



**Montgomery Soccer, Inc.
Recreational Program Manual
2017-2018**

MONTGOMERY SOCCER, INC.

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RECREATIONAL PROGRAM MANUAL

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**MSI maintains office hours
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday from 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.**

FOREWORD

This manual has been developed as a reference guide, providing information to enhance your understanding of MSI programs.

Since it is a reference guide, you are encouraged to refer to it frequently. It will answer most of your questions as well as the questions of your players and their families.

Coaches: no matter how long you have been with MSI, please read the important MSI rules. New coaches should take time to read the complete manual.

If you do not find what you need here, please contact the MSI Office or visit the MSI website. MSI staff will be happy to help you (refer to the list of staff on the inside front cover).

This manual is an official publication of the programs and rules of Montgomery Soccer, Incorporated. It supersedes all previously published manuals.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Montgomery Soccer, Inc. is to promote the game of soccer to the youth of Montgomery County through programs that emphasize each child's enjoyment, skill development, personal growth, passion for the game and team experience, consistent with the principles of Fair Play and Good Sportsmanship.

HISTORY

MSI was organized in 1971 by a small group of parents who were interested in seeing their children learn to play and enjoy soccer. Today MSI has grown from a handful of families and their children into a well-organized youth program that attracts more than 14,000 boys and girls during spring and fall play.

ORGANIZATION

AFFILIATIONS

MSI is affiliated with two state associations, Maryland State Youth Soccer Association (MSYSA) and the Virginia Youth Soccer Association (VYSA). Players in the District of Columbia are officially part of VYSA. Both state youth soccer associations are affiliated with the United States Youth Soccer Association (U.S. Youth Soccer), which, in turn, is affiliated with the United States Soccer Federation (USSF or U.S. Soccer), which is a member of FIFA, soccer's world governing body.

MSI OFFICIALS AND THEIR DUTIES

ELECTED OFFICIALS

The Board of Directors, consisting of the following elected officials, governs MSI:

CHAIRMAN

As the principal executive officer, the chairman supervises and controls all of the business and affairs authorized by the Board. The chairman also serves as the chairperson of the Executive Committee.

1st and 2nd VICE CHAIRS

The vice chairs perform duties prescribed by the board or the chairman. In the absence of the chairman, the 1st vice chair is authorized to perform all duties of the chairman. In the absence of both the chairman and the 1st vice chair, the 2nd vice chair is authorized to perform all duties of the chairman.

SECRETARY

The secretary records all votes and minutes at all meetings of the Board.

TREASURER

The treasurer is the chief financial officer who has charge and custody of all funds and prepares reports to the Board at least four times a year as well as to the full membership at the Annual General Meeting in January.

PARLIAMENTARIAN

The Parliamentarian advises the Chairman, other officers, committees, and members on matters of parliamentary procedure. The Parliamentarian is frequently used to assist with procedure during board meetings and the creation or revision of by-laws.

Standing committees are appointed each year by the chairman.

The Board has open meetings at least four times a year. An annual general meeting (AGM) is held once a year in January. Notice of the AGM is posted on the MSI website.

PAID STAFF

MSI employs staff who handle the day-to-day operations of MSI and who are responsible to the Board of Directors, but do not have voting power. Refer to the inside cover for a list of employees at the time of publication. An updated list is posted on the MSI website.

THE DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS oversees the Recreation and Classic programs, including the day to day operations of all Montgomery Soccer leagues and programs. The Director of Player Development oversees the Academy and Premier programs.

AGE GROUP COMMISSIONERS (AGC) are appointed by the Director of Operations. They are responsible for placing all players on teams and for setting up conferences. They act as a resource for coaches and parents during registration. If you have questions or concerns regarding registration or placement, please contact your Age Group Commissioner. Refer to the inside cover for a list of AGCs at the time of publication. An updated list is posted on the MSI website.

VOLUNTEERS

CONFERENCE COORDINATORS (CC) are appointed by the Age Group Commissioners to oversee the conferences in each age group. Conference Coordinators are responsible for recording the scores, notifying the coaches of cancellations and changes in the game schedule, informing the MSI Office of problems with fields, teams, or referees, and distributing uniforms and awards. **Individual game cancellation and rescheduling are not responsibilities of the Conference Coordinator.**

Other Volunteer opportunities are available for coaches, managers and parents to become involved as members of various MSI committees such as the Policy, Rules and Discipline Committee, Sponsorship Committee, Coach and Player Development Committee and many more.

MSI SOCCER PROGRAMS

RECREATIONAL PROGRAM

The term "recreational," describes an open program in which players do not try out for teams, but are placed on teams by Age Group Commissioners (AGC). Players of all abilities are invited to register and enjoy the game. The coaches are all volunteers. A player may not play concurrently on both a Recreational team and any select team in any league (where players are carded by US Club Soccer, the Maryland State Youth Soccer Association (MSYSA), or the Virginia Youth Soccer Association (VYSA)).

Open teams are initially formed by volunteer AGCs, with neighborhood location taken into account when possible. AGCs place on-time returning players and new players on teams, following MSI placement procedures. **Coaches and parents do not place players on teams and may not guarantee placement to potential players.** After the initial season, players will be placed on their current teams if registration deadlines are met, and new players are placed in the order of their registration, as space allows. (Players who skip a season are considered "new" players when they return.) Transfer requests will be honored on a space-available basis.

The Recreational Program is available from the fall of kindergarten through spring of the 12th grade.

Games will be scheduled primarily on Saturdays. Teams in grades 7-12 will likely play a few Sunday games. Teams in grades 2-6 MAY have a Sunday game. Makeups for rained out games in ALL grades may be scheduled to Sundays.

KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

MSI extends its very popular Recreational Program to kindergarteners, with an emphasis on fun-based introductory games and skills development. The program runs 5 Saturdays each season. Players are NOT formed into competitive teams and do not play an organized league schedule. Rather, each week involves small group games designed to promote individual skill development and enjoyment of the game. Each session will conclude with informal small-sided game play.

CLASSIC PROGRAM

The MSI Classic Program offers a more competitive level of in-house play to teams from age groups U-10 through U-19. It is a "select" program in which players must try out and be selected for teams. Players interested in playing in the U10-U12 age groups must successfully complete a skills evaluation that is administered by MSI. Classic players may not play on Recreational teams.

Playing under the guidance of coaches holding the Classic Coaching Course certification or the NSCAA Junior Level VI Diploma, the Classic Program provides skillful players the opportunity to continue their development to the highest level possible. For that reason, Classic seeks out those players and coaches who demonstrate a greater commitment and interest in learning and playing the game. For some, the Classic Program is just the beginning of a youth's competitive soccer experience that may be fully realized at varying levels throughout their association with the game. For others, the program provides the challenges and a level of play that promotes and nurtures growth as a soccer athlete.

CLUB-SPONSORED PREMIER AND ACADEMY TEAMS

Premier soccer is the most competitive level of youth soccer. MSI sponsors Premier teams, primarily in the National Capital Soccer League (NCSL). These leagues provide competition among the best U-9 through U-19 youth teams in the greater Washington metropolitan area. Premier players may not play on Recreational teams.

Experienced, well-qualified coaches, generally holding a minimum of NSCAA Junior Level VI Diplomas or "D" Coaching Licenses are selected by MSI to coach Montgomery Soccer Premier teams, which are formed through a tryout process. The Premier program demands a great commitment from both players and their parents since Premier players can expect more intense training and travel to out-of-town tournaments, often on holiday weekends. In order to qualify to coach a MSC team, coaches are required to provide a minimum of ten hours per year of their time and expertise to MSI programs and/or activities.

The Academy Program is designed to meet the needs of those younger players who exhibit an exceptional capability and commitment to the game for their age. The Players Academy offers first and second grade players evening camps in the summer, indoor winter training and fall and spring programs with credentialed MSI/MSC staff coaches. In order to participate, players are required to be registered MSI Recreational Program participants. Beginning in the 3rd grade year, a small, qualified group of U9 players are selected to play on MSI Academy teams that are coached by MSI staff coaches, individuals who have shown a commitment to emphasizing player development and enjoyment of the game for younger players.

ADAPTIVE /TOPSOCCER PROGRAM

The Adaptive/TOPSoccer Program is a partner of Special Olympics Maryland and serves children ages 3 to 21 with disabilities such as mental retardation, severe learning disabilities, cerebral palsy, and impaired vision or hearing --- any child who would benefit from specialized soccer skills training. The focus is on development, training, and participation, rather than on competition, and is a great opportunity for children with special needs to learn new skills, build physical fitness and self esteem, and have fun playing soccer!

Many of our players choose to take advantage of training and competition opportunities designed to meet Special Olympics criteria for advancement in Special Olympics competition at a local and regional level.

Training takes place 6 weekends during the fall soccer season. An online registration form is available on the MSI website.

COMMUNITY SOCCER PROGRAM

Community Soccer is a program developed by MSI to provide social services in the neediest school communities. Through our Community Soccer Program, MSI offers team organization, volunteer training, uniforms and equipment, scheduling, and other on site support to school children who have no other opportunity to play organized sports.

Participating in MSI Community Soccer provides several advantages for a local school community. The Program offers healthy physical activity that promotes a player's physical development as well as pride in his/her individual accomplishments, team, and school. Equally as important is the involvement of adults. MSI Community Soccer helps to develop adults' skills as organizers, team managers, and coaches, and provides opportunities for parents to get more involved in their kids' lives. The long-term success of the Program depends on our success in developing community volunteers and coaches.

SUMMER PROGRAMS

MSI provides a number of summer programs including summer camps, First and Second Grade Academy mini camps and a 4v4 Summer Program for high school players.

MSI TOURNAMENTS

MSI sponsors the Cherry Blossom Classic tournament in late March and the Kickoff Classic friendlies over Labor Day weekend. These events are primarily targeted to Classic and Premier teams. Visit the MSI Classic or Premier websites for more information

IMPORTANT MSI RECREATIONAL PROGRAM RULES

The following is a list of some of the more important MSI Rules. Failure to comply with these rules can lead to forfeiture of a game or sanctions against a coach or player. All coaches are expected to familiarize themselves with them and ignorance of a rule is not an acceptable excuse when the rule is broken.

TEAM COMPOSITION

- **No player carded by MSYSA, US Club Soccer, or VYSA in any league may play on a MSI Recreational team during the same season.**
- Recreational coaches may not place or remove team players. Placement is made only by the Age Group Commissioner or MSI staff person.
- A player may not be added to a team for the last game of the season if the team is in contention for a divisional trophy.
- **No child may participate in a team practice or game if s/he is not officially registered and placed on that team.** Doing so presents serious insurance risks to MSI and the adult in charge.
- **Returning players are guaranteed placement on current teams ONLY if registered by stated deadlines.** Returning players who register after stated deadlines will be placed in the order of their registration date, only as space allows.
- New players, including players who skip a season, are placed on neighborhood teams, whenever possible, in the order of their registration, as space allows.
- Boys may not play on girls teams; girls may play on mostly boys teams
- Teams will be held to stated roster sizes, and coaches and parents may not request special exceptions.

