

WESTERN SUBURBAN SOCCER LEAGUE LAWS OF THE GAME – A GUIDE FOR REFEREES and COACHES

<http://wsslsoccer.org>

Revised Fall 2014
September 6, 2014

Games shall be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game as published by FIFA, and the following WSSL modifications.

Law 1. The Field

General conditions. The field of play shall be reasonably flat, grassy fields, free from structures which may endanger the players. The field must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line. The home team will be responsible for the condition of the grounds, the proper field markings and proper equipment. **Nets and corner flags are required. Goals are required to be properly installed. Moveable goals must be anchored. The game will not be permitted to start if the movable goals are not anchored.**

All games shall be played on age appropriate sized fields.

6 v 6 and 7 v 7

Dimensions:	Length: minimum 45 yards	maximum 65 yards
	Width: minimum 35 yards	maximum 45 yards
Markings:	Center circle: 8 yard radius	Corner arc: 1 yard radius
	Penalty area: 10 yards	Goal area: 6 yards
Goals:	6(.5) ft x 18(.5) ft (recommended)	Penalty mark is 8 yards from the goal line

9 v 9 Dimensions:

	Length: minimum 70 yards	maximum 85 yards
	Width: minimum 45 yards	maximum 60 yards
Markings:	Center circle: 8 yard radius	Corner arc: 1 yard radius
	Penalty area: 14 yards	Goal Area: 6 yards
Goals:	7 ft x 21 ft (recommended)	Penalty mark is 10 yards from the goal line

11 v 11 Dimensions:

	Length: minimum 100 yards	maximum 130 yards
	Width: minimum 50 yards	maximum 100 yards
Markings:	Center circle: 10 yard radius	Corner arc: 1 yard radius
	Penalty area: 18 yards	Goal Area: 6 yards
Goals:	8 ft x 24 ft	Penalty mark is 12 yards from the goal line

Law 2. The Ball

Size #4 for age groups under 12 and younger

Size #5 for age groups under 13 and older

Law 3. The Number of Players

6 v 6	maximum	five (5) field players + one (1) goalkeeper
	minimum	three (3) field players + one (1) goalkeeper
Roster:		minimum number of layers on roster is 6
		maximum number of players on roster is eleven (11).

7 v 7	maximum minimum Roster:	six (7) field players + one (1) goalkeeper three (3) field players + one (1) goalkeeper minimum number of layers on roster is 7 maximum number of players on roster is twelve (12).
9 v 9	maximum minimum Roster:	eight (7) field players + one (1) goalkeeper four (4) field players + one (1) goalkeeper minimum number of players on roster is 9 maximum number of players on roster is fifteen (15).
11 v 11	maximum minimum Roster:	ten (10) field players + one (1) goalkeeper six (6) field players + one (1) goalkeeper minimum number of players on roster is 11 maximum of 22 on roster, maximum of 18 on game card.
HSO	maximum	five (5) field players + 1 goalkeeper
Small	minimum	three (3) field players + one (1) goalkeeper
Sided	Roster:	maximum of 22 on roster, maximum of 18 on game card

Substitution Procedure:

A player who has been replaced may return to the game at a later time. **WSSL does not limit the number the number of substitutions made per game.**

Substitutes shall be allowed in the following circumstances:

- Prior to a throw in by either team only if the team that has possession of the ball is making a substitution.
- Prior to a goal kick by either team.
- Prior to the game being restarted after a goal (kick off) by either team.
- During the interval between periods by either team. Referee notification is only required when the goalkeeper is substituted at this time.
- For a player(s) that has received a caution (yellow card) – the opposing may substitute a like number of players.
- For an injured player(s) – opposing team may substitute a like number of players.
- For a player(s) who is ejected (red card) from the game - neither team shall substitute, and the offending team shall play the game less the number of player(s) ejected. If, however, the goalkeeper is ejected, a substitute may replace another player of the same team so as to play as the goalkeeper. The offending team must still play with a reduced number of players reflecting the ejection of the goalkeeper.

If a player changes places with the goalkeeper without the referee's permission, the players concerned and coach will be issued a verbal admonition when the ball is next out of play. No free kick will be awarded, even if the new goalkeeper handles the ball.

