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Meridian PAL has implemented a new build out line rule in the U7, U8, and U10 age groups (see diagram below). The build out line will promote playing the ball out of the back in a less pressured setting. The intent is to support the Meridian PAL player development initiative which is to develop the skills and abilities of each player.

Here are some basics regarding the build out line rule:

- When the goalkeeper has the ball in his or her hands during play from the opponent, the opposing team must move behind the build out line until the ball is put into play
- Once the opposing team is behind the build out line, the goalkeeper can pass, throw or roll the ball into play (punting or drop-kicking the ball is not permitted)
- After the ball is put into play by the goalkeeper, the opposing team can cross the build out line and play resumes as normal
- The opposing team must also move behind the build out line during a goal kick until the ball is put into play

For U9/U10 only (U7/U8 offsides will continue as is in the penalty box only) -

- The build out line will also be used to denote where offside offenses can be called
- Players cannot be penalized for an offside offense between the halfway line and the build out line
- Players can be penalized for an offside offense between the build out line and goal line

The following are some tips for practical application:

- Ideally, the goalkeeper will wait to put the ball into play once all opponents are past the build out line
- However, the goalkeeper can put the ball into play sooner but he or she does so accepting the positioning of the opponents and the consequences of how play resumes
- To support the intent of the development rule, coaches should be mindful of any intentional delays being caused by their players (when they're the opponents) not retreating in a timely manner or encroaching over the build out line prior to the ball being put into play
- Coaches are responsible for addressing these types of issues with their players
- Referees should be flexible when enforcing the 6 second rule and counting the time of possession should only begin when all opponents have moved behind the build out line
- Referees can manage the situation with misconduct if deemed appropriate

We've included a link to a YouTube video breaking down the build out line rule visually as well as a field measurements image (please note that Meridian PAL measurements may differ slightly).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PAE4d0wLmhc>



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