

# **SOCAL Soccer League Handbook**



**2023-2024 Season**



**A US Club Soccer Sanctioned League**

## **SOCAL Mission**

SOCAL was created to allow Clubs to do what is in the best interest of their players. With a focus on developing players and providing multi-faceted programming, SOCAL has grown to be the leading youth sports soccer program in Southern California.

## **SOCAL Core Values**

Guided by our Founding Philosophy and Core Values, SOCAL's purpose is to set the highest standards for soccer Clubs to develop players to their fullest potential – physically, emotionally, and ethically through:

### **Collaboration**

We collaborate with our soccer community to make wise decisions.

### **Joy**

We celebrate soccer and take fun seriously!

### **Impact**

We make a meaningful difference.

### **Integrity**

We strive to do the right thing.

### **Agility**

We move quickly.

### **Competition**

We believe that healthy competition is essential to progress.

### **Education**

We are committed to learning and development.

## SOCAL Staff Contacts

Michelle Chesters	Executive Director	<a href="mailto:michelle@socalsoccerleague.org">michelle@socalsoccerleague.org</a>
Bob Turner	Executive Director, San Diego	<a href="mailto:bob@socalsoccerleague.org">bob@socalsoccerleague.org</a>
Cris Gilmore	Director of Special Programming	<a href="mailto:cris@socalsoccerleague.org">cris@socalsoccerleague.org</a>
Hayley Barker	Accounting and League Support Coordinator	<a href="mailto:hayley@socalsoccerleague.org">hayley@socalsoccerleague.org</a>
Blake George	Master Scheduler and NPL Commissioner	<a href="mailto:blake@socalsoccerleague.org">blake@socalsoccerleague.org</a>
Christine Van Slyke	Customer Experience Manager and League Support	<a href="mailto:christine@socalsoccerleague.org">christine@socalsoccerleague.org</a>
Melika Pirodan	Social Media, Marketing and League Support	<a href="mailto:melika@socalsoccerleague.org">melika@socalsoccerleague.org</a>

## SOCAL Club Membership

Membership in SOCAL is considered and reviewed by application. Applications for new member Clubs begin January 15th of each year and closes February 28th of each calendar year. All member Clubs must meet our criteria of membership as outlined in the application and be accepting of our rules, policies, and procedures. Our competitions are governed by regulations approved by the Technical Committee and our membership and are written in this handbook. The Technical Committee shall rule on all disputes and issues pertaining to SOCAL competitions. The Technical Committee may overrule stated rules, policies, or procedures in this handbook if it is determined to be for the good of the game. Additionally, all participants in SOCAL events are members of US Club Soccer and therefore must adhere fully and faithfully, both to the letter and the spirit, to its stated bylaws, rules, and policies.

When SOCAL's rules and policies are in direct conflict with the rules of another League or governing body, SOCAL may be restricted from implementing certain rules. However, our Code of Ethics must be adhered to at all times.

New one-time Membership Club League Fee \$3,500.00

## **Criteria for Consideration into SOCAL Includes:**

1. Clubs must identify a minimum of 5 teams to participate in the SOCAL.
2. Clubs must have an established and identifiable Director of Coaching.
3. Clubs must have a Board of Directors and a specified Club Administrator.
4. Clubs must have sufficient home fields to accommodate all teams within the Club.
5. Clubs must have a player development program in place and be willing to support the platform of development that SOCAL is based on.
6. Geographical location of the Club applying will be considered.

## **Home Field Requirement**

Clubs should have at least one game-quality Field (5-time slots) per eight teams. In the event of a complaint about the quality of a Field, the appropriate League Staff shall determine if a Field is game quality. All new Venues must be added to [GotSport](#) by July 1st.

**Field Closures must be reported to** [fieldclosures@socalsoccerleague.org](mailto:fieldclosures@socalsoccerleague.org)

## **Field Requirements**

Fields shall conform to FIFA (Law 1) and be adjusted to an age group. The home Club is responsible for marking and setup of the field. All fields must be properly marked, GOALS MUST be properly anchored down, and have corner flags. The suitability of corner flags, goals safely anchored and playability of the field are the sole and final discretion of the Referee under the laws of the game. Be sure to discuss any concerns you may have about the field prior to the start of the game. Once the game begins it will be considered a played game.

## **Scheduling Requirements**

Games may only be rescheduled due to field permit issues, up until Tuesday (at midnight) prior to the play weekend. A game must be within 5 miles of the original venue and be within 1 hour of the original start time. Referees must also be able to accommodate the change in order for the change to be approved. Any changes after Tuesday at midnight may be considered a forfeit. Forfeit and referee fees will be charged for forfeited games. Games will not be rescheduled for coaching conflicts or matters of convenience. [US Club Soccer Certificate of Insurance Application](#)

All fields being used for SOCAL games are required to have Certificates of Insurance, from US Club Soccer, on file with the club supplying the home fields for the game.