Technical area: along one touch line between the two eighteen yard lines or if sideline is shared between the halfway line and eighteen yard line on their half of the field.

Law 4. The Players Equipment

The team color shall be the color of the shirt.

- Opposing teams shall wear shirts that are distinctively different in color.
- If opposing teams are the same color, the home team shall change to an alternate color of shirt.
- Each player reporting to a team shall have a number that is at least four inches high and permanently attached to the back of the shirt. For recreation teams a number is not required on an alternate shirt. Players are not allowed to switch numbers after the team has been checked-in by the referees without notifying a referee of the change.
- Long pants may be worn in addition to the required uniform if they are of the same main color as the shorts.
Long sleeve shirts may be worn underneath the required jersey.

Law 5. The Referee

All referees will be registered with USSF through the State Referee Association. No person shall officiate as a referee or assistant referee in any match under the sanction or jurisdiction (direct or indirect) of the WSSL who is not registered.

Referee is appointed and paid by the home teams club and paid according to the club's pay schedule.

The referee's jurisdiction shall be empowered either on the field of play or in the vicinity of the field at all times, prior to, during, or after the game.

A referee shall not officiate any game in which a relative is engaged as a team participant.

A three official diagonal system shall be utilized for 9v9 and 11v11 games. In the event that less than three officials are present, the referee shall appoint club linesman as required. 6v6 and 7v7 games may be played with one referee.

The referee shall be at least one year older than the oldest player and be professionally dressed in full uniform.

Prior to the start of the match the referee shall verify the identity of the players, coaches, managers and team officials. And, shall make sure that each player's equipment is in proper order.

Prior to the start of the match, the Referee shall make sure that all goal nets and corner flags are properly installed, anchored, and in proper repair, that the field has the proper markings and that the ground is fit for play.

If the designated referee has not reported to the field within fifteen minutes of the scheduled starting time, the opposing coaches may appoint a referee that is satisfactory to both coaches. In the event both coaches do not agree on an alternate referee then the match shall be re-scheduled (see pre-game rules #3). In the event that the referee reports after the game has started, it shall be the discretion of both coaches to permit the referee to take charge of the game. However, the game shall in no event be restarted.

Law 6. The Assistant Referees

6 v 6 (U9 & U10) Assistant Referees are not required (the offside rule is not enforced).

An assistant referee shall not officiate any game in which a relative is engaged as a player or coach, unless acting as a club linesperson when duly appointed by the referee. Assistants should be professionally dressed in full uniform.

Law 7. The Duration of the Match

Periods of Play; the match shall last for two equal periods of:

- 45 minutes for age groups U17, U18 & U19
- 40 minutes for age groups U15, U16, and High School Open 11v11
- 35 minutes for age groups U13Y, U13, U14, and High School Open 6v6
- 30 minutes for age groups U10Y, U11 & U12
- 25 minutes for age groups U8, U9 & U10

Stoppage time will be added at the referee's discretion. No overtime periods are allowed. Games that end (regulation plus stoppage time) in a tied score, are considered ties/draws for purposes of league game scoring (see Law 10. The Method of Scoring).

Law 8. The Start and Restart of Play

At the discretion of the referee the scheduled start of the game may be delayed a maximum of 15 minutes if a team has less than the minimum number of players including the goalkeeper on the field.

Minimum number of players: 11 v 11 play is 7 players, 9 v 9 play is 5 players, 6 v 6 and 7 v 7 play is 4 players.

6 v 6 and 7 v 7 Kickoff: A goal may **not** be scored directly from the kick-off. (Kick-offs are indirect, the same as free kicks)

Law 10. The Method of Scoring

For all WSSL seasonal league games, the following method of league game scoring will be used in order to determine league division winners:

3 points awarded for a win

1 point awarded for a tie

0 points awarded for a loss

WSSL awards division wins to ALL teams placing first in their division. There are no tie-breakers for first place, all teams tied for 1st place are considered division winners. For recreational teams, WSSL awards player trophies to all U11 and above division winners. For select teams, WSSL awards player trophies to all division winners.

