

COLUMBUS EXPRESS SOCCER CLUB



Policies

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About

Columbus Express is a 501(c)3 Non-Profit Organization located in Columbus, Indiana specializing in youth soccer programming.

Mission

To build on CESC's rich history and be the best soccer club in south central Indiana by attracting a diverse group of young players, utilizing player-centered instruction, and maintaining a culture of excellence and inclusivity, all of which positively impact our players, families, and communities.

Vision

To prepare youth for the future by developing important life skills through the game of soccer.

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NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Columbus Express Soccer Club does not discriminate against its members, players, coaches, parents, referees on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, reprisal, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, financial status, or if all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance programs.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Columbus Express Soccer Club (CESC) strives to provide all players with a safe and positive soccer environment. Bullying will not be tolerated at CESC practices, games, or sanctioned events.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is intentional actions or comments that are insulting, intimidating, degrading or hurtful towards an individual or group by another individual or group. Bullying can be any written, verbal, or physical act, or any electronic communication. Bullying can be a single incident or a series of events.

Signs & Symptoms of Bullying

Some children will be more inclined to tell a parent, coach, or adult when bullying occurs, while other children will not report bullying due to fear, intimidation, or more bullying. Coaches and parents should understand the signs and symptoms when bullying is happening. While some signs and symptoms may indicate other issues, bullying should be considered and explored.

Bullying Reporting Procedures

1. Players or parents should report bullying incidents to the team coach. If the issue continues, please contact the Director of Coaching. If necessary and appropriate, law enforcement may be consulted.
2. In all cases of reported bullying, parents of the player who was bullied shall be informed immediately and may be asked to meet with the respective team coach and/or Director of Coaching to discuss the incident. In all cases, strict confidentiality shall be maintained.
3. The parents of any player who is reported to be bullying another player will be contacted immediately by the respective team coach, Director of Coaching, or CESC Executive Board member to meet and discuss the incident and determine the next steps.

Consequences of Bullying

1. During the first offense involving bullying, encouragement to change negative behavior will be made to the bully or bullies for the benefit of the bullied player, the team, and the environment.
2. If bullying continues, disciplinary action towards a player may be taken by the team coach, Director of Coaching, and/or CESC Executive Board. Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to, suspension.
3. Following investigation of incidents and the addressing of incidents, the team coach and Director of Coaching will monitor to ensure the issue has been resolved.

COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

Columbus Express Soccer Club (CESC) staff members should understand that they are role models and representatives of CESC. CESC coaches are expected to represent themselves, their teams, and CESC with dignity and honor. Coaches are expected to act professionally and be respectful to players, parents, opposing teams, and officials on and off the field.

CESC coaches should be motivated to be experts in player development and seek opportunities to improve their ability as coaches and leaders. Coaches are expected to be prepared for training sessions by implementing an appropriate plan consistent with the provided CESC Coaching Curriculum.

CESC coaches must adhere to the club's philosophy to "Provide Every Opportunity to Improve;" the club's values of Education, Discipline, Relationships, and Effort; and CESC's key components of Player Development, Coaching, Parent Engagement, and Competition.

Acceptance of employment by Columbus Express Soccer Club obligates the following agreement:

Coach Responsibilities

- Coaches will complete all coaching requirements prior to interacting with players as determined by CESC, Indiana Soccer, and U.S. Youth Soccer. This includes but may not be limited to submitting to regular background checks, completing Heads Up Concussion training and U.S. Center for Safesport training.
- Coaches are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner with dignity and honor.
- Coaches will create a safe player-centered environment.
- Coaches will refrain from aggressive, intimidating, or threatening language and behavior towards players, parents, opponents, other coaches, officials, and spectators.
- Coaches will demonstrate respect towards players, parents, opponents, officials, and spectators.
- Coaches will refrain from all illegal activity and avoid profanity, alcohol, drugs, and tobacco while traveling to and from and while attending all CESC events.
- Coaches are expected to be punctual and organized.
- Coaches are expected to wear CESC and Adidas gear during training and games and refrain from wearing high school, college, or other soccer club attire at all CESC events.
- Coaches are expected to effectively create groups, maximize training time and involvement with the ball, and provide information and honest feedback and instruction.
- Coaches should do their best to display patience, honesty, and reliability.

