

4CITY/Foothill/Almaden/Sequoia Girls League Rules

Updated 10/17/2023

Coaching Expectations:

Thank you to all of our volunteer coaches! We know that coaching youth sports is extremely challenging—but hopefully equally rewarding. As a coach in our league, your responsibilities include:

- **Respecting the game.** As a coach, you are responsible for all 20 players on the court, not just the 10 under your team banner.
- **Acting with integrity toward all players, coaches, officials and fans.** Referees are going to get calls wrong; players are going to make mistakes; fans may act unruly -- The coach MUST remember that the game is for the kids (all 20) and not about yourself. Coaches should ensure that players and fans conduct themselves in a proper way at all practices and games.
- **Putting player safety first.** Player safety is vital -- coaches must ensure the physical, emotional, and mental safety of all players above all else.

Clock and Game Play

Game Play: All games consist of 5 “quarters”. Each quarter will be 8 minutes. Halftime will occur after the 2nd quarter and will last 3 minutes; other quarter breaks will be one minute long.

Clock Stoppage: During the first 6 minutes of each quarter the game clock will run continuously, including during Free Throws. The last 2 minutes of each quarter will be a “stop clock” for all stoppages in play.

Possession: The game will start with a jump ball and then alternate possessions on held-balls and start of quarters.

Overtime: If a game is tied after the 5th quarter, an Overtime period of 2 minutes (stop-clock) will be played. Possession will be determined by a jump-ball. If still tied after the first overtime period, a 2nd untimed “sudden death” period will be played: the first team to score wins. Possession will be determined by a jump-ball.

Timeouts: Each team will have one 45 second timeout to use in the first half, and two 45 second timeouts to use in the second half. If the game goes to Overtime, each team will have one 45 second timeout per Overtime period. Timeouts do not carry-over from the 1st half to the 2nd half, nor from the 5th period into overtime or between overtime periods.

Fouls and Free Throws

Foul limit: Players will be disqualified on their fifth personal foul.

Double Bonus per quarter: Two bonus free throws will be awarded on and after the fifth team foul *of each quarter*. Team foul count resets at the beginning of each

quarter, including the fifth. There is no one-and-one. NOTE: Technical fouls count as player and team fouls.

Free throw line: The normal free throw line will be used, EXCEPT for the 3rd/4th grade league which will shoot from 12 feet. The 12 foot line will be marked with tape or managed by the referee. 5th/6th Grade League will use the 15 foot line but may cross the line during the shot attempt without penalty.

Pre-game Free Throws: In the 3rd/4th Grade League only, all players present at the start of the game will attempt one Free Throw from the 12-foot line which, if made, counts for one point. If one team has more players shooting than the other, the coach of the team with fewer players may choose players who miss to take a second Free Throw so that both teams attempt the same number of shots.

Defensive Restrictions

Defense Allowed: In all divisions, teams must play a Person-to-Person (P2P) defense in the first four quarters. In the 5th quarter, any defense (Zone or P2P) is allowed.

P2P Definition: During mandatory P2P quarters, all defenders must clearly be guarding separate players and one defender must be within five feet of the ball handler. A nearby defender is allowed to double team the ball-handler but must return to guard their player when in possession of the ball. All other players must be making an attempt to defend their player while in Proper Help Defense Position.

Proper Help Defense Position: is defined as the defender being in between the guarded player and the basket, and not crossing the midline when the ball is on the other side of the court (the midline is an imaginary line running the length of the court between the two baskets). Referees will issue one verbal warning to the coach if a team violates these rules. All subsequent infractions will result in a two-shot Technical Foul assessed to the bench.

Defense Initiation: defines where the team without the ball may begin playing defense in the first four quarters. All divisions may play full court defense for the entire fifth quarter.

- **7th/8th grades:** Defense may start in the backcourt (full court press) for the whole game.
- **5th/6th grades:** In the first four quarters, teams may only initiate defense once the offense has taken at least one dribble across the half court line.
- **3rd/4th grades:** In the first half, teams may only initiate defense once the offense has crossed the “attack” line. The “attack” line will be identified by the referees during the pre-game meeting and is usually a volleyball line several feet above the three point line. In the 3rd and 4th quarters, teams may only initiate defense once the offense has taken at least one dribble across the half court line.

Insufficient Action: When the attack line is in effect, once a team crosses the half

court line, they have five seconds to cross the attack line. Referees will issue one warning; subsequent violations will result in a turnover.

10-second Rule: If the ball is inbounded in the backcourt, teams have ten seconds to advance it across the half court line. Violation will result in a turnover.

Mercy Rule: If a team is ahead by 15 or more points, that team must initiate defense inside the 3 point line—in effect until the score goes under a 10 point difference.

Player Participation

Equal Playing Time: All players must play one quarter in the first half (either 1st or 2nd) and one quarter in the 2nd half (either 3rd or 4th). No substitution of players can occur in the first 4 quarters except for injury or if a team has more than ten players and is trying to balance playing time. The player replacing the injured player may be selected by the opposing coach until the injured player can return.

11 and 12 player rosters: In the event a team has 11 or 12 players on the roster, they may substitute up to two players at the four minute mark of the first four quarters; *provided that no player plays more than 4/8ths of the first four quarters.* Whenever the 11 or 12 player team chooses to sub, the opposing team may sub up to the same number of players; *provided that no player participation rules are violated.*

5th quarter: The coach may play any players in the 5th quarter, and may freely substitute players on dead ball whistles. We recommend but do not require that coaches give all players at least some playing time in the 5th quarter.

No four quarter players. No player can play more than three of the first four quarters, unless the team has 5 or 6 players (see below).

6-player rule. If a team has six players, the opposing coach can choose which two players play all four quarters (but not the order) unless the opposing team has 5 or 6 players, in which case the 6-player rule does not apply.

Late arrivals. Players arriving before the end of the first quarter must play in the second quarter, and one quarter in the second half. Players arriving after the end of the first quarter are only required to play either the third or fourth quarter.

Forfeit rule. A team forfeits if they have fewer than five players present 10 minutes after the start time. If coaches agree to scrimmage, referees and scorekeepers must stay. If both teams have fewer than five players, both teams forfeit.

Additional Rules

Seconds in the key. Per high school rules, offensive players are only allowed to remain in the key for three consecutive seconds before “clearing” the lane; *except 3rd/4th grades, which will be allowed five seconds in the key.* Referees are encouraged to warn players and coaches before calling the first violation.

Expected Conduct

Coach Conduct: We trust all coaches will act appropriately during games. A Technical foul will be assessed to the coach if a referee warrants that action, resulting in two free throws and possession for the opposing team. A 2nd technical foul will result in the coach ejection and a team forfeit unless an assistant coach is present. If a coach receives multiple technicals during the season, a review by the girls' commissioners of all participating leagues may determine suspension from the league is necessary.

Spectator Conduct: Coaches are responsible for behavior of spectators at all games. Prior to the start of the season, we recommend that coaches meet with parents to cover league expectations. Any jeering, insults, referee criticism, or other unsportsman-like conduct will result in fans being removed from the gym.

Player Conduct: Players may be assessed a technical foul for inappropriate behavior during a game. A 2nd technical foul will result in the player being ejected. Consistent player infractions may result in player removal from the league.

Jewelry Protocol: Necklaces, bracelets, anklets, hoop/dangling earrings are not allowed to be worn during a game. If a child has recently had their ears pierce (studs only) and are unable to remove them, they may participate if the earrings are covered with tape.