

# **Minnesota Senior Soccer league (MSSL)**

## **Rules and Regulations**

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## **ARTICLE 1. Dues**

Section 1.01 Team fees will be set annually by the MSSL Executive Committee.

Section 1.02 Failure to pay team fees by the established deadline will result in immediate removal from the schedule. Any game not played will be considered a forfeit in the standings.

Section 1.03 A fine will be assessed until the dues are received by the MSSL. The amount and timing of the dues will be covered in the schedule of fines per Article 4.

Section 1.04 Failure to pay team fees by the deadline set by the MSSL Executive Committee each season of the season may result in a weekly fine in the team and its players being prevented from registering for upcoming seasons, and in the team not playing in a scheduled match. If a team is removed from the schedule due to non-payment of Team Registration Fees, the team will be awarded a forfeit in the standings and they will be responsible for any additional fees as stated in Article 4.

## **ARTICLE 2. Assessments**

Section 2.01 The MSSL Executive Committee may assess the members to make up any deficits in the cost of operation of the league that are not covered by team and player registration fees.

## **ARTICLE 3. Fee**

Section 3.01 Fees, payment amounts, and payment deadlines will be set annually by the MSSL Executive Committee, and will be posted on the league website, and distributed by e-mail to the last known contact information for managers of teams in the league for the prior season. The Executive Committee will provide no less than 60 days' advance notice, in this fashion, of the initial payment amount and due date for team fees for the upcoming season.

Section 3.02 Every year, each team asking to join or remain in the league for the upcoming season shall deposit \$100 with the MSSL in connection with its request to join or remain in the league. This deposit must be paid by a deadline set by the MSSL Executive Committee, prior to the MSSL's

deadline to secure the required number of fields for the upcoming season. The Executive Committee will post notice of the deadline for this deposit on the league website and e-mail notice to the last known contact information for managers of teams in the league the prior season. The deposit is independent of but will be credited toward the initial payment referred to in Section 3.01. The deposit is refundable if the team notifies the MSSL Executive Committee at least 30 days prior to the first game of the upcoming season that it will not participate in the season.

#### **ARTICLE 4. Fines**

Section 4.01 A Schedule of Fines will be set by the MSSL Executive Committee.

Section 4.02 Schedule of Fines:

- 1) Team Fees: Fines are implemented as deemed by the Executive Committee.
- 2) Cards Fouls: Fines of \$100 per team per 10 points (3 points for Red Card and 1 point for a Yellow Card).
- 3) Team Forfeits: Fines for price of the fields and cost of the referees deemed by the Executive Committee. Fee to be determined by current field and referee costs or expenses.

Section 4.03 Payment of a fine must occur within ten (10) days of the date on which the fine was officially levied by the MSSL Executive Committee. Notification of the levying of a fine may occur either in email, via text or phone call by the Treasure to the board manager. An additional penalty of \$5.00 per week may be added for late payments.

Section 4.04 Team's and player's future games are subject to forfeiture until delinquent fines are paid.

#### **ARTICLE 5. Payments to the MSSL**

Section 5.01 All payments to the MSSL or to any unit thereof shall be made by check or money order or equivalent electronic means with an accompanying memo noting the purpose of the payment.

Section 5.02 If a payment is made by check, and that check is returned for having "insufficient funds," the payment will not be considered to have been made. Future payment must then also include the cost of processing the returned check.

## **ARTICLE 6. Budget**

Section 6.01 The MSSL Executive Committee shall consider, revise, and approve the budget for the following year.

## **ARTICLE 7. Registration**

Section 7.01 A player playing in a Minnesota Senior Soccer League game must be registered with the MSSL electronic registration means.