PLAYER CODE OF CONDUCT

Columbus Express Soccer Club (CESC) players are expected to represent themselves, their teams, and CESC with dignity and honor and to be respectful to coaches, other players, parents, opposing teams, and officials on and off the field

Commitment and registration into Columbus Express Soccer Club requires agreement with the following:

Player Responsibilities

- Players will demonstrate respect towards other players, parents, opponents, coaches, officials, and spectators.
- Players will avoid aggressive, intimidating, or threatening language and behavior towards other players, parents, opponents, coaches, officials, and spectators.
- Players will refrain from profanity, alcohol, drugs, tobacco, and other illegal activity.
- Players agree to wear approved CESC uniform and training apparel and abstain from wearing high school, college, or other soccer club attire at all CESC events.
- Players must adopt a professional approach towards nutrition, hydration, sleep, hygiene, and performance preparation.
- Players will remain in good standing with their schools.
- Players will not question coaches about playing time or positions, as these decisions are determined by the coach for reasons that may not be evident to the player. (At any time, players may ask what steps they can take to improve their skills and contribute more to their team.)
- Players agree to adhere to the 24-Hour Policy before discussing concerns with the coach or Director of Coaching.
- Players agree to never criticize another player, coach, or the club in a public manner.
- Players adhere to all coach or staff instruction.
- Players are expected to be punctual and organized.

Behavior Expectations

The following behaviors by players will not be tolerated and could lead to suspension or dismissal of the player from CESC:

- Failure to meet any of the aforementioned responsibilities after reminders by coach or Director of Coaching.
- Any use or possession of an illegal substance.
- Any illegal actions or activity that occurs at a CESC event or while traveling to or from a CESC event.
- Any attempt to purposefully injure, abuse, or haze someone at a CESC event.

Behavior Consequences

- In the event that a player violates the Player Code of Conduct, the Director of Coaching and Executive Board will determine the appropriate disciplinary action.
- All decisions to suspend or dismiss a player from CESC will be made in consultation with the Board of Directors and will be final. In the event of suspension or dismissal, player fees will not be refunded. Players may not be eligible for future financial assistance if they violate the Player Code of Conduct.

PARENT / SPECTATOR CODE OF CONDUCT

Parents/spectators of Columbus Express Soccer Club (CESC) players are expected to represent themselves, their teams, and CESC with dignity and honor and to be respectful to the players, coaches, other parents, opposing teams, and officials on and off the field. Parents are expected to stay current with all financial commitments.

Commitment and registration into Columbus Express Soccer Club obligate the following agreement:

Parent / Spectator Responsibilities

- Parents/Spectators will demonstrate respect towards players, other parents, opponents, coaches, officials, and spectators.
- Parents/spectators will avoid aggressive, intimidating, or threatening language and behavior towards players, parents, opponents, coaches, officials, and spectators.
- Parents/spectators will refrain from using profanity, alcohol, drugs, and tobacco while traveling to and from and while attending all CESC events.
- Parents/spectators will not participate in any conversations regarding playing time or positions.
- Parents/spectators agree to adhere to the 24-Hour Policy before discussing concerns with a coach or Director of Coaching.
- Parents/spectators agree to never criticize a coach, player, or the club in a public manner.
- Parent/spectator criticism, instruction, and referee interaction are prohibited.
- Parents will stay current with all financial agreements and fees.

Parent / Spectator Expectations

The following behaviors by parents/spectators will not be tolerated and could lead to suspension or dismissal of the parent/spectator and/or player from CESC:

- Failure to meet any of the aforementioned responsibilities.
- Any use or possession of an illegal substance at a CESC event.
- Any illegal actions or activity at a CESC event or while traveling to or from a CESC event.
- Any attempt to purposefully injure, abuse, or haze someone at a CESC event.

