friends or a network to use in career searches coaching with the Pickering FC is a valuable way to expand who knows you and what you are about.

Coaches will bring a variety of experience and knowledge to their role as a coach. Some will be experienced coaches; some will have played the game as a youth or adult at various levels and there will be others who will be coaching for the first time. Just remember, as the players are learning the game, in some cases so is the coach. It is important to manage expectations as recreational soccer is about playing the game, making new friends and being active.

The most important thing for parents to remember is that their child's recreational coach is a VOLUNTEER! The volunteer coach is someone who is willing to provide the team with 2-3 hours each week so that children and youth get to play soccer. Just think what a season of soccer would look like without the 100 plus volunteer coaches that provide their time, passion and expertise each season!

STARTING THE SEASON

Registration

The first step in starting the season will be the Club providing you with the links to:

- Police Check – the Club uses Back Check which is an on line platform for police checks for new coaches. The process is at no charge to the coach and the results of the check are emailed to both the coach and a Club Screening Officer usually within 48 hours.
 - <https://www.pickeringfc.ca/coachcorner>
 - The Police Check/Back Check is valid for 3 years. Coaches who are returning coaches can complete Screening Declaration form which will be provided by the Club's Recreational Administrator.
- Ontario Soccer Registration
 - all coaches new and returning must register with Ontario Soccer using Sports Engine
 - The Sports Engine link for coaches to register for 2026 is <https://pickeringfc.sportngin.com/register/form/557465482>
 - Once registered with Ontario Soccer the coach will be assigned to a team, giving them access to the Sports Engine Team app which can be used for team communication.

Club Communication

In early May coaches will receive an email from the Club that will provide the following information:

- Uniform Pick-up Day (Time/Date/Location for coaches to pick up their team's uniforms)
- Team schedule
- Team list that includes contact information
- Game sheet
- Recreational Coach Administrative Guide (this document)

Introduce Yourself

Once you have received the above, email the parents/players to introduce yourself:

- Your name and the name of the team if applicable
- How you wish parents to communicate with you and how you will be communicating with them
- Your experience as a coach and your philosophy around coaching (be honest as this again helps to manage expectations)
- The Team App (see team app information on page of this document)
- Schedule
 - Highlight game nights and fields that are used
 - Practice night, time and field
 - Where the schedule is posted
- Distribution of uniforms – provide information on how players can pick up their uniforms from you. This might be at the field or from a neutral location such as the Club.

Uniform Distribution

For each player, program registration includes a uniform consisting of jersey, shorts and socks. Players in U3 to U6/U7 will receive a coloured jersey that has been assigned to their team. Players in U8 to U18 will receive a black and a white jersey. The team schedule will advise players what jersey they are to wear for each game. Players from U3 to U13 will also receive a ball which they are to bring to all practices. Players need to mark their ball with their name and jersey number.

Once a coach picks up the team uniforms:

- Establish a time/date/location for uniforms to be picked up by players
- Communicate this information to players/parents
- Hints for uniform distribution:
 - Restrict the time period for pick up to no more than one hour
 - If you are uncomfortable having the players come to your residence to pick you can:
 - Through the Recreational League Administrator confirm the availability of the Pickering Soccer Centre
 - Use a game or practice field to help parents/players become acquainted with those locations
 - Avoid the first game if possible as it will delay the start of the game and impact the other team
- Uniforms are ordered in January by the Club
- Players will not be fitted for sizes
- A range of uniform sizes are provided by the supplier that fit the age group
- Smaller uniforms are the smaller sizes so take that into account when distributing the uniforms
- Meeting the players
- Uniform distribution is a great way to meet the players.
- Have a game sheet filled out with the player's names and write their number on the game sheet next to their name once they receive their uniform.
- Find out what name they wish to be called by, for example Thomas or Tom/Elizabeth or Liz

ONCE THE SEASON HAS STARTED

The Pickering Football Club receives permits for the fields that are used from the City of Pickering and the Durham District School Board. In 2026 those permits will start on Monday, May 18 and end on September 30. Season start and end dates can be found on Page 10.

