



# Sequoia FC

## Policies and Procedures Handbook

Updated: February 2022

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## 1. About the Club

### 1.1. Name

- This Club shall be known as Sequoia FC.
- Sequoia FC is a registered 501c3 organization.

### 1.2. Mission Statement

- Competitive Soccer Program: To provide motivated athletes, living in rural Northern California, affordable training and the opportunity to play soccer at the highest level they desire.
- Outreach Program: To provide underserved children exposure to fun, appropriate soccer and other activities, with a focus on (a) fostering a love for physical activity, (b) obesity reduction, and (c) at risk youth diversion.

### 1.3. Colors and Logo

- Representative colors for the Club will be Green, Black, and White.
- This is subject to change based on board vote.
- The Board will have a final decision on the Club logo.
- Use of the Club logo requires Board approval.

## 2. Governance

### 2.1. Affiliations

- The Club will be affiliated with:
  - NorCal Premier Soccer
  - US Club Soccer
- Teams will be registered with:
  - US Club Soccer

### 2.2. Governing Authorities

The Club shall be governed by the policy and procedures adopted by its Governing Board (hereafter called the Sequoia FC Board, or Board) and the rules and regulations established by the associations with which this organization is affiliated (i.e. NorCal Premier Soccer and US Club Soccer).

The Board will review, refine and vote on all club issues pertaining to the financial operations, appointed positions, and other executive and/or legislative issues.

### 2.3. Board of Directors

Sequoia FC Board meetings are held approximately on a monthly basis. Club members are welcome to attend, and will be provided the opportunity to address the Board, but will not have voting privileges.

Sequoia FC Board is comprised of the following membership:

#### President

- Responsible for ensuring club policy and procedure are adhered to.
- Oversees operation and chairs Sequoia FC Board meetings.
- Has access to club and team bank accounts for oversight

#### Vice President

- Responsible for communications to parents and affiliations.
- Leads action to resolve any Parent or Player Code of Conduct violations or financial disciplinary actions (for example, pulling player passes, behavior issues, unpaid Club dues).

#### Treasurer

- Keeps accurate records of all Sequoia FC monies, and maintains checking accounts.
- Prepares and presents budgets for the Club to the Sequoia FC Board.
- Prepares all necessary financial reports for the Club.

#### Secretary

- Records minutes of all meetings and keeps these records for the Club.
- Writes letters as needed for the Club.

#### Up to three additional Board Members

- Advisory members to support Club operation and mission by contributing specific expertise.

Board positions will serve 2 years. These positions will rotate election years.

- The President, Treasurer, and two advisory member positions will be elected on even years.
- Vice President, Secretary, and one advisory member will be elected on odd years.
- Vacant positions may be filled by Board vote as necessary.

## **2.4. Staff Positions**

Staff provide vital support to Club operation and function, but do not have voting privileges. Staff positions include:

#### Club Registrar

- Coordinates Club registration, including distribution of forms, player passes and other needed items to stay current with governing affiliates
- Position receives a stipend per player as decided by the Board annually.

#### Director of Coaching (DOC)

- The DOC oversees and coordinates coaching staff, Club development, community outreach and technical programming as well as other duties as needed.
- The DOC may also serve as a coach.
- See Section 2.5 for additional detail.
- Position receives a stipend per player as decided by the Board annually.

#### Scheduler

- Coordinates games for all teams, referees and fields as needed
- Position receives seasonal stipend per team.

#### Administrative Assistant(s)

- Works with Board and DOC to produce and advertise Club activities and events. Sends information to the club as needed by the Board
- Stipend as determined by the Board is received for this position.

#### Webmaster

- Maintains website on behalf of the Club with items being posted under direct supervision of the Sequoia FC Board and/or Club Director.
- Website will be maintained with timely information
- Stipend as determined by the Board is received for this position.

#### Advertising Coordinator

- Promotes the Club via social media platforms with items being posted under direct supervision of the Board and/or DOC.
- Stipend as determined by the Board is received for this position.