Behavior Consequences

- In the event that a parent/spectator engages in any of the aforementioned behavior, the Director of Coaching and Executive Board will determine the appropriate disciplinary action.
- All decisions to suspend or dismiss a parent from CESC will be made in consultation with the Board of Directors and will be final. In the event of a suspension or dismissal from the club due to violation of the Code of Conduct, player fees will not be refunded, and families may not be eligible for financial assistance in the future.

SIDELINE BEHAVIOR POLICY

Columbus Express Soccer Club discourages and prohibits any negative or aggressive sideline behavior from coaches, parents, spectators, or players as outlined in the Coach, Player, and Parent/Spectator Codes of Conduct.

CESC believes that only positive reinforcement should be provided to players and officials by coaches and sideline spectators. Parents and spectators are expected to be encouraging and patient with the players and the officials.

Criticizing of players, teams, or officials is prohibited. Coaches will be removed from the program for repeated violations of this policy. Parents or family members will be subject to disciplinary action for violations of club policy or the Parent/Spectator Code of Conduct.

There should be *no negative interactions* at any time between coaches and referees; between coaches and opposing coaches or opposing players; between spectators and referees; and between spectators and opposing players.

The CESC Executive Board takes parent/spectator sideline behavior seriously. Parents, family members, or friends who cannot refrain from negative sideline behavior or who cannot maintain the club's standards of behavior should not attend CESC matches.

RIGHT TO REFUSE & TERMINATE

Coach Refusal

Columbus Express Soccer Club (CESC) reserves the right to refuse any coaches for any reason, except for reasons of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, reprisal, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, or if all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance programs. Reasons for refusal may include perpetual negative or abusive sideline behavior.

Coach Termination

CESC reserves the right to remove any coach for any reason at any time. Additional action may be required if necessary, including banning coaches from attending games as spectators and removing any future coaching rights. If coaches refuse to cooperate, they and their children may be banned from the club immediately and possibly permanently. Any further refusal to cooperate can result in police interaction.

Player Refusal

CESC reserves the right to refuse participation for any reason, except for reasons of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, reprisal, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or if all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance programs. Reasons for refusal may include negative or abusive parent/guardian behavior, negative or abusive player behavior, or repeated non-payment of fees.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION POLICY

Columbus Express Soccer Club (CESC) enforces a 24-hour policy when addressing a conflict. Complaints or concerns should be directed according to the following protocol:

Concerns regarding CESC coaches and/or managers should be addressed with the team coach. If a resolution is not satisfactory, document your concerns in writing to the Director of Coaching or appropriate director.

Concerns regarding your child's team should be addressed directly with your child's coach at the proper time and place. Please notify the team coach to schedule a proper time. If a resolution is not satisfactory, document your concerns in writing to the Director of Coaching or appropriate director.

If, after following the appropriate measures as listed above, and resolution is not satisfactory, document your concerns in writing to the attention of the CESC Executive Board President.

Complaints and concerns regarding CESC's player development policies, programs and coaching staff should be documented in writing and sent to the attention of the Director of Coaching.

Complaints and concerns regarding CESC's administrative policies should be documented in writing and sent to the attention of the CESC Executive Board President.

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

Youth sports provide an opportunity for children to build self-esteem, learn fundamental skills, and play in a healthy and safe environment. They also provide adults with the opportunity to be positive, supportive role models and to teach the value and importance of good sportsmanship. Unfortunately, incidents involving negative, aggressive, and unacceptable behavior towards players, parents, coaches, referees, and officials have increased in recent years. There is an ongoing referee shortage, and multiple studies have shown that verbal abuse from sideline spectators is a leading cause of referees quitting the game.

In alignment with the CESC Vision and Mission, the Executive Board intends for CESC to lead the way in modeling appropriate player and parent conduct in all of our competitive games, training, and events.

