

SUBURBAN COUNTIES SOCCER LEAGUE

www.suburbancounties.org

PLAYING RULES: Fall 2026

This seasons changes are highlighted in yellow

The Suburban Counties Soccer League, hereinafter referred to as the "SCSL", is a member of the Eastern Pennsylvania Youth Soccer Association, EPYS, which is affiliated with the Eastern Pennsylvania Soccer Association, EPSA. All three parties are affiliated with the United States Soccer Federation, USSF. The SCSL is officially considered a **Recreation League**, in direct contrast to a Travel League. Players are assumed to be intramural in their skill levels and shall not have been issued any Player ID passes by any Travel League for the current "year". Travel soccer players that are in possession of a current year player pass wishing to participate in SCSL must complete and have on file with their Club a PS-1 form dropping them from any travel team roster.

To facilitate the definition of "Recreation" as played in the SCSL, we hereby set down the following Rules and Guidelines. We follow the normal USSF rules for time of games with the exception of U-19, and all Referees are instructed to call all games according to the Laws of the Game unless specifically noted herein.

I Membership: The SCSL invites all non-select, non-Travel, Intramural teams from all EPYS member Clubs in Berks, Chester and Montgomery Counties (PA) in the U9/U10 (3rd & 4th Grades) U11/U12 (5th & 6th Grade), U13/U14 (7th & 8th Grade), U15/U16 (9th & 10th Grade) and Under 19 (10th, 11th & 12th Grade) age groups. A player's year of birth/school grade defines what age that player can play "Under" that fall and the following spring.

For the **Fall 2025 Season**, this means:

- U10 players must have been born **2016** or later (3rd & 4th Grade)
- U-12 players must have been born **2014** or later (5th & 6th Grade)
- U-14 players must have been born **2012** or later (7th & 8th Grade)
- U-16 players must have been born **2010** or later (9th & 10th Grade)
- U-19 players must have been born **2007** or later (11th & 12th grade)

Each season is expected to include Intramural teams from the following EPYSA Clubs:

Amity AC Soccer Club.....<http://tcteams.com/amity/>
Boyertown Soccer Clubwww.boyertownsoccerclub.net
Coventry Soccer Association.....www.coventrysoccer.com
Exeter Soccer Club
Methacton United.....www.methactonunited.org
Perkiomen Valley Soccer.....www.perkvalleysoccer.org
Phoenixville Area Soccer Club, PASC..... www.phoenixvillesoccer.org
Pottsgrove Soccer Club..... www.pottsgrovesoccer.com
Pottstown Soccer Club.....www.pottstownsoccer.org
Valley Soccer Club
West-Mont United Soccer Association.... www.westmontunitedsoccer.org

II Duration of Games & Roster Size: To provide for maximum enjoyment of the game of soccer by the players while providing a schedule that allows the SCSL, coaches and referees to fit all required games into the primary playing days of Saturdays, the games durations will be as follows:

- U-10 games will be 7v7 with two (2) 25minute halves with a 5 minute half
- U-12 games will be 9v9 with two (2) 30 minute halves with a 5 minute half
- U-14 games will be 11v11 with two (2) 35 minute halves with a 5 minute half
- U-16 games will be 11v11 with two (2) 40 minute halves with a 5 minute halftime
- U-19 games will be 11v11 with two (2) 40 minute halves with a 5 minute halftime (If coaches agree prior to start of game, teams are permitted to play a smaller number of players. The referee must be advised of this change.)

All Players on all Teams shall have unique numbers on their jerseys.

Co-ed Rosters are mandatory for the U16 through U19 age groups. **At least two females** are expected be on each roster submitted to the League office for these age groups. To enforce Co-ed play at the U16 through U19 age divisions, at least one female player per team shall be on the field at all times. If an all male team is playing against a team with one or more females on the playing field, the all male team will pull one player and play one player short as long as the other team has any female players on the field.