Section 7.02 Each player must register each year and may only be registered with one primary team in the MSSL in the electronic registration means. A player who is eligible by age may be affiliated with a second team in a different division and/or a second team in a division within a single club established prior to the season, and may alternate games between those teams, so long as the player is properly rostered for a particular game and otherwise in compliance with all MSSL Rules & Regulations. A player may change primary registration and/or club affiliation once per season but must sit out two games in each division where a change occurs upon re-registering or re-affiliating, before the player may play for the new team, club, and/or affiliate. Notification to both managers must be provided by the MSSL.

Section 7.03 Each team in the MSSL must submit a Team Roster to the MSSL Registrar. The roster must be legible and have one number for each player assessed. The roster must list each player's first and last name, have the player's photograph passport quality picture and their date of birth as it appears on their age verification document. The age verification document is a driver's license or any other valid government issued photo ID. A player whose name on the roster does not match the name on their age verification document will be considered ineligible to play; the only exception to this rule is that nick names are acceptable as long as they are commonly used (e.g., Rick for Richard, or Bill for William).

Section 7.04 The Team Roster (provided by each team manager) will be checked by the referee comparing each player's government-issued photo ID against the roster and player providing the government-issued photo ID. One copy of the team roster will be provided to the referees and one copy will be given to the manager of the opposite team by each team manager. No player's name may be handwritten; all player's names must be preprinted on the roster.

The team manager must keep the opposing team roster for possible future use in resolving questions.

Section 7.05 A player's age can be challenged at any time by a team manager (board member). A player's eligibility to participate in a particular game must be challenged during that particular game.

Section 7.06 When challenged, a player must provide age verification documentation to the referee at the field. If that proof is not provided, the player cannot play, and the Team Manager must provide the proof to the Executive Committee. If such proof cannot be provided by the player or manager within 48 hours, the game is forfeited.

## **ARTICLE 8. League Divisions**

Section 8.01 The MSSL Executive Committee will be responsible for determining, from time to time, the proper divisions of the league.

Section 8.02 Each division comprises certain age limits: Legends Division 40 years or older but not younger; Masters Division 50 years or older but not younger; Grandmasters Division 60 years or older but not younger. In order to participate in a game in a Division, a player must turn the appropriate minimum age on or before the last day of the calendar year in which the games occur.

## **ARTICLE 9. Referees**

Section 9.01 Game assignments of referees will be delegated by the MSSL's Executive Committee to a Referee Assignor Agent.

Section 9.02 Referees assigned to MSSL games will have current USSF certification.

Section 9.03 The MSSL Executive Committee will establish reasonable expectations of the referees and a performance code for the referees. Standards will include absence, dress, tardiness, attitude, and knowledge of the rules.

Section 9.04 The MSSL Executive Committee will expect the Referee Assigned Agent to enforce the MSSL referee standards.

Section 9.05 The Referee Assigned Agent will be required to complete a game report in a timely manner (@ latest 48 hours) and send it to the MSSL. If an online reporting mechanism is available, the referee is required to use this method in notifying the MSSL of game results. The game report must include information about all cautions, (yellow cards submitted) and ejections (red card submitted) and player injuries.

Section 9.06 Each team shall pay the center referee one-half of the total amount due to the game referees on the field at half-time of the game. If a team fails to pay its one-half of the referee fee before the end of half-time, the following sanctions shall result: (1) the team shall forfeit the game, which will not restart for the second half; (2) the team must pay the full amount due to the referees for that game, including paying to the referees or repaying the opposing team the other half of the referee fee due.

## **ARTICLE 10. Standings**

Section 10.01 MSSL will maintain separate standings for each division (Legend, Master & Grandmaster Divisions).

Section 10.02 Standings will be determined as follows:

- win = 3 points
- tie = 1 point
- loss = 0 points

Section 10.03 If, at the end of the regular season, two or more teams are tied in points, the following will be used to determine relative standing: 1) Head-to-head competition (won-loss record in head-to-head).

- 2) Inter-team goal aggregate (number of goals by team A vs. number of goals by team B in head-to-head).
- 3) Ratio of [goals scored by: goals scored against] during the entire season.