If a player or parent/spectator violates the Code of Conduct or Sideline Behavior Policy, that person will be subject to a disciplinary investigation and may be sanctioned with a written notice of permanent ZERO TOLERANCE. ZERO TOLERANCE means that should any violation of CESC's Code of Conduct or other policy occur in the future, the sanctioned person will be expelled from our club and barred from attending any CESC games, training, or events.

At the discretion of the Executive Board, the player or players of a parent/spectator under ZERO TOLERANCE may also be expelled from the club.

FINANCIAL POLICY

Families must commit to the full annual payment amount and payment schedule as determined at the time of player registration for Columbus Express. Failure to keep payments current may result in players not being eligible for play until payments are up to date according to the agreed-upon payment plan and schedule.

Any players who are *not fully registered with Indiana Soccer* will not be added to the proposed team and may not participate in any training or matches.

Players who are *registered but have not made the first payment* may not participate in training or matches.

Families who encounter financial difficulties during the playing year should reach out to the Club Registrar to discuss changes to their payment plan. Players who have monthly payments that fall behind without communication to the club will have the following consequences:

- One missed payment (<1 month behind) = Players are still eligible to participate fully in team trainings and matches.
- Two missed payments (>1 month behind) = Players may train with their teams but not play in matches.
- More than two missed payments (>2 months behind) = Players may not attend any training sessions or matches.

REFUND POLICY

Registering to play with Columbus Express is a commitment to complete the playing year and meet all financial obligations for that playing year. CESC understands that circumstances sometimes change between tryouts and throughout the course of the playing seasons (Fall, Winter, and Spring) for reasons out of a family's control. Refunds are not guaranteed, but the club agrees to consider reasonable refund requests that are made in writing to the Registrar or Director of Coaching.

CESC will only consider refund requests for those players in good standing with the club. Conflicts with practice schedules or games are not grounds for refunds. There will be no reimbursements granted for practices or games cancelled due to weather, acts of God, or forfeits. Refund requests due to injury should be made within 2 weeks of injury, and families should be prepared to supply a note from a physician if requested.

Additionally, CESC incurs administrative costs associated with registration of players and planning (administrative, staff, insurance, etc.) at the beginning of each soccer year, and these costs will not be refunded. *At no time after registration will a full refund be approved.*

All refunds require the approval of the CESC Executive Board.

UNIFORM POLICY

Columbus Express Soccer Club's official apparel and equipment sponsor is adidas. This relationship is critical to the success of Express programming. As such, all uniforms, training gear, cold weather gear, and bags should be adidas branded.

Players registered for any CESC team must purchase a uniform and training gear package at the beginning of the season from our retail partner. Players are required to wear appropriate CESC issued gear to each training session and game. There are no exceptions to this policy. Players are responsible for the upkeep of this gear.

Competitive uniform purchases happen on a 2-year cycle. Continuing players will have the opportunity to reuse the prior year's uniform if it is within the 2-year cycle. New uniforms must be purchased every 2 years. Uniform numbers will be assigned by CESC.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Columbus Express Soccer Club players are expected to attend practice. At times, conflicts of training will be unavoidable and should be communicated to the coach as soon as possible. A player may see a reduction in playing time when his/her practice time is less than that of his/her teammates.

In no situation is it acceptable to miss any State Cup, ISL, National League, or US Youth Soccer sanctioned event. Inability to attend training, matches, and events may result in immediate dismissal from the team.

Pre-Academy & Academy Groups: 7U-10U

Attendance is expected within the Pre-Academy and Academy age groups; however, CESC does not discourage players from participating in additional sports or activities. In the event of an absence, families must communicate with the Academy Director as soon as possible. A player may see a reduction in playing time when his/her practice time is less than that of his/her teammates.

Junior Age Groups: 11U-14U

Players in these age groups playing multiple sports must understand that attendance at practices and games with a CESC team is not optional. Players missing practice for illness, school, church, or family should notify the coach or Director of Coaching as soon as possible. A player may see a reduction in playing time when his/her practice time is less than that of his/her teammates.