Communication

It is important that the players/parents know who you are. To assist in this as a coach you should:

- Get your team's app
 - Once you have registered with Ontario Soccer the Rec Administrator will assign you to your team as the coach
 - Get the Sports Engine Team Management App from the App Store – make sure that you use the same email address as you used to register with Ontario Soccer.
 - Your team's app will appear for you to select
- Update parents on your method of communication
 - They should use the same method to communicate with you
- Weekly updates
 - Practice and game reminders – using the team app is the quickest way to do this as there is an RSVP function for each practice and game on the team schedule
 - Encourage parents/players to RSVP for games and practices to help you with your planning and so that you know who will be there
 - Remind parents and players to double check the player's soccer gear for each game and practice:
 - Water bottle
 - Jerseys – U8 to U18 should have both their black and white jerseys
 - Shorts and socks
 - Shin pads
 - Soccer shoes
- Where you and parents can find schedules:
 - Schedule is posted on the team app
 - Electronic version was emailed to you in the email to start the season
 - Please make parents aware of the above and how to get the team app

Time Commitment by a Coach

- For coaches of U5 and U6/7 the sessions are 1 hour
- Coaches of U8 to U18 will have a one-hour practice and a game of 50 to 90 minutes each week
- Practice and game planning will be another 30-45 minutes each week
- Plan on 15-20 minutes for weekly communication for all group

Practices

- All teams – U8 to U18 - will have a weekly one-hour practice
- Field is shared with another team
- Practice should consist of:
 - Warm up activity – 10 minutes
 - Skills and drills 25-30 minutes – Club can provide you with a list of age appropriate drills
 - Scrimmage – 20 minutes – with your team or with the team that you are sharing the field with
- Can't make practice? Please follow these steps:
 - Make sure that the parents know you will not be in attendance
 - If you have an assistant coach have that person take the practice
 - Reach out to the parents to get someone to fill in
 - Ask the coach of the team you share the field with if your team can join her/his team. Contact the recreational.admin@pickeringfc.ca if you don't have contact information for the coach.

Games – U8 to U18

- All teams will have one game each week. As a coach you will:
 - Complete a game sheet for each game – hand to referee prior to the start of the game
 - For game sheets please [click here](#)
 - Manage Player changes
 - Pickering FC has a Fair and Equal Play Policy which means that all players should receive fair playing time in all games
 - Player changes can be made:
 - ✓ As the game is in progress – U8/U9 only
 - ✓ Goal Kicks
 - ✓ Goals
 - ✓ Half time
 - ✓ On team's throw ins/pass ins (NOTE: *if player changes are being made by the team with the throw in/pass in, the other team may also make player changes*)
 - Players need to stay in the team bench area
 - Assist the coach in making player changes
 - Coach knows where the players are
 - Discourage players on the sidelines from kicking a ball around – helps avoid injuries and keeps players aware of what is going on in the game
 - Benches for both teams are to be on the same side of the field / **Parents and spectators are to sit on the opposite of the field. No one should be behind either bench area.**
 - Organize the team to start the game
 - Assign players to positions – in the younger age groups coaches should encourage players to play several different positions over the course of the season
 - Goalkeeper
 - ✓ At the team uniform pick up, the coach will have received a pinnie for the goalkeeper to wear
 - ✓ U8 to U13 – do a rotation over the course of the season so that all players get to play goal. Each game, 2 different players will play one half in goal with change made at half time
 - ✓ U15 to U18 – one keeper can be used for the entire game. If desired, the team can use the same player as keeper for most if not all of the games
 - Provide positive Support – coach comments to encourage the players and make sure the game is fun!

Laws of the Game (rules)

- <https://www.ontariosoccer.net/referee-rules>
- U8 to U13 follow Small Sided rules
- U15 and up follow the FIFA 11-a-side rules

Player of the Game

- If applicable, Pickering FC will provide the coach with Player of the Game Awards
 - A description on how the Player of the Game Awards are to be presented will be provided to the coach.