Section 10.04 Play-off rules are as follows:

- The first 11 games determined the 3 play-off groups in each division.
- The four teams in each play-off group play each other once using the standard points system (win = 3 points, loss = 0, tie = 1).
- After the three play-off games, the point totals are used to determine the opponents for the final game with the top two and bottom two teams of each group playing each other. This final game is "final placing game" for the season standings of all 24 teams and the 15 games played. For example, Group A (in either Legend or Master division) is therefore pairing the top two play-off teams of that division and they are playing for the championship for that respective division. The winner of that game is the division champions, the other two play-off teams in group A are playing for 3rd and 4th place respectively. This continues down into Groups B & C playing for 5th, 6th, 7th, ...etc. If the final game, "final placing game" ends in a tie, then the first tiebreaker will be the head to head play-off game. If that head to head game was also tied, then the next tiebreaker will be the total points earned during the three playoff games. If the point total is also tied between those two teams, then the tie breaker goes to goal differential during the three play-off games. If that is still tied, then the tiebreaker will be the total goals scored during the three play-off games. If that is tied, then the total goals allowed during the three play-off games will decide. If after these five tiebreakers a winner is still not able to be determined, then we would need to use the regular season games and follow the same order of tiebreakers listed above (head to head, points, goal differential, goals scored, goals allowed).
- These rules will be adjusted to accommodate our league size for each year we play.

Section 10.05 When an official game is declared to be forfeit, the score recorded will be either the actual score or 2-0 whichever is the most advantageous for the team winning by forfeit.

Section 10.06 In order to promote between sportsmanship between teams, the MSSL has a 7-goal differentiation. The Commissioner or Division Representative will manually change the score of any game with a spread larger than 7 to reflect only a 7-point spread. This score will be used in determining standings.



## **ARTICLE 11. Suspended Teams or Individual Players**

Section 11.01 No MSSL team or individual player rostered with a MSSL team may play against another team that has been suspended by the MSSL or by an organization affiliated with the USSF and/or FIFA.

Section 11.02 An individual suspended player affiliated with the USSF and/or FIFA cannot play on a team in the MSSL.

Section 11.03 Any time that a team is suspended, its membership in the MSSL revoked, or is otherwise barred from playing any MSSL game, that sanction shall also extend individually to each player rostered on that team at the time the sanction is imposed. In other words, a player on a suspended team that is not allowed to play in the MSSL, for any reason, shall not be allowed to play for a different team in the MSSL for the duration of the sanction, or permanently in the case of expulsion from the MSSL.

Section 11.04 Any individual player who is barred from playing in a MSSL game under Section 11.03 may petition the Executive Committee no less than 48 hours before a MSSL game and seek a waiver to play in that and/or future games which would otherwise fall under Section 11:03, by seeking to show that the individual player was personally innocent of and not associated with the conduct that led to the sanction. For example, an individual player may attempt to show that he had not been present at a game where his team was involved in a disciplinary incident that led to a sanction. However, waivers under this section shall be granted at the Executive Committee's sole discretion, including that sanctions imposed in whole or in part based on ongoing conduct of a team will not necessarily be waived against individual players simple because, for example, the player was not at a particular game.

## **ARTICLE 12. Game Rules and Procedures**

Section 12.01 All games sponsored by the MSSL will be conducted in accordance with the most current version of the USSF and/or FIFA Laws of the Game, and in accordance with the rules of the MSSL.

Section 12.02 Every team is responsible to the MSSL for the conduct of its players, team officials, and spectators, and as such, is required to take all precautions necessary to prevent threat or assault against persons or referees.

Section 12.03 Each team shall have a home and an away set of jerseys.

Section 12.04 For each match, the home team shall:

- Provide a regulation size number 5 ball.
- Provide corner flags, which are clearly visible from the opposite ends of the field (18" x 12" suggested), and which are mounted on a pole at least 5 feet high. The poles must be made of a smooth, consistent, flexible material with no sharp points protruding. Bicycle safety flags will be automatically regarded as meeting these criteria.
- Wear its home jerseys.

