



# Player/Parent Handbook

[www.VISALIAUNITED.com](http://www.VISALIAUNITED.com)

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**Vice President:**

**Secretary:** Sonia Gonzales

**Treasurer:** Rogelio Sanchez

**Registrar:** Andrew Moreno

**Coaching Director Girls:** Mike Ridenour

**Coaching Director Boys:** Eduardo Ojeda

## **Mission Statement**

Visalia United is committed to developing athletes to their full potential as soccer players and individuals through the use of quality training methods, licensed coaches, hard work and the integration of individual development with that of the team without compromising ethics or integrity for a win or personal gain.

## **Philosophy**

Visalia United devotes considerable financial and personnel resources to our program. We believe there is a great future for all players with opportunities to play soccer in high school and colleges, if the proper training is provided and the players make the commitment. At Visalia United we will offer the best program we can, not a second class program. Rest assured that we will do everything reasonable to give you the right program, which will motivate you to exceed your expectations.

While the Officers/Directors of Visalia United are committed to providing necessary resources and the coaches are prepared to implement appropriate training, it is the commitment of the player and parent as members of VUSC that complete the program. Without players and parents fully engaging in support of Visalia United, the result becomes one-sided and eventually, proper development of players is not possible.

## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this Handbook is to provide players and parents a source of information regarding:

- Player expectations and responsibilities
- Parent expectations and responsibilities
- Playing league program expectations

Please use this Handbook as a reference. It can help to provide answers to many of the questions players and parents might have during the course of the year. Keep in mind this is a work-in progress.

**We do value your input and opinions.**

## 2. Player Expectations and Responsibilities

While Visalia United is all about you, the player, we ask all players to understand and abide by specific commitments they need to make to be a competitive player. Everything we do is to make your soccer “experience” the best it can be. As a player you should:

- Play for the fun of it, not just to please your parents or coach
- For games and training, be on time and prepared with proper equipment including cleats, shin guards, water, etc.
- Commit to two days training per week, plus occasionally a third day of training or scrimmage as needed to prepare for upcoming events such as tournaments
- Engage in individual work or “homework” to further develop skills during non-practice days
- Recognizing Visalia United FC should be your first sports priority and players should not play on other teams
- Play by the rules
- Never argue with or complain about referee calls/decisions

- Control your temper and do not retaliate when you feel you have been wronged.
- Concentrate on playing soccer and on affecting the outcome of the game with your best effort. Work equally hard for your team and for yourself.
- Be a good sport by cheering all good plays, whether it is your teams or your opponents. Treat all players as you would like to be treated.
- Remember that the goals are to improve skill and have fun
- Cooperate with your coach's, teammates

### **Player Responsibility**

Being a competitive player requires that you take on another level of responsibility for yourself as a student-athlete. It is no longer enough to admit to your coach that you are not fully ready for training or that you have not made any investment in your own development aside from the formal training set aside for the team. It is expected that you will perform skills work with the ball on your own time as well.

### **Practice Guidelines**

- No cell phone/electronic device use during practice unless in an emergency. If you need to contact a parent, let the coach know during the water break.
- Be prepared: must have shin guards, cleats and water
- Must have gear on and be prepared to begin practice on time
- Players warm up, drill and exercise together as a team
- Players will not go to restrooms alone. They will be accompanied by another player. Always use the "buddy system".

### **Conduct**

- Positive attitudes
- No gossiping about other players. Any issues with players should be addressed with the coach.
- Show respect to players and **coaches** at all times

## **Property**

- Assist with set-up and tear down of training equipment
- Leave practice and game areas cleaner than when you arrived

## **Game Guidelines**

- Use of foul language can result in disciplinary action
- Players are expected to arrive 1 hour prior to game time prepared with gear, ready to warm up.
- Players are expected to stay with the team in the designated area prior to, during and after the game until released by the coach
- Players will be responsible to pick up trash on our side of the field.

### **3. Parent Expectations and Responsibilities**

The role that the parents play in the life of a soccer player has a tremendous impact on the player's experience and effectiveness. Parental support of your child, the coach, and game officials is vital to our organization. Encourage your child to "honor the game" by respecting their teammates, game officials, coaches, opponents.

The following are additional expectations. If you have any questions about these, please discuss them with your coach.

**Let the coach's coach:** This applies before, during and after games and practices. If a player has too many coaches, it is confusing for them and their performance usually declines. Instead of coaching your player, encourage good performance and ask the player how they can improve on a specific aspect.

**Encourage your child to talk to the coach:** If they are having difficulties in practices or games, encourage them to speak directly to the coach. This is a big part of player and individual development and by doing so, your child is claiming ownership of their preparation for and performance during the game.

**Understand and display appropriate game behavior:** Remember your child models the behaviors you set forth for them. If you are a distraction on the sideline, your child (and others) may display the same type of behavior.