Pictures

- The Pickering FC no longer provides player and team pictures.
- At the start or end of the season players gifts will be provided to the coach for distribution to the team.

Scores and Standings

- As per Ontario Soccer guidelines, scores and standings will not be kept for U8, U10 and U12
- Scores, standings and playoffs will be in place for U15 and U18

Year End Events

- For U3 to U13 all players will receive a participation medal
- U15 and U18 will have playoffs with the players on the teams making the Championship Game receiving a trophy. Players on teams that do not make the Championship Game will receive a participation medal
- Coaches will receive a package of team medals. Medals for players not in attendance will be returned to the information table and the Club will follow up for distribution.
- Formats:
 - U3 to U7 will have a one-hour session
 - U8 to U13 all teams will play one game
 - U15 and U18 all teams will play a minimum of 2 games and a maximum of 3 games

Weather Cancellations

- Should the Pickering FC/City of Pickering be required to close fields due to weather the following steps are taken:
 - An announcement by no later than 4 pm will be made:
 - Posted on Social Media – website, twitter, Instagram
 - Message will go out via team apps to those teams impacted
 - If no announcement is made by 4 pm any field closure will be a game time decision made at the field by coaches, club staff and match officials.
 - Games and U3 to U6 sessions will be rescheduled to a later date. Practices will not be rescheduled but fields will be made available to those coaches who wish to replace the missed practice.
- Thunder/Lightning
 - The policy of 30/30 is in place. Should a coach/match official/club staff hear thunder or see a strike of lightning the field(s) must be cleared of all participants and spectators.
 - A period of 30 minutes with no further thunder/lightning must take place before activities can be resumed.
 - Under no circumstances are activities to be continued or resumed without the 30-minute period of no further thunder/lightning.
 - The Pickering FC will review all situations on a case by case to determine if make up time is required for a future date.

Match Officials

- All match officials assigned to games, U8 to Women's Rec, are registered with Ontario Soccer.
- 1st year match officials will have completed an Ontario Soccer on line clinic specific to the types of games they are assigned to. The clinic includes modules, webinars, practical session, Laws of the Game test and a Signals Test. A fee is paid by the Match Official to be able to register for the clinic.
- Returning Match Officials will be registered for the current season with Ontario Soccer which includes a registration fee and successful completion of on line exam.
- The Pickering FC has a mentoring program to assist 1st and 2nd year match officials. The goal of the mentoring program is to provide young match officials with support, feedback and encourage retention for the following season. If you see someone wearing a blue t shirt with the PFC logo your match official is being mentored. All mentors are certified Ontario Soccer Mentors.
- Our Match Officials wear pink t shirts with "Stop Bullying Now" embellished on the front and back. Remember that like your players, match officials are part of the game and are also learning and growing their craft. Please remind your players and parents to respect the decisions made by the Match Officials.
- If by chance a Match Official is absent, reach out to a parent or have both teams provide a match official for the game. If this happens, please email scheduler@pickeringfc.ca so that the Club is aware of this.

Player Ratings

- Coaches of U6 and up will be asked to complete and submit player ratings prior to the end of the season.
- Player Rating Forms will be sent to coaches within 3 weeks of the date of the Year End Festival. These forms must be submitted prior to coaches receiving their team's medals.
- Player ratings are used to help build and balance teams each season in an effort to make the game experience as fair and exciting as possible for all players. Close scores keep players engaged in the game and interested in coming back week after week and for the following season.

