



COACH'S HANDBOOK

MERIDIAN SOCCER

Introduction

Let us start by thanking you for dedicating your time and energy to being a coach. As one of the representatives of our club that interacts with the players and families the most, we are aware that you have a huge impact on the soccer experience for our players. Meridian Soccer appreciates all volunteers, and it is our goal to make your job as easy and enjoyable as possible.

Whether you are an experienced coach, or a parent that has agreed to undertake the coaching responsibility, we understand the beginning of the season can be an overwhelming time. We work hard to make sure our coaches have a positive experience because of the support they receive.

If you are a travel head coach attending out-of-town tournaments, the manager will assist with setting a team budget and finances. The club has a standard amount to pay for travel outside of Lloydminster as follows:

- Hotel: Maximum of \$165 per night including all taxes and fees
- Meals: \$100 per weekend
- Gas: \$100 per weekend

This is a standard across all of our teams and will be budgeted according in each team's budget planning.

This guide is provided as a resource that will assist our coaches and set expectations, but also to provide tools to manage a variety of situations which typically arise during the course of coaching your team. Meridian Soccer has session plans which help guide coach's through a session. This can be viewed at www.meridiansoccer.ca

Getting Started

COMMUNICATION

Your duties include communicating with your manager and parents by calling team meetings, distributing team roster information, and communicating practice/tournament information. Meridian Soccer schedules all practices.

Before the Season

COACHING REQUIREMENTS

The Saskatchewan Soccer Association governs Meridian Soccer. Currently, we are in the process of updating our membership status to ensure that we maintain our licensed association with Canada Soccer. To achieve this, we must meet certain standards for our coaches and volunteers. This is done to provide the best possible opportunities for our coaches, volunteers, players, and members.

Currently, our club operates within the Grassroots – Community Stream category, but we are working towards achieving Grassroots – Community/Competitive Stream status. To reach this goal, specific certification is required for all our coaches and volunteers.

The chart below outlines the minimum requirements for the upcoming Outdoor Season.

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Grassroots/Competitive Stream (Meridian Soccer Requirements Outdoor 2024)	
Course	Resource
IF YOU ARE COACHING A TEAM THAT IS <u>NOT TRAVELING</u> YOU ARE ONLY REQUIRED TO COMPLETE STEPS 1-3	
1. RAMP Staff Registration	Online through RAMP Registration
2. Criminal Record Check and Vulnerable Sector Screening	Online through RAMP Registration – Meridian Soccer (be valid for a period of 2 years from the date of issue)
3. Canada Soccer Grassroots Coach Education – Coaching Soccer in Canada Module	Online Through Canada Soccer (Access Code Provided by Meridian Soccer)
IF YOU ARE COACHING A TEAM THAT <u>IS TRAVELING</u> YOU ARE REQUIRED TO COMPLETE STEPS 1-10	
4. Stage-appropriate Canada Soccer Grassroots Coach Education – Practical Module *indicated below by age	Through Meridian Soccer - Canada Soccer-Active Start, FUNdamentals, Learn to Train, Soccer for Life
5. Stage-appropriate Canada Soccer Grassroots Coach Education – Theory Module *indicated below by age	Online Through Canada Soccer-Active Start, FUNdamentals, Learn to Train, Soccer for Life
6. Respect in Sport Activity Leader Program	Online – The Locker – coach.ca
7. NCCP Emergency Plan Module	Online – The Locker – coach.ca
8. NCCP Making Headway Module	Online – The Locker – coach.ca
9. NCCP Rule of Two Module	Online – The Locker – coach.ca
10. NCCP Making Ethical Decisions Module and/or Online Evaluation	Online – The Locker – coach.ca

STAGE APPROPRIATE TRAINING BREAKDOWN:

Active Start: U4 – U6 (1.5 hours of online training followed by 2 hours on field workshop)

FUNdamentals Workshop: Under 6-Under 9 Boys and Under 6-Under 8 Girls (1.5 hours of online training followed by 3-hour on-field workshop)

Learn to Train Workshop: Under 9-Under 12 Boys and Under 8-Under 11 Girls (2 hours of online training followed by 4-hour on-field workshop)

Soccer for Life Workshop: Boys Under 13 + and Girls 12 + (2 hours of online training followed by 4-hour on-field workshop)

1. RAMP REGISTRATION

Register as a coach, assistant coach, manager, or volunteer through Meridian Soccer Association online registration link [HERE](#).

2. CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK (CRC) & VULNERABLE SECTOR SCREENING (VSS)

Included within the registration system is the option to complete an online Criminal Record Check with the Vulnerable Sector Screening (CRC-VSS). This is paid for by Meridian Soccer. This is set up through the online registration when you register as a coach.

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If you do not have a valid CRC-VSS to upload (within 2 years from the date of issue), select the box under Family Member Information to complete the process online. If you have a valid document to upload, it will be after the requirements section in the registration form.

Suppose you have difficulty completing the CRC-VSS online. If you cannot complete the online CRC-VSS and do not have a valid one you can upload, please go to the local RCMP station and complete one. Keep your receipt, and the club will reimburse your cost once you submit your receipt to obtain the CRC-VSS.

If you have questions, don't hesitate to contact the Club at registrar@meridiansoccer.ca

3. Canada Soccer Grassroots Coach Education, Practical & Theory Module

This online course is required by all coaches, managers and volunteers with Meridian Soccer. Once we receive your registration, we will send you a link with the access code and link.

4. RESPECT IN SPORT REQUIREMENTS

Please note that the provincial governing body for soccer, the Saskatchewan Soccer Association (SSA), requires that all coaching staff (including assistant coaches), managers, and anyone on the bench whose names appear on the game sheet or will be in dressing rooms be in possession of a current (within the last 2 years) Criminal and Vulnerable Sector clearance. All of these individuals must also have completed the Respect in Sport Course, which is available online at:

<http://saskatchewansoccer.msa4.rampinteractive.com/content/respect-in-sport-ris>

5. NCCP Number – The Locker - www.coach.ca

The Locker is the central location to easily access, manage, and maintain your coach training and records. The Locker is also where Meridian Soccer will confirm your completed training and coaching certifications.

How to get started:

[Don't have an NCCP#? Create one now!](#)

If you have an NCCP#, follow the instructions below:

1. Log in to the Locker (thelocker.coach.ca)
2. Update your profile and email preferences.
3. View your coaching qualifications transcript under the Certifications tab.
4. Find available training events for your sport.
5. Take the required online eLearning modules through the eLearning tab.

Required Courses

1. Making Ethical Decisions – Is currently free but will switch to a fee base. If you have to pay a fee, keep your receipt and MSA will reimburse the cost of the course.
2. Emergency Plan Module
3. Making Headway Module
4. Rule of Two

DURING THE SEASON

ONCE YOU ARE ASSIGNED TO A TEAM

One of the most important activities to set the tone for the season is the pre-season player/parent meeting. Here is the sequence of actions that you need to take with the coach.

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1. The Director of Soccer will email out the team lists to the coach.
2. Once you get your team list and manager's name, contact your manager to introduce yourself and pick a tentative date for a pre-season meeting.
3. You and your manager need to attend Meridian coach's night to obtain information and list of tournaments that are offered.
4. Your manager should invite the parents to the pre-season meeting. Follow the agenda that is included in the Appendix.

AT THE PLAYER/PARENT MEETING

1. Confirm all team roster information with parents (including all contact information). Have the manager report any discrepancies to the Registrar.
2. **All teams must wear club approved apparel.** If a team is interested in ordering alternate club approved jerseys, they may do so at their own expense.
3. Ensure that all players and parents are aware of and adhere to Meridian's Code of Conduct (found on the website)

GENDER PROVISIONS

A female team with male coaching staff must have two adult females in attendance in the dressing room, on the bench, and at practices. A male team with a female coaching staff must have two male adults in attendance at the above-mentioned events. These people commonly known as "Bench Moms and Dads (Gender Reps)" must also register as team personnel and provide Criminal Record and Vulnerable Sector checks and have complete Respect in Sport certification.