Recently, we have expanded to include gender select teams at U10 & U12. COed teams are also welcome at these age brackets, and will play with the Boys flight

U-10 rosters may contain no more than 12 players

Each U-12 team roster may contain an unlimited number of names but only fourteen (14) players may dress and play in each game.

Each U-14, U-16 & U19 team will limit its roster size to no more than 18 players for the 11v11 games.

TEAM ROSTERS

Clubs shall supply a roster for each team being registered to the league office as part of team registration. Since SCSL is a recreational league, rosters may be updated at any time by contacting the league office and requesting the necessary change. Clubs are expected to keep an accurate roster on file with the league office.

GAME DAY ROSTERS

At each game, coaches will present three (3) signed copies of their team's Game Day Roster to the center referee. SCSL provides an appropriate form for coach's use on the SCSL website.

Players listed on the Game Day Roster must be listed on a team roster on file with the league office. It is permissible to borrow one or more players from any other SCSL team or club as long as they otherwise meet the player eligibility requirements. Borrowed players shall be indicated by checking the "Borrowed" box on the Game Day Roster form. It is expected that borrowed players will be used to fill a temporary shortage of players in order to field a team for a specific match. Teams shall not borrow players just to "beef up" their roster for a specific match.

The referee shall sign the roster and return one copy to the coach and give one copy to the opposing coach. Referees shall keep the third copy as a record of the players participating in match that day. This provides the referee with supporting documentation should there be any questions about the game or their game report.

III Game Scheduling: The League maintains control of all game schedules and rescheduling of any rain-dates. After a rained-out game, the Coaches can confer to see if both teams wish to reschedule the game. If so, they should request that their respective SCSL Club Coordinators request the League to have the game rescheduled with a field location and time already verified as being available to all parties. The Club Coordinator of the Home Team shall make the official request to the League. If the Referee Assignor can handle the rescheduled game, permission will be granted to play the rescheduled game. But, in general, rained-out weekend games will be rescheduled in blocks for maximum referee efficiency and not on a game by game basis. Most games rained out will not be rescheduled except when early weeks are lost and open weekends exist.

NOTE: No game is sanctioned (nor players insured) unless the League officially approves a game and the Ref Assignor assigns the referees.

IV Referee Fees: The SCSL employs a licensed EPYS Referee Assignor, who shall schedule and provide ALL referees used at ALL SCSL games. Each team will pay the Referee half of the game referee fee before the start of each game, in CASH (exact change required).

Please refer to the Seasonal "Cheat Sheet" for current fees

If the Referee arrives and determines that the game should not be played due to field conditions or weather conditions, the Home Team pays the Referee that half of the total game fee only. The Visiting Team pays nothing.

If a game is called off by the SCSL before **7:00 AM** on game day, no fees are due. **Only the SCSL, through its Club Coordinators and Referee Assignor can call off a game, NOT the Coaches.** Club Coordinators please notify your coaches asap if your fields are closed and games canceled so they can contact their opponent. Please remind coaches that if they have an away game they need to check with the home team to see if their fields are open or closed. Visiting teams need to be notified two (2) hours before the scheduled start of a game if it is being called off. Game cancellations are announced by email only. Coaches and Clubs are expected to check email on game days.

If a Referee shows up for an officially scheduled Game and one or more teams do not show-up without having given prior notice to the League and Referee Assignor, the Referee fees will be due in full and the offending Club(s) will send their respective half of the total fee to the League within one week. If one team does show up and is otherwise able to play, the missing team will be liable for both halves of the total fee and that Club will reimburse the League within one week of the offense.

3/9/2019- Per the Spring 2019 League meeting, we have revised the Game cancellation and rescheduling procedures. The intent of these changes to minimize last minute cancellations and changes. Key elements of the rule changes include Games scheduled to be played before 11:00 AM will need to be cancelled the previous night, games scheduled to be played after 11:00 AM will continue with the 7:00 AM deadline.