Section 12.05 For each match, the away team shall wear its away jerseys. In case of a conflict or similar colors, the visiting team is required to change.

Section 12.06 The Team Manager is responsible for providing the MSSL Team Roster (from League Apps). Managers are required to provide two copies of the MSSL roster. They must hand one roster to the opposing team's manager and one to the referee prior to the start of each game.

Section 12.07 Each player must present identification to the referee when challenged. If the player fails to present valid identification when challenged before the end of the game, the player is prohibited from playing in that game. Challenges must be made before the end of the game.

Section 12.08 All matches of the Minnesota Senior Soccer League will begin promptly at 6:30 P.M.

Section 12.09 If a team does not line up with at least seven (7) players within 15 minutes after the scheduled start time, the game may not be started and may be declared forfeit for that team. If both teams fail to line up, the game may be declared forfeit for both teams.

Section 12.10 In accordance to FIFA Laws of the Game, if a game is not started because of insufficient player numbers and the referees are being paid the full game fees, the referees are expected to referee a "friendly" game, if it is started within 15 minutes of the forfeit time. (For example, scheduled time is 6:30 pm, one team forfeits at 6:45 pm, referees may

leave the field if no friendly game is in progress by 7:00 pm). The exception is if the forfeiture results from field conditions. However, officials are not required to officiate a friendly game. It is up to each individual referee to decide whether he/she wishes to officiate. (This is due to USSF insurance considerations.)

Section 12.11 The referees will be on the field 15 minutes before the game's scheduled start time.

Section 12.12 If no official arrives at the field to officiate a game within 10 minutes after the scheduled start time of 6:30pm, managers should immediately call the MSSL Deputy Commissioner, who will contact the referee assignor. The game must be rescheduled if no contact can be made or the home team must notify the MSSL Division Representative immediately. If both the home and away team agree to play and count the game as official, the Division Representative pulls a referee(s) from another divisional game.

Section 12.13 Referees will use the 3-person, diagonal system of control. If only 2 referees are present, FIFA Laws of the Game permit only 1 referee on the field at one time. The referee shall attempt to recruit a club line to call out of bounds.

Section 12.14 The referee will enforce all MSSL and FIFA rules and decide any disputed point. The referee's decision on points of fact connected with the play will be final so far as the result of the game is concerned.

Section 12.15 The referee must also note the names and jersey number of any ejected players, along with the reason for the ejection, with yellow/red card issued on the referee report submitted to the MSSL.

Section 12.16 FIFA rule exceptions for the MSSL: There shall be unlimited substitutions during the game (substitutions shall be made from the center line) and are allowed to be made at any time during play, regardless of a stoppage in play. There are no slide tackles allowed within the reach of another player; for example: a player sliding to prevent a ball from going out is allowed but if such slide tackle causes another player to make a preventative move or could injure another player such slide tackle is not allowed.

Section 12.17 Players not currently in the game should remain within the technical area.

Section 12.18 A game stopped by the referee after at least one full half of play will be declared an official game. The score at the time of stoppage will be the final score unless the game is declared forfeited upon review by the league.

Section 12.19 A game stopped by the referee before at least one full half of play must be replayed, unless the game is declared forfeited upon review by the league or if both the home and away team agree to count the game as official.

Section 12.20 Within 48 hours of a game, the referees are responsible for reporting the results of the game, including scores, incident reports, including but not limited to cautions and ejections, unsafe field conditions, injuries and forfeits.

Section 12.21 The burden of rescheduling a postponed game will rest with the MSSL League (MSSL Treasurer). If the two teams are unable to decide upon a date, the MSSL Treasurer will set one. The Executive Committee must declare a forfeit if one or both of the teams fail to appear on the date scheduled.