Mercy rule (Recreation games only): When the goal differential becomes 5, the team leading shall play with the spirit of good sportsmanship and limit the continued number of goals scored against the trailing team .

Forfeits: The score of any forfeit shall stand 2 – 0 against the forfeiting team. Any team which forfeits a game shall not be eligible for a division championship unless otherwise determined by the WSSL Scorekeeper. Any team with two (2) or more forfeits during a season may be subject to suspension and/or appropriate disciplinary action by the WSSL Executive Board.

Canceled Games: Any canceled game is considered a game not played and will not be considered when calculating points.

If a team is unable to compete or disbanded prior to the completion of the season, no points or goals for or against shall be awarded to any team included in their WSSL schedule.

Law 11. Offside

6 v 6 and 7 v 7 (U8, U9 & U10) The offside rule shall not be enforced.

Law 12. Fouls and Misconduct

Cautions are cumulative throughout the fall and spring seasons. If a player or coach receives three (3) cautions in a soccer year (fall/spring), they are disqualified for the next scheduled league contest.

A player or coach who has been sent off must leave the vicinity of the field of play and the technical area. The ejected individual shall physically retreat to an area designated by the referee. An ejected coach or player cannot return to the vicinity of the field at any time even after the game has ended.

Law 13. Free Kicks

6 v 6 and 7 v 7 (U8, U9 & U10) All free kicks shall be indirect including fouls within the penalty area, except for a flagrant foul within the penalty area which shall be penalized by a penalty kick. (A flagrant foul is defined as “excessive contact committed by a player against an opponent”). All opponents must be at least 8 yards from the ball.

Law 14. The Penalty Kick

6 v 6 and 7 v 7 (U8, U9 & U10) All opponents must be at least 8 yards from the ball. Penalty mark is 8 yards from the goal line.

(Note 6 v 6: penalty kick is only to be awarded for a flagrant foul * within the penalty area).

8 v 8 All opponents must be at least 8 yards from the ball. Penalty mark is 10 yards from the goal line

A penalty kick must be taken from the designated penalty mark, regardless of the field conditions at the mark.

Law 16. The Goal Kick

6 v 6 and 7 v 7 (U8 & U9) No Goal Kicks – game is restarted with goalkeeper possession. Goal keeper can throw, kick, punt, or dribble the ball back into play. Note: The ball is in play when it leaves the penalty area.

7 v 7 (U10) Goal keeper possession rule has been rescinded for U10 only. U10 teams will restart with a goal kick.

Law 17. The Corner Kick

6 v 6, 7 v 7 and 9 v 9 All opponents must be at least 8 yards from the ball.

If the field conditions with the corner arc are adverse to taking the kick, the referee may allow the kick to be taken at the nearest location where the field conditions are suitable.

Pre-Game Rules

1. For all select games, where possible, spectators for both teams must take opposite sides of the field from the teams. For all recreational games, where possible, teams along with their spectators must take opposite sides of the field, unless mutually agreed otherwise by both coaches. When both teams share one side of the field, each team shall limit their bench and sideline activities between the halfway line and one penalty area line. The home coach has first choice.
2. The home team shall be responsible for the condition of the field. Field marking and proper equipment such as goal nets and corner flags are considered necessary for a WSSL sponsored game. Home team shall provide the game ball.
3. In the event that the game must be cancelled because the designated referee does not arrive and an alternate referee cannot be agreed upon by both coaches, or that there are no appropriately sized fields available at the location within ½ hour of the originally scheduled game time. Then the visiting team has the option to re-schedule the game at their facilities with the original home team responsible for paying the referees fees at the original visiting team's pay rate.
4. Each club shall provide each coach with copies of the team roster containing all required WSSL information. Three copies of the GotSoccer game card shall be provided by the home team for each scheduled game including a mailing envelope. Coaches or team officials shall submit completely filled out Game Cards to the referee prior to the game. It is the responsibility of the coach to document all players/team officials that are sitting out due to red/yellow cards, team discipline, injuries, etc. Also, to write-in any passcard players that will be participating in the game. A WSSL game shall be deemed a forfeit if the game report is not given to the referee before the start of the 2nd half. Should it be necessary, the referee may forward the game report to the Rules and Referees Coordinator for possible action.
5. Both teams, including coaches, shall be required to exchange handshakes in the middle of the field prior to the start of the game. The referee shall report any offending team, player, or coach, to the Rules and Referees Coordinator. Failure to comply with this rule shall be interpreted as unsporting behavior.
6. Coaching from the sidelines shall be conducted in a constrained and reasonable manner, and shall only occur in the technical area between the penalty area lines, limited to own side of the field. No coach, substitute player, or spectator shall be allowed beyond the penalty area line or at either end of the field while play is in progress.
7. No mechanical, electrical, or radio-controlled devices shall be allowed for coaching purposes during the game.
8. Verbal criticism of the referee or assistant referees during the game by coaches, spectators, or players will not be allowed. The coach shall be deemed responsible for the actions of their team, asst. coaches, and spectators.
9. Each player reporting to a team, who is present at the start of the game, shall play at least ½ of the game (1/3 for select teams) unless injured or suspended by the home club or WSSL which shall be noted on the game report.

