BAC Travel Coach Information & Code of Conduct

Season information, expectations, and the code of conduct for all BAC travel coaches

Welcome to BAC Travel Soccer! We appreciate your commitment to volunteering as a coach and helping create a positive, development-focused experience for our players. This packet provides general season information as well as the BAC Coaches Code of Conduct, which outlines behavior expectations and coaching responsibilities to ensure a successful and rewarding season.

Questions? Contact BAC Leadership at TravelProgram@bedfordac.com.

General season information

Coach commitment summary

- Coaches are expected to commit to the full season, including all practices, games, and team events. This includes participation in trainer-led practices.
- Communicate any conflicts early with assistant coaches and BAC Leadership to arrange coverage as needed.
- Coaches are expected to attend BAC Coaches Meetings (1-2 per season).

Communication

- Open and timely communication with parents is critical. Coaches are expected to provide clear updates regarding practice schedules, game times, and any changes that may occur.
- Send reminders before games regarding time, location, and uniform colors. BAC encourages the use of the Spond app to help relay information to parents. You can also use the GotSport platform to email parents.
- Ensure parents are aware of the BAC Player & Parent Code of Conduct. Reinforce these expectations throughout the season.
- Address player and parent concerns respectfully and in a timely manner. If concerns cannot be resolved through direct communication with parents or players, escalate the matter to BAC Leadership for guidance.

Uniforms & equipment

- Players must wear matching uniforms (jersey, shorts, socks) for all games.
- **Home jerseys are RED; Away jerseys are WHITE**. Players should always bring both jerseys to every game.
- Shin guards and soccer cleats are mandatory. No jewelry/watches are permitted.
- Coaches should check players' equipment before games to ensure compliance.
- BAC Leadership will provide all head coaches with a coach kit (bag, first aid supplies, pinnies, etc.) at the start of the season. Contact BAC Leadership if you need additional supplies throughout the season.

Game day procedures

- Arrive early to set up and prepare the team.
- Introduce yourself to referees and opposing coaches before the game.
- BAC Leadership will provide all head coaches with finalized rosters and coach cards before the first match. Bring **two copies** of your roster, including any club pass players, to each match.
- You **MUST** wear your valid coach's card on a lanyard while on the sideline.
- It is the home team's responsibility to confirm the final score with the referee and report it via the NHSL website within 48 hours: soccernh.com/nh-soccer-league/score-reporting.
- Both coaches complete the NHSL game feedback form after every game, home or away. It is on the same NHSL score reporting page.

Field setup & parking

- **Greenfield Farms:** The first team of the day sets up goals and corner flags. The last team of the day puts them away along the fence line.
- **Sportsman Field:** The last team of the day should put corner flags away in the BAC storage container. Goals are not to be moved.
- Pick up trash and respect our fields.
- No dogs allowed per town rules.
- Parking:
  - **Greenfield Farms:** Use the designated lot, or park on side streets nearby if additional parking is necessary. **NO parking allowed** on Greenfield Parkway or grass.
  - **Sportsman Field:** Use the designated lot. The lower High School lot across the street is available for additional parking.
- For every other field, see the Field Locations page on bedfordac.com for addresses, maps, and parking.

Safety & health

- Register as a BAC coach and complete SafeSport training and background checks via GotSport as directed by BAC Leadership. The BAC Coach Registration, Background Check and SafeSport guide walks through each step.
- Inspect fields and equipment before every practice and game.
- Be aware of concussion symptoms and follow return-to-play protocols. Players with suspected concussions should receive medical clearance before returning to play.
- Maintain a substance-free environment during all BAC player-involved activities.
- **Electronic communication with players must include a parent or another adult.** Never text, message, or email a player one-on-one. This follows SafeSport minor athlete protection standards.
- **Report safety or abuse concerns promptly** to BAC Leadership at TravelProgram@bedfordac.com. Concerns involving abuse may also be reported directly to the U.S. Center for SafeSport at uscenterforsafesport.org.

Tournaments

- BAC will reimburse teams for one tournament per season (Fall/Spring). Speak with BAC Leadership before registering your team.

Inclement weather

- In the event of a weather-related cancellation, BAC will communicate with coaches and parents as soon as a decision is made. Coaches are also encouraged to notify parents.
- Weather-related game cancellations: it is up to the home club to determine field conditions. If it is determined that home games need to be cancelled, BAC will post to the NH Soccer League website under "Field Closures." Once notified, BAC coaches should reach out to visiting coaches immediately to alert them of the closure, as well as contact the BAC scheduler to start the process of rescheduling the game. Fields will only be closed if they are unsafe to play on that day. If you have any questions about whether a game has been cancelled due to weather, check the field closure website. Do not email BAC Leadership.
- Thunder and lightning:
    - If you hear thunder or see lightning, the game/practice is to be suspended immediately (or not started if prior to kickoff). All coaches, players, and spectators should leave the field immediately and get to a safe area. There is a **MANDATORY 30-minute waiting period** from the last hearing of thunder or sight of lightning before play may resume. Referees and/or the League Director will determine if the game will continue or be cancelled. Coaches will determine if a practice will continue or be cancelled.

