



ATHLETIC UNITED SC

PARENT & PLAYER HANDBOOK

2026 CLUB EDITION

ONE BADGE. ONE FAMILY. ONE GOAL.

A practical guide to club standards, family expectations, player development, communication, safety and the Athletic United experience.

Athletic Navy #0A1D34 | United Gold #D4A629 | White #FFFFFF

Effective for the 2026 club year • Subject to updates by Athletic United SC



WELCOME TO ATHLETIC UNITED

Athletic United SC exists to provide young players with a structured, competitive and positive environment in which they can develop as soccer players and as people. This handbook establishes the standards that allow the club, coaches, players and families to move in the same direction.

The club experience works best when expectations are clear from the beginning. Families should understand what the club provides, what the club expects from players and parents, how decisions are made, and how concerns should be communicated.

OUR CLUB STANDARD

Development. Discipline. Competition. Character. Community.

Every decision should strengthen at least one of these five areas without compromising the others.

HANDBOOK SECTIONS

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1. CLUB IDENTITY & PHILOSOPHY

1.1 Purpose of the Club

Athletic United SC is a youth soccer club built around long-term player development, meaningful competition and a strong club identity. Winning matters, but development is not sacrificed for a single result. Coaches are expected to teach players how to compete, solve problems and represent the badge with discipline.

1.2 The Athletic United Standard

- Development - players should improve technically, tactically, physically and mentally over time.
- Discipline - preparation, punctuality, effort and respect are non-negotiable.
- Competition - players learn to compete with courage and composure.
- Character - behavior matters when winning, losing, training and traveling.
- Community - every team represents one club, not an isolated group.

1.3 Club Identity

Athletic United uses one club badge and one shared identity across teams and age groups. Individual teams may have age-group or color designations for scheduling purposes, but all teams remain part of Athletic United SC.

ONE BADGE. ONE FAMILY. ONE GOAL.

Players and families are expected to support the entire club. A player may belong to one team roster, but represents Athletic United SC at all times.

2. MEMBERSHIP & SEASON COMMITMENT

2.1 Acceptance of a Roster Place

Accepting a roster position represents a commitment to the team and club for the stated season or program period. Families should review the schedule, expected fees and participation requirements before accepting.



2.2 What the Club Commits to Provide

- Qualified and approved coaching appropriate to the program level.
- Organized training sessions and competition scheduling.
- A player-development environment with defined standards.
- Clear communication regarding schedules, events and club requirements.
- Reasonable procedures for questions, complaints, safety concerns and emergencies.
- Professional use of the Athletic United brand and official club communications.

2.3 What Families Commit to Provide

- Reliable attendance and timely communication.
- Respectful conduct toward coaches, referees, teammates, opponents and other families.
- Timely payment of club financial obligations.
- Appropriate transportation and supervision of the player.
- Support for club policies even when a competitive decision is disappointing.

3. PLAYER STANDARDS & RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Player Expectations

- Arrive prepared, on time and with required equipment.
- Train with effort and a willingness to learn.
- Listen when coaches are instructing.
- Treat teammates, opponents, referees and staff respectfully.
- Use appropriate language and avoid bullying, harassment or discriminatory behavior.
- Take responsibility for mistakes rather than blaming teammates or officials.
- Represent Athletic United appropriately in person and online.

3.2 Player Leadership

Players are encouraged to communicate directly with coaches in age-appropriate situations. As players mature, Athletic United expects them to increasingly take ownership of attendance, preparation, performance questions and development goals.

3.3 School and Family Responsibilities

Athletic United recognizes that school, health and family responsibilities are important. Families should communicate known conflicts as early as possible. Repeated avoidable conflicts may affect team placement or match selection when they materially affect the team.

4. PARENT / GUARDIAN STANDARDS

4.1 The Parent Role

The parent or guardian role is to support the player, provide transportation and communication, reinforce positive standards and allow the coach to coach. Parents are an essential part of the club environment but are not part of the technical staff unless formally appointed.



4.2 Sideline Expectations

- Encourage players positively.
- Do not coach instructions from the spectator side.
- Do not confront or abuse referees.
- Do not enter the field or team technical area without permission except for an immediate emergency.
- Do not criticize individual children publicly.
- Do not create confrontations with opposing parents or staff.

4.3 Conduct Affecting a Player

Serious or repeated parent/spectator misconduct may result in warnings, removal from a facility, suspension from attending club activities or other club action. The club may address adult behavior separately from the player whenever reasonably possible.