#### Strength and Conditioning Assistant

- TBD

#### College Advisor

- TBD

#### Communications Coordinator

- TBD

#### Fundraising Coordinator

- TBD

## 2.5. Director of Coaching and Coaching Staff

### Director of Coaching (DOC)

- Non-voting member who attends the Board meeting
- The professional opinion of the DOC is weighted in the decision and voting process of the Board.
- DOC must be insured with US Club Soccer and/or NCSSA, or an organization which provides equal coverage.

### Coaches

- Coaches will be selected by the DOC and approved by the Board.
- All coaches will be expected to adhere to the Club policies and procedures.
- Coaches are expected to have some level of licensing or actively working on obtaining official training.

- All Club coaches (including volunteers) will have a current US Club card.
- Coaching fees are established by the DOC, require Board approval, and are paid for by Club general fund

#### Coach absence

- Club policy allows for coaches to train more than one team. Should this create an occasion where a coach is to be in two places at once, the coach with approval of the DOC will designate a suitable alternative to coach the players during the game or training session (see Section 4.3).

## 3. Financial

### 3.1. Non-profit Status and Account Management

- Sequoia FC will maintain clear financial documents and file taxes yearly as required to maintain 501c3 status.
- All Club's banking is managed through one Club account and incoming/outgoing finances are tracked through TeamSnap™.
- Individual teams that choose to fundraise will track their finances separately and apply them as they see fit based on team preference.
- The Treasurer shall have access to all accounts for oversight purposes.
- Individual team managers have access only to their specific team accounts.

### 3.2. Club Members Financial Responsibility

#### 1. Club Fees

- Club members are defined as players actively participating in the competitive arm of the Club.
- All members must create an account and register via TeamSnap™.
- Fees are due at time of registration.
- Individual player costs will vary based on age and number of programs the player chooses to participate in.

#### 2. Financial Responsibility

- All Club members are responsible for timely payments.
- Non-payment directly affects the ability to pay for tournaments, team expenses and coaching fees. Non-payment will result in the suspension of the player.
- If a payment becomes past due by 15 days, the DOC reserves the right to not allow the player to train, limit playing time, and/or pull the player's US Club card until payment is made.
- If payment has not been received within 30 days, the Board will take action by pulling the player's card for future events until a plan for resolution has been formulated with the DOC or the Board.
- Sequoia FC is willing to work with families with financial stressors. Payment plans can be initiated by speaking with the DOC, or any Board member. Scholarship request forms are available on the Sequoia FC website. All conversations will be kept confidential and not discussed outside the Board.

- Teams may hold fundraisers; all fundraisers must be approved by the Board.
- Pre-approved fundraisers include:
  - Bake sale
  - Yard sale
  - Car wash

## 4. Teams

### 4.1. Team Formation

- Teams will be formed with players primarily from Humboldt County and surrounding areas.
- Each season the DOC will present the Board with a final count of teams and number of players per team upon completion of registration.
- Players with an outstanding balance will have their player card suspended (see Section 3.2.3).

### 4.2. Age Groups and Playing Seasons

Training and competitive play are offered for three main age groups:

- Grassroots (U10 and younger)
- Middle School (U11 - U15)
- High School (U16 - U19).

Playing seasons vary based on tournaments and number of teams per age group. Typical seasons by age group are listed below:

- Grassroots division (youngest groups): U8/9/10
  - December- February (Winter Academy)
    - Focus on individual player improvement.
  - March - June (Spring Academy)
    - Focus on team development.
- Middle School: U11/12/13/14/15
  - July – November
    - Board may opt not to compete with local youth recreational soccer
  - December- February (Winter Academy)
    - Focus on individual player improvement.
  - March - June (Spring Academy)
    - Focus on team development.
- High School: U16/17/18/19
  - December – June (accommodates high school soccer season)
  - Optional summer session.

### 4.3. Team Management

Individual teams may elect to have a team manager to improve team communication and coordination. Team managers will coordinate primarily with the coach and Club administrative staff (e.g., registrar, scheduler).

#### 4.4. Conflict Resolution

Conflict Resolution steps are as follows:

48 Hour Rule - also known as "Count to 100" and "Sleep-on-it". After 48hrs, if there remains a pertinent unresolved issue, then go to Step 1:

- Step 1.
  - Player talks to the Head Coach 1 on 1. We recognize this is VERY hard for young players...so we encourage use of the Player Representative (generally a captain, but can be any other teammate) in approaching the Coach. If there is no resolution then go to Step 2.
- Step 2.
  - Parent(s) meet with the Head Coach and player. If there is no resolution, go to Step 3.
- Step 3.
  - Sequoia FC has a Club Ombudsperson who acts as a liaison between the two parties to help reach a resolution. Ask the Ombudsperson to mediate a meeting (player/parent/coach/ombudsperson). If there is no resolution, then coordinate with the Ombudsperson and go to Step 4.
- Step 4.
  - Schedule meeting with the Board.

#### 4.5. Leaving the Team

- Players may leave the Club and/or transfer to another team/Club in accordance with US Club rules.
- The Board will consider, but not guarantee a refund of Club fees.
- Refunds will be considered only if a player is leaving because of a family relocation, season ending injury, or if they leave prior to league play beginning.
- Player cards will not be released to another Club if delinquent funds exist.

#### 4.6. Player and Family Expectations

- Players will be ready at training time with equipment on and ready to train and pay attention.
- Players will arrive 1 hour prior to the start of scheduled games (league or tournament), unless otherwise instructed by a coach. This allows for adequate warm up time, an important piece of injury prevention.
- Players and families will conduct themselves when associated with the Club in a professional, kind, and inclusive manner.

#### 4.7. Guest Players

- Guest Players are players who are asked to play on a team other than their primary team. This is done in rare circumstances due to team need or individual player excellence. This situation is approved by the DOC in cooperation with both the primary and guest coaches' involvement.

## 5. Code of Conduct

### 5.1 Parents/Guardians (and Guests)

Parents/Guardians (and Guests) will:

- Be a positive role model for their child and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players (on both teams), coaches, officials, and spectators at every game, training session, or other sporting events.
- Not engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, coach, player, or parent such as booing and taunting; using profane language or gestures; or using offensive, insulting or abusive language.
- Not encourage any behaviors or practices that would endanger the health and well-being of the athletes.
- Not verbally address a player on an opposing team except to complement their play.
- Will be supportive of their child, unconditionally – this promotes the development of the player.
- Remember that youth players participate primarily for the fun of the experience. Emphasize that the game is played for the benefit of the youth, not adults.
- Let the coach guide, direct, and coach their child and the other players without any interference or coaching from themselves on the sidelines.
- Remain outside the field of play within the spectator area, unless called onto the field by the referee during a match.
- Do their best to learn and understand the Laws of the Game since knowing the rules of the game will help with development and will help to minimize disagreements.
- Teach their child to play within the spirit/intentions of the rules and the Laws of the Game.
- Refrain from criticizing the game officials and will respect their authority and decisions throughout the match.
- Not ridicule or yell at their child or another participant for making a mistake or losing a competition.
- Never place the value of winning over the safety and welfare of the players.
- Demand a sports environment free from drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and will refrain from their use at all Club sporting events or in the immediate vicinity of Club matches or training.
- Be consistent, prompt, and respectful in their communication with coaches and ensure that they understand the coach's expectations for themselves, their child, the team and the players.



- Ensure that their child arrives at training, practices, and games on time and fully equipped per the coach's expectations.
- Ensure that they are on time to retrieve their child from training and games.
- Respect the 48-hour rule (Section 4.4) and not discuss playing time/game issues until after 48 hours have passed.
- Remember that as a member of the Club, they represent the Club and understand poor behavior during training, games, or tournaments may result in expulsion from the soccer activity. If this happens repeatedly, it will result in expulsion from the Club for their family.
- Keep their financial account with the Club current and in good standing.
- Adhere to the guidance of the Positive Coaching Alliance, including the following behavior:

*Acknowledge and applaud genuine effort and good play as well as success. Affirm players, not just for athletic performance or victory, but whenever good character, healthy sportsmanship, and unselfish behavior are displayed. Avoid criticizing a player for making a mistake – mistakes are part of learning. Encourage your player to honor the opponent and to show respect for the referees – without people in these roles, there is no game. Teach your player the importance of keeping winning and losing in perspective – game outcomes are part of, but should never wholly define, the overall experience. Avoid analyzing your player's performance following each game – instead let them know you enjoyed watching them play. Encourage your player to work directly with the coach to resolve issues, thereby helping her develop a strong sense of self-advocacy.*

## 5.2 Players

Players will:

- Demonstrate positive sportsmanship on and off the field. This includes exercising positive self-control, graciously accepting the outcome of games and treating all players, coaches, officials, and fans with courtesy and respect.
- Demonstrate respect for all players and coaches in behavior and refrain from using profanity as it will not be tolerated.
- Demonstrate respect for officials, in part by accepting their decisions. Insulting comments, arguing, gestures and profanity directed at officials will not be tolerated.
- Positively represent the Club on and off the field, at home and away, and during all Club sanctioned events and activities.
- Be responsible for timely notification of absences from games and training to the coach and/or team manager in coordination with their parents/guardians.
- Not conduct acts of violence or abuse of any nature as it will not be tolerated.
- Refrain from the use of alcohol, illegal drugs, and tobacco products while a member of the Club.

- Understand and respect the rules of the game as appropriate for the age group of the team or player.
- Give 100% at training and games and will make every effort to attend all training sessions, games, and team/Club events that ensure a solid team foundation.
- Be present at the playing field at the designated time for all games and all pre/post-game activities. Players shall be dressed appropriately, and, when in team uniform, shall have clean jerseys tucked into shorts with shin guards and cleats on and ready.
- Respect the 48-hour rule and not discuss playing time/game issues with the coach until 48 hours have passed.
- Respect, listen, and follow directions given by the coaches, team managers, and attend all team games and activities while traveling with the team.
- Dress appropriately as befit representing the Club, or as directed by their coach and/or Director of Coaching (Sequoia FC attire; typically, Sequoia FC training gear assigned by coach, manager, or chaperone.)

### 5.3 Coaches

This code of conduct has been developed to clarify and distinguish approved and accepted professional, ethical, and moral behavior from that which is detrimental for a positive experience. Coaches are expected to be positive role models who project the spirit of the sport on and off the field. They are expected to hold themselves and their team(s) to the high standards set forth by the Club. While representing the Club, they must abide by the following expectations and requirements and will:

- Prioritize the health and safety of all players and maintain an environment that supports this priority both on and off the field.
- Demonstrate positive support, dignity, and respect for all players, parents, coaches, and officials at every game, training, and other Club events; this includes players, parents and coaches from the opposing team.
- Be a positive role model whenever I am around players and will exercise professional decorum and conduct at all training sessions and games, meetings, and other team or Club functions.
- Exemplify honesty, integrity, fair-play, and sportsmanship at all times regardless of the impact that might have upon the outcome of the competition.
- Refrain from the use of profanity, abusive, offensive or insulting language, gestures or actions, racially insensitive remarks, or any other conduct that reflects poorly on themselves or the Club, on and off of the field.
- Not discriminate against players based upon race, nationality, religion, or sexual orientation.
- Avoid any conduct that could be construed as harassment or physically, verbally, or sexually abusive.

- Know the official Laws of the Game of soccer and will teach their players to play fairly and to respect the rules, officials, and opponents.
- Not verbally address a player on an opposing team, except to compliment their play.
- Always show respect for all of the match officials and honor their decisions.
- Be reasonable in their demands on players' time, energy, enthusiasm and their performance on the soccer field.
- Provide a sports environment for their team that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol.
- Be responsible for not only their own behavior, but also the behavior of their team and players, their parents, and fans at Club training and games and discourage Club members or spectators from prohibited behaviors outlined in the respective codes of conduct.
- Ensure that their players' experience in training and games is one of fun, enjoyment and improvement
- Understand that the top reason children play sports is to have fun.
- Give each player a fair and honest chance to play in games. Playing time will be determined by effort at training, overall performance, attitude, skill and needs of the team.
- Provide periodic feedback for each athlete understanding that this communication will allow players to continue to grow.

## 6. Participant Safety/Risk Management

The Club is committed to providing a safe environment and preventing abusive conduct in any form. With that in mind, all Club participants (Board members, coaches, players and their respective parent or guardians, and volunteers associated with the Club) are responsible for knowing and complying with all US Club Soccer Bylaws, Policies and Rules (including those guidelines and directives on the US Club Soccer website), Safe Sport Code, as well as adhering to all applicable federal and state laws, rules and regulations. Failure to adhere to US Club Soccer Bylaws, Policies and Rules and Safe Sport codes are grounds for immediate termination from the Club.

- US Club Soccer Bylaws, Policies and Rules may be found at: <https://usclubsoccer.org/bylaws-policies-guidelines/>
  - APPENDIX A: US Club Soccer Prohibited Conduct Policy (p.29)
  - APPENDIX B: US Club Soccer Prevention Policies Limiting One-on-One Interactions Between Adults and Minors (P.32)
- Safe Sport code may be found at: <https://uscenterforsafesport.org/>

## 7. Sponsorships

### 7.1. General

- Competitive traveling teams may obtain sponsors to offset team costs.
- All sponsors must be approved by the Board.
- Teams cannot display sponsor's name or logo on apparel unless approved by the Board.

## 7.2. Team Sponsors vs. Club Sponsors

- Team sponsors must be separate from Club sponsors. In order that individual teams do not encroach upon Club level corporate sponsorships effort, sponsorships over \$1,000 must be submitted to the Board for approval and managed through the general Club account.
- Sponsorships of more than \$1,000 and above may still entirely support a single team with the approval of the Board.

## 8. Uniforms

- The DOC with Board approval will choose the logo and appearance of the Club uniforms.
- Uniform kits and costs will be determined annually by the Board.

## 9. Tryouts and Team Formation

- New teams: New Club travel teams are formed from the Club's academy training events and camps when enough participants show the interest and commitment to travel.
- Existing teams: The DOC may advertise for walk-on tryouts based on an existing teams' anticipated needs.
- Sequoia FC strives to keep team age pure, however the DOC may make exceptions based on participant numbers and/or team needs.
- Playing time is not guaranteed. Players who will not see many game minutes may be offered a Training Only role.
- Training Only players are players who train with a travel team and benefit from all other Club programs, but do not play in the games unless a coach requests their "guest" appearance.
- Training Only players pay a monthly fee.
- Coaches and/or the DOC will identify players and inform families if they feel a player should pursue the Training Only role if there is a high likelihood the player will not see many game minutes.
- Players may be added to a team roster after scheduled tryouts only if prior authorization from the DOC is obtained.

## 10. Outreach

Sequoia FC offers several grant funded programs as monies allow. These projects are specifically targeted toward children suffering from obesity and/or social challenges.

Currently these programs include:

- Foster Youth development program

- Health Fair activity outreach
- School outreach targeted at kids in afterschool programs

## **11. Travel Policy**

The Club assumes no responsibility or liability whatsoever for travel associated with Club training, league or tournament play, nationally or internationally. Carpooling and other cooperative transportation arrangements solely involve players and parents. The Club is not involved in said travel arrangement nor is the Club in any way responsible for making such arrangements. Accordingly, parents and players who have reached the appropriate driving age as stipulated by the law, expressly agree to hold the Club, its officers, directors, and employees, and agents, harmless from any and all liability stemming from, or arising out of, injuries or death related to the transportation of players to and from Club training, league, or tournament play. As for players driving, it is our recommendation that there should be no unaccompanied minors in a vehicle.