PROJECTED 2026 SEASON START AND END DATES

(SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

Age Division	Start Date	Season End Date
U3 Coed 2023 YOYB	Woodlands – May 25 Creekside – May 27	Saturday, August 29
U4 Coed 2022 YOYB	Woodlands – May 26 Creekside – May 28	Saturday, August 29
U5 Boys & Girls 2021 YOYB	Woodlands – May 25 Creekside – May 27	Saturday, August 29
U6/U7 Boys & Girls 2019 & 2020 YOYB	Woodlands – May 26 Creekside – May 28	Saturday, August 29
U8/U9 Boys U8/U9 Girls 2017/2018 YOYB	Creekside <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice May 25 • Game May 26 Woodlands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice May 26 • Game May 28 	Saturday, August 29
U10/U11 Boys U10/U11 Girls 2015/2016 YOYB	U10/U11 Boys Monday <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice May 20 • Game May 25 U9/U10 Boys Thursday <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice May 26 • Game May 28 U9/U10 Girls <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice May 25 • Game May 27 	Regular Season Games End U9/U10 Boys Monday <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monday, August 31 U9/U10 Boys Thursday <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday, August 27 U9/U10 Girls <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday, August 26 All Groups practice September 7 to 9 Year End – Saturday, September 12
U12/U13 Boys U12/U13 Girls 2013/2014 YOYB Girls Interlock with West Rouge SC	U11/U12 Boys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice May 21 • Game May 26 U11/U12 Girls <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice May 26 • Game May 28 	Regular Season Games/Practices End Boys – August 31/September 4 Girls – August 27/September 7 Year End – Saturday, September 12
U14/U15 Boys U14/U15 Girls 2011/2012 YOYB Interlock with West Rouge SC	U14/U15 Boys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice May 23 • Game May 28 U13/U14/U15 Girls <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice May 28 • Game May 30 	Regular Season Games/Practices End Boys – August 25/September 10 Girls – September 3 /September 8 Year End – Saturday, September 12
U16/U17/U18 Coed 2008/2009/2010 YOYB Interlock with West Rouge SC	U16/U17/U18 Coed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice May 25 • Game May 27 	Regular Season Games August 31 Final – Wednesday, September 2

SAFE SPORTS

Canada Soccer has introduced the "[Canada Soccer Safe Sport Roster](#)". This roster is a package of programs, policies, and procedures designed to ensure that all organizations that offer soccer programming in Canada create safe, fun, and welcoming experiences for all participants.

Ahead of the start of the 2024 soccer season, all member organizations that offer soccer programming in a Canada Soccer Member Association Province and Territory will be required to meet the minimum standards of the Quality Soccer Provider level of the Canada Soccer Youth Club Licensing Program in support of the guiding principles of the Safe Sport Roster.

Source: <https://www.canadasoccer.com/play-landing/safe-sport/>

The Pickering Football Club has a page on the website that provides more information on Safe Sports including links to several resources to help members navigate through Safe Sports and make Safe Sports a key component of their participation with the PFC.

<https://www.pickeringfc.ca/safesport>

CONCUSSIONS

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury—or TBI—caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or by a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. This fast movement can cause the brain to bounce around or twist in the skull, creating chemical changes in the brain and sometimes stretching and damaging the brain cells.

In the registration process parents/athletes/guardians are asked to view and sign-off on the Pickering FC's Concussion Code of Conduct. This section provides essential information to help protect athletes from, and reduce the risks associated with concussions. Use this information at games and practices to learn how to spot a concussion and what to do if a concussion occurs.

It is a requirement of Provincial Law that any participant under 26 years of age has to confirm, or have parental confirmation that the Concussion Awareness Resources have been reviewed.

To review the official Concussion Awareness Resources you will need to visit: ontario.ca/concussions.

As a coach we ask that you review the Concussion Code of Conduct for Coaches and Team Trainers. The Code of Conduct provides information on how you as a coach can work with your players to help prevent concussions, taking concussions seriously, create an environment where the athlete can speak up and support the athlete to take the time needed to recover. To review the Concussion Code of Conduct [click here](#).

CLUB POLICIES

All of the Pickering FC's Policies are available to you on the website, <https://www.pickeringfc.ca/bylaws-policies>.

We recommend that you take the time to make yourself familiar with the many policies especially:

- PFC Code of Conduct [click here](#)
- PFC Code of Conduct to Protect Children [click here](#)
- Guidelines for Safe Working with Youth [click here](#)

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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**THANKS FOR BEING A COACH WITH THE PICKERING FOOTBALL CLUB
CHEERS FOR A GREAT SEASON!!!**