## **Club Requirements**

In order for a Club to be considered a member of SOCAL, the following conditions must be satisfied:

1. All teams participating in SOCAL events must belong to a single legal entity, with a single leadership structure, a single financial structure, and a single governance structure.
2. All teams participating in SOCAL events must have a common Club name, logo, and uniform (which should be unique to their Club) and should practice/play games in the same geographical area of operation.
3. All teams participating in SOCAL events must operate under a single technical structure/plan and report to a single Director of Coaching.

4. All players participating in SOCAL events must be registered under a single US Club Soccer sanctioned Club.
5. All Clubs participating in SOCAL must meet the minimum of 5-teams.
6. All Clubs participating in SOCAL must have field availability on all Saturday's and Sunday's for home games during each season in which they participate.
7. All teams within the member Club MUST wear the Club uniform. Teams may not wear uniforms from other Clubs.
8. Adhere to the [SOCAL Tryout Window Policy](#)

### **Required Club Contacts**

Each Club's GotSport account must be kept up to date with the proper contact information. Please keep in mind that this is the primary method by which SOCAL communicates with your Club. Failing to have the proper contact information may result in your Club missing vital League communication. Each Club shall maintain the following Club contacts with a current email address:

1. Club Administrator
2. Coaching/Technical Director/DOC AND/OR Executive Director
3. Registrar
4. President
5. Field Scheduler
6. Treasurer

### **Code of Ethics**

As a SOCAL Member, your adherence to the Code of Ethics signals your commitment to the basic laws of the organization, and thus basic moral standards of the soccer community at large.

### **For All Members**

- A. Know, respect, and follow the letter and spirit of the [Laws of the Game](#).
- B. Treat others with respect and courtesy.
- C. Adhere to the rules and policies of SOCAL, [US Club Soccer](#), and [US Soccer](#).
- D. Recognize the rights, dignity, and worth of all – regardless of gender, ability, cultural background, or religion.

### **For Clubs**

- A. Require sportsmanlike conduct at all times.
- B. Address issues with other Clubs in a professional and timely manner.
- C. Ensure that all Adults and players in your Club are familiar with the rules and expectations of SOCAL.
- D. Respect the Facilities used by other Clubs.
- E. Actively uphold the Player Transfer Policy.

### **For Coaches**

- A. Place your Player's physical, mental, and emotional development and well-being ahead of all else.
- B. Continuously seek education on sound Coaching techniques.
- C. Model and teach good sporting behavior.

### **For players**

- A. Participate for your own enjoyment and development.
- B. Take responsibility for your sportsmanship and conduct.

## **Zero Tolerance Abuse Policy**

All PARENTS/SPECTATORS must follow the SOCAL League Parent Code of Conduct.

All COACHES must follow the SOCAL League Code of Conduct.

If a PARENT/SPECTATOR is sent-off from a game, the parent will serve a minimum 3-game suspension to be enforced by the Club, team manager and team coach. A suspended parent that comes to a game during their suspension will result in the game being forfeited and the coach and manager being suspended from the next 3-games.

If there is a second incident of a PARENT/SPECTATOR send-off from the same team, the team will be placed on probation for the remainder of the season (including State Cup). A third incident will result in the team being dropped from the League.

If a COACH is sent-off from a game, the coach will serve a minimum 3-game suspension from coaching ANY TEAM IN THE Club that participates in the SOCAL League. A second coach send-off for the same coach will result in a 1-month suspension from coaching ANY team in the Club.

Referee abuse by a PLAYER will carry a 6-game, minimum suspension.

Referee abuse by a COACH will carry a 1-season, minimum suspension from coaching ANY team in SOCAL.

Referee abuse by a PARENT/SPECTATOR will result in the player of the offending parent/spectator being listed as ineligible for the remainder of the season from all games in SOCAL.

Issues involving parents from opposite teams that results in the game being stopped before it's completed will result in the game being a double forfeit and the next scheduled game will also be forfeited for each team, a \$500 fine charged to each Club and both teams will be placed on probation for the remainder of the season. Any further issues and the team will be dropped from the League.

PARENTS/SPECTATORS that verbally or physically assault any venue staff or SOCAL staff at any SOCAL event will have their player banned from participating in the League for the remainder of the season (including State Cup).

ANY PERSON who touches, confronts, chases, bullies, follows, cusses at, threatens, waits for, tries to fight, attacks or assaults a referee will be banned FOR LIFE from the SOCAL League and will be turned over to US Club Soccer for further disciplinary actions.

## **SOCAL Soccer League Parent Code of Conduct**

**FOLLOW THE GOLDEN RULE:** Always treat others (coaches, parents, officials, and players) the same way that you would want you and your child to be treated. Set the example by showing respect, dignity, and total sportsmanship at all times. Avoid profanity, especially when players or younger family members of players are present on the sidelines or at designated team events.