Any Club decision to cancel games due to field conditions or other events must be conveyed directly to the League Office and visiting Coaches via e-mail and/or phone contact. Postings on Club web sites will neither be considered "prior notice" nor sufficient for informing the League, Referee Assignor and the other Clubs and Coaches about these decisions.

V Referees: The lifeblood of the SCSL is its group of licensed Referees who are trained for Intramural games such as those played in the SCSL. They are to be treated with Respect at all times. Coaches and Club Administrators will insure that their sidelines are under control and that NO ONE is abusing or directing loud and derogatory comments to the Referee. Improper conduct by any Coach, Parent or Club will be duly reported to the SCSL for disciplinary action.



All SCSL Coaches shall submit a Game Report for any SCSL game in which anything "out of the ordinary" occurred including but not limited to the issuance of any Red or Yellow cards; any physical abuse of a player, coach, referee or spectator; and any verbal "fights" involving players, coaches, referee or spectators. It is the ultimate responsibility of each Coach to control his players, parents, and spectators and report anything beyond fair play and good sportsmanship to his or her Club, Club Coordinator, the SCSL and the Referee Assignor so that steps can be taken in a timely manner to avoid future conflicts. All Game Reports, when required, must be submitted no later than the following Monday at **10:00 AM** to the Referee Assignor to allow adjustments for Referee assignments for the following week's set of games. The Game Report can be e-mailed (preferred) or mailed.

In the unlikely event that an assigned Referee fails to show up for a game, the two Coaches MAY elect to still play the game using a mutually agreed upon substitute Referee. Each Coach shall nominate one person as a substitute Referee and a Coin flip shall decide who the Referee shall be. Otherwise, each Coach shall referee one half with the Home Team Coach taking the first half and the Visiting Coach taking the second half. In no event shall the Coaches wait more than ten (10) minutes past the scheduled start of a game to find a referee and begin play.

VI Linesmen: Each Club will appoint a Parent or Spectator to assist the Referee in determining when a ball goes out of bounds and which team touched the ball last. This Linesman is not an Assistant Referee and shall have no powers other than to advise the Referee when and how the ball left the field.

VII The Laws of the Game: All EPYS/USSF rules for ball size; uniforms, shin guards and substitutions will apply.

Normal EPYS/USSF rules for OFFSIDE apply for U12, U14, U16 and U19.

A #4 ball is used for U-10, U-12 games

A #5 ball is used for U-14, U-16 and U-19 games

Each Team must wear a single jersey color over a single pants color. Separate and distinct numbers must be clearly evident on the backs of each player. The Goal Keeper must have a jersey that contrasts with the uniforms of BOTH teams. If the two teams are not distinct enough for the Referee, it is the HOME team's responsibility to switch uniform colors using pinnies or different jerseys.

Each Team shall bring at least One (1) Game Ball to each match with two being preferred. This will allow substitute balls to be thrown in to keep play moving instead of waiting to retrieve balls that roll far out of bounds.

Each Home Team is fully responsible for the condition of the field, the presence of corner flags, the visibility of all lines and the conditions of the goal and nets.

For all Games at all Age Levels in the SCSL, **NO SLIDE TACKLES are allowed**, even if "legal" by USSF rules. An Indirect free kick shall be awarded to the team that was tackled in such a manner at the point of the tackle.

In the interest of sportsmanship, goalkeepers shall not play "coast to coast"

Whenever a Player or Coach receives a **RED CARD**, he or she must leave the field immediately and not play in any further games until the SCSL reviews the circumstances. **At a minimum, the player will not be allowed to play in any other games later that specific calendar day.** The SCSL reserves the right to prohibit a dangerous player from playing in SCSL games.