SETTING GOALS FOR YOU AND YOUR TEAM

Without clearly defined goals, it is very difficult to have a successful season. Keep your goals realistic and do not base them solely on results. Meridian coaches are expected to make soccer an enjoyable place for young people, and are an important part of their growth in terms of both soccer and life skills. You should have a clear idea of what you want to achieve by season's end in terms of:

1. Team spirit and cohesiveness
2. Enjoyment and enthusiasm for the game
3. Parental support and communication
4. Skill Development
5. Results

Your goals should be communicated with parents and players in order to gain their buy-in, which means that you, the parents and players will share a common vision for your team.

CLUB POLITICS

Our coaches are expected to steer clear of club politics and gossip. Coaches are expected to support each other. If players or parents express concern about another coach, your first reaction should be a show of support for your colleague. If you feel that there are serious accusations, contact the Director of Soccer with your concerns. Getting involved in harmful gossip can allow you to be manipulated by those who seek to push their own agenda. Such people are very good at finding those who will carry their agenda forward. It is preferable that your manager is consistently with parents and not on the bench. Your manager can better perform their duty of being a liaison between yourself and the parents if they are amongst the parents.

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SHARING PLAYERS

If another team is short players for a tournament, the Director of Soccer should be a part of the communication with the other team and coaches. If you need players, please follow the protocol of speaking with the Director of Soccer first; NEVER approach players or parents directly. The coach may instead have his/her manager be the contact for such requests. The coach will also be able to give you help in identifying which player(s) to use and their relative strengths and/or weaknesses.

PRACTICES

The club provides two sessions per week. If you are wanting to add additional training, the club still holds the standard that all teams train during their scheduled times and look outside those times to add additional training sessions.

When conducting practices, it is imperative that your sessions are enjoyable and that they feature a high level of activity for the players. Players should never be standing in lines of more than three, waiting for a turn to do something. If you see lines of more than three, add another group immediately to shorten the lines and increase activity levels.

Keep practice relevant to the age group, make sure that every player is coached and feels wanted and ensure that you are constantly challenging players at their level. Happy practices lead to happy players, and happy players make happy coaches and happy parents, which all lead to a happy club.

DEALING WITH CONFLICT

Unfortunately, there are times when parents have concerns about playing time or other issues. Please do not brush them off. At your pre-season meeting establish protocol to establish how parents can arrange a meeting with you through your manager:

1. You are totally approachable as long as the approach is right.
2. We prefer that parents ask to talk to the coach rather than creating dissent behind the scenes.
3. Parents should NEVER approach the coach immediately before or after a game or practice.
4. Parents should contact the manager to request a meeting and identify the issue so that the coach can prepare.
5. Children are NEVER punished because a parent brought forward a concern.
6. If the issue cannot be resolved in a meeting, the Director of Soccer should be contacted.

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APPENDIX

PARENT/GUARDIAN MEETING SAMPLE AGENDA

Welcome and Introduction

- Coach background as athlete, coach, parent, etc.
- Each person share name and something about themselves, sport related or otherwise.

Coaching Philosophy

- Team Values
- Dealing with mistakes in competition
- Policy on playing time, missing practices, attendance

Goals and Hopes for the Season

- Coach's goals and hopes
- Parents' goals and hopes

Logistics

- Practice schedules
- Tournaments
- Budget
- Equipment
- Gender Reps? And completion of criminal and vulnerable sector checks and RIS.

CODE OF CONDUCT

As an affiliate of the Saskatchewan Soccer Association, Meridian is committed to upholding the code of conduct as developed by the SSA. The full SSA Code of Conduct can be found on their website: http://sasksoccer.com/files/section_3_ppm_code_of_conduct_and_ethics_0116.pdf. We have included the parts related to team personnel, athletes and parents/spectators here for your reference.