Senior Age Groups: 15U-19U

Attendance at all practices/games is required. Players missing scheduled events for illness, school, church, or family should notify the coach or Director of Coaching as soon as possible. A player may see a reduction in playing time when his/her practice time is less than that of his/her teammates.

Attendance is expected for all CESC training and matches. Failure to attend CESC events may result in reduction of playing time, match suspension, forfeiture of playing opportunities, and/or dismissal from Columbus Express Soccer Club programming.

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

Columbus Express Soccer Club (CESC) recognizes that social media is a part of everyday life for most players, families, and sports teams. The club's social media guidelines are designed to protect our players and our club.

Specific Guidelines

1. Personal websites or social media posts created by teams, coaches, or players which use the CESC logo must be approved by the Director of Coaching or the Columbus Express Executive Board prior to public display.
2. Columbus Express Soccer Club DOES NOT recommend our coaches or staff have any direct or private online social networking communication with players.
3. Players, coaches, and families should not include other CESC players in their social media posts without the permission of those players or parents.
4. Coaches and players should remember they are representing Columbus Express Soccer Club in their online communication and activities and be responsible, respectful, and positive.
5. Coaches, players, and families should avoid engaging in dialogue that is disparaging Columbus Express Soccer Club players or coaches or our competitors.

Any violation of these guidelines could result in consequences, including, but not limited to, suspension or dismissal from Columbus Express Soccer Club.

GUEST PLAYING OUTSIDE THE CLUB

Columbus Express Soccer Club players must ask for permission from the Director of Coaching before participating in events with other clubs. Indiana Soccer has strict rules about how and when players may participate in events with other clubs. The Director of Coaching will approve or decline the request. If approved, the Director of Coaching will organize the logistics of getting a player card.

MOVEMENT BETWEEN TEAMS

Columbus Express Soccer Club seeks situations to ensure that all players are sufficiently challenged and playing at a level to encourage development. Coaches may suggest a new team for training or games, in order to put a player into a better playing environment. All moves from one team to another must be approved by the Director of Coaching.

PLAYER FAILURE TO PLACE POLICY

Registration of a player with Columbus Express Soccer Club (CESC) does not guarantee a place in the Club's Programs. CESC directors and staff work to provide as many players as possible with the opportunity to play, but there may be instances where a player will be denied an opportunity to play. Such instances include, but are not limited to, lack of player ability, insufficient team numbers, insufficient coaching staff, late registrations, unsuccessful payments, and missing payment deadlines.

PLAYER RELEASE POLICY

Following player commitment and completion of registration, the player is considered registered with Columbus Express Soccer Club (CESC). Each player is bound to CESC for the entire playing year from August 1 through July 1 of the following year. Each family is obligated to fulfill the financial commitment of playing soccer at Columbus Express.

CESC will not consider a request for player to be released from the program during the soccer year until that player has paid his/her entire financial obligation to the club.

PLAYER PICK UP POLICY

Parents or guardians must drop off and pick up their players from practices and matches on time. The club understands that many families have busy schedules that can make getting to and from practices challenging; however, our coaches also have demanding schedules and may need to leave immediately following training sessions. The club expects parents to be punctual and respectful of their coach's time.

Columbus Express Soccer Club coaches are certified by the U.S. Center for Safesport and must adhere to policies pertaining to player safety. This includes remaining at the field until the last player's transportation has arrived and not leaving young players alone without supervision. As part of this effort to ensure player safety, coaches are asked to have a "two deep" player policy, meaning coaches should avoid being alone with one unrelated minor child without another adult or another player present. Should a coach need to leave the field area while children are still present, children should only be left with another adult who has completed the U.S. Center for Safesport training.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Columbus Express Soccer Club does not formally organize team or player transportation to CESC events, including training sessions, matches, tournaments, and social events.