WSSL Passcards

All select team coaches, assistant coaches, managers, adult team officials and players must have a WSSL approved passcard which shall have a current photograph of the name individual permanently affixed and which will be presented to the referee prior to each game.

Should any players' passcard not be available, they shall be permitted to play in the game after having provided to the referee prior to the game, his/her name, signature and birth date. The referee shall note this information on the Game Card and at the conclusion of the game, advise the coach of the opposing team of this information and make it available to him/her. The opposing team coach has a right to challenge such a player by contacting the WSSL Administrator for verification that the challenged player(s) is/are properly registered and eligible to play. If the WSSL Administrator records show that the player(s) is/are properly registered to play, the matter is finished. If the WSSL Administrator records show that the player(s) is/are not properly registered to play, the offending team shall automatically forfeit that game and the coach may face further disciplinary action.

WSSL Club Passcard Player Rules

1. Only WSSL Registered Recreational or Select team players can be passcarded to other WSSL **select** teams within their same WSSL Club. **PASSCARDING TO RECREATIONAL TEAMS IS NOT ALLOWED.**
2. A player's age and gender for passcarding is determined by the team age and gender of the team on which they are officially rostered.
 - a. A U9 aged player officially rostered to a U10 team is considered U10.
 - b. For UY divisions, the UY divisions are considered the highest divisions of the team age. U13Y, Div. 1 is considered U12, Div. 1; U13Y, Div. 2 is considered U12, Div. 2; followed by U12, Div. 1 is considered, U12, **Div. 3**; U12, Div. 2 is considered U12, **Div. 4** and so on for passcarding purposes **ONLY!**
3. A passcarded player must be from the same Club and on a WSSL Administrator approved official team roster.
 - a. A select team passcarded player may play laterally between teams within the same division.
 - b. A select team passcarded player may play down within the same gender and age group but by no more than two divisions: division 1 to 3, division 2 to 4, division 3 to 5, division 4 to 6, etc.
 - c. A select team passcarded player may play up from a division lower, an age group younger but by no more than two years, or from a girl's team to a boy's team of the same year or an age group younger but by no more than two years.
 - d. A recreational team passcarded player may play up from the same gender and age group, an age group younger but by no more than two years, or from a girl's team to a boy's team of the same year or an age group younger but by no more than two years.
4. The maximum times a passcarded player may be passcarded in a week is two times.
 - a. The week is defined as starting on Sunday and ending on Saturday.
5. The maximum number of players that can be passcarded to a team at any single game is as follows:
 - a. U8, U9, U10 = 3
 - b. U11, U12 = 4
 - c. U13 and older = 5
 - d. The total number of players per team including passcarded players cannot exceed the age group roster maximum as follows: U8, U9, U10 is 11, U11 and U12 is 14 and U13Y and above is 18
6. Prior to the start of the game, the coach using the passcarded player(s) must list the passcarded player(s) on the WSSL/GotSoccer Game Card. A WSSL approved official player passcard with photograph must be presented to the referee. (Note: Club Passcard Player(s) not in possession of a passcard cannot participate in a WSSL sanctioned game.)
7. Passcarded players can only be used for WSSL Select League games.
8. Passcarded players are only eligible to be passcarded if free of suspensions.
 - a. A player's history of play is the responsibility of the coach using the passcarded player.
9. Violations of the above WSSL Club Passcard Player Rules will result in a game forfeit and a 1 game suspension for the coach.