Substitutions (U-10, U12, U14, U16 and U19)

There shall be unlimited substitutions (from the halfway line only) with the permission of the referee at the following times:

- Note, per USC changes of 2019, substitutions shall be on any stoppage We await better definition from Referee training.
- After either team scores a goal.
- At the beginning of the second half.
- In case of an injury, substitution for the injured player is permitted but not required; the opposing team may also substitute one player if the injured player is substituted. If the injured player's coach comes on to the field of play to attend to the injured player, said player **must** be substituted.
- If a player receives a dismissal (red card), that player must leave the field of play. Their team may not substitute for them at any time during that match. The team may field a full team in its next scheduled match subject to the provisions of the Section VII.

All substitutions must enter the playing field from the halfway line with the permission of the referee. The referee may disallow a request for substitution if, in the referee's judgment, that request is intended to delay the play of the game.

VIII Special Rules:

9v9 games shall be played on smaller, 50x80 yard type fields. All requirements for having a female player on the field at all times apply (see Page 2).

- U-10 games shall be played on a smaller 7v7 field with a buildout line
- No punting the ball in U-10
- No **HEADING** the ball in U10 or U12 Divisions Referees will award an Indirect Free Kick (IFK) at the spot of the header. If the header occurs inside the goal area, the ball will be placed on the goal area line closest to the spot of the infraction.



- The goalkeeper **IS** permitted to punt the ball in U12; however with the small-sided field we would ask that you encourage your goalkeeper to pass, throw or roll the ball back into play.
- Any ball being played out by the goalkeeper in U10 or U12 by a punt, drop kick or throw, must NOT cross the halfway line without first touching a player or the ground. The penalty for this infraction is an indirect free kick for the opposing team where the ball crossed the halfway line.
- The goalkeeper shall not transition to offensive player during regular play (No “coast to coast”) The penalty for this infraction is a direct free kick for the opposing team where the keeper crossed the halfway line. The exception to this rule shall be in the final 2 minutes of a match
- The League has adopted the EPYSA/ US Soccer Heat and Cold Guidelines. Links can be found here: [Heat Guidelines](#), [Cold Guidelines](#)

IX Running Up The Score at Any Age Division:

The biggest single issue the SCSL must deal with each year is the claim by various coaches that their Opponent “ran up the score”. Even though no Standings are kept in the SCSL and no scores are recorded other than on the Referee game reports, some coaches do sometimes allow the score to escalate without taking evasive action. **This will NOT be tolerated!** A 3-goal margin is considered the maximum margin of victory. As soon as a Coach gets a lead of 3 goals, he or she must take steps to avert further scoring.

In addition to the 3-goal margin recommendations, there are several mandatory moves required at all age groups when scoring becomes excessive:

When one team goes up by five (5) goals, the opposing team will be allowed to add one (1) player. This one player addition shall be removed if the score differential drops below 5 but will be in effect as long as the score differential is 5 or more.

In addition to the above, if one team goes up by seven (7) goals, that team shall remove a player and play two players down as long as the score differential is 7 or more. The player can be added back to the field if the score differential drops below seven. Co-ed rules continue to apply as applicable; a female player must be on the Field at all times for each team at U12 through U19.

Suggestions for averting further scoring

Moving offensive scorers/starters and playing “a man down” are suggested options along with the requirement of multiple touches prior to shots on goal.

X The Good of The Game: The SCSL is proud of its long history of good sportsmanship and quality **Recreation** play. No standings are kept and no Coach or Club is allowed to claim any “titles” or publish unofficial standings in any newspaper. All Coaches and Players are expected to line up and shake hands at the end of EACH game. No misconduct by ANY player during this ritual is to be tolerated.

All SCSL Coaches are considered to be an extension and representative of the League’s philosophy of fair play and good sportsmanship. If ANY actions unbecoming to the reputation and philosophy of the SCSL occur before, during or after an SCSL game they should be reported to the Club Coordinators immediately for a prompt SCSL response.

SIGNED: *FOR THE SUBURBAN COUNTIES SOCCER LEAGUE:*

David Vaughan **DATE: 3/9/2026**
David Vaughan, President