Parents or guardians are required to organize their own transportation for any players who are under the age of 18. Players who are 18 or older may organize their own transportation. CESC is not liable for any events, illnesses, or accidents that occur during transportation arranged by players, parents, or guardians.

The club strongly discourages any coaches or paid staff from transporting minor athletes. If transportation of minor athletes by club staff is necessary, it must adhere to the U.S. Center for Safesport One-on-One Interactions policy at all times. The adult CESC staff member may transport a minor athlete and adhere to the policy if there is a second adult staff member (also certified by U.S. Center for Safesport) present or if there are two minor players present together. The only exception to this policy is in the event of an Emergency, such as a medical emergency.

SOLICITATIONS, PROMOTIONS, AND DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS POLICY

Any solicitations, promotions, distributions of written or other materials or any other advertisement not previously approved by Columbus Express Soccer Club is strictly prohibited at practices, games, or other activities sponsored by the club.

CONCUSSION POLICY

Columbus Express Soccer Club understands the serious consequences of impact-caused brain trauma. CESC's Concussion Policy is intended to provide guidelines regarding concussions and protocols to increase safety for our athletes diagnosed or suspected of having a concussion. CESC strives to educate members about concussion safety, identification, and prevention.

CESC coaches, managers, and board members are required to have all necessary concussion training every two years.

Coaches and managers should be familiar with signs and symptoms of a concussion and be able to identify the signs and symptoms of a concussion.

- **LEARN:** Familiarize with signs and symptoms of concussion
- **IDENTIFY:** Recognize the signs and symptoms of concussion
- **REMOVE:** When in doubt, sub them out. It is best to remove a player from competition if signs of a concussion are present or suspected.
- **MONITOR:** Players suffering from a concussion should only return on a gradual basis as recommended by their medical providers or athletic trainers.

WEATHER POLICIES

The goal of Columbus Express Soccer Club (CESC) is to have scheduled soccer training and matches on time when possible. However, there are times when weather adversely affects this, sometimes requiring adjustments or rescheduling.

The Director of Coaching will make all final decisions about the cancellation of club training. If another local organization has cancelled, that does not guarantee that CESC will also cancel. CESC will attempt to make final decisions about cancellations by 3:30 PM, although training may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of the Director of Coaching, team coaches, or Executive Board.

Field Closings

If Columbus Parks & Recreation closes Richard Wigh or Blackwell Park soccer fields due to weather or poor field conditions, CESC will try to find an alternative training venue whenever possible.

Heat

The risk of heat related illness from sport activity increases with the temperature. Columbus Express Soccer Club will issue the following rules when the Heat Index exceeds 90° F:

- 89° F & below: Normal Play & Regular Hydration Patterns
- 90°-95° F: Mandatory Hydration Breaks Every 25 Minutes
- 96°-102° F: Mandatory Hydration Breaks Every 15 Minutes
- 103° F & above: All Outside Activity Cancelled

Rain

In the event of rain, CESC will continue as scheduled with training or matches. It is recommended that players dress appropriately for the weather and bring large plastic bags to cover their belongings when it rains.

Lightning

Coaches, Managers, and Administrators at Columbus Express Soccer Club will be aware of any lightning in the area during trainings and games. In the case of lightning within 10 miles, all fields must be cleared. Teams will seek shelter in cars or closed storage areas and try to wait out the storm. Delays will be 30 minutes following the last lightning strike. Decisions to resume training or matches will be made by the Director of Coaching, team coach, or Referees.

Snow Days

While the majority of our players are Bartholomew County School Corporation students, many players travel from outside of the community. The closing of local schools does not automatically mean that Columbus Express Soccer Club functions are cancelled. In the event of a school cancellation, the Director of Coaching will determine if training still occurs in the evening.

Cold Weather

As a general rule, Columbus Express Soccer Club will cancel outside training programs if the projected temperature is to be below 25°F at the start of training. Players are more susceptible to injuries during the cold weather, particularly from pulled muscles. Players are encouraged to wear appropriate clothing to help retain body heat while allowing adequate movement without creating a safety hazard.