Section 12.22 The commissioner must be notified of any changes, reschedules or cancellations to a game prior to 72 hours in advanced of the scheduled start time. Any changes, other than cancellations, made to a game within 72 hours of its scheduled time will result in the reschedule fine.

Section 12.23 If a game is cancelled within 72 hours of its scheduled time, for any reason, the game will be considered a forfeit by the team initiating the cancellation.

### **ARTICLE 13. Uniforms**

Section 13.01 All players on a team will wear shirts that match in color, except the goalkeepers, who shall wear colors that contrast with their own team and with the visiting team.

Section 13.02 Each player, except for the goalkeepers, will wear a shirt with a number on the back. Each team member must have a different number.

Section 13.03 When the referee determines that the color of the shirts of competing teams is too similar to play the game, the visiting team must change. If there is no remedy, the game will not be played and may be forfeited by the visiting team.

#### **ARTICLE 14. Disciplinary Matters**

Section 14.01 The MSSL will have the power to take disciplinary action on violations of the Laws of the Game and of the rules and regulations of the MSSL, USSF, and FIFA.

Section 14.02 The MSSL shall have the authority to:

(a) levy fines, suspensions, revocations of membership, affiliation, and/or registration

(b) order forfeiture, replay and/or cancellation of games

Exception: an amateur player cannot be individually fined for his or her conduct as a player. The team will be responsible for any fines levied against the team as a result of an individual's player's actions.

Section 14.03 The MSSL Executive Committee will consider allegations of violations or misconduct by teams or persons and take appropriate disciplinary action.

Section 14.04 A representative of the Executive Committee will provide a written report of all decisions to such parties directly concerned in the decision.

Section 14.05 Cases of referee assault and abuse must be immediately referred to the Minnesota Soccer Association, which has original jurisdiction over such cases. The suspension of the player will be indefinite until the Minnesota Soccer Association ruling is provided.

Section 14.06 If any person under the jurisdiction of the MSSL physically assaults a referee, that person will automatically be suspended for one year from the date of the incident. If circumstances warrant, the period of suspension may be extended by the Executive Committee.

Section 14.07 When any player is sent off the field with a red card by the referee, he or she will automatically be suspended from playing for a minimum of:

- one game - if the violation is non-physical (e.g. dissent)
- two games - if the violation is physical (e.g. pushing)
- four games - if the violation is for physical assault on another player.

The Commissioner may extend the period of suspension if the circumstances warrant.

Section 14.08 A yellow card will count for 1 point, and a red card for 3 points (two yellows resulting in a player being sent off will count as 3 points). A player who accumulates 5 points for yellow and red cards will be suspended for 1 game. For every 3 additional points that player accumulates after the initial suspension, the player will be suspended for 1 game. This is in addition to any suspension imposed pursuant to Section 14.07. The Executive Committee may extend the period of suspension as circumstances warrant.

Section 14.09 The MSSL has the authority to direct the Referee Coordinator that certain referees not be assigned to MSSL games.

Section 14.10 The MSSL Executive Committee may assert original jurisdiction over any disciplinary matter within the MSSL except those specifically called out in the rules and regulations of the Minnesota Soccer Association, USSF or FIFA.

## **ARTICLE 15. Protests**

Section 15.01 Any team may file a protest with its Divisional Representative when it feels that a match or part of a match has not been played in accordance with MSSL Rules. The team must inform the referee, before leaving the field, that it feels a rule has been violated and must notify the MSSL Division Representative of intent to file a protest and must file the written protest with the MSSL Division Representative within 48 hours of the protested game. The Division Representative will investigate to the extent necessary and will submit a written report to the Executive Committee within 48 hours of the receipt of the protest.

Section 15.02 The report will be reviewed by the Executive Committee and a decision will be made within 48 hours of receipt. If any decision is

required concerning disciplinary action, it will be made within the same period.

Section 15.03 Upon consideration of a protest, the Executive Committee will have the authority to deny the protest, to order a forfeiture, replay, or cancellation of a game, and to take whatever disciplinary actions are required.