**ACT YOUR AGE:** Youth soccer is for the kids. If you find yourself becoming too emotionally involved in what's happening on the field, take a step back, walk away and relax. Remember, your childhood is over. Give the players the freedom to enjoy themselves without pressure.

**BE SEEN, NOT HEARD:** Nothing is better for a player than having their parents on hand to watch them play. And nothing is worse for a player than hearing a parent booing, taunting, screaming or making comments at, or about, players, coaches, fans or officials (that includes your own team as well as your opponent). Offer applause and cheers of encouragement for both teams following a good play or a great effort, otherwise keep quiet.

**MOTIVATE THROUGH CONFIDENCE:** Try and identify a positive from every game or practice to help build confidence. A player's sense of achievement is the greatest motivator.

**DON'T QUESTION AN OFFICIAL'S CALL:** You may not agree with a call, but it's not your job (or the players or coaches either) to officiate the game. Never should an official's call be argued by a spectator. Accept the call and move on, while staying positive. **PUT WINNING AND LOSING IN PERSPECTIVE:** Games have winners and losers. Keep reminding your player about this reality and the need to deal with both outcomes. Players should avoid getting too cocky when they win and too upset when they lose. Overcoming adversity is required in life and in sports, so focus on how your player can respond to adversity instead of complaining. Attempt to relieve the pressure of competition, not increase it.

**BE A ROLE MODEL FOR YOUR PLAYER AND FOR THOSE AROUND YOU:** Lead by setting a positive example in a challenging situation. Players need more positive examples than criticism or negative behavior.

**CHAIN OF COMMUNICATION:** Parents shall not email the League. All communication shall go through Club Administration. Any communication from a parent directly to the League will go unanswered.

**WE ARE NOT REFEREES:** We recognize many of the referees are young and learning to referee. We agree to support their learning efforts as we do youth players. We also agree not to address any referee, no matter age, gender or level of experience, in any way. We understand that should we want to become a referee there is a pathway of education to explore in order to become certified.

**SOCIAL MEDIA:** We agree to not criticize or make any negative comment on or through social media or online regarding an opposing team, player, referee, staff member or the soccer community in general. We understand there are channels for feedback and communication with SOCAL and will use these channels to communicate.

**ALCOHOL IS NOT FOR YOUTH SOCCER GAMES:** We understand that there is no alcohol allowed at the soccer fields. Nor will drunk and disorderly behavior be tolerated. Anyone caught with alcohol will be banned from SOCAL.

## League Fines

The SOCAL League Office may impose the following fines:

6/2	6/15	Fall League Team Drop - With Team Registration Fee Refund
6/16	7/1	Fall League Team Drop Fee - No Team Registration Fee Refund
7/2	7/15	Fall League Team Drop Fee \$500 Plus Registration Fee
7/16	8/1	Fall League Team Drop Fee \$1000 Plus Registration Fee
8/2	9/8	Fall League Team Drop Fee \$2,000 Plus Registration Fee. (Not including Referee/Forfeit Fees)
9/10	11/20	Fall League Drop Fine After Season starts - \$2000 plus Referee Fees 2 weeks

### Additional Fines:

1. Playing Illegal players: \$500 per instance
2. Any game schedule changed after Tuesday at 12:00pm the week of a scheduled game will be subject to a forfeit fine. Forfeit Fines below.
3. **Failure to Report by Team Issued the Red Card/Double Yellow or Send Off Fine: \$200 per instance**
4. Any club that does not complete any payment within 60 days will be subject to a late fee of 15%. Late fees will apply on Aug 8th for initial team registration.

### Forfeits are charged to the club, not the team.

#### 1st Club Offense: \$250

Clubs must notify the league before 12:00 pm the Tuesday before the game to avoid also paying the entire referees fee for the forfeited game.

**2nd Club Offense:** \$500 plus full referees fees. Club will pay the referee fee regardless of notification date.

#### No Show:

**1st Club Offense:** \$250 plus Club will pay referee fee.

**2nd Club Offense:** \$500 plus full referees fees. Club will pay the referee fee regardless of notification date. SOCAL will determine if the team needs to be removed from the league.

**Fines collected by SOCAL will be added to the travel fund for teams qualifying for national events via SOCAL competitions, after the deduction of Referee fees or Field Rental Costs.**

**All fines and fees due to SOCAL Soccer League will be invoiced in GotSport and the credit card on file will be processed net 30 days. [How to Pay Invoice- GotSport](#)**



## League-to-Club Communication

Communication will come from League Staff to Club Officials and/or Team Contacts. Please make sure all contact information for the appropriate required officials are updated in the GotSport system.

**All communication to any SOCAL Staff member regarding a game MUST include the Game # in the subject line of the email. Emails to SOCAL staff from parents, managers or coaches will not be replied to and Clubs should instruct their members and staff that all communications must come to designated Club Officials for review and, if necessary, the Club Official may reach out to a SOCAL staff member for assistance.**

## SOCAL Team Fall League Applications

Teams from new and returning SOCAL Clubs, may begin the application process on March 15th. Team applications will be accepted through June 1st. After that date, no teams may be added without special consideration from the Technical Committee.