PRACTICES

- Coaches may not hold more than two practices per week during the season. A scrimmage counts as a practice.
- Two adults must be present during each practice, at least one of whom is a formally registered MSI volunteer.
- Players must attend a majority of practices and games. If a pattern of attendance problems exists with a player that is detrimental to the team and grossly unfair to the other players, coaches are expected to make an effort to mitigate the problem by engaging in constructive dialogue with the offending player and his or her parents. Should the problem persist, coaches should contact MSI for assistance.

PLAYING THE GAME

- Only players registered on YOUR team may play in your games.
- **Every player MUST play at least one half of every game. (Note: This does not necessarily mean equal playing time for all players.)**
- **Teams must have the minimum number of players required to begin game:**
7v7: 5 players 8v8: 5 players 9v9: 6 players 11v11: 7 players
After waiting 15 minutes, if one team cannot field the minimum number of players, the referee will cancel the game. Teams may choose to play an exhibition game (no points awarded) with referee coverage. If both teams have the minimum number of players as stated above, the game must begin.
- Coaching from the sidelines MUST occur behind the touchline and between the 18-yard lines on your own team's sideline.
- **Coaches may not dispute the ruling of a referee during or following a game.** All concerns must be directed to the MSI office in writing immediately following the game, at which time they will be forwarded to MWSRA, or the Junior Referee trainer, for investigation.
- Physical violence, foul or abusive language, or harassment of players and referees will not be tolerated and may result in permanent suspension.
- The referee shall require a player who is bleeding or has an open injury to leave the field for treatment.
- **All third and fourth grade teams MUST use a minimum of two different goalies during each game.** No player may play in goal more than one half of the game. Beginning with fall of 5th grade, there is no goalkeeper regulation.
- There is no slide tackling in 1st through 4th grades.
- EACH TEAM (grades 3-HS in the fall; grades 2-HS in the spring) must designate one adult (other than coach) prior to the start of each game to serve as Team Sportsmanship Liaison (TSL). The TSL will

accompany the captain of team to meet with the referee prior to the match. The match MAY NOT BE STARTED until both teams have identified their TSL's. The TSL will assist the coach with spectator behavior on their team sideline during the game. No coach or spectator may enter the field under any circumstance without the referee's permission.

- Any team that walks off of a field in protest will forfeit that game, and the coach will be called before the Policy, Rules and Discipline Committee for unsporting conduct.
- The use of noise making or amplifying devices is prohibited.

YELLOW CARD OFFENSES:

Player must leave the game immediately and sit out 5 minutes, after which the referee may allow for the return of the player in a normal substitution. The five minute sitout period does not include halftime.

Substitution is allowed during the sitout, enabling the team to play at full strength. (If there are no substitutes available, the team must play "short" during the sitout period.)

RED CARD OFFENSES:

7v7 & 8v8: No red cards may be issued to players in grades 1-4. If a red card offense is committed, no card is shown but the player must sit out remainder of game. No penalty points or additional game suspension. Substitution allowed.

9v9 & 11v11: Player is ejected from current game, without substitution, and suspended from participation in the next league game.

A coach or spectator receiving a red card must leave the field immediately and move at least to the parking lot. He or she may not return to the field at the end of the game, or be on the sidelines at the following game. The jurisdiction of the referee begins upon his arrival at the parking area and continues until he leaves the parking area. Red cards cannot be appealed. If a red card is issued, the offending person is prohibited from attending the team's next game. **A sit out form indicating that the person was not at the next game must be completed and submitted to MSI within 48 hours of the game.** The form can be found on the MSI website on the rules and regulations page.

PLAYER REGISTRATION

TIME FOR REGISTRATION

Registration for the Recreational Program takes place semiannually, typically beginning in May for the fall season and beginning in late November or early December for the spring season.

Players who are carded to Classic, Premier, Challenge, or any other carded team in another league, may not play concurrently on a Recreational team.

FORMING TEAMS

Children may begin team play at 1st grade or 6 years of age. An introductory program, not involving team play, is offered to kindergarteners.

Roster Limits:

1 st grade	13 players
2 nd grade	13 players
3 rd grade	13 players
4 th grade	13 players
5 th & 6 th grades	15 players
7 th & 8 th grades	18 players
9 th - 12 th grades	20 players

Registrations received by MSI are dated as received. All teams are formed by **Age Group Commissioners** who assign players to existing or newly formed teams by neighborhood locale, when possible. Specific requests are honored only as space is available.

Coaches and parents may not assign players to a team. Returning players are guaranteed placement on current teams only if registration deadlines are met. New players and late-returning players are placed on neighborhood teams in order of registration, as space allows.

Submitting a registration does not guarantee that a child will be placed on a team or that the team will practice or play its games on a nearby field. **No player may play or practice with a team unless s/he is officially registered and placed on that team.** An unregistered player is an uninsured player, and any injury or harmful act incurred by or caused by that child becomes the individual responsibility of the coach or adult in charge.

Playing a carded player or a child who has not been properly registered to the team roster, may result in a forfeit and/or sanctions against the coach.

AGE GROUPS

Children have the option of requesting placement according to their grade in school or their birth year, as long as they are no more than one year older or younger than the age used for grade placement in Montgomery County Schools, with the following exception:

“Playing Up” - A player's parents may request to have their child placed with a team whose members are one year older. Age Group Commissioners may assign a player to a team one year older after all players in the correct age group have been placed in that area. Kindergarten and first grade players may not “play up”.

Players in the high school age groups must be in high school (or middle school if “playing up”). Players who reach the age of 19 before September 1 are not eligible.

RETURNING PLAYERS

Returning players will be reassigned to the team on which they played the previous season, if age requirements and registration deadlines are met, and fees are paid. A returning player may request a transfer to another team at the time of registration. Should MSI be unable to make the requested transfer, the player may retain their roster spot on the current team. No changes are made once the rosters are established and the season has begun.

ADDING PLAYERS

Players will be added to team rosters by AGCs until the maximum roster number has been reached. After the third game, players may be added at the coach's discretion up to the MSI maximum. Exception: Players cannot be added to a team for the last game of the season if the team is in contention for a trophy.

INJURED PLAYERS/ROSTER SUBSTITUTIONS

A player who must leave a team during the season because of an injury or illness can be temporarily replaced with another player for the remainder of the season. The replacement player will appear first on the wait-list kept by the Age Group Commissioner for that team the following season, at which time, the injured player will have first preference to rejoin the team as a returning player and the replacement player will have the first chance at any vacancies on the team.

REGISTRATION FEES

Registration fees are set by the Board of Directors to reflect the projected budget for each new season and the number of players expected.

Player registration fees cover the following items:

- Player uniforms: jerseys, shorts, and socks
- Cost of providing Junior Referees or USSF Referees (grades 2 - 12)
- Cost of providing Game Clinicians and Site Managers (grades 1-2)
- Cost of providing Program Instructors and Site Manager (Kindergarten)
- Field equipment
- Trophies
- Administrative expenses
- Educational clinics and materials
- State and national affiliation fees
- Insurance*
- A team game ball
- A coach's shirt or shorts
- Permit fees for game fields
- Web site

*All MSI registered players and volunteers are covered by accidental medical and liability **insurance** while participating in MSI activities. There are limitations, and this is supplemental to a family's private insurance. Call the MSI Office (301-762-4674) if you need details about this policy.

Refunds will be issued to placed players who withdraw from the program, online or in writing, by the established deadline on the registration page, with a \$15 or \$30 administrative fee deducted, depending on the date of withdrawal. Full refunds are awarded when MSI is unable to place the player on a team or if a player is accepted to play on a Classic team. If a player withdraws before the season begins due to a medical problem, a full refund is approved only with documentation from a physician. No medical refunds are awarded after the season begins.

FINANCIAL AID

No player will be denied the opportunity to play solely on the basis of a family's inability to pay the registration fee. Applicants for financial aid must attach a copy of the Montgomery County Public Schools' Free and Reduced Meals form (FARM) to their registration.

Financial Aid reduced registration rates are as follow:

Free Lunch	\$25 early registration	\$35 or \$40 late registration
Reduced Lunch	\$38 early registration	\$48 or \$53 late registration

COACHES' RESPONSIBILITIES

VOLUNTEER COACHES

The interest and dedication of the coaches who work with MSI players to introduce them to soccer and improve their skills is the major factor of MSI's continued success. The contribution of our coaches is greatly appreciated.

The Recreational Program is based on the concept of parent participation and is completely run by volunteers. Recreational teams are not allowed to use paid coaches or trainers and no parent may be assessed a fee to pay for coaching or training.

YOUTH COACHES

High school students may volunteer as head coach or assistant coach of a soccer team and earn credit for community service towards their graduation requirement. Head coaches who are under 18 **must** have an adult sponsor, preferably a parent, who will be responsible for the team throughout the season. This adult will be responsible for administrative coordination of the team and must be present and responsible for the general behavior of the team and spectators at games and practices. The adult sponsor must assume this responsibility by registering as an MSI volunteer at the MSI website. Two adults must be present at every MSI practice.

SPORTSMANSHIP

Good sportsmanship is a guiding principle of MSI. Coaches set the tone for players. Therefore, MSI requires coaches to exemplify good sportsmanship and to encourage team members to act similarly. Coaches are also responsible for the behavior of their team's spectators at the games. Please refer to the detailed guidelines in the Sportsmanship section of the Rules of the Game.

TEAM SPORTSMANSHIP LIAISON

EACH TEAM (grades 3-HS in the fall; grades 2-HS in the spring) must designate one adult (other than coach) prior to the start of each game to serve as Team Sportsmanship Liaison (TSL). The TSL will accompany the captain of team to meet with the referee prior to the match. The match **MAY NOT BE STARTED** until both teams have identified their TSL's. The TSL will assist the coach with spectator behavior on their team sideline during the game. If a team has no spectators present, no TSL is required. No coach or spectator may enter the field under any circumstance without the referee's permission.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Coaches are required to hold open practices and team gatherings. As a result, more parents will get involved. **MSI policy states that coaches must have at least one additional adult at each practice. It is important that an adult is present to assist the coach and is available in the event of an emergency or injury.**

PLAYER SAFETY

The safety of all participants in our practices and games is a paramount concern for MSI. In August of 1994, US Youth Soccer (the national governing body for youth soccer in this country) approved the KidSafe Risk Management Program. MSI supports the intent of this program. MSI will not knowingly allow any person convicted of a crime of violence, physical abuse, sale of illegal substances, or any other offense that would indicate a pattern of behavior that would have a detrimental effect on children to be placed in a position that would involve direct contact with children.

MSI is affiliated with the Maryland State Youth Soccer Association (MSYSA), and U.S. Youth Soccer. MSYSA affiliated players, administrators and coaches in MSI's recreational program are provided insurance coverage under an umbrella policy of MSYSA. This includes liability coverage for volunteers and coaches. In order to minimize your risk exposure, MSI requires that coaches and assistant coaches:

- Become fully familiar with all MSI, MSYSA, US Youth Soccer, and FIFA rules, policies, and requirements, particularly those concerning sportsmanship, conduct of coaches, and safety
- Register each season as a volunteer coach and make sure all other team officials also register (this is the only way to obtain insurance coverage as a coach or assistant coach)
- Attend mandatory MSI coaching courses and continue your training and education

- Learn proper first aid procedures.
- Not allow any unregistered players to practice or play games with your team
- Not allow players to practice or play unless they are properly equipped, including shoes and shinguards.