1.8 Team Personnel

In addition to Articles 1.4-1.6, Team Personnel (which includes, but not limited to, all Coaches, Assistant Coaches, and Managers, Gender Representatives, Medical or other personnel in a position of influence on the athletes) have many additional responsibilities. The Team Personnel-athlete relationship is a privileged one and plays a critical role in the personal, sport, and athletic development of the athlete. Team Personnel must understand and respect the inherent power imbalance that exists in this relationship and must be extremely careful not to abuse it, consciously or unconsciously. Team Personnel will:

- a) Ensure a safe environment by selecting activities and establishing controls that are suitable for the age, experience, ability, and fitness level of the involved athletes
- b) Prepare athletes systematically and progressively, using appropriate time frames and monitoring physical and psychological adjustments while refraining from using training methods or techniques that may harm athletes
- c) Avoid compromising the present and future health of athletes by communicating and cooperating with sport medicine professionals in the diagnosis, treatment, and management of athletes' medical and psychological treatments
- d) Support the coaching staff of a training camp, provincial team, or national team, should an athlete qualify for participation with one of these programs

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- e) Provide athletes (and the parents/guardians of minor athletes) with the information necessary to be involved in the decisions that affect the athlete
- f) Act in the best interest of the athlete's development as a whole person
- g) Respect other coaches
- h) Meet the highest standards of credentials, integrity and suitability, including but not limited to such considerations established by the SSA's Screening Policy
- i) Report any ongoing criminal investigation, conviction, or existing bail conditions, including those for violence, child pornography, or possession, use, or sale of any illegal substance
- j) Under no circumstances provide, promote, or condone the use of drugs (other than properly prescribed medications) or performance-enhancing substances and, in the case of minors, alcohol and/or tobacco
- k) Respect athletes playing with other teams and, in dealings with them, not encroach upon topics or actions which are deemed to be within the realm of 'coaching', unless after first receiving approval from the coaches who are responsible for the athletes
- l) Not engage in a sexual relationship with an athlete under 18 years old, or an intimate or sexual relationship with an athlete over the age of 18 if the Team Personnel is in a position of power, trust, or authority over the athlete
- m) Recognize the power inherent in the position of Team Personnel and respect and promote the rights of all participants in sport. This is accomplished by establishing and following procedures for confidentiality (right to privacy), informed participation, and fair and reasonable treatment. Team Personnel have a special responsibility to respect and promote the rights of participants who are in a vulnerable or dependent position and less able to protect their own rights
- n) Dress professionally, neatly, and inoffensively
- o) Use inoffensive language, taking into account the audience being addressed
- p) Act professionally at all times
- q) Act in a sportsmanlike manner and not display appearances of violence, foul language, or gestures to other athletes, officials, coaches, or spectators.

1.9 Athletes

1.9.1 In addition to Articles 1.4-1.6 athletes will have additional responsibilities to:

- a) Report any medical problems in a timely fashion, when such problems may limit their ability to travel, practice, or compete; or in the case of carded athletes, interfere with the athlete's ability to fulfill requirements under the Athlete Assistance Program
- b) Participate and appear on-time, well-nourished, and prepared to participate to their best abilities in all competitions, practices, training sessions, tryouts, tournaments, and events
- c) Properly represent themselves and not attempt to participate in a competition for which they are not eligible by reason of age, classification, or other reason
- d) Adhere to the SSA's rules and requirements regarding clothing and equipment
- e) Never ridicule a participant for a poor performance or practice
- f) Act in a sportsmanlike manner and not display appearances of violence, foul language, or gestures to other athletes, officials, coaches, or spectators
- g) Dress in a manner representative of the SSA; focusing on neatness, cleanliness, and discretion
- h) Act in accordance with the SSA's policies and procedures and, when applicable, additional rules as outlined by coaches or managers
- i) Act in a sportsmanlike manner and not display appearances of violence, foul language,

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or gestures to other athletes, officials, coaches, or spectators

1.11 Spectators and Parents

1.11.1 In addition to Articles 1.4-1.6 parents and spectators will have additional responsibilities to:

- a) Encourage athletes to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence
- b) Never ridicule a participant for making a mistake during a performance or practice
- c) Provide positive comments that motivate and encourage participants' continued effort
- d) Respect the decisions and judgments of officials and encourage athletes to do the same
- e) Respect and show appreciation to all competitors, and to the coaches, officials, and other volunteers who give their time to the sport
- f) Act in a sportsmanlike manner and not display appearances of violence, foul language, or gestures to other athletes, officials, coaches, or spectators
- g) Keep off the training or competition area and not interfere with any activities.