Section 15.04 The MSSL Executive Committee will provide a written report of the considerations and decisions to the involved parties.

### **ARTICLE 16. Appeals**

Section 16.01 Appeals from the decision of the Executive Committee may be made to the Minnesota Soccer Association (MSA) in accordance with the rules of the MSA.

### **ARTICLE 17. Executive Committee Procedure When Considering Termination of Membership**

Section 17.01 A hearing for terminating membership must be convened by the Commissioner of the MSSL. It may be held in conjunction with an Executive Committee meeting.

Section 17.02 The Executive Committee will decide whether membership should be terminated.

Section 17.03 The Executive Committee will provide the member with a written report of its decision.

Section 17.04 If the member wishes to appeal the decision of the Executive Committee, it may be done through the appeal procedure described in ARTICLE 16.

### **ARTICLE 18. Procedure When Considering Removal of a Director For Cause**

Section 18.01 A communication to the membership will be made if removal of a Director is requested. A meeting will be called.

Section 18.02 At least seven (7) days' notice will be given to all parties and to the membership prior to a meeting.

Section 18.03 The subject Director will be advised of the alleged cause and will be provided with the opportunity to be present and to be heard at such a meeting.

Section 18.04 Any decision to remove the Director must be made by three fourths (3/4) vote of members of the MSSL Board of Directors present at an open meeting held for this purpose.

### **ARTICLE 19. Exhaustion of Administrative Procedures**

Section 19.01 No player, member, or Director of this league shall have standing to commence litigation in any court against this league, or the Minnesota Soccer Association (MSA), or the USSF, unless such a person first has exhausted all administrative procedures for the relief to be sought by such litigation in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of this league, of the MSA, and of the USSF.

### **ARTICLE 20. Mandatory Injury Waiver**

Section 20.01 The following waiver shall be provided to each MSSL player on the MSA website and each player shall be required to read and accept the terms of the waiver in the process of registering to play. Additionally, this waiver shall be distributed by each member, along with the rest of the Rules & Regulations, to each of the member's players. Completing the waiver on the MSA website and participating in a MSSL game each separately and independently acknowledge receipt and acceptance of this waiver and its terms.

#### **READ BEFORE CLICKING TO COMPLETE WAIVER**

In consideration of being allowed to participate in any Minnesota Senior Soccer League (MSSL) games, or any related events and activities, I hereby acknowledge, appreciate and agree that:

1. The risk of injury from the activities involved in this program is significant, including the potential for permanent paralysis and death, and while particular rules, equipment, and personal discipline may reduce this risk, the risk of serious injury does exist; and,



2. I KNOWINGLY AND FREELY ASSUME ALL SUCH RISKS, both known and unknown, EVEN IF ARISING FROM THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE RELEASEES or others, and assume full responsibility for my participation; and,

3. I willingly agree to comply with the stated and customary terms and conditions for participation. If, however, I observe any unusual significant hazard during my presence or participation, I will remove myself from participation and bring such to the attention of the nearest official immediately; and,

4. I, for myself and on behalf of my heirs, assigns, personal representatives and next of kin, HEREBY RELEASE AND HOLD HARMLESS the Minnesota Senior Soccer League, its board members, executive committee members, officers, officials, agents, and/or employees, other participants, sponsoring agencies, sponsors, advertisers, and if applicable, owners and lessors of premises used to conduct the event ("RELEASEES"), WITH RESPECT TO ANY AND ALL INJURY, DISABILITY, DEATH, or loss or damage to person or property, WHETHER ARISING FROM THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE RELEASEES OR OTHERWISE, to the fullest extent permitted by law.

**I HAVE READ THIS RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK AGREEMENT, FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS TERMS, UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE GIVEN UP SUBSTANTIAL RIGHTS BY COMPLETING THIS WAIVER, AND I COMPLETE IT FREELY AND VOLUNTARILY WITHOUT ANY INDUCEMENT.**