Team Policies and Requirements

All team parents are permitted to attend or observe any MSI practice. Parental involvement is the best way to assure a good experience for the children.

MSI requires two adults to be present at every practice. This is an important protection both for the team as well as the coach.

All teams are required to have a first aid kit.

It is always safest to have a cell phone at the playing field and a contact number for every player's family in the event of an emergency.

Protection of Players

The registered coach or a registered assistant coach should be in attendance at all team functions. If neither is attending, the coach must appoint another adult to act as supervising coach

Players must wear shinguards at all times, whether playing or practicing

Coaches and parents should make sure players drink plenty of water during practices and games.

Do not play or practice if dangerous conditions exist. These can include any or all of thunderstorms in the immediate area, fields ordered closed by county authorities, standing water on the fields, or extremely hot weather.

Fields and Goals

Never allow your players to climb on or hang from goals. Coaches and parents should be aware that some playing fields in the county have large but movable goals. While we have been assured that these goals are safe, additional caution is warranted.

Check the goals and field before each practice or game for hazards, holes, sharp objects, etc.

If it is necessary to move goals, always use great care and always have enough adults to move goals safely. If it is your responsibility to set up the field, make sure you have enough adults to move the goals to the proper position, if necessary. Children should not help move goals under any circumstances.

Do not use a goal that is damaged, weakened, or otherwise in disrepair. Please report any such problems to the MSI Office at 301-762-4674.

Header Policy

US Soccer has adopted new safety guidelines that will limit the ages at which "heading" is allowed, and limit the frequency of "heading in practice" for older age groups. MSI will comply with these new rules effective immediately. All coaches are required to adhere to the following restrictions:

- *Players aged 10 or younger MAY NOT HEAD THE BALL during either practices or games.* MSI and referees will enforce this restriction for Recreational KG through Grade 5, Classic age groups U10 through U11, and Premier age groups U09 through U11. In any instance where a player is deemed to have deliberately headed the ball during a game in these age groups, the referee shall award an Indirect Free Kick (IFK) to the opposing team from the spot of the header. If that spot is inside the Goal Area (6-yard box), the IFK shall be taken from the nearest point on the horizontal line defining the top of the Goal Area.
- *Players between ages 11 and 13 MAY HEAD THE BALL during games, but are limited to heading the ball in practice for a total of 30 minutes practice time each week, with no more than 15-20 headers*

allowed per player in total. MSI will enforce this restriction for Recreational Grade 6 through Grade 7, Classic age groups U12 through U13, and Premier age groups U12 and U13.

- Coaches should be aware of any circumstance where they may have a player who is “playing up” one or more age groups, and therefore may have greater restrictions for themselves as compared to the age group in which they compete. It is the age of the individual player that governs the restrictions they may have under these new guidelines. Coaches are responsible for ensuring compliance in these exceptions; referees will officiate on the basis of the age group designation for the game.

Coaches are encouraged to watch the video link given below, which includes specific instruction from the US Youth Soccer Association on how to teach proper heading technique.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O7u5m_48dUY

Parent Responsibilities

A soccer team isn't a babysitting service. It's critical for a responsible adult to pick up the child when practice is due to end; being tardy is unfair to a volunteer coach and potentially dangerous to your child. If you are unable to arrive on time, make other arrangements to ensure that your child is picked up on time.

All parents are encouraged to participate actively in the team's activities, including attendance at practices and games. Please provide assistance to the team if requested by the coach or team manager. This can include bringing snacks to practice or games, setting up or taking down equipment, making phone calls, or helping at practices and games. Parents should support the team, should cheer for all players on the field, and refrain from criticizing players, the coach, or the referee.

Parents must be aware that soccer is a contact sport and that injuries will happen. Particularly at young ages, serious injuries are relatively rare. Parents should not expect the referee to call a foul every time their child is knocked down and must refrain from criticizing the referee. Some contact is perfectly legal and sometimes even if a foul was committed, the referee will allow play to continue if the team against which the foul was committed has maintained possession of the ball. In particular, parents of young children cannot feel they have the right to run out on the soccer field whenever their child is “injured.” Most injuries are shaken off quickly and parents who enter the field of play simply compound the confusion and the risk of further injuries.

Guidelines for Appropriate Behavior by Adults

The physical and emotional well being of our players and their families must be a primary concern for all adults involved with MSI. Adults who are filling the role of coach, assistant coach, administrator, board member, game official, or adult volunteer, must be aware that they hold a position of some authority and responsibility over youth players. People in positions of authority must make sure not to abuse their authority to the detriment of others. By establishing formal guidelines for behavior, everyone will know what behavior is acceptable and what behavior is not. Our goal for establishing codes of conduct is to help to provide a safe and healthy atmosphere for our members and their families.

1. Physical Contact

Adults and others in positions of authority must be aware that physical contact can be misinterpreted. Physical contact should be limited to that necessary to teach a skill, treat an injury, or console or congratulate the player. Physical intimidation, physical punishment, or threatening a player with physical harm are not appropriate behaviors and will not be tolerated. However, reasonably requiring players to do push-ups or run a lap for misbehavior would not likely be considered inappropriate.

Sexual contact of any kind between adults and players is absolutely prohibited whether or not the contact is consensual.

Hazing or any type of initiation to a club or a team is absolutely prohibited.

Corporal punishment is absolutely prohibited.

2. Social Contact

Adults should not spend time or socialize alone with players. Pulling a player to the side for additional instruction in plain view of the remainder of the team would be an exception to this rule. However, an adult in a one-on-one situation with a child is generally considered inappropriate and should be avoided. Another exception would be if a young child was the last one waiting for a ride home from practice, the coach should not leave the child until the child's parent or ride home has arrived.

3. Health and Well-Being

Adults share the responsibility for the player's health while at practices, scrimmages and games. Adults must have a player's medical release form (found in the back of this manual) with them at all times. **Teams must have a first aid kit at all practices and games.** Kits that meet the minimum requirements are available at the MSI Office. See the back of this manual for first aid kit suggestions. Coaches should have an emergency plan in place so that, if someone is hurt in a practice or a game, the coach knows who to call, where emergency personnel might take the injured party, and how to contact family members.

MSI considers the safety of the players of paramount importance. Coaches should exercise good judgment regarding practices and games. Play should be suspended when dangerous weather threatens. See "Dangerous Weather" in the Rain Policy section of this manual for guidelines. The conditions of the field and goals must be conducive to safe play. Weather conditions must also be reasonably safe from lightning or extreme temperatures.

- MSI is governed by the FIFA Rules of the Game, which state that jewelry (including pierced earrings) is not allowed on the playing field. Jewelry includes string or leather wrist bands. Placing tape over pierced earrings is not acceptable.
- Most **eyewear** on the market today is safe, and sport goggles also available. There is no directive from FIFA or USSF restricting eyewear of any kind, as long as they are deemed "safe" by the referee. Straps are not required, but recommended to prevent the loss and possible breakage of the glasses.
- A child with a cast may play at the discretion of the referee, who must determine whether there is a safety issue. MSI stands behind the referee's decision. It is recommended that the player wishing to play with a cast wrap the cast in at least 1" thickness of "bubble wrap" or a similar material, and arrive early to the game in order to speak with the referee. Without such safety cushioning, the referee will not allow the player to participate.

Any head injuries resulting in disorientation should result in a player remaining out of the game or practice. All coaches and parents must read a concussion information document at the time of registration.

Any bleeding that occurs must be administered to with latex gloves, and properly sterilized bandages. All bleeding must be stopped prior to re-entering the game. Any bandages, uniforms or other items that have come in contact with the blood must be properly disposed of. The referee shall require a player who is bleeding or has an open injury to leave the field for treatment.

Adults transporting players must model safe driving techniques and enforce seat belt use for all vehicle occupants.

Adults should be aware of the signs of neglect and abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) of the players. Signs of this should be reported to the local law enforcement agency.

4. Language

Offensive or vulgar language by adults or children is unacceptable. MSI events, including games and practices, should be family oriented events. Adults should model good communication skills.

Language that is denigrating in nature, content, or tone or refers to one's gender, race, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or religion is not acceptable. Insults and demeaning nicknames directed at players are not permitted.

Inappropriate language or threatening language used toward an official, coach, player, or parent may be grounds for removal from a game or the premises, or both.

5. Violations

Violations will be handled in accordance with existing MSI policy. Complaints about misconduct by MSI players, coaches, or parents will be investigated by MSI's Policy, Rules and Discipline Committee (PRDC). In accordance with MSYSA procedures, complaints of referee abuse will be referred directly to MSYSA and will be dealt with by the State disciplinary process. Sanctions can include counseling, probation, fines or suspensions from all MSI or from all US Youth Soccer activities. Anonymous complaints cannot be addressed by MSI.

If the circumstances of the complaint indicate a probability of criminal behavior, MSI will report the matter to the appropriate legal authorities.

COACHES TRAINING

COACHING CLINICS

MSI conducts coaching clinics at various times during the year. They are open to anyone and most are free of charge. They include sessions for volunteers learning soccer for the first time, as well as sessions for experienced coaches. The clinics provide an exceptional opportunity to learn principles and techniques, organization of practices, conduct of the game, first aid procedures and the laws of the game. The clinic schedule is emailed to every coach prior the start of the season and can also be found on the MSI website.

New coaches in the Player Development Program (1st and 2nd grade) **must attend** mandatory clinics presented at the start of each season. New first grade coaches must attend two PDP clinics and coaches in the 2nd grade age group must attend the 2nd grade Coaches Clinic. New coaches in the 3rd through 12th grade age groups must attend the Laws of the Game clinic. Coaches are presented with the techniques of working with young children and basic soccer skills instruction. The PDP clinics focus on specific skills for beginners with pertinent games and activities for the coach, who can then follow through with these techniques at team practices. Coaches in the 3rd through 9th grade age groups are also required to attend the Positive Coaching Alliance workshop that is presented every season. (This is a one-time requirement.)

COACHING LICENSES

Before the start of each season, MSI offers the Classic Coaching certification course. Information about this course is available at the MSI website. Although coaches in all programs are encouraged to attend, coaching licenses are not required for Recreational coaching.

COACHING AIDS

- Equipment - As a service to players and coaches, MSI sells soccer balls, practice cones, scrimmage vests, and first aid kits. These items are available at or near cost at the MSI Office. MSI does not sell shinguards or soccer cleats.

Coaches may assess the families of the players no more than \$5.00 per season to cover the cost of the purchase of necessary team equipment such as first aid kit, scrimmage vests, cones, and practice field permits.

- Books - The bookstore has a wide assortment of books for soccer coaches, players and fans.
- DVD's-- Instructional DVD's are loaned at no charge from the MSI office during office hours. A descriptive list of titles is available on the MSI web site. A \$30.00 refundable deposit is required for each DVD checked out.

PRACTICES

The coach, subject to permit approval, determines practice days and times. **No more than two practices a week may be held once the season begins.** Scrimmages are considered practice sessions.

FIELDS AND THEIR USE

GENERAL PROVISIONS

MSI competes with many other county and private organizations for access to fields. MSI uses more than 100 fields each season, and the competition increases each playing season. Fields are crucial to soccer, and it's extremely important to cooperate with the Interagency Coordinating Board (ICB), the Montgomery County Recreation Department, the City of Rockville, City of Gaithersburg and the Maryland Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC), the agencies that issue field permits.