CODE OF CONDUCT – MERIDIAN SOCCER

Code of Conduct: Players

See section 8.0 of the MYSA Governance and Operational Policies document. The Code of Conduct is included in registration and is agreed to as part of registration.

It is the intention of this pledge to promote fair play and respect for all participants within the soccer club.

Player Code of Conduct: The following code of conduct has been developed to provide players with guidelines outlining the behavioural and procedural responsibilities of playing with the Meridian Soccer Association (MSA).

1. I will play by the rules of soccer and in the Spirit of the Game.
2. I will act in a respectful and responsible manner. Abusive language and disruptive behaviour will not be tolerated. I will be removed from the program if my behaviour is not acceptable.
3. I will respect my opponents and teammates. Acknowledge all good plays and performances - those of my team and opponents.
4. I will do my best to be a true team player and strive to give my best for the good of the team.
5. I will remember that winning isn't everything - that having fun, improving skills, making friends and doing my best are also important.
6. I will acknowledge all good plays and performances - those of my team and opponents.
7. I will remember that coaches and officials are there to help me. I will accept their decisions and show them respect.

I agree to comply with the Player Code of Conduct for the Meridian Soccer Association.

Player Signature

Player Printed Name

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Parent/Guardian Printed Name

Date

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Code of Conduct: Parents and Guardians

See section 8.0 of the MYSA Governance and Operational Policies document. The Code of Conduct is included in registration and is agreed to as part of registration.

It is the intention of this pledge to promote fair play and respect for all participants within the soccer club.

Parent(s) and Guardian(s) Code of Conduct The following code of conduct has been developed to provide parents and guardians with a clear set of guidelines outlining the behavioural and procedural responsibilities when participating with the Meridian Soccer Association (MSA).

1. Let the coaches do the coaching for all team members.
2. Support the program by volunteering to assist the team somehow.
3. Be your child's best fan; support him or her unconditionally.
4. Acknowledge your child's effort, as well as his or her support of team members, adherence to player responsibilities, etc.
5. Support and root for all team members. That fosters teamwork.
6. Be enthusiastic for all kids' efforts, successes, and hard work.
7. Support your team, coaches, players and referees in all situations. Model good sportsmanship at all times during practices and competitions.
8. Orient your child to the enjoyment of participating and his or her responsibility to the team.
9. Encourage direct communication. If your child has difficulties in practice or games or can't make a practice, encourage him or her to speak directly to the coaches.
10. Understand and display appropriate game behaviours (e.g., watch, make positive remarks; don't berate players, officials or coaches). Remember, your child's self-esteem and game performance are at stake. Be supportive.
11. Keep sport in its proper perspective: Sport should be fun for you and your child. Highly skilled children and their parents must be especially careful to maintain a balanced view.
12. If your child's performance produces strong emotions in you, maintain a calm demeanour. Your relationship with your child remains long after competitive sports days are over. Keep your goals and needs separate from your child's experience.
13. Reality test: If your child's team loses but has played its best, help your child see that as a "win." Remind him or her to focus on the "process" and not only "results." Children should derive fun and satisfaction from "striving to win" and playing well and hard.
14. Let other family members and friends who might attend your child's games know what constitutes appropriate and supportive behaviour. You are responsible for their behaviour.
15. Have fun. Remember, children play organized sports for fun, first and foremost.
16. Encourage your child to play by the rules and to resolve conflict without resorting to hostility or violence.
17. Teach your child that doing one's best is as important as winning so that your child will never feel defeated by the outcome of the game. Make your child feel like a winner every time by offering praise for competing fairly and hard.
18. I will remember that children learn by example. I will applaud good plays and performances by both my child's team and their opponents.
19. Never question the referee's or coach's judgment or decision.
20. Respect the official's decision, respect the players, and respect the coaches in all situations.
21. Respect and show appreciation for the volunteers who give their time to soccer for my child.
22. Support your team, coaches, players and referees in all situations.
23. Meridian Soccer wants to adopt a behavioural stance against persons who insult, harass, threaten or assault other persons at any event involving a Meridian Soccer team.
24. If someone is acting in an unacceptable manner, they may be instructed to leave the area immediately. If the behaviour continues in any way, shape, or form during the game and is documented, the MSA Board will take appropriate action toward said person or persons.
25. If the person is identified as a parent, friend or family member of a Meridian Soccer athlete, the parent and possibly their child will be suspended from any and all Meridian Soccer activities for the season or longer if needed and will be subject for a behavioural bond before their child or children are allowed to play again.