A team is only considered for approval if the team fee is received. Each participating SOCAL Club will submit payment in GotSport via credit card or one Club check. Checks must be postmarked by June 7th.



# SOCAL Competition Rules

## Team Management

In order to compete in SOCAL events, each team must have at least one team manager or coach whose duties may include, but are not limited to: printing Match Report and providing them to the referees, referee payments, travel arrangements, reporting of scores, and communication with appropriate Club officials, retain all match reports for each game until the end of each season. All team managers/coaches must have access to a current email address that is checked on a daily basis and a cell phone number.

## Coach, Manager and Club Staff Registration and Requirements

All Club staff including Coaches, Managers and Staff must all complete the US Club requirements and SOCAL Requirements in GotSport. All staff must be registered with US Club Soccer each year. All Coaches and Managers must have a current US Club passcard. [How to Add Coach or Manager to Team](#)

## US Club Soccer Staff Requirements

[US Club Background Check](#)

[Annual SafeSport](#)

[Adverse Eligibility List Review \(Staff\)](#)

## SOCAL Requirements

SOCAL Coaching License - Coaches Only

## State of California Requirements

Sudden Cardiac Arrest

Heads Up - Concussion Training

AB 506 Live Scan

Mandatory Reporter Training

## Player Registration

All Players MUST be registered through GotSport according to US Club Soccer requirements.

A Player may ONLY be rostered to one team as a Primary Player. Players may only club pass within the same club per club pass rules. Club Pass players are only players within the same club. Players may only play for one club during any SOCAL event.

Players turning 18 within the calendar year will be required to take a [SafeSport](#) course.

## **\*\*NO players FROM Leagues OUTSIDE OF SOCAL MAY CLUB PASS TO SOCAL TEAMS**

REGARDLESS OF THE League THEY ARE PLAYING IN. All players participating in SOCAL games MUST have US Club SOCCER PLAYER CARDS indicating the player participates in the SOCAL League. **ECNL/ECRL player cards are no longer valid in the SOCAL League.** A player's PRIMARY team MUST be a SOCAL team. If a player plays on a few occasions (less than 50% of outside league team's games) on an outside league team they may, but the PRIMARY team MUST be the SOCAL team.

## **US Club Soccer Player Passcard**

All players and Coaches must present their US Club Soccer player passcards to the Referee prior to the match. Virtual ID's, photos of passcards and physical passcards are all accepted forms of passcards. If the player or staff card picture is not on the ID card and/or the card is not laminated, the individual will not be eligible for the match.

## **Match Report Requirements**

Only players who are listed on the official GotSport/SOCAL/US Club Match Report will be eligible to play in SOCAL matches. Club passed players may be handwritten or entered in GotSport as a Club Pass Player on the Match Report. A player's PRIMARY team MUST be a SOCAL team. If a player plays on a few occasions on an outside league team they may, but the PRIMARY team MUST be the SOCAL team. Players may only club pass within the same club per club pass rules. Club Pass players are only players within the same club. Players may only play for one club during any SOCAL event.

Players MAY ONLY be rostered to one SOCAL team within a club.

Players may only be registered with one SOCAL Club. They may not be registered with two, or more, SOCAL Clubs.

## **How to Set Match Day Roster and Club Pass**

### **Match Reports**

All Match Reports for the current season MUST be collected after every match and retained for the duration of the season. A photo of Match Reports is adequate for record keeping. Match reports are requested for numerous reasons including but not limited to, scoring, red cards, and match issues.

### **Forgotten US Club Soccer Player Passcard**

If a team forgets their US Club Player passes for a SOCAL game the game can begin and can continue play if the player passcards are at the game by half-time. Virtual ID's, photos of passcards and physical passcards are all accepted forms of passcards. All managers and coaches are able to access [Virtual ID's in GotSport](#).

### **Guest Players**

**No Guest Players** (players with a Player Pass from another Club or League) are NOT allowed to play in SOCAL competitions. Guest players are not the same as Club Passed players.

## SOCAL Player Transfer Policy

The SOCAL Player Transfer Policy goes into effect July 1 of the current year. **BEFORE July 1:**

Any player that has signed, paid, practiced or played with a team CAN release and transfer to any other club/team without being in violation of the policy and without having to adhere to the requirements of the policy.

Example: Suzie's mom signs a Player Agreement with Real Madrid on February 20th and pays 1/2 of the club dues for the upcoming season. Suzie practices and plays a few tournaments with Real Madrid but decides that the team may not be a good fit for her. So on June 15th, Suzie joins Manchester United. Even though Real Madrid already registered Suzie in GotSport as a player in their club, the club must release the player so that she can join Manchester United because it's before July 1st. Real Madrid can not enforce the transfer policy or require payment in full as it is before the July 1st policy enforcement date. Either the Real Madrid Registrar or a SOCAL league official may release the player so that she can join Manchester United.