Everyone associated with MSI can help in keeping the assigned fields playable by following these rules.

1. **Do not practice on wet or soggy fields.** Any activity on a wet or soggy field, especially with cleats, will tear up the sod and could make the field unplayable for many weeks
2. **Pick up any trash or debris** on the field after your team has played
3. **Do not park or drive on grassy areas adjacent to fields,** or on the blacktop playground area under any conditions.
4. **Do not drive onto the field to deliver equipment, or for any other reason.**
5. **Promptly report any acts of vandalism to the MSI Office** at (301) 762-4674.
6. **In instances of inclement weather and/or saturated fields, check the weather hotline for the region in which your practice field is located. This number is provided on all MSI-issued permits.**

PRACTICE FIELDS

Coaches must acquire permits for their own practice fields each season. There are school fields and park fields available for use in Montgomery County. The coach, subject to permit approval, determines practice days and times. Practice sessions should be scheduled for the convenience of a majority of players, as well as the coach. Goalposts are not a necessity for practice. Cones or other simulated goals may be used.

MSI works with Montgomery County government to "block schedule" park and school fields for its teams use. Prior to the beginning of each season (generally during July and March), MSI teams will be able to visit the MSI website for a list of fields and practice times available and submit a practice request directly to MSI for two practice permits during the season. MSI will issue a permit for a second permit once all requests for first permits are satisfied. First permits for Recreational coaches are free of charge.

Applications received prior to the start of the submission window will be returned unprocessed. Applications received during the submission window will be treated equally based on the choices provided on the application. Applications received after the close of the submission window will be processed on a first-come first-serve basis after the applications received during the window have been processed. Historical use of permits will not be honored.

GAME FIELDS

MSI uses a variety of field sizes for game play. Every effort is made to coordinate field dimensions with each age group consistent with younger players' strength, endurance, and skills.

Approximate Field Dimensions (width x length):

4v4	25-30 x 35-40 yards
7v7	40-50 x 60-70 yards
8v8	45-55 x 70-80 yards
9v9	50-60 x 80-90 yards
11v11	55-75 x 90-120 yards

Many sites in Montgomery County are too narrow to achieve the ideal three-to-two length-to-width ratio.

When lining these fields, be sure to mark them as wide as possible. It is sometimes necessary to include part of a dirt baseball infield or to pull weeds to make room for a corner flag. The conference coordinator should check the field as soon as it is assigned before the season starts to make sure that it is suitable for league play.

FIELD SET-UP AND EQUIPMENT

It is the Conference Coordinator's responsibility to oversee the use of field equipment in his/her conference. When a rainout occurs, the Conference Coordinator should make arrangements for the equipment to be transferred to the following week's set-up coach.

MSI's goal is to have all fields professionally lined prior to the first game of the season. For grades 3-6, MSI distributes 3 cans of paint to each team with field setup responsibilities for subsequent weeks. Fields are lined by MSI for all games in grades 1 and 2 and 7-HS. Field equipment is distributed during the preseason to the team responsible for setting up the field opening day, and is transferred at the end of each game day to the team scheduled to set up the following week. Standard equipment needed includes the following items:

Grades 1-	no equipment needed (MSI sets up)
Grade 2-	4 pairs of PUGG goals
Grades 3-12-	2 nets, 4 corner flags, 1 paint wand (grades 3-6)

MSI provides a paint wand to Recreational coaches in grades 3-6. It is the responsibility of the set-up coach to place the paint wand with the net bag, close to the goal net after s/he finishes painting. The take-down coach must then remember to collect the paint wand with the nets and flags at the end of the day.

Coaches designated as home coach for the first game of each playing day are scheduled to set up the field (unless otherwise indicated on the schedule). Allow 1 to 1 1/2 hours to prepare the field for play, to include freshening the painted lines each week (grades 3-6). Games are carefully scheduled so that the take-down team one week has set up the following week. There is no setup or takedown at the Maryland SoccerPlex.

Materials needed for set-up include:

- ! hammer
- ! stepladder
- ! field diagram
- ! nets and corner flags
- ! paint wand and paint (grades 3-6)

Some fields may have **portable goals** that require setup. They occasionally are locked together and frequently will require coaches to move them to the end lines. Lock combinations will be provided to the appropriate coaches. If the locks cannot be opened for your game, please call the MSI office at 301-762-4674 and choose the "game day emergency" option. In addition, make sure that these goals are anchored securely. For information on the proper way to move and anchor goals, please refer to the education and training link on the MSI website.

MSI Portable Goal Policy

Increasingly, Montgomery County school and park ball fields are utilizing portable goals for soccer, frequently necessitating their movement in order to be utilized for either practices or games. In recognition of the safety issues associated with the movement of these portable goals, the following policy statement must be adhered to by all MSI teams:

"In no event shall children be allowed to participate in the movement of portable soccer goals in association with any MSI activity. In those cases where portable goals must be moved, this effort must be accomplished solely by willing and able adults. It is recommended that at least six adults work as a team in moving these goals, and that children be kept considerable distance away at all times. If the portable goal is one of the extremely heavy varieties, more than six adults may be required. All portable goals must be anchored securely."

The cooperation of all coaches is requested when cancellations occur in the middle of the day. DO

NOT LEAVE FIELD EQUIPMENT UNATTENDED ON FIELDS! If your team forfeited or cancelled a game leaving a hole in the schedule, your team is responsible for the field equipment until the following game begins.

HANGING NETS

Bring a step-ladder or stool to stand on. From behind the goal, roll the top of the net over the cross bar. Weave the snap link metal fastener back under the bar, through the net, and up over the top of the bar and hook it to the net. Use the same wrap around technique to attach the net to the posts. Use the attached stakes to secure the net to the ground.

LINING THE FIELD

Most MSI fields will not need to be lined from scratch by setup teams and refreshing existing lines is all that is necessary. In rare instances where lining from scratch is necessary, the following is provided:

To do a first class job that will be the envy of other coaches, players, and parents, start with the right equipment. You will need a 100' tape measure; 300' is even better. You will also need 400' of string and a spool to keep the string from getting tangled.

1. Use the tape measure to locate and mark all intersections on the field. From each goalpost, mark a "T" on the end line at 6 yards and 18 yards. (Note that fields used for 7v7 games should be marked at 6 yards and 14 yards).
2. Define the Penalty Area by marking corners of the box 18 yards out from each 18-yard "T" on the goal line (see the field diagram). Use the tape to create a 3-4-5 right triangle to assure that these lines will be perpendicular to the goal. Repeat this process at the other end of the field.
3. Before painting any lines, check to see if your goals are parallel. Place a corner flag on each end of the left side of one Penalty Area and on the right side of the Penalty Area on the other side of the field. If all four flags line up, you are square. If not, make compromises where necessary, since you cannot move the goals.
4. When the goal lines are as parallel as possible, mark the corners of the field. The ideal width of a field is two-thirds of the length.
5. **Now you are ready to line the field.** Use your string to define all straight lines. You will need a helper or a stake driven into the ground to pull the string taut. Paint right over the string, not next to it. Some find it easier not to use the wheel on the paint wand, rather to point it in front several inches off the ground. Focus on a point in front of the wand, lock your elbow, pull the trigger, and walk slowly to the next point.
6. Use your tape measure to measure the length of the field and mark the half-way line and the center point. Paint the 10 yard center circle (8 yards for fields used for 7v7) using a stake at the center point. Attach the string to the stake, pull the string taut, connect to the wand at 10 yards (8 yards for 7v7), and walk the circle with the paint wand.
7. Mark the Penalty Mark 12 yards (10 yards for 7v7) out from the center of the goal. Attach your 10-yard string (8 for 7v7) to a stake at the Penalty Mark and to your wand, and mark the Penalty Arc outside the Penalty Area (see diagram). Repeat these steps at other end of field. Note: The Penalty Arc is often marked incorrectly as a semi-circle from the edge of the Penalty Area when it should be measured from the Penalty Mark instead.
8. Paint 4 Corner Arcs that define the Corner Areas used for corner kicks. This arc should have a radius of 3 feet.
9. Be sure to include a spectator line 2-3 yards outside the touchline and between the penalty areas. This line is necessary to keep spectators off the playing field, to give assistant referees room to work, give the players space and to maintain safety.

Note: Smaller fields used for 11 v 11 play have the same goal box, penalty area, and center circle dimensions as the adult field.

FIELD TAKE-DOWN

The coach designated to take down the field equipment after the last game of the day is responsible for removing all field equipment, storing it, and using it to set up the field the following week. At some fields, this may involve moving and relocking portable goals (see Portable Goal Policy above).

When rainouts occur in the middle of game day, the coaches on the field must remove the equipment and make every effort to contact the coach responsible for takedown that day. **DO NOT LEAVE FIELD EQUIPMENT UNATTENDED ON FIELDS!**

IF YOUR TEAM FORFEITED OR CANCELLED A GAME, LEAVING A HOLE IN THE SCHEDULE, YOUR TEAM IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ATTENDING TO THE FIELD EQUIPMENT UNTIL THE FOLLOWING GAME BEGINS!

PLAYING THE GAME

AGE GROUPINGS WITH ROSTER SIZE AND GAME LENGTH

Age Group and Grade	Ball Size	Players On the Field	Roster Size	Game Length/ Game Periods
Kindergarten	3	clinic	no rosters	instructional
Grade 1	3	4X2	13	32 (4 8 minute quarters)
Grade 2 (fall)	3	4X2	13	32 (4 10-minute quarters)
Grade 2 (spring)	3	7	13	32 (4 10-minute quarters)
Grade 3	4	7	13	50 (2 25-minute halves)
Grade 4	4	8	13	50 (2 25-minute halves)
Grade 5	4	9	15	60 (2 30-minute halves)
Grade 6	4	9	15	60 (2 30-minute halves)
Grade 7	5	11	18	70 (2 35-minute halves)
Grade 8	5	11	18	70 (2 35-minute halves)
High School	5	11	20	80 (2 40-minute halves)

UNIFORMS

Players must wear unaltered MSI uniforms, consisting of shorts, shirt and socks. There are two exceptions:

! Teams who earn the sportsmanship award may sew the patches on their uniforms.

! Teams participating in the First Grade Player Development Program may sew their skill patches on their uniforms.

Shinguards are mandatory at all games and socks must be pulled up over the top of the shinguards.
Metal cleats are not permitted in MSI leagues and tournaments.

Teams may have organizational or individual sponsors, but no sponsor identification may appear on any part of a player's uniform unless authorized by MSI. **Children's names may not be applied to jerseys, for their own protection.**

When two teams with the same color jerseys are scheduled to play each other, the home team must change jersey color by using pinnies, alternate jerseys, or white t-shirts. Coaches, please check your schedules in advance to be prepared for this possibility. Pinnies are available at the MSI office, if needed.

4V4 PLAYER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM - FIRST GRADE AND SECOND GRADE (FALL)

Montgomery Soccer's Player Development Program offers its entry-level players an introduction to the game with small-sided games that focus on fun as the key to technical development. All available research and observation shows that children have more fun and learn more playing a game with smaller teams with modified rules.