Postponed or Abandoned or Canceled Games

All games shall be played on the scheduled date, time, and field. Refusal to play a scheduled game shall result in forfeiture by the offending team, unless the game is postponed or abandoned. Any canceled game is considered a game not played and will not be considered when calculating points. Any team leaving a match without permission from the Referee will automatically be disciplined by a one (1) game suspension to the coach and also be subject to

additional disciplinary action by the WSSL Executive Board. The Referee will be questioned on the circumstances of the game.

Each club determines the status of their fields and playing conditions, and reserves the right to postpone games. Only the referee, a city or club official, or a community leader may abandon or postpone a game.

If a game must be postponed because of a conflict or error, you must give at least 72 hours notice to the opposing team plus notify the WSSL Administrator and the home club referee assignor. Reschedules must be limited, and the WSSL reserves the right to deny requests. When games are to be rescheduled, the rescheduling shall be completed promptly; and the date, time, and place, must be agreed to by both teams.

If one hour or less before the scheduled game time, a tornado or severe weather warning is in effect, the game shall be canceled and rescheduled. Lightning and/or thunder in the local area shall be cause for stoppage of the game as determined by the referee. If after the minimum waiting period of 30 minutes, the weather conditions persist, the game shall be abandoned.

The safety and welfare of the participants is of prime concern. The match may be abandoned ; if ordered by a public service official. if the game is stopped by the intrusion of irreconcilable forces or because of flagrant misconduct of participants or spectators.

Unless otherwise notified by an authorized WSSL or Club Official, a team must arrive ready to play with the appropriate number of players no later than 15 minutes after the scheduled game time on the field assigned or will be subject to a forfeit of the game regardless of field or weather conditions.

If a game is abandoned prior to the start of the second half for recreation teams or prior to 2/3rds being played for select teams, the game shall be void and not counted as a game played, although the penalties for misconduct shall not be voided. All cautions (yellow cards) and/or ejections (red cards) shall be recorded and penalties shall be enforced. If a game is abandoned after the start of the second half (recreation team games), the game is counted as a game played and the score at the time of the abandonment is the official score. Select teams must complete 2/3rds of the game for it to be counted as a game played and the score to be official.

If a team is unable to compete or is disbanded prior to the completion of the season, no points or goals for or against shall be awarded to any team included in their schedule.

Post-Game Rules

The referee shall record the score and all cautions and send-offs on the GotSoccer game cards after the game is completed. The referee shall include an explanation for all send-offs on the back of the GotSoccer game cards. A team official from each team shall review all information and sign confirming that the game card is correct. An official from the winning team (or the home team in the case of a tie) is responsible for reporting the score and any cautions and/or send-offs using the GotSoccer phone-in system and mailing one copy of the game card to the WSSL Scorekeeper at PO Box 702367, Plymouth, MI 48170. This must be completed within 48 hours of the game.

The following numbers shall be used in the caution and send-off columns of the game card to indicate the type of misconduct.

Cautions: **UB** Unsporting Behavior, **DT** Dissent, **PI** Persistent Infringement, **DR** Delays the restart, **FRD** Failure to respect the required distance on a restart, **E** Enters or re-enters the field without the referees permission, **L** Deliberately leaves the field without the referees permission.

Send-off: **SFP** Serious Foul Play, **VC** Violent Conduct, **S** Spitting at an opponent or any other person, **DGH** Denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity by handling the ball, **DGF** Denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity by an offense punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick, **AL** Using Offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures, **2CT** receiving a second caution in the same match.