### **JULY 1 UNTIL THE END OF COMPETITION, INCLUDING STATE CUP, FOR THE OUTGOING TEAM:**

Same situation as above only Suzie decides to leave Real Madrid on July 15th to join Manchester United. Since it's after July 1st, Real Madrid MUST release Suzie because, per US Soccer Federation rules, a club must release a player that asks to release, HOWEVER, the Player Transfer Policy is now in effect so 1 of 2 things has to apply.

Option 1. The player must be PAID IN FULL per the player agreement signed with the outgoing club **OR**

Option 2. The outgoing DOC MUST approve the transfer.

**To clarify - no club can refuse to release a player. Since we are after the July 1st date, either Option 1 or Option 2 are the ONLY 2 ways that a player can transfer to another SOCAL team prior to the end of competition for the team the player wishes to leave.**

There is no Roster Freeze in the SOCAL league for the 2022/23 season but the transfer policy prevents a player from leaving one SOCAL team to join another SOCAL team without meeting the criteria of either paying in full OR obtaining DOC permission from the outgoing club.

The incoming DOC MUST communicate directly with the outgoing club DOC. Approvals are not valid if obtained by coach, manager, Registrar, Club Admin. Approval can ONLY be granted by the Director of Coaching for the outgoing club.

NOTE: The SOCAL Player Transfer Policy can only be enforced with players moving between SOCAL teams. SOCAL has no jurisdiction over other leagues and their policies so a player leaving a GA team for a ECNL team is not covered by the SOCAL policy. However, a player leaving a SOCAL team for another outside league IS bound by the Transfer Policy because it involves a player that was on a SOCAL team.

- Anything that happens prior to July 1 must be allowed and can not be contested.
- Anything that involves a player transfer from July 1st and beyond must follow the Transfer Policy.
- Any player requesting to be released MUST be released but the outgoing club controls the Option (1 or 2) by which the transfer is granted.

## **SOCAL Player Transfer Policy (con't)**

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# Playing Rules

All games under League jurisdiction shall be played according to the rules and regulations recognized by the SOCAL Soccer League which shall be the same rules set by FIFA/U.S. Soccer (USSF) except for those exceptions authorized by FIFA or USSF.

All decisions made by SOCAL Discipline Committee and SOCAL League Administration are final.

## SOCAL Soccer League Guideline

	<b>U7-U10 (2017-2014)</b>	<b>U11 (2013)</b>	<b>U12 (2012)</b>	<b>U13-U14 (2011/2010)</b>	<b>U15-U16 (2009/2008)</b>	<b>U17-U19 (2007/06/05)</b>
<b>Field Size (yds)</b>	55/65 L 35/45 W	70/80 L 45/55 W	70/80 L 45/55 W	100/120 L 55/80 W	100/120 L 55/80 W	100/120 L 55/80 W
<b># of players</b>	7v7	9v9	9v9	11v11	11v11	11v11
<b>Minimum # of players</b>	5	6	6	7	7	7
<b>Roster Limits</b>	12	16	16	26	26	26
<b># of players allowed to play each game</b>	12	16	16	18	18	<b>20</b>
<b>Goalkeeper</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Playing Time</b>	2x30	2x30	2x30	2x35	2x40	2x45
<b>Half-Time</b>	10 mins	10 mins	10 mins	10 mins	10 mins	10 mins
<b>Ball Size</b>	4	4	4	5	5	5
<b>Goal Size (ft)</b>	6.5x18.5- 7x21	6.5x18.5- 7x21	6.5x18.5- 7x21	8x24	8x24	8x24
<b>Offside</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Substitutions</b>	Unlimited - Flights 1 - 4 on any possession, or if other team subs.					
<b>NPL Substitutions</b>	3 moments per half. Re-entry allowed. Half-time does not count as a moment					
<b>Fouls (free kicks)</b>	Indirect & Direct Free Kicks					
<b>Free Kick clearance</b>	8 yd	8 yd	8 yd	10 yd	10 yd	10 yd
<b>Throw-in</b>	Normal	Normal	Normal	Normal	Normal	Normal
<b>Penalty Kicks</b>	Yes (mark at 10 yds)	Yes (mark at 10 yds)	Yes (mark at 10 yds)	Yes (mark at 12 yds)	Yes (mark at 12 yds)	Yes (mark at 12 yds)
<b>Penalty Area (yds)</b>	12x24	14x36	14x36	18 x 44	18 x 44	18 x 44
<b>Goal Area (yards)</b>	4x8	5x16	5x16	6 x 20	6 x 20	6 x 20
<b>Heading</b>	NO As per the Laws of the Game			YES As per the Laws of the Game		
<b>Build-Out Line</b>	Yes	None				

# Game Day Instructions Visit Resources on the SOCAL Website

## Player Eligibility

### [How to Set Match Day Roster and Club Pass](#)

#### NPL Player Eligibility

A player may not play for more than one team within an age group in the NPL. Players may club pass "up" between NPL teams outside of their age group and may play no more than 2 games per day. No more than 2 players and 1 goalkeeper (who must play in goal) can Club Pass to another NPL team from the same club OR to Flight 1. NPL players may NOT club pass to teams in Flight 2-4.