The program is based on the following premises:

- ! enjoyment of the game and development of basic skills are the primary goals for young players;
- ! players and coaches will enjoy the game more if they continue to improve their knowledge and skills;
- ! development of individual skills through practice is a fundamental process for players of all levels of experience;
- ! skills are best learned when they are presented incrementally, practiced first in isolation, then in situations which increasingly resemble the game environment.

WHAT IS 4v4?

4v4 is the smallest form of playing the game without losing any basic ingredients (ball, opponents, teammates, space, pressure, rules, time, and direction) that make soccer the fun game it is!

4V4 provides a playing environment of frequent ball contact and, consequently, plenty of learning opportunities.

4V4 allows children to recognize the different situations that are constantly repeated, and develop an understanding of what works and what does not work. As a result, the game becomes the teacher.

WHY 4 v 4?

The following are some more compelling advantages to small-sided 4v4 games:

- ! fits the game to the child's needs, not vice versa
- ! is simple and fun to play
- ! offers a successful introduction to soccer (success means the children enjoy the experience!)
- ! improves technique with frequent ball contact
- ! increases concentration since the ball is always close
- ! improves fitness through its lively and dynamic tempo
- ! creates awareness since situations are constantly repeated
- ! develops thinking skills since all participants play offense and defense
- ! introduces children to the world's greatest game in an enjoyable way!

RULES FOR 4 v 4 GAMES (first grade teams and fall second grade)

Number of Players: 2 teams of 4 field players (no goalkeepers)

Playing Field: Approximately 35 yards x 25 yards; PUGG goals or 2 corner flags are used to form a goal at each end of the 35 yard playing area. Goals are 2-3 yards wide. **NO SPECTATORS ARE PERMITTED BEHIND THE GOAL AREAS OR IN BETWEEN THE FIELDS OF PLAY.**

Spectators must remain outside the field of play in the area designated by the Field Marshal, PDP clinician or PDP Site Manager.

Duration of Games: Four 8-10 minute quarters (2-3 minutes rest between quarters, 5 minutes at the half).

Objective of the Game: To shoot the ball into opponent's goal.

Start of play: Game starts with the ball being played from the end line of the team winning the coin toss. Players are encouraged to pass the ball into play but dribbling is allowed. Opponents must remain in their own half of the field until the ball crosses the center line.

Scoring: Goals can only be scored from the attacking half of the field.

Re-Starts: Opponents must be 5 yards away for all re-starts. No throw-ins or goal kicks are permitted. Following a goal, the attacking team withdraws to its own half of the field and the ball is played "in" from the end line with an indirect kick in the same manner as the start of play. It is also acceptable for the player to dribble the ball into play. A ball going out of play, whether over the sideline or the end line, is played "in" by opposing team with an indirect kick. The attacking team takes corner kicks when the ball has been last touched by a defender and goes over the defending team's end line.

Substitutions: Substitute quickly when the ball goes out so action can continue. Permission to enter and exit the field is unnecessary.

Infringements: The penalty for infractions (tripping, handling, etc) is the award of an indirect free kick (i.e., ball must be touched by two players before a goal can be scored). The opposing team must be 5 yards from ball). The game leader may award a penalty kick from midfield (a free kick with no defenders) if infringements continue after repeated warnings.

Slide Tackling: Not permitted.

Variations that the Game Leader may employ when scores become lopsided:

- A shot on goal is allowed only when all players are in attacking half.
- Increase/decrease the goal size to increase/decrease opportunities to score goals.
- Require the team that just scored to allow opposing team to advance the ball further before

actively defending.

Goalkeepers: Not permitted.

NO SCORES OR LEAGUE STANDINGS ARE KEPT.

GAME RULES AND PROCEDURES - SECOND GRADE (SPRING ONLY) AND ABOVE

MSI games are governed by FIFA rules of play with certain modifications appropriate to youth play. (Teams using the 4 v 4 format are not governed by FIFA rules of play.) The MSI MODIFICATIONS OF FIFA RULES are as follows:

Conduct: In addition to FIFA Law V(d), a referee can suspend or terminate a game because of derogatory remarks directed at the referee or opposing team by a player, coach or spectator. A coach or spectator receiving a red card must leave the field immediately and move at least to the parking lot. He or she may not return to the field at the end of the game, or be on the sidelines at the following game. The jurisdiction of the referee begins upon his arrival at the parking area and continues until he leaves the parking area. The use of communications devices to instruct the coach's replacement is prohibited. Returning to the game field during or after any MSI games played that day will result in mandatory referral to the Policy, Rules, and Discipline Committee and additional one game suspension. Failure to leave the field will result in mandatory referral to the PRDC and termination of the game. S/he may coach another team at another field. If the coach is required to leave and there is no other responsible adult available to supervise the team, the game will be declared a forfeit in favor of the other team with a final score of 1 - 0.

Red cards cannot be appealed.

Any ejection of a coach, player, or spectator constitutes a red card offense whether or not the card is actually shown and all associated penalties must still be served by the offending person.

Please call the MSI office telephone number (301-762-4674) **if referees arrive late or not at all.** MSI encourages all teams to use parent volunteers to officiate games when there is no referee, understanding that this decision is irreversible once play has begun, and scores may not be contested. The alternative is to reschedule the game at a time and location convenient to both teams.

Substitutions: May be made with the consent of the referee at the following times:

1. prior to a throw-in by either team only when the team in possession chooses to substitute
2. prior to a kick-off;
3. prior to a goal kick by either team;
4. prior to a corner kick by either team (7v7, 8v8, and 9v9 only);
5. prior to a corner kick by either team, only when team in possession substitutes (11v11)
5. upon issuance of a yellow card in 7v7, 8v8, 9v9, and 11v11 games (only player receiving card may be substituted. If so, the opposing team may substitute a like number);
6. on injury – only players injured may be substituted; if so, opposing team may substitute a like number.

Referees Signals: Referees are requested to use hand signals to indicate the nature of fouls and the direction of the kick. Referees are not required to discuss calls with players or coaches during play.

Restart of Play after Temporary Suspension: After a temporary suspension of play because of injury or any unusual circumstance, play shall be restarted in either of two ways:

1. if one team had clear possession of the ball when play was stopped, that team shall be awarded an indirect free kick;
2. if neither team had clear possession of the ball when play was stopped, a drop ball shall be used to restart play.

In either case, play will be restarted at the place where the ball was when play was stopped.

Girls' Rule: (Recreational Program Only) Girls may cross their arms over their chests to protect themselves while playing the ball. No infraction will be called if the arms remain close to the body. If an outward motion of the arms is made as the ball makes contact, an indirect kick will be awarded the opposing team at the spot of the infraction.

Goalkeeper Privileges: A goalkeeper may not be charged, interfered with, or impeded in any manner **while in possession of the ball. (No goalkeepers are used in the second grade.)**

Coaching from Sidelines: It is intended that coaches will educate and inform players rather than direct their play. Sideline coaching must adhere to the following guidelines:

- ! the tone and language are instructive and directed by only one coach,
- ! it emanates from the sidelines between the two 14 or 18-yard lines (grades 3-HS),
- ! it is directed from your own team's sideline.

In keeping with the FIFA rule, coaches are not permitted to provide players with a constant flow of directions during play. Violation of this rule is considered unsportsmanlike conduct.

Red Cards (Automatic Suspension):

Receipt of a red card by a player, coach or spectator results in immediate ejection from the field of play and a minimum one-game suspension from the next league game with **no appeal**. A coach or spectator receiving a red card must leave the field immediately and move at least to the parking lot. He or she may not return to the field at the end of the game, or be on the sidelines at the following game. The jurisdiction of the referee begins upon his arrival at the parking area and continues until he leaves the parking area. If a red card is issued to an adult, the offending person is prohibited from attending the team's next game. A player serving a sit out may attend the team's next game provided he is not wearing any team wear. **A sit out form indicating that the person was not at the next game must be completed and submitted to MSI within 48 hours of the game.** Failure to leave the field after receiving a red card will result in mandatory coaches' review and termination and forfeiture of the game. S/he may coach another team at another field. If the coach is required to leave and there is no other responsible adult available to supervise the team, the game will be declared a forfeit in favor of the other team with a final score of 1 – 0.

Any ejection of a coach, player, or spectator constitutes a red card offense whether or not the card is actually shown and all associated penalties must still be served by the offending person.

Yellow Cards: Player must leave the game immediately and sit out 5 minutes, after which the referee may allow for the return of the player in a normal substitution. The five minute sitout period does not include halftime. Substitution is allowed during the sitout, enabling the team to play at full strength. (If there are no substitutes available, the team must play "short" during the sitout period.)

See the Sportsmanship Section of this manual concerning cards.

7v7 AND 8v8 PROGRAM (3RD AND 4TH GRADES) RULE MODIFICATIONS

- **Each team must use at least two different goalkeepers. No player may play in goal more than one half of the game.**
- Only flagrant violation of Law 12 which permits the goalkeeper 6 seconds to release the ball.
- Referees should only call flagrant offsides.
- Players may retake an incorrect throw-in, once only.
- No slide tackling is allowed.
 - First game offense: verbal warning to both teams
 - Second game offense: yellow card to player
 - Third game offense: player sits out remainder of game and coach receives yellow card
- No red cards may be issued to players in grades 1-4. If a red card offense is committed, no card is shown but the player must sit out remainder of game.
- No appeal of decisions made by Junior Referees is permitted.

GAME START AND FORFEITS

To field a team, each side is required to have the following minimum number of players:

7 v 7	5 players
8 v 8	5 players
9 v 9	6 players
11 v 11	7 players

The start of the game may be delayed by the referee for up to 15 minutes to allow a team to obtain the minimum number of players. When both teams have at least the minimum number of players, the game must start, even if one side has fewer players on the field. Late players may not enter play until they receive permission from the referee.

If one team cannot field the minimum number of players, the referee will cancel the game and the team with sufficient players will be declared the winner by a score of 1-0. If neither team has enough players, a double forfeit will be declared with a score of 0-0 with zero standing points awarded.

In the event that either team does not have enough players, the coach with insufficient numbers of players may agree to forfeit the result of the game, yet still play an "**official exhibition**". In this event, the teams may share players, as long as all participating players are registered players with an MSI team during the current season. Referees are instructed to referee the "official exhibition", per the terms of MSI's contract with MWSRA (the referee association).

If the MSI office receives advance notice from a team that it will forfeit a game, the opponent will be contacted and does not have to appear at the field to claim the forfeit. **All obligations concerning field and equipment set up and take down must still be met by the forfeiting team. If the forfeit or cancellation leaves a hole in the schedule, the forfeiting team is responsible for the field equipment until the following game begins.**

In the event that inclement weather strikes and a decision about the playability of a field must be made at the game site, the MWSRA referee will make the decision regarding the stoppage of the game. Decisions regarding games officiated by a Junior Referee will be made by both coaches in consultation with the Junior Referee. Decisions regarding games in the first and second grade age groups will be made by the Site Manager.

A game is considered complete if it has been played through the first half before being terminated by the referee.

PLAYING TIME

MSI requires that every player on every Recreational roster and present at a game must play at least one half of the game. Violations of this rule may lead to forfeiture of the game(s) and/or additional sanctions.