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26. Upon suspension or any other discipline from the Meridian Soccer Association, there will be no refund provided for any fees paid.

I agree to abide by the principles of the CODE OF CONDUCT as set by Meridian Soccer Association. I also agree to abide by the rules, regulations and decisions of the Meridian Soccer Association.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Printed Name

Date

Code of Conduct: Coaches, On-field Support & Volunteers

See section 8.0 of the MYSA Governance and Operational Policies document. The Code of Conduct is included in registration and is agreed to as part of registration.

It is the intention of this pledge to promote fair play and respect for all participants within the soccer club.

COACHES, ON-FIELD SUPPORT AND VOLUNTEERS CODE OF CONDUCT THE FOLLOWING CODE OF CONDUCT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED TO PROVIDE COACHES WITH A CLEAR SET OF guidelines outlining the behavioural and procedural responsibilities of coaching with Meridian Soccer Association (MSA).

1. I understand that I am representing the Meridian Soccer Association (MSA) as well as my team and will act accordingly at all times. Any inappropriate conduct directed towards members of the MSA Board of Directors, or the representatives of other associations, other volunteers, parents, players and officials will not be tolerated.
2. I understand that coaching is a position of trust and leadership. Therefore, I will be a positive role model for my players and will maintain my personal integrity and dignity at all times.
3. I understand that being a coach means being, first and foremost, a teacher. I will teach my players basic soccer skills, techniques and strategies and will give all my players the opportunity to improve their skills, gain confidence and develop self-esteem.
4. I will not swear, use profanity or make obscene gestures, or engage in any inappropriate behaviour or conduct while acting in a coaching capacity or representing the MSA.
5. I am aware of the Saskatchewan Soccer Association, CSA, and tournament bylaws, policies, rules and regulations and I agree to abide by them and to be bound by them and shall support and uphold them to the best of my ability. I understand I may be disciplined (suspended) if I violate the bylaws, policies, rules and regulations.
6. I will respect the referees and game officials and their authority during every game. I will not dispute, challenge, or excessively argue any decisions made by them or confront any referee or league official at the field before, during or after a game. If necessary, I will take the time to calmly and rationally discuss any situation or call made during a game with a tournament official or by utilizing proper channels with the Director of Soccer for Meridian Soccer Association.
7. I will always display good sportsmanship and fair play and will encourage the same from my players, colleagues, opponents, parents and spectators.
8. I understand that the game of soccer is a team sport, and I will treat all my players in a fair and equal manner.
9. I will have a positive attitude and will always praise my players for trying hard, playing fair and doing their best, regardless of the outcome of the game. I will not criticize or yell at any player for making a mistake or losing a competition. I will not tolerate physical or verbal abuse in youth sports.
10. I will maintain an open line of communication with my player's parents. I will explain my goals and objectives for the team.
11. I shall discuss openly with Parents about items specific to their child's needs. Not other children.
12. I will maintain an open line of communication with the Director of Soccer at all times.
13. I will be humble in victory and gracious in defeat.

I agree to abide by the principles of the CODE OF CONDUCT as set by Meridian Soccer Association. I also agree to abide by the rules, regulations and decisions of the Meridian Soccer Association.

Volunteer Signature

Player Printed Name

Date

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