



### **Guidelines for Coaches**

PCFC relies on volunteer coaches to sustain its mission and goals. There are opportunities available to be a coach or assistant coach at PCFC if you are interested.

As a coach, you are in a unique and privileged position to be a leader for a group of young players. It is incumbent upon you to set an example of PCFC's values and carry out PCFC's mission and goals. You have the opportunity to create an unforgettable experience for the players, and with that position comes a set of responsibilities.

**Equipment Needs.** The club will provide equipment and field space for all coaches. If you are a coach, please do not spend your money or resources purchasing things like cones, match balls, or bibs for your team. In addition, the PCFC has pop-up goals, agility poles, tents, and pop-up benches in its storage for use during practices and matches. If you need any help with equipment, please contact Joel Correa on the team app.

**Safe Soccer Clearance.** Beginning August 2025, Georgia Soccer has enacted change to its Risk Management policy that will require all background screenings to be adjudicated through the US Soccer Learning Center. Therefore, PCFC is now requiring all coaches to go through US Soccer's Safe Soccer Clearance. To get clearance, there are three phases you must complete:

- Phase 1: SafeSport, Introduction to Safe and Healthy Playing Environments, and Code of Conduct
- Phase 2: Positive Soccer Environments and Soccer for All
- Phase 3: Background Screening

You can access the US Soccer Safe Soccer Clearance website at: <https://learning.ussoccer.com/safe-soccer>. You will need to sign up to access your programs.

In addition, all coaches are mandated reporters in the state of Georgia pursuant to O.C.G.A § 19-7-5. Therefore, as a youth coach in Georgia, you have a legal obligation to report any reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities, such as the Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) or law enforcement. Therefore, all new coaches are required to take a mandated reporter training available through the Georgia Office of the Child Advocate at <https://ocga.georgia.gov/training/mandated-reporting>.



If you have any questions about the required trainings, please contact Joel Correa or Gavin Meech on the team app.

**Communication.** As a coach, communication is important. You should use the team app chat to regularly communicate with the families. Offer feedback to parents and be responsive to communication from families.

**Encourage Development.** The players want to have fun playing soccer. Focusing on having fun and the development of the players instead of the victories and defeats will yield a more positive experience for you and the players.

With the understanding that it may not always be possible for a variety of reasons, you should strive to give players the opportunity to play at least 50 percent of the time on match days. Players can only improve if they are given opportunities to learn from match day experience.

Encourage the players to challenge themselves, reward effort, and promote teamwork and fair play. Players should learn to love to win but learn to lose so they can improve.

**Be Positive.** Fostering a positive environment is crucial. Provide clear instructions, guidance, and feedback to athletes. Be supportive. Acknowledge effort.

Positive enforcement is the best way to help the players achieve their goals and overcome a fear of failure or disappointment, while playing a sport that should bring them joy. Mistakes are an essential part of development as a soccer player. Focus on the lessons learned from the mistakes and encourage the players to take ownership of their own goals and standards.

Applaud good plays by your team as well as good plays by the opposing team. Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from youth sports.

**Respect Referees.** Referees are essential for match days, and PCFC is committed to supporting referees. There will inevitably be situations in which we see the game or a play differently than a referee. Please be respectful of referees and their calls.

**Respect Opposing Teams.** Players should learn how to cope with the stress and challenge of competition with fair play and without resorting to abusive, dishonest, or unsportsmanlike tactics on the field. Remember that players are looking to you to learn how to handle the stress and challenges that come with competition. Please refrain from engaging in any



inappropriate behavior on the sidelines directed towards opposing players or coaches. If you have any concerns, please communicate those to the club.

**Thank you** for coaching and for your commitment to upholding PCFC's mission, goals, and values.