Coaches found in violation of MSI's half-game rule will be subject to sanctions imposed by the MSI Policy, Rules and Discipline Committee (PRDC). Suspected violations of the player participation rule should be reported in writing to the MSI office. After receipt of a complaint, the PRDC will investigate.

REDUCED PLAYING TIME AS DISCIPLINE

Players who do not attend a majority of practices and games without notifying their coach with a legitimate excuse for the absence, or players who are causing consistent discipline problems on a team, may be penalized by reduction in playing time. If a pattern of attendance problems exists with a player that is detrimental to the team and grossly unfair to the other players, coaches are expected to make an effort to mitigate the problem by engaging in constructive dialogue with the offending player and his or her parents. ***If a high school Recreational player's conduct requires immediate disciplinary action, a coach may reduce the player's playing time to less than half of the game.***

Any coach penalizing a player must inform the MSI office by email at msi@msisoccer.org by 10:00 a.m. the Friday prior to each game. A coach who finds it necessary to use this option in more than one instance, or with more than two players in a single game, must report the reasons in writing to the MSI office. Games in which a player(s) did not play one half of a game and MSI was not notified will be subject to forfeiture and/or additional sanctions against the coach.

INJURED PLAYERS

A player who is bleeding or has an open wound must leave the field for treatment. If a substitute is available, the player's coach may substitute. The injured player may return to the game at the earliest legal opportunity, provided the referee is satisfied with the player's condition.

SIDELINE MANAGEMENT

No coach or spectator may enter the field without the referee's permission. Opposing teams must occupy **opposite sides** of the field. The home team has choice of sides. Exception: At games played at the SoccerPlex, all players and coaches will occupy one side of the field, and all spectators the other side, opposite their own team bench. Do not move SoccerPlex benches. Spectators, coaches and players are only allowed on the sidelines between the penalty areas. **Team spectators may not give instruction to players on the field, and coaches may not give instruction to the opposing team players, or from their opponent's touchline, between the 18-yard line and the end line, or behind the end lines or**

goals. Violation of this rule is considered unsportsmanlike conduct and may result in sanctions.

CANCELING AND RESCHEDULING GAMES

Each season we allow head coaches the opportunity to submit online scheduling requests before the schedules are created, and we receive hundreds of requests. If you are a head coach and wish to submit a scheduling request **by the stated deadline**, go to the MSI website at www.msisoccer.org and click on the Recreational Registration link. Choose "Coaches Scheduling Requests". While we cannot guarantee that we will be able to meet your request, we will make every effort possible. Please also understand that conflicts created by the rescheduling of rained out games may occur. In these instances, there is a greater likelihood that we will be unable to resolve a conflict.

There are times when scheduling problems arise unexpectedly during the season, and coaches wish to reschedule games. **MSI does not reschedule games during the season**, nor is it the responsibility of your Conference Coordinator to reschedule games. If you cannot field the minimum number of players for a game, you may follow the options below:

1. Trade scheduled game times with another game, within your conference on the same day, with the approval of all four teams involved, and notify your Conference Coordinator.
2. Notify MSI and the opposing coach that you are forfeiting the game, in which case the opposing team is awarded a 1-0 win.
3. Contact the opposing coach and ask if s/he is willing to play the game at another time, at a permitted practice field with volunteer parent referees.
 - a. the opposing coach may decline and take the 1-0 win,
 - b. the opposing coach may agree to play a friendly game without official referees but not count the score, in which case the score remains a 1-0 forfeit,
 - c. the opposing coach may agree to reschedule the game on a practice field using volunteer referees, and record the score. While this is not an official game due to the absence of MWSRA referees, MSI will accept the score if it is agreed by both coaches. (Please note that once the game is started, no judgments made by the volunteer referees, or the final score, may be appealed to MSI).

If option b or c above is chosen, please notify the MSI office as early as possible so that we can contact referees and confirm that the other games will still be covered. Coaches are required to notify the MSI office as soon as possible when a game is being canceled so that the referee can be notified. If a game is abandoned without notice in the middle of the day, referees will often leave the remaining games uncovered unless instructed to return. Teams that decide not to play their scheduled game remain responsible for ensuring that their assigned setup and takedown duties for that day are carried out.

REFEREES

USSF REFEREE ASSIGNMENT

MSI contracts the Metropolitan Washington Soccer Referees' Association (MWSRA) to assign referees for Recreational games. The MWSRA is an independent organization whose referees are not employees of MSI. The Association provides referees for most area youth soccer games, as well as high school and college varsity play. Referees are not assigned by MWSRA for 4 v 4 games and most 7 v 7 games.

USSF REFEREE TRAINING

MWSRA sponsors an eighteen-hour course prior to each fall and spring season. For those with desire and ability, MWSRA offers rapid advancement, with short-term requirements for training, into senior amateur soccer (adults), high school varsity and junior varsity games, NCAA college games and even the professional leagues.

Soccer's growth in popularity has placed severe pressure on the Referees' Association, resulting in a chronic shortage of experienced referees. Some adult and junior referees at our games have been recently recruited and trained, and do not have the experience of more seasoned referees. MSI asks coaches to be patient with these new referees and encourage them to continue developing and gaining experience. Please notify the MSI office in writing of any specific problems or concerns you have with your game officials, so that we can recommend additional training for them.

For information on becoming a USSF certified referee or an MSI Junior Referee, please visit the MWSRA website at www.MWSRA.org or the MSI website.

MSI MODIFICATIONS OF FIFA LAWS CARD

MSI games are played under FIFA rules with certain modifications printed on the MSI Official Modifications of FIFA Laws Card. This rule card is given to every coach at the beginning of each season (exception: 1st

grade coaches and second grade coaches in the fall do not receive them because 4 v 4 games are not governed by FIFA laws). **Coaches or TSLs are required to show this card to referees prior to the start of each game.**

REFEREE RESPONSIBILITY

The referee's major responsibility to maintain control of the game extends to coaches and spectators, as well as players. MSI understands this responsibility and cooperates in guaranteeing that it is observed.

In soccer, as in many other sports, referees are given discretionary leeway to make judgment calls. Players, coaches and spectators alike often misunderstand this liberty. On-field criticism does not set a good example for players. It also discourages and demoralizes referees. Players and spectators sometimes question a referee's calls, particularly in a closely contested game, and feel strongly enough to lodge a complaint or appeal with MSI against the referee. The vast majority of these complaints involve judgment calls, in which the referee's opinion or judgment prevails. **Judgment calls may not be appealed.** Some examples of judgment calls include the following situations: whether a ball is in play or out-of-bounds; whether a foul occurred; whether or not a player was offside.

On the other hand, coaches and parents should notify the MSI office about those situations in which a referee's behavior is inappropriate during play, or a rule is misapplied. Inappropriate behavior may include the use of abusive language, over-familiarity with players, or inappropriate physical contact with players. **An appeal of a referee's ruling can be made only when the situation involves the misapplication of a rule.** An example of a misapplication of a rule is: a penalty kick is taken, bounces off the crossbar and the penalty kicker plays it into the goal. The referee says that it is permissible for the shooter to play the ball without it touching anyone else. The referee has clearly misapplied the FIFA rule. To file a complaint or appeal, see the Appeals and Complaints section of this handbook.

REFEREES ON THE SIDELINES

Coaches and spectators who are also referees must remember to remove or camouflage their referee uniform when they are coaching or cheering their teams. It is of paramount importance that the assigned referee be the only authority figure present.

JUNIOR REFEREES

MSI developed a Junior Referee Program for middle school students and older to referee MSI Recreational 3rd and some 4th grade games. MSI sponsors 6 hours of classroom training and 3 hours of field training for new referees, and 2 hours of refresher classroom training for returning referees every season.

MSI has a "zero tolerance" policy for abuse of Junior Referees. Such abuse is defined by USSF rules; MSI extends the USSF definition to include repeated or persistent dissent to, or criticism of, a Junior Referee, or any instruction or influence of a Junior Referee during play or prior to and following play.

All violations of the "zero tolerance" policy are the jurisdiction of the Policy, Rules and Discipline Committee (PRDC), which will determine the extent of action to be taken against the offender.

Complaints by a Junior Referee, player, coach, or spectator must be submitted to the MSI office in writing. Disciplinary action of any nature taken by the PRDC will render the offending team ineligible for the season's MSI Sportsmanship Award.

AWARDS

TROPHIES

Participation awards are given to all players through 4th grade.

Divisional trophies are awarded to the winning team in each division of a conference beginning in the 5th grade. In the event of ties, all winning teams receive trophies. There are no tiebreakers.

Game Points:

Win	3 points
Tie	1 point
Loss	0 points

MSI RAIN POLICY

LEAGUE-WIDE CANCELLATION

In the event of inclement weather, MSI posts an announcement on its web site (www.msisoccer.org) concerning the status of league games. When possible, the MSI League Coordinators ask conference coordinators to notify the individual coaches. **It is the coach's or manager's responsibility to monitor the MSI website and contact individual team players and families. The information provided on the MSI website will be the final determinant of the status of games. For games, please do not use the county weather hotline or text message alert system for closure information.**

MSI uses Montgomery County School and Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission guidelines for field use and game cancellation. Decisions to cancel games are not made hastily. Considerable thought and discussion are involved in an effort to avoid canceling games or adjusting schedules.

Once MSI has canceled games for the entire day league wide, it is impossible to reverse the decision for games later in the day. When games are canceled, referees and families make alternative plans. Sudden warmth and sunshine do not mean fields are actually playable. Your patience concerning cancellations is appreciated. Please understand that the safety of your children is our greatest concern.

If you are not notified concerning cancellation of your game or there is no notice on the MSI website, assume that the game will be played as scheduled.

FIELD-BY-FIELD CANCELLATION

There are instances when the decision to play is made field by field. It could mean that, if you have two children playing in the MSI program, one plays and the other does not. Conditions can deteriorate during a day allowing only part of a schedule to be played. Field conditions and weather systems can vary greatly within the county. Also, in weather conditions with extreme heat and humidity, MSI may reduce the length of playing time and even mandate the games be divided into quarters to allow for ample rest and fluid intake. Our intention is to provide safe conditions for our players and to honor permit regulations for field use with county schools and parks.

Once games have started, referees are instructed to use common sense and suspend play when dangerous weather threatens, even if the storm has not yet broken. Their decisions should err on the side of safety and caution. Immediately upon suspension or termination of a game, players and spectators must leave the field and surrounding area, returning to places of safety (i.e., cars).

When thunder or lightning occurs, the game is immediately stopped, and the game clock is stopped. If there are 15 minutes or less remaining in the game, the game is terminated with the game score reported as an official completed game. If more than 15 minutes remain in the game, participants must wait the appropriate time – typically 25-30 minutes without additional thunder or lightning – before continuing the game. If the game has not reached the half-time, and the game cannot be restarted because of continuing inclement weather, the game is NOT an official game. If the game is stopped during the 2nd half with more than 15 minutes remaining, but the game cannot be restarted because of continuing inclement weather, the game is an official game.

The clock will stop during a delay and will resume when play restarts. Exception: In the event of a thunder/lightning delay with less than 15 minutes left in the game, the game will be terminated and the score will stand as of the time of termination.

TERMINATED GAMES AND FINAL SCORES

If a referee terminates a game because of field or weather conditions, it will be considered a complete game if the first half has been completed. The score will be final as it stands at the time the game is terminated. If the game is terminated prior to or during the first half, there will be no result recorded, and MSI will make every effort to reschedule the ENTIRE game at a later date.