Protests

Protests will be entertained for rule violations only. Referee judgment is final and cannot be protested. All protests must be reported to the WSSL Rules and Referees Coordinator via email and pay a \$50 fee (payable to WSSL) within 48 hrs of the game. A club official must approve any potential protest before it is submitted to the WSSL. If you win the protest, your fee will be returned.

Penalties for Ejection's

The following are the penalties that have been established by the WSSL for a coach or player receiving an ejection (red card) in conjunction with any WSSL game. The following penalties may also be imposed on a coach or player based on the referee's report even though an ejection (red card) was not issued at the time of the incident.

All suspensions are in addition to the game in which the person was ejected. All suspensions shall apply to the next physically played WSSL game, whether or not such game is within the same season. A forfeited game, cancelled game, or postponed game is not considered a played game. Suspensions that are not served do carry over to the following year.

In so far as a coach is responsible for teaching good sporting behavior to the players, and should set himself/herself as an example, any misconduct on his/her part shall be considered more than that of a player. Therefore, all suspensions for coaches shall be double those of players.

Serious Foul Play: 2 Games

Violent Conduct:

Player 2 Games
Coach or Team Official 4 Games

Spitting at an opponent or any other person:

Player 2 Games
Coach or Team Official 4 Games

Uses Offensive, insulting or abusive language or gestures:

Player 2 Games
Coach or Team Official 4 Games

Denies an obvious goal scoring opportunity by handling the ball: 1 Game

Denies an obvious goal scoring opportunity by committing an offense punishable by a free kick or penalty kick: 1 Game

Receives a second caution in the same match:

Player 1 Game
Coach or Team Official 2 Games

Misconduct on the part of a team's spectators:

Coach made a reasonable attempt to restrain the teams spectator(s) 1 Game
Coach made no attempt to control the teams spectator(s) 2 Games

Fighting:

See section on "Special Hearing"

Intentional foul play which results in serious bodily harm:

See section on "Special Hearing"

Any coach guilty of violent conduct toward a player:

See section on "Special Hearing"

Special Hearing

In these situations, a special hearing will be conducted by an ad hoc committee as appointed by the WSSL Executive Board. If the assault charge is verified, a suspension will be recommended to the Board based upon the severity of the case with a minimum of an eight (8) game suspension to a maximum of a lifetime suspension. In addition to the suspension the offending person will be reported to the MSYSA. Any suspension issued by the WSSL shall be considered a minimum suspension and will be subject only to additional suspensions awarded by higher authorities.

Additional Suspensions

If a player or team official is suspended a second time in the same season for any reason, two (2) additional games shall be added to the suspension.

If a player is suspended a third time within a period of the current season plus the three preceding seasons, three (3) games shall be added to the suspension.

Penalties for Cautions

Cautions (yellow cards) are issued at the discretion of the referee. If a player or team official receives numerous cautions throughout the soccer year (fall/spring), the following penalties (suspensions) shall apply.

Third caution in a soccer year, but not in the same game 1 Game

Fourth caution in a soccer year, but not in the same game 1 Game

If a caution results in an ejection (2nd caution in a game) and the player or coach has received 1 or more cautions previously than the suspension would be 1 game for ejection + 1 game for the third caution. Additional suspensions could also apply, see additional suspensions section.

Playing Suspended or Ineligible Players

Any coach who allows a player to play in a game, during which that player was to serve a suspension or is ineligible, shall receive a two (2) game suspension. Repeat offenses by the same coach shall result in a Disciplinary hearing. Any team which allows a player to play in a game during which that player was to serve a suspension or is ineligible, shall suffer a forfeit of that game and may be subject to a fine set by the WSSL board.

Participation by Suspended Team Officials

Any coach who allows a team official (coach, asst. coach, manager, etc.) to participate in a game, during which that team official was to serve a suspension, shall receive a two (2) game suspension. Repeat offenses by the same coach shall result in a Disciplinary hearing. Any team which allows a team official to participate in a game, during which that team official was to serve a suspension, shall suffer a forfeit of that game and that team official and Club may be subject to a fine set by the WSSL Executive Board.

Application of Suspensions

All suspensions and/or probations apply to the next physically played game, whether or not such game is within the same season or soccer year or within the same team.