**Support the program:** Get involved, Volunteer, Help out with fundraisers, car-pool; anything to support the program.

**Communication:** The following are some guidelines for efficient and successful communications:

- Always provide the coach and team manager with up-to-date contact information including email address and phone numbers
- If a player is going to miss or be late to practice or a scrimmage, parents must email allowing as much notice as possible. It is also recommended to follow up with a phone call.
- If a player is unavailable for a game, we need at least 24 hour notice so that if the need arises, we are able to get a “guest player” in time for our game. We will be fined for any games forfeited due to insufficient players.
- Report player injuries/illness within 24 hours. In order to protect the player, serious injuries (head injuries, broken bone, etc) will require a doctor’s note clearing the player before they are able to return to practices, scrimmages, and/or games
- Coaches are open to and encourage questions by parents and players concerning their place on the team
- If a parent or player wishes to meet with the coach, they should call or email to schedule a time
- It is inappropriate to discuss issues before, during, or after games, without scheduling a meeting with the coach

### **Chain of Communication (problem escalation process)**

Not everything will run smoothly. A player or parent may feel uncomfortable or ill-treated by some event. We know there may be problems on every team and the program wants to hear all sides of any issue, but many problems are easily resolved when discussed in a respectful way. The suggested method of communication is e-mail, unless time is a critical factor. We want you to make us aware of any issues you might have so we can correct the problem or, at least, offer explanations. We have established the following means of handling these issues based on years of experience:

1. For normal issues, e-mail the coach
2. For urgent matters, discuss with the coach before or after practice, not during.

If you have not received a reply within 3 days or you are unable to resolve the matter in this manner, you should contact Visalia United Coaching Director.

### **4. Playing League Program Expectations**

As a competitive soccer program, it is expected that parents and players make the league a high priority behind academics. Other recreational or optional social events should not take precedence over commitment to the team in terms of involvement in practices and games.

#### **Fall League:**

September-November (Fall League competition will end prior to start of high school season to avoid CIF rule conflicts)

#### **Post Season:**



November - March (includes state competition tournament and tryouts for the coming year)

### **Spring League:**

March-June (team formation/development for coming year)

### **Playing Time**

Playing time at a game is determined by the coach only. Factors that will influence play time include:

- Effort at practices, scrimmages, and games
- Improvements at practices, scrimmages, and games
- Commitment to practices, scrimmages, and games
- Impact the player has on the game
- Flow of the game
- Discipline on and off the field

Not attending/participating in practices, scrimmages or games (training activity) without satisfactory excuse and appropriately early communications of the absence, can also significantly impact playing time as it reflects commitment and effort. An example of possible playing time restrictions for such absences can be:

- a. 1<sup>st</sup> missed training activity: sit out up to one half of one game
- b. 2<sup>nd</sup> missed training activity: sit out up to one full game
- c. 3<sup>rd</sup> missed training activity: sit out up to two full games
- d. 4<sup>th</sup> missed training activity: meeting with player, parent and coach. Disciplinary action can include removal from the team.

## **Placements (evaluations/tryouts)**

Placements are among the most stressful days in the life of a competitive soccer player. It is important that each player put their best effort into all aspects of the tryout as no player is guaranteed a placement. Within 3 weeks of the tryout, each player will be notified as to whether they are placed on a team or not. Although we hope to maintain lots of players on all our teams, the facts are that as the talent pool increases, some players may not be selected for a team. Please understand that in competitive soccer, unlike recreational soccer, there is a commitment by all involved to assemble the best competitive team possible.

## **Tournaments**

Tournaments are very complex subject. Much time goes into the selection of which tournaments a team may attend. The philosophy differs from that of some clubs in Northern California. We are convinced that more is not necessarily better. Tournaments provide the opportunity to play against different teams, many of which are highly skilled. It is essential that players compete against other styles of play. While tournaments are often fun for players and families and are typically strong team-bonding events, they can be an expensive competitive venue, sometimes costing as much as \$1150 for team entry fees alone.

A team is at a tournament for the purpose of playing several soccer games. Coaches will clearly define their rules for those days, such as curfew, meals, rest periods, use of player's cell phone and acceptable forms of entertainment. Appropriate behavior by players is expected. Needless to say, appropriate behavior is expected of all in attendance.

It is expected that ALL players will participate in every tournament. There will not be an a la carte methodology for attending these events. If a family cannot commit to attending all selected events, we suggest, before a team is formed, or as soon as possible thereafter, the family communicate with the coach.

**Sign and return this page to the team coach**

I have read this Player/Parent handbook and I agree to abide by the policies of Visalia United FC noted therein. I also agree to educate my family and any guests that I bring to a VUFC event so they will be aware of and abide by the same policies as applicable. I further understand that by signing below, I am committing to VUFC the playing season from July through June. I also understand that at the end of this playing season my commitment to VUFC is complete. Likewise, at the end of this season, VUFC’s commitment to me is complete.

**Team Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Age Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Player Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Player Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Team Coach**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

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**Parent Signature**

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**Date**

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**Parent Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Team Coach**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**