#### NPL and Non-NPL Player Eligibility

**NEW FOR 2023: For 11v11 games (2007-2005):** A maximum of 20 players may be dressed and play in a game. The 20 players must be on the official Match Report given to the match official and opposing team before the start of the game. Any players listed on the roster that will not play must have a line through their names on the Match Report or set as inactive players.

**For 11v11 games (2011-2008):** A maximum of 18 players may be dressed and play in a game. The 18 players must be on the official Match Report given to the match official and opposing team before the start of the game. Any players listed on the roster that will not play must have a line through their names on the Match Report or set as inactive players.

**For 9v9 games:** A maximum of 16 players may be dressed and play in a game.

**For 7v7 games:** A maximum of 12 players may be dressed and play in a game.

**ALL DECISIONS MADE BY THE SOCAL ADMINISTRATION AND COMMITTEES ARE FINAL!**



## CLUB PASS PLAYERS

A Player may ONLY be rostered to one team as a Primary Player. Players may only club pass within the same club per club pass rules. Club Pass players are only players within the same club. Players may only club pass within the same club per club pass rules. Club Pass players are only players within the same club. Players may only play for one club during any SOCAL event.

**No Guest Players** (players with a Player Pass from another Club or League) are NOT allowed to play in SOCAL competitions. Guest players are not the same as Club Passed players.

## PLAYER CLUB PASS LIMITS

**Limits for the amount of players that can Club Pass are as follows:**

7v7 and 9v9 games – limit 4 players per game

11v11 games – limit 8 players per game (non-NPL games)

Club pass players must be handwritten in on Match Report or added to the team as Club Pass Player in [GotSport](#).

**NPL Players** can ONLY Club Pass to Flight 1 teams and older NPL teams within their club.

Limits of Club Passing for NPL players are 2 field players + 1 goalkeeper that MUST play in goal (not on the field).

NPL players may NOT Club pass to Flight 2, 3 or 4 teams.

## PLAYER CLUB PASS LIMITS (SAN DIEGO ONLY)

**Limits for the amount of players that can Club Pass are as follows:**

7v7 and 9v9 games – limit 3 players per game

11v11 games – limit 4 players per game (non-NPL games)

Club pass players must be handwritten in on Match Report or added to the team as Club Pass Player in [GotSport](#).

## **\*\*NO players FROM Leagues OUTSIDE OF SOCAL MAY CLUB PASS TO SOCAL TEAMS**

REGARDLESS OF THE League THEY ARE PLAYING IN. All players participating in SOCAL games MUST have US Club SOCCER PLAYER CARDS indicating the player participates in the SOCAL League. **ECNL/ECRL player cards are no longer valid in the SOCAL League.** A player's PRIMARY team MUST be a SOCAL team. If a player plays on a few occasions (less than 50% of outside league team's games) on an outside league team they may, but the PRIMARY team MUST be the SOCAL team.

## **Club Pass Rule - PLAYER MOVEMENT BETWEEN TEAMS (Applies to all ages groups except 2016-2017)**

1. Players may play no more than 2 games per day.
2. **Players may play 2 games in the same age group, and in the same flight although they may NOT play in the SAME geographical bracket on the same day. As an example - a 2012 player can play for a 2012 team in Flight 2 South I but can not play for another team in Flight 2 South I. However, the player may play for a team in Flight 2 South II.**
3. Players can Club Pass either up or down between Flights 1, 2, 3 and 4.



4. Players can Club Pass up from any flight to the NPL.
5. NPL players can ONLY Club Pass to Flight 1 teams and older NPL teams within their club.
6. Limits of Club Passing for NPL players are 2 field players + 1 goalkeeper that MUST play in goal (not on the field).
7. NPL players may NOT Club pass to Flight 2, 3 or 4 teams.
8. A player's PRIMARY team MUST be a SOCAL team. Players may only club pass within the same club per club pass rules. Club Pass players are only players within the same club. Players may only play for one club during any SOCAL event.
9. Players that play up in an age group as their Primary team may be club passed to a team in their actual age group. Example: Sally, born in 2012 plays on a 2011 team as her primary team may be club passed to play on a 2012 team because her age is appropriate for that team as well

## How to Set Match Day Roster and Club Pass

### **Illegal Player/Falsification of Documents**

A team shall forfeit each and every game in which and a possible fine may be imposed:

1. An unregistered player/coach/manager participated in the game.
2. A player was improperly entered on the team's roster.
3. Any infraction of Club Pass rules.
4. A player or coach currently serving a suspension or injury game/s that participates in a 5. game and has not been released by the League.
6. Any team using, or attempting to use, an illegal Player shall forfeit the game, the Coach of the team using the illegal Player will be suspended from all SOCAL competitions for a minimum of 3-games.
7. Falsification of records, documents, player identification passes, or in any other matters or manner, shall be grounds for immediate suspension from further participation in the SOCAL Soccer League with any team or Club and in addition can be subject to a Trial Board hearing.