DANGEROUS WEATHER

By way of definition, dangerous weather exists if any of the following conditions are present:

1. Any lightning is observed.
2. Thunder is heard, regardless of the presence of lightning.

"Generally speaking, if an individual can see lightning and/or hear thunder he/she is already at risk. Louder or more frequent thunder indicates that lightning activity is approaching, increasing the risk for lightning injury or death. If the time delay between seeing the flash (lightning) and hearing the bang (thunder) is less than 30 seconds, the individual should be in, or seek a safer location. Be aware that this method of ranging has severe limitations in part due to the difficulty of associating the proper thunder to the corresponding flash."

"High winds, rainfall, and cloud cover often act as precursors to actual cloud-to-ground strikes notifying individuals to take action. Many lightning casualties occur in the beginning, as the storm approaches, because people ignore these precursors. Also, many lightning casualties occur after the perceived threat has passed. Generally, the lightning threat diminishes with time after the last sound of thunder, but may persist for more than 30 minutes. When thunderstorms are in the area but not overhead, the lightning threat can exist even when it is sunny, not raining, or when clear sky is visible."

"When available, pay attention to weather warning devices such as NOAA weather radio and/or credible lightning detection systems, however, do not let this information override good common sense."

From www.lightningsafety.com.

PERSONAL LIGHTNING SAFETY TIPS

1. PLAN in advance your evacuation and safety measures. When you first see lightning or hear thunder, activate your emergency plan. Now is the time to go to a building or a vehicle. Lightning often precedes rain, so don't wait for the rain to begin before suspending activities.

2. IF OUTDOORS... Avoid water. Avoid the high ground. Avoid open spaces. Avoid all metal objects including electric wires, fences, machinery, motors, power tools, etc. Unsafe places include underneath canopies, small picnic or rain shelters, or near trees. Where possible, find shelter in a substantial building or in a fully enclosed metal vehicle such as a car, truck or a van with the windows completely shut. If lightning is striking nearby when you are outside, you should:

A. **Crouch down.** Put feet together. Place hands over ears to minimize hearing damage from thunder.

B. **Avoid proximity** (minimum of 15 ft.) to other people.

3. IF INDOORS... Avoid water. Stay away from doors and windows. Do not use the telephone. Take off headsets. Turn off, unplug, and stay away from appliances, computers, power tools, & TV sets. Lightning may strike exterior electric and phone lines, inducing shocks to inside equipment.

4. SUSPEND ACTIVITIES for 30 minutes after observing lightning or hearing thunder.

5. INJURED PERSONS do not carry an electrical charge and can be handled safely. Apply First Aid procedures to a lightning victim if you are qualified to do so. Call 911 or send for help immediately.

Know Your Emergency Telephone Numbers

Prepared by the
National Lightning Safety Institute, Louisville, CO.

SPORTSMANSHIP

SPORTSMANSHIP

Good sportsmanship is a guiding principle of MSI. Coaches set the tone for players and parents. Therefore, MSI expects coaches to exemplify good sportsmanship and to encourage your team members to act similarly. Coaches are also responsible for the behavior of their team's spectators at the games.

SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD

All coaches, except those coaching first and fall second grade teams receive Sportsmanship Cards at the beginning of the season, and are required to give a card to the referee prior to the start of each home game. The referee rates the players, coaches and spectators in each game, returns the information to MSI, the MSI office staff tabulates the results, and the teams receiving the highest ratings are awarded the Sportsmanship Award for the season.

COACHES' CONDUCT

The conduct of MSI coaches on both the practice and game field establishes how players, parents, and the public perceive MSI. Parents who entrust their children to MSI should feel confident that standards being taught are consistent with their own. Therefore, it is vital that coaches demonstrate and teach the highest standards of sportsmanship. Every MSI coach must read and follow these guidelines:

1. Players are instructed to play according to the Laws of the Game and are encouraged to play to win without taking unfair advantage of an opponent.
2. Coaches must **not** dispute the ruling of a referee or assistant referee while the game is in progress and will instruct their team and spectators to refrain from doing so. **In all cases, they will follow the directions of the referee.** Clarification of a ruling may take place only with the referee's approval during an official break in play or when the referee indicates it is appropriate.
3. Coaching from the sidelines is permitted only under the following conditions:
 - ! the tone and language are instructive,
 - ! it occurs behind the touchline between the 18-yard lines,
 - ! it is directed from your team's sideline.
4. **Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their players, officials, and spectators.** If a spectator's conduct warrants the issuance of a yellow or red card, it may be issued directly to the spectator. If the referee cannot identify the spectator or believes the coach has not attempted to control his spectators, the card may be awarded to the coach.

Physical violence, foul or abusive language, or harassment of players and referees is NOT TOLERATED and could result in permanent suspension. Such conduct reported to MSI officials is reviewed even in situations where cards are not issued. Coaches may not coach or criticize players on the opposing team.

Any incident of assault or physical violence directed against a referee or assistant referee by coaches, spectators, or players results in immediate referral to MWSRA. The Policy, Rules and Discipline Committee (PRDC) of MSI automatically reviews the incident and takes appropriate action, and may also forward the incident to MSYSA or VYSA for further discipline.

5. The unsportsmanlike use of noise-making or amplifying devices is prohibited. The referee is the sole judge of unsportsmanlike behavior involving noise-making or amplifying devices.
6. When a team walks off a field in protest, they forfeit the game, and the coach is called before the PRDC and may face sanctions.

SANCTIONS

YELLOW CARDS

A player who receives a yellow card must leave the game immediately, but can be substituted and sit out 5 minutes, after which the referee may allow for the return of the player in a normal substitution. The five-minute sit-out time does not include halftime.

RED CARDS (AUTOMATIC SUSPENSION)

Receipt of a red card by a player, coach or spectator results in immediate ejection from the field of play and a minimum one-game suspension from the next league game with **no appeal**. A coach or spectator receiving a red card must leave the field immediately and move at least to the parking lot. He or she may not return to the field at the end of the game, or be on the sidelines at the following game. The jurisdiction of the referee begins upon his arrival at the parking area and continues until he leaves the parking area. If a red card is issued to a coach or spectator, the offending person is prohibited from attending the team's next game. If a red card is issued to a player, the player may attend the next game but is not allowed to play and may not be in uniform or other team wear. **A sit out form indicating that the person was not at the next game or did not play must be completed and submitted to MSI within 48 hours of the game.**

Failure to leave the field after receiving a red card will result in mandatory PRDC review and termination and forfeiture of the game. S/he may coach another team at another field. If the coach is required to leave and there is no other responsible adult available to supervise the team, the game will be declared a forfeit in favor of the other team with a final score of 1-0. Additional sanctions may be assessed.

Referees display a yellow card to indicate the offender has received a caution. A red card indicates ejection. Two yellow cards in the same game become a red card. Yellow or Red cards cannot be appealed.

The following individual penalty points will be assessed to coaches or players who are awarded yellow or red cards:

Yellow Card	2 points
2nd Yellow Card in the same game	3 points + ejection (must serve sit-out in next game)
Red Card	5 points + ejection (must serve sit-out in next game)

Exception: No red cards are given to players in grades 1-4

A coach, spectator or player will be suspended from MSI participation because of the accumulation of penalty points during the season, whether assessed in league play or in MSI-sanctioned tournaments:

5 points	1-game suspension (minimum)
8 points	additional 1-game suspension (minimum)
12 or more points	additional 2-game suspension (minimum)

The Policy, Rules and Discipline Committee (PRDC) will impose additional penalties if suspensions are not served in accordance with MSI rules and procedures. These sanctions do not limit the authority of the PRDC from imposing other conditions upon future participation or additional penalties for misconduct, as deemed necessary.

SANCTIONS ON TEAMS ACCUMULATING POINTS

Any team receiving 15 or more points during a season may be subject to a review by the Policy, Rules and Discipline Committee. The team's coach is required to be present at this review and, regardless of the coach's attendance; the Committee may take any action deemed necessary. An accumulation of 26 points will result in a reduction of 3 standings points. Each additional 5 penalty points will result in 3 additional standings points being deducted. **It is the team's responsibility to track its totals and ensure that sit-outs occur.**

CARRYING OUT SUSPENSIONS (SIT OUT CARD)

A suspended coach or spectator may not appear at the game site or its vicinity before, during, or after a game for which s/he has been suspended. If a coach or spectator appears at the game site during a suspension, his or her team shall forfeit the game(s) in question by a 1-0 score. Such incidents must be reported on game report cards.

A suspended player may attend the game as a spectator provided:

- the player is not in uniform
- the player does not play.

When a player, coach or spectator receives a red card, coaches must complete a sit-out form, have it signed by the referee and opposing coach at the following game in which the sit-out occurs, and submit it to the MSI Office within

48 hours of that game. Sit-out forms are available on the MSI website.

If a suspended player or coach participates in the game(s) for which they are suspended, the team shall forfeit the game(s) by a 1-0 score. If the coach fails to submit a signed, sit-out form to the MSI office within 48 hours of the sit-out, the team shall forfeit the game by a 1-0 score and the suspended player or coach must sit out an additional game.

A suspension must apply to the next MSI league game that the team plays. In instances where there are forfeitures or postponed games, the suspension will be served at the next game played. All suspension actions carry forward until the entire suspension is served, irrespective of season.

COMMITTEE REVIEWS AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION

League Coordinators (LC) review all game cards each week, recording sportsmanship ratings and any red or yellow cards awarded, and make counseling calls to all coaches with poor ratings. In addition, the LC's receive complaints and concerns from Conference Coordinators, coaches, or parents regarding activity at each weekend's games.

When warranted, information will be forwarded to the Policy, Rules & Discipline Committee (PRDC) Chairman for disciplinary action.

The PRDC reviews, investigates and adjudicates complaints of unsporting conduct and/or conduct not in the best interest of MSI. The actions taken against an individual player, team official, team or club may include but are not limited to:

- 1. Verbal warnings and a written record.** Verbal warning and reprimands may be made by PRDC. A written record must be kept and may be referenced in any future actions against that party. If appropriate, a copy will be sent to the club representative of any team outside MSI.
- 2. Written censure.** A written censure may be sent to the offending party by the PRDC. This may be referenced in any future actions against the party. A copy of the censure will be sent to the offender's coach and club representative, if appropriate.
- 3. Probation and suspension.** A player, team official, team, or club may be placed on probation and, in more serious cases, may be suspended for a number of games specifically associated with that party. A suspended player may not participate in any game for which they are suspended. A suspended team official may not appear at the game site or the vicinity of a game for which they are suspended. See *Carrying Out Suspensions*, for full details.
- 4. Reduction of standings points.**
- 5. Ban from participation.** In extreme cases, upon decision of the PRDC, a player, official, team, or club may be banned from MSI participation or sponsorship for a given period of time. This requires approval of MSI's Board of Directors. Those being banned may not participate in any games or practice with any team during the period of suspension. A team that does not comply with this sanction may have all MSI privileges removed. Creation of a "new" team for MSI will be limited to a maximum of six players from the banned team's roster, irrespective of the seasonal year.

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Two types of actions may be taken involving a referee: A complaint which merely records the conduct, and an appeal, which requests action.