Other cancellations

- Do not take it upon yourself to cancel or reschedule a game!
- Game cancellations may only be done by the club or the league.
- Game rescheduling **must** go through the BAC scheduler.
- Note: not having enough players to field a team is not a reason to cancel. Use the club pass and plan. Refer to NHSL rules for more details about club passing players.

Resources

- Familiarize yourself with BAC policies and NHSL rules: soccernh.com/nh-soccer-league/rules-policies.
- Game schedules can be found at soccernh.com under NH Soccer League.
- Use BAC-approved coaching resources (e.g., The Coaching Manual) to deliver engaging, development-focused sessions. Access to this platform will be provided by BAC at the start of the season.

Key reminders

- Emphasize player development and sportsmanship.
- Respect referees, opposing coaches, players, and parents.
- Communicate clearly and often with parents and players.
- Encourage a fun, positive environment where players can grow and enjoy soccer.

BAC Coaches Code of Conduct

Coaches play a vital role in creating a positive environment for our players and families. As a representative of BAC and the Town of Bedford, coaches are expected to uphold the highest standards of respect, professionalism, and sportsmanship. By accepting a volunteer coaching position, you agree to the expectations outlined below. This code applies at every BAC activity, including practices, games, tournaments, club trips, meetings and events, and to communications about the club or the people in it, whether in person, by email or text, in group chats, or online.

Player-centered coaching

- Emphasize player development, safety, and building confidence, while encouraging a positive approach to competition.
- Create a positive learning environment where players feel encouraged to take risks, make mistakes, and grow.
- Use positive reinforcement and constructive feedback to build player confidence and self-esteem.
- Ensure fair and meaningful playing time, particularly in younger age groups.

Sportsmanship & respect

- Treat all players, parents, referees, opposing teams, volunteers, and equipment with respect.
- Do not use foul or discriminatory language or obscene gestures.
- Never engage in any verbal, physical, emotional, or sexual abuse/harassment.
- Respect referees. BAC fully supports U.S. Soccer's Referee Abuse Prevention (RAP) policy. Any threats, intimidation, or abuse (in-person or online) directed at referees may result in immediate removal from BAC and possible legal action. For more information, visit ussoccer.com/rap.
- Never argue with referees. Seek clarification respectfully when necessary. Your behavior sets the tone for your team.
- Enforce and support an anti-bullying policy to create a positive, inclusive team environment where all players, regardless of background, ability, or identity, feel respected and valued.
- Communicate clearly and professionally with families and players, and avoid behavior that demeans, intimidates, or embarrasses players or families.
- Maintain a substance-free environment during all BAC player-involved activities.
- **Respect for volunteers and Board members:** BAC is an all-volunteer club. Harassment, intimidation, abusive communications, targeted personal attacks, or threats toward fellow coaches, referees, Board members, coordinators, or volunteers will not be tolerated, whether at a field, in a meeting, or in an email. Coaches are held to the same standard in how they treat players, families, fellow volunteers, referees, and sponsors.
- **Communication and social media:** Use respectful communication in emails, texts, group chats, social media, and any other message related to BAC or its people. Negative or disparaging public posts about referees, coaches, players, volunteers, or the club are prohibited. Communications, public or private, that include harassment, threats, bullying, intimidation, defamatory statements, or targeted personal attacks may result in disciplinary action. Concerns should be addressed privately and respectfully.

Compliance with BAC & league policies

- Abide by BAC policies, including behavior expectations, playing time standards, referee respect, and health/safety protocols.
- Follow NHSL league rules, including club pass procedures, roster requirements, maximum allowed goal differential, accurate score reporting, and the game feedback form.

Accountability

- Coaches will be responsible for paying fines resulting from red cards, misconduct, or any other NHSL violations. **BAC will no longer be covering these costs.** Any fines must be paid prior to returning to practices/games.
- All offenses will be reviewed. BAC Leadership reserves the right to impose additional fines and/or suspensions above and beyond those determined by the NHSL/NHSA. Depending on the circumstances and severity, action may include a written warning, suspension from games, practices, or club activities, restriction of participation privileges (including club events and club trips), removal from the coaching position, or removal from BAC.
- Where the Board restricts a coach's participation beyond a single event, it will tell the coach in writing what was decided and the conduct it is based on, and the coach may send a written response to the President. Club leadership may act immediately when needed to protect the safety of players, families, officials, or volunteers, with Board review to follow.
- The full club-wide Code of Conduct, which also covers players, parents, volunteers, and sponsors, is posted at bedfordac.com/code-of-conduct.

Acknowledgment: By registering as a coach or serving as a volunteer coach with BAC, you agree to abide by this Coaches Code of Conduct and the club-wide BAC Code of Conduct posted at bedfordac.com/code-of-conduct. No separate form is needed. Violations may result in fines, suspension, or dismissal from your coaching role.