### **Playing Illegal players - \$500 per instance**

### **Match Officials**

Match officials must have a current year USSF Referee License. No match officials, other than Club linesmen, may have family members in the game they are working. Club linesmen may only signal when the ball has left the Field of play, they may not call offsides or fouls.

If a referee is not present within the 15 minute grace period for a scheduled game, the game will be rescheduled. The coach or manager must contact their club to notify them and the club administrator will contact Blake George to reschedule the game. **7 v 7 games may be played with a coach facilitating the game.**

## Protests

Protests regarding the match conditions (i.e. Field condition, etc.) must be made prior to the start of the match and be clearly written on the official with the center referee. Protests regarding the use of illegal players may be made prior to or following the match and be clearly written on the match report.

Referee decisions cannot be protested. This includes send-offs for players, coaches or spectators.

Videos of games will not be reviewed to support protests or objections.

## Point System

All SOCAL League games shall operate under the following point system.

- 3 points for a win
- 1 point for a tie
- 0 points for a loss

## League Standings

7v7 Scores must be entered in GS, scores and standings will not be posted.

Scores and standings will be posted for all 9v9 and 11v11 divisions.

SOCAL has promotion and relegation ONLY between Discovery NPL and Flight 1.

Medals are awarded to 1st place winners in all 9v9 and 11v11 brackets only.

## Game Scores/ Red Cards/Double Yellow/Send Offs

### New for 2023 - 2024

#### All Game Scoring Including NPL

**Failure to Report by Team Issued a Red Card/Double Yellow or Send Off Fine: \$200 per instance**

All Game Scores and Red Cards/Double Yellow/Send Offs must be entered in [GotSport](#) by **BOTH TEAMS** within 48 hours after the game. However, for teams that play back to back Saturday and Sunday games, scores and Red Cards/Double Yellow/Send Offs must be posted on Saturday. Send Offs include any spectator, player, coach or manager told to leave the game by the referee regardless of being shown a card or not.

[Link to GOTSPORT SCORING](#)

## Ties

If a League game is tied after regulation, the tie stands and will be posted as a tie.

## Tie Breakers for League Standings

In case of a tie on points in the standings, the following will be used as tiebreakers:

1. "Head to Head" points (win/lose/draw) between teams
2. Overall Goal Differential
3. Goals for
4. Goals against
5. Most shutouts
7. Lowest Misconduct points

If more than two teams are tied, the tie-breaking process (1. Head to Head tie breakers not used if more than two teams are tied) will be used until a winner is determined. The tie-breaking procedure does not revert to previous criteria if one team is eliminated.

All standings divisions are based on an average of Points Per Game (PPG) to decide standings.

## Forfeits

**Forfeits will be scored 0-1 against the forfeiting team.**

Any game schedule changed after Tuesday at midnight the week of a scheduled game will be subject to a forfeit fine.

**Forfeits are charged to the club. Not the team.**

**1st Club Offense:** \$250

Clubs must notify the league before 12:00 pm the Tuesday before the game to avoid also paying the entire referees fee for the forfeited game.

**2nd Club Offense:** \$500 plus full referees fees. Club will pay the referee fee regardless of notification date.

**No Show:**

**1st Club Offense:** \$250 plus Club will pay referee fee.

**2nd Club Offense:** \$500 plus full referees fees. Club will pay the referee fee regardless of notification date. SOCAL will determine if the team needs to be removed from the league.

## Red Card/Double Yellow/Send Off Reporting Instructions All Games Including NPL - **New 2023-2024**

**Failure to Report by Team Issued the Red Card/Double Yellow or Send Off Fine: \$200 per instance**

All Game Scores and Red Cards/Double Yellow/Send Offs must be entered in [GotSport](#) by **BOTH TEAMS** within 48 hours after the game. **However, for teams that play back to back Saturday and Sunday games, scores and Red Cards/Double Yellow/Send Offs must be posted on Saturday.**

Send Offs include any spectator, player, coach or manager told to leave the game by the referee regardless of being shown a card or not.

### Spectator Send Offs

Spectator Send Offs must be reported in GotSport under Red Cards, at the bottom of the players/coaches list for each team is "OTHER". Select "OTHER", in the field that appears, type in the name of the spectator and their relation to the player at the game and click save. Email the match report to [redcardreports@socalsoccerleague.org](mailto:redcardreports@socalsoccerleague.org)

## Red Card/Double Yellow/Send Off Reporting Instructions

1. Both Teams collect Match Report at the end of the game from the referee.
2. Both Teams enter the Score and Red Card/Double Yellow/Send Offs/Head Injury immediately into GotSport.
3. If a Red Card/Double Yellow is issued, both teams must send a copy of the Match Report to [redcardreports@socalsoccerleague.org](mailto:redcardreports@socalsoccerleague.org) with the MATCH # in the subject line.
4. A Player that receives a Red Card/Double Yellow on Saturday will automatically be suspended for the next match regardless of receiving a suspension notification.

## How to Ensure a player is cleared after receiving a Red Card

1. Send a copy of the Match Report to [redcardreports@socalsoccerleague.org](mailto:redcardreports@socalsoccerleague.org) after every game suspension is served.
2. Enter the score in GotSport immediately after each game. The system will not clear the player unless the score is entered.

## **Reporting Head Injuries**

All suspected head injuries must be reported within 24 hours in the GotSport Scoring and SOCAL Soccer League must be notified within 24 hours of injury.

The Match Report must be sent to [headinjuryreports@socalsoccerleague.org](mailto:headinjuryreports@socalsoccerleague.org)

## **Clearing Head Injuries**

For a player to return to match play, the Club shall provide SOCAL Soccer League the medical clearance from the Licensed Health Care Provider on their letterhead or note stamped with the Licensed Health Care Provider's name, address and phone number. The Medical Clearance MUST state clearly that the player may return to FULL and Unconditional Return to Play. Report must be sent to [headinjuryreports@socalsoccerleague.org](mailto:headinjuryreports@socalsoccerleague.org)

## **Incomplete Games/Abandoned Games**

In the event that a game cannot be completed, the game will stand if at least half of the game was played; provided, however, that if any team is directly responsible for the termination of the game, no matter how much of the match remains, due to poor sportsmanship towards a Referee, opposing fans, or opposing players, the team will be required to forfeit the match. This could also lead to other sanctions set forth by SOCAL and/or US Club SOCCER. If there is no result, and the match is suspended prior to the expiration of one half the game, SOCAL will make a determination on the results of the game based on a USSF Supplemental Report submitted by the referee of the game.

The referee may abandon a match if:

1. There are not enough players to meet the requirements of the Law of the competition;\*
2. A team is a no-show after the 15 minute grace period;\*
3. The field or any of its equipment does not meet the requirement of the Laws and/or is otherwise deemed unsafe by the referee.

\*If an away team causes the match to be abandoned, the referee must notify his/her assignor and the referee association will invoice SOCAL for payment. SOCAL will invoice the Club of the forfeiting team.

The referee may terminate a match for:

1. Reasons of safety such as bad weather or darkness;
2. Any serious infringement of the Laws;
3. Interference by spectators.

Terminated games before the commencement of the second half may be replayed in their entirety. Terminated games terminated during the second half may be considered complete. Only the SOCAL League, not the referee, has the authority to declare a winner, a forfeit, or a replay of the match in

its entirety. SOCAL Soccer reserves the right to be flexible in decisions regarding terminated matches. The referee must report fully on the events.

Abandoned or terminated games may be ruled a forfeit when the actions of that team's players, coaches or spectators is the cause for the abandonment or termination of the game. If a coach abandons a match, the game is subject to a forfeit score 0-1 against their team. All decisions of SOCAL Soccer are final.

## **Spectator Seating**

**ALL SPECTATORS FROM A TEAM will sit on the same side of the field as their team.**

**Spectators will NOT sit on opposite sides of the field from their team for League play.**

**Coaches are responsible for the spectators on their team.**

**Spectators may not sit behind goals or next to the corner flags.**

**Spectators are not to commingle with spectators from the opposing team.** Spectators should sit on the opposite side of the half to the Assistant Referee.

**Home Team has a choice of seating on the touchline.**

## **Personnel on the Bench**

- A maximum of 3 team officials are allowed in each team's technical area. Team officials must have a current US Club passcard from the Club in which they are coaching in order to sit in the technical area.
- A coach must have a minimum Grassroots license to coach a game in SOCAL.
- A manager with a current US Club passcard from the Club in which they are may cover for a coach in an emergency situation.

## **Heading Game Rule**

For U11 and below, when a Player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred. If a Player does not deliberately head the ball, then play should continue.

*This rule shall apply to the age groups of U11 and below. Players who are playing up will play according to the rules of the age group in which they are playing. It is the Club's responsibility to understand the effects of this rule on players playing up.*

### **No Re-Entry Protocol (for Head Injury and SCA)**

In accordance with the US Club Soccer return to play guidelines, any Player removed from the Field for a suspected head injury or SCA (sudden cardiac arrest) will not be allowed to return to the Field of play unless cleared by a Licensed Healthcare Provider, defined by CA law AB-379 as an individual who is trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and is acting within the scope of the provider's practice for evaluation and management of concussions or other head injuries and/or an individual who is trained in the evaluation and management of cardiac conditions and is acting within the scope of that provider's practice for evaluation and management of sudden cardiac arrest, fainting, and shortness of breath.

### **Assembly Bill No. 2007**