- **No appeals are accepted in games officiated by Junior Referees.**

COMPLAINT AGAINST A USSF REFEREE

Any complaint concerning a referee's conduct during a game should be submitted **in writing** to the MSI office. The complaint will be noted and sent to the MWSRA for follow-up. (MWSRA provides a liaison to MSI who is responsible for reviewing and possibly acting on complaints about referees.)

APPEALS OF REFEREE DECISIONS

Any MSI coach may appeal a decision or ruling by a MWSRA referee believed to be an incorrect application of the FIFA Laws of the Game, as modified by MSI. Judgment calls, essentially questions of fact, may not be appealed. **Red cards may not be appealed.** See the section *Referees* in this handbook.

Appeals are sent to the MSI Executive Director, who is empowered to decide whether the appeal is with or without merit. The appeal must be **in writing**, and must include **all** of the following information:

1. The referee's **decisions, rulings and actions.**
2. The governing **soccer law** or rules that the coach feels were misapplied or violated.
3. The **names** of the MSI conference, teams, and coaches involved.
4. The **telephone numbers** of all coaches.

In order to file an appeal, the coach must complete the following procedures:

1. Make **four copies** of the written appeal.
2. Mail all copies to the President/Executive Director of MSI. They must be **postmarked within four days** following the date the game was played.
3. Attach a **check for \$100**, signed and made payable to MSI, to the appeal letter. The President/Executive Director will retain the check until the Appeals Commissioner completes action on the appeal and will return it if the appeal was upheld or cash and deposit it if the appeal was denied.

COMPLAINT AGAINST A COACH

Coaches, parents, and other active and associated members of MSI may file complaints with the PRDC concerning unsporting conduct by an MSI coach. (See the *Sportsmanship* section of this handbook.) Complaints against coaches may result in action against the coach.

Complaints must be **in writing** and should be submitted to the MSI Director of Operations. Unless the Director of Operations deems the complaint inappropriate for PRDC consideration and so informs the complainant, the complaint and all relevant information will be promptly and carefully considered by the Committee.

If the PRDC concludes that the coach did engage in unsporting conduct, it may impose sanctions on the coach.

APPEAL OF PRDC DECISION

Any penalty imposed by the PRDC may be appealed to the MSI Board of Directors. The appeal will be considered by such Board members who are present at meeting which will be held in conjunction with the next regularly scheduled Executive Committee meeting. Board members who participated in the original PRDC hearing may attend any appeal hearing in their capacity as PRDC members but should refrain from participating in the Board's deliberations.

The person wishing to file the appeal must notify MSI's President/Executive Director, who will provide instructions about what material should be provided, deadlines for receipt of the material, and to whom it should be submitted. The person must provide oral notice of his or her intent to appeal within 48 hours after receiving notice of the penalty from PRDC, and should file the formal written notice of appeal within another 48 hours after the oral notice is made. The PRDC appeal must be accompanied by the appeal fee, a check for \$100 made out to MSI, which will be held by the President/Executive Director until the Board of Directors has taken action on the appeal.

Any suspension or reduction in playing time ordered by the PRDC or one of its subcommittees will be held in abeyance until such appeal is heard, as long as the person filing the appeal continues to pursue the appeal and continues to meet deadlines required by the appeals process. (However, any automatic suspensions and additional sit-outs due to red cards or accumulated cards shall be served pending the hearing.)

The Board's deliberations on an appeal will not constitute a new hearing on the matter but will solely be concerned with whether the original committee hearing was fair, was based on accurate testimony, and reached a reasonable conclusion. The Board of Directors may affirm, modify, reverse, or elect not to review any decision made by the PRDC. The Board may, at its discretion, hold a hearing at which all parties in interest are given the opportunity to appear. If a hearing is not held, the Board should afford all parties in interest the opportunity to submit appropriate information for consideration.

Persons filing appeals are encouraged to submit their materials in a timely manner. If the materials are not submitted at least 48 hours before the meeting where the Board is scheduled to consider the appeal, the Board may refuse to consider the information or delay its consideration of the appeal until a subsequent meeting. If the Board believes the person filing the appeal is engaging in delaying tactics, the Board may consider the appeal in the absence of the supplementary information.

MSI's President/Executive Director, working with the PRDC chair, will provide a summary to the Board, including written material and exhibits provided at the original hearing, the record of the committee's decision, any subsequent correspondence between the committees, the appellant, and MSI, and any new material submitted by the committee or the appellant. The chair of the PRDC is also invited to submit additional information, including a summary of the reasoning behind the PRDC's decision.

If a hearing is scheduled, parties in interest to the appeal, including the PRDC, the appellant, and the person filing the original complaint, will be notified of the Board hearing and will be invited to submit additional information.

The Board will review this material and will invite the person who filed the appeal to make a brief statement on his/her behalf. The Board may question the appellant. The PRDC chair may attend the Executive Committee hearing as observers and to answer questions about the committee's deliberations and decision.

After the person filing the appeal has finished his or her statement and the Board has asked any questions, the appellant will be asked to leave and the Board will discuss the appeal. Normally, the Board will reach a decision at that meeting, on the basis of the written material and the discussion with the appellant. In unusual circumstances, the Board may decide to conduct a new hearing, which will be scheduled at a later date. The Board will inform MSI's President/Executive Director of its decision, who will notify the appellant, the PRDC chair, and other parties who need to be informed.

If the Board sustains the appeal, the appeal fee shall be refunded. Even if the appeal is not sustained, the Board can order the refund of all or part of the Coach's appeal fee unless it determines that the appeal was frivolous, without merit, or was submitted for reasons that are contrary to the best interests of MSI. Any appeal fee not refunded becomes the property of MSI and shall be forwarded to the MSI Treasurer for deposit to an appropriate account. The Board shall advise the President/Executive Director of his or her action as to the appeal fee and the President/Executive Director shall forward the deposit to the Treasurer or return it to the appellant, as the case may be.

No person who is subject to the MSI rules and discipline process may appeal any matter addressed by the MSI rules and discipline process to MSYSA or any other organization within the structure of the U.S. Soccer Federation until all appeals within MSI have been exhausted. If the MSI Board of Directors rejects an appeal, the penalty may be appealed to MSYSA, subject to rules and procedures established by that organization.

No member team, player, coach, administrator, spectator, or referee may invoke the aid of the courts regarding any action occurring in an MSI league game, tournament, or other MSI activity, or any action taken by MSI or one of its committees, without first exhausting all administrative remedies made available by MSI, MSYSA, US Club Soccer, US Youth Soccer, or the US Soccer Federation.

MONTGOMERY SOCCER, INC. MEDICAL RELEASE FORM

I hereby give permission for any and all medical attention necessary to be administered to my child in the event of an accident, injury, sickness, etc., under the direction of the person(s) listed below, until such time as I may be contacted. This release is effective until such time as revoked by me. I also hereby assume the responsibility for payment of any such treatment.

My address is: _____

My insurance is: _____ My policy number is: _____

In case I cannot be reached, any of the following is authorized to act in my behalf:

1. Coach _____
2. Assistant Coach _____
3. A league or Montgomery Soccer representative where my child is playing.
4. Any tournament representative where my child is playing.

Our physician is: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

My child's birth date: _____ Known allergies: _____

Date of last tetanus shot: _____ Parent's phone: (H) _____ (W) _____

Signature (Parent/Guardian): _____

Subscribed and sworn (affirmed) before me this _____ day of 20_____.

My commission expires: _____

Notary Public _____

Appendix 1

FIRST AID PRECAUTIONS FOR MSI COACHES

HEAT, FLUID INTAKE, AND SOCCER

Research on fluid replenishment is ongoing and considering that each new drink makes a new claim, it is easier to continue using water. Players should be cautious about their water intake.

They should avoid soda, especially caffeinated and carbonated sodas. Caffeine is a diuretic (you want to retain water, not urinate it) and carbonation makes you feel full, so that you don't drink enough.

Drinks sweetened solely with fructose (read labels!) can sometimes cause an upset stomach. However, fructose is such a good sweetener, its presence with other carbohydrates (glucose polymers, sucrose, and glucose) improves the drink's taste. The tastier the drink, the more kids will drink. A drawback of water is its bland taste.

Small concentrations of carbohydrates are good, but too much is not good. If there is too much carbohydrates, passage of the drink to the intestine is slowed. A solution between 6-10% is suggested. (examples: Leons EM, Gatorade, Body Fuel Hydra Fuel, Exceed, CytoMax)

Electrolytes help to move fluid across the cells of the intestine and into the bloodstream. It also helps in retaining some of the fluids ingested.

Cold drinks are absorbed fastest (around 40°F), so keep them iced.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

IN THE CASE OF SERIOUS AND LIFE-THREATENING MEDICAL EMERGENCIES FIRST AID IS THE TREATMENT GIVEN TO THE VICTIM WHILE AWAITING THE ARRIVAL OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SYSTEMS. WHEN THE NEED FOR EMERGENCY TREATMENT ARISES, KEEP THE FOLLOWING ADVICE IN MIND:

- Avoid excitement or panic. KEEP CALM.
- If the emergency is life-threatening (the victim is not breathing, bleeding uncontrollably, experiencing severe shock), take action immediately.
- Never move a badly injured person unless remaining there endangers lives.
- Check vital signs (breathing, pulse) and ascertain if the victim is bleeding.
- Activate the EMS (Emergency Medical Systems) immediately by notifying ambulance, fire or police.

Make sure that you are watching players at all times during practice as well as games. Avoid distractions including unnecessary conversation. This will not only help you to act more effectively during an emergency, but you may also be better prepared to prevent one if you are paying close attention to the players. Always supervise field and player equipment.

Coaches should always conduct a practice or play a game with a first aid kit nearby. Although the rate of injury to young athletes is not of significant numbers, injuries do occur, and a sideline first aid kit can be quite valuable. The contents of these kits may change as a team matures and becomes more competitive. Fewer basic medical supplies are needed by an under-8 group of players than by a team of teenaged athletes. Injuries at younger levels occur at a rate of approximately 1:1000 playing hours, compared to older groups where the rate of injury is approximately 3.8:1000 playing hours. The increased intensity of play in older age groups increases the level of injury.

Please take time to review the First Aid pamphlet included in your coaching materials before the season begins.

FIRST AID KIT SUGGESTIONS

Following is a **suggested inventory** of first aid items. It is important that these supplies be kept clean and dry. Therefore, the container they are placed in should be resistant to dirt and weather.

BASIC FIRST AID KIT

- Spray bottle
- Assorted Band Aids (1) box
- Butterfly Bandage (1)
- Plastic Bags (5)
- Instant Cold Pack (6)
- Ace Wrap (2) 3 inches wide
- Rubber Gloves

ADDITIONAL SUPPLIES FOR MORE COMPETITIVE TEAMS

- Pen Light (1)
- Under Wrap (3) rolls (sometimes called pre-wrap)
- Adhesive Tape (3) 1inch
- Telfa Pads 3x3 (24)
- Steristrips (12)
- Thermometer- Oral (1)
- Bandage Scissors (2)
- Tongue Depressors (6)
- Q-Tips (12)
- Bite Stick (1)
- Mirror (1)
- Squirt Bottle (1)
- Eye Wash (1) bottle