PROTECT THE PLAYER EXPERIENCE

Adults set the emotional tone around youth sports. Athletic United expects competitive passion without hostility toward children, referees, coaches or other families.

5. TRAINING STANDARDS

5.1 Arrival

Players should arrive early enough to be dressed, equipped and ready to begin at the scheduled start time. The club may establish team-specific arrival requirements.

5.2 Training Behavior

- Players should bring water and required equipment.
- Phones and personal devices should remain away unless needed for a legitimate reason.
- Players should remain engaged during instruction and transitions.
- Unsafe behavior, fighting or intentional disruption is not acceptable.
- Players should help protect club and facility equipment.

5.3 Missed Training

Missing training does not automatically create a disciplinary penalty. However, coaches may consider attendance, preparation and recent training performance when making lineups, roles, roster selections and playing-time decisions.

6. MATCH-DAY STANDARDS

6.1 Preparation

- Arrive at the time communicated by the coach.
- Wear the designated match uniform and required protective equipment.
- Bring water and any team-required items.
- Notify the coach immediately if an emergency will cause lateness or absence.



6.2 Technical Decisions

The head coach controls the lineup, positions, substitutions, tactical system and match plan, subject to competition rules and club policy. Parents and spectators may not direct these decisions from the sideline.

6.3 After the Match

Players should shake hands or otherwise show appropriate sportsmanship where competition rules and circumstances permit. Parents should avoid immediate performance interrogation. The priority immediately after the match should be recovery, perspective and respectful behavior.

7. PLAYING TIME & COMPETITIVE DECISIONS

7.1 Playing Time Philosophy

Athletic United is a development club, but roster membership does not automatically guarantee identical playing time, a starting role or a specific position. The club may use different playing-time expectations by age and program level.

7.2 Factors Coaches May Consider

- Attendance and punctuality.
- Training effort and preparation.
- Player development needs.
- Current form and match performance.
- Tactical requirements and opponent considerations.
- Attitude, discipline and coachability.
- Health, injury status and safe workload.

7.3 Younger Developmental Ages

At younger ages, coaches should seek meaningful participation and opportunities to develop multiple players and positions. Competitive decisions should remain age-appropriate and consistent with the club development philosophy.

7.4 Competitive Progression

As players advance in age and competitive level, selection and playing-time decisions may become increasingly performance-based. Families should expect competition for positions to be part of the development process.

PAYMENT DOES NOT PURCHASE MINUTES

Club fees provide access to the program, coaching, training and team environment. They do not purchase a guaranteed starting position, position assignment or exact percentage of match minutes.



8. ATTENDANCE, LATENESS & AVAILABILITY

8.1 Reporting Absences

Known absences should be reported to the coach as early as possible through the designated team communication method. Last-minute notice should be reserved for illness, emergency or unexpected circumstances.

8.2 Repeated Attendance Issues

Repeated unexcused absence or lateness may affect playing time, match selection, team placement or future roster decisions. Coaches should apply consequences consistently and with consideration for age and individual circumstances.

8.3 Injured Players

An injured player should not hide symptoms in order to remain available. Families should communicate injuries and medical restrictions to the coach. The club may require medical clearance before return when appropriate.

9. COMMUNICATION & THE 24-HOUR RULE

9.1 Normal Communication Chain

- Player speaks with the coach when age-appropriate.
- Parent/guardian contacts the head coach if additional discussion is needed.
- If unresolved, the matter may be escalated to the appropriate club director or administrator.
- Ownership/executive leadership is used for serious, unresolved or organization-level matters rather than routine coaching disagreements.

9.2 The 24-Hour Rule

For non-safety concerns involving playing time, position, tactics, selections or match decisions, families should wait at least 24 hours after the match before initiating a formal discussion. This does not apply to immediate safety, safeguarding, discrimination or serious misconduct concerns.

9.3 Appropriate Topics

Parents may ask about their child's development, behavior, role expectations and improvement plan. Coaches are not expected to discuss another child's playing time, ability, discipline, family information or private circumstances.

10. PLAYER DEVELOPMENT, PLACEMENT & MOVEMENT

10.1 Placement

Players are placed according to age eligibility, ability, developmental needs, roster capacity, positional balance and club objectives. Placement is a club decision rather than a permanent player label.



10.2 Movement Between Teams

Athletic United may move or invite players between teams for development, competition, roster needs or evaluation when competition rules permit. Temporary call-ups do not automatically create permanent placement.

10.3 Authority

Player movement should be coordinated through club technical leadership or designated directors. Individual coaches should not promise promotions, permanent transfers or roster places without appropriate club authorization.

10.4 Same-Club Competition

When Athletic United operates multiple teams in the same age category, each team should compete honestly and independently. Club-wide development decisions must not compromise the integrity of official competition.

11. TRYOUTS, OFFERS & ROSTER ACCEPTANCE

11.1 Evaluation Areas

- Technical: first touch, passing, receiving, dribbling, finishing and ball control.
- Tactical: awareness, positioning, decision-making and understanding of space.
- Physical: coordination, agility, speed, balance and age-appropriate athletic qualities.
- Mental / behavioral: effort, resilience, competitiveness, communication and coachability.

11.2 Offers

Roster offers should identify the team/program, expected season commitment and acceptance deadline. A roster place is not final until required acceptance steps and payments are completed.

11.3 No Guarantee of Future Placement

A roster offer applies to the stated team/program period. Future team placement may change based on development, roster structure, coaching assessment and competition format.

12. UNIFORMS, EQUIPMENT & CLUB BRAND

12.1 Required Apparel

Players must obtain and wear required Athletic United apparel as directed. The club may designate home, away, goalkeeper, training and travel apparel.

12.2 Numbers and Replacement Items

Jersey numbers are assigned or approved by the club and are not guaranteed permanently. Families are responsible for replacement costs resulting from loss, damage or player growth unless the club states otherwise.

12.3 Brand Protection

- Do not alter, stretch, recolor or redraw the official Athletic United crest.
- Do not sell merchandise using the club name or crest without written authorization.



- Team-created social graphics should use official master logo assets.
- Generative AI should not be used to recreate or reinterpret the official crest.

13. REGISTRATION, FEES & FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

13.1 Fees

Families are responsible for the fees disclosed during registration or offer acceptance. Club fees may be separate from uniforms, travel, tournament expenses, league/referee fees or optional programs depending on the specific team package.

13.2 Payment Plans

When payment plans are offered, payments must be made according to the agreed schedule. A family experiencing an unexpected financial hardship should contact club administration before an account becomes substantially overdue.

13.3 Delinquent Accounts

The club may restrict participation, withhold future roster offers or take other reasonable administrative action for materially overdue balances after appropriate communication attempts.

13.4 Refunds

Refund eligibility should be governed by the club's separate Registration & Financial Policy. Expenses already incurred on behalf of a player, including uniforms, league entries, insurance, processing or committed team costs, may affect any refund calculation.

SEPARATE FINANCIAL POLICY

This handbook summarizes family responsibilities. Athletic United should maintain a separate Registration, Payment & Refund Policy with exact deadlines, refund rules and payment-plan terms.

14. HEALTH, SAFETY & INJURY PROTOCOL

14.1 Player Health Comes First

A player who appears seriously injured, ill or medically unsafe should be removed from activity and evaluated appropriately. Coaches are not expected to diagnose medical conditions.

14.2 Head Injury / Suspected Concussion

A player with signs or symptoms consistent with a possible concussion should be removed from play and should not return simply because symptoms appear to improve. Return should follow applicable medical and governing-body requirements.



14.3 Emergency Information

Families must maintain current emergency contacts and disclose relevant medical information needed for safe participation. Coaches and staff should know the facility emergency plan, including access for emergency responders when available.

14.4 Hydration and Heat

Players should arrive hydrated and with adequate water. The club may modify, delay or stop activity due to heat, lightning, severe weather, field conditions or other safety concerns.

15. SAFEGUARDING & CONDUCT AROUND MINORS

15.1 Adult Responsibility

All adults involved with Athletic United share responsibility for maintaining appropriate boundaries and a safe youth-sports environment. Coaches and staff should follow club safeguarding requirements, screening requirements and applicable governing-body policies.

15.2 Communication With Players

Club communication with minors should be transparent and age-appropriate. Parents/guardians should be included in direct electronic communication where required by club policy, law or governing-body standards.

15.3 Transportation and One-on-One Situations

Coaches and staff should avoid unnecessary isolated one-on-one situations with players and should follow approved procedures for transportation, meetings, locker/changing areas and private instruction.

15.4 Reporting Concerns

Safety or safeguarding concerns should be reported promptly to the appropriate club administrator and, when required, to the proper external authority. The 24-hour communication rule never delays reporting of a safety or abuse concern.

16. SOCIAL MEDIA, PHOTOGRAPHY & PUBLIC CONDUCT

16.1 Club Accounts

Official Athletic United social media accounts, passwords, creative assets and audience data are club property and should be controlled by authorized club personnel.

16.2 Player Images

The club may use photos or video of players for legitimate club communication and marketing when appropriate consent has been obtained. Families should be given a process to communicate restrictions or opt-out requests where applicable.

16.3 Public Conduct

- Do not post threats, discriminatory content or harassment involving club participants.



- Do not publicly disclose private information about minors.
- Do not use the club logo to imply an official club statement without authorization.
- Concerns with coaches or club decisions should use the club grievance process rather than social-media attacks.

17. DISCIPLINE & CONSEQUENCES

17.1 Progressive Discipline

Athletic United may use progressive discipline when appropriate, but serious conduct may justify immediate escalation. The club should consider age, severity, repetition, safety, intent and prior history.

LEVEL	POSSIBLE ACTION	EXAMPLES
Level 1	Coach conversation / verbal correction	Minor lateness, distraction, low-level behavior issue
Level 2	Written or documented warning	Repeated conduct after coaching intervention
Level 3	Temporary restriction or suspension	Serious disrespect, fighting, unsafe behavior, repeated violations
Level 4	Removal from team / club review	Severe misconduct, repeated serious violations, conduct threatening safety or club integrity

17.2 Serious Misconduct

Fighting, threats, abuse, discriminatory conduct, deliberate safety violations, theft, vandalism, harassment or serious safeguarding concerns may result in immediate suspension or removal pending review.

18. COMPLAINTS, GRIEVANCES & APPEALS

18.1 Goal of the Process

The purpose of the grievance process is to resolve legitimate concerns fairly without allowing routine competitive disappointment to become organizational conflict.

18.2 Normal Path

1. Discuss age-appropriate performance concerns with the player first when reasonable.
2. Contact the head coach after the 24-hour period for non-safety matters.
3. If unresolved, submit the matter to the designated club director/administrator.
4. Serious unresolved matters may be escalated to executive leadership or a designated review group.

18.3 Matters That May Be Reviewed

- Safety or safeguarding concerns.



- Repeated policy violations.
- Discrimination, harassment or abusive conduct.
- Administrative errors or financial disputes.
- Concerns that club policy was materially misapplied.

18.4 Matters Normally Left to Coaches

- Starting lineup.
- Formation and tactics.
- Substitution timing.
- Position assignments.
- Opponent-specific decisions.
- Routine playing-time decisions consistent with club policy.

19. TRAVEL, TOURNAMENTS & CLUB EVENTS

19.1 Additional Competitions

Teams may participate in tournaments, friendlies, showcases or special events in addition to regular league competition. Participation requirements and extra costs should be communicated before commitment whenever reasonably possible.

19.2 Travel Conduct

Players and families represent Athletic United while traveling. Hotel, facility, transportation and event rules must be followed. Serious misconduct at a travel event may result in removal from the event and further club discipline.

19.3 Tournament Selection

The club determines which events are appropriate for each team based on age, development level, budget, competition needs, schedule and travel burden.

20. CLUB ADMINISTRATION & ACKNOWLEDGMENT

20.1 Authority to Administer the Handbook

Athletic United SC may interpret, clarify or update this handbook when needed to address safety, governing-body requirements, facility rules, operational changes or circumstances not specifically anticipated. Material changes should be communicated to affected families.

20.2 Related Policies

This handbook is intended to work alongside more specific club documents, including the Parent Code of Conduct, Player Code of Conduct, Coach Handbook, Registration & Financial Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Emergency Action Plan and Complaint / Grievance Policy. When a more specific adopted policy directly addresses an issue, that policy controls.



20.3 Family Acknowledgment

By accepting a roster place and participating with Athletic United SC, the player and parent/guardian acknowledge responsibility for reviewing and following applicable club policies.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This page may be used as a family acknowledgment page if Athletic United chooses to collect signatures. Electronic acceptance during registration may also be used.

PLAYER NAME _____

PLAYER SIGNATURE (AGE-APPROPRIATE) _____

PARENT / GUARDIAN NAME _____

PARENT / GUARDIAN SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

TEAM / AGE GROUP _____



THE ATHLETIC UNITED FAMILY STANDARD

PLAYERS

Compete with effort. Learn with humility. Respect the badge.

PARENTS

Support the player. Respect the process. Let coaches coach.

COACHES

Teach. Develop. Communicate. Lead by example.

CLUB

Provide structure, opportunity, standards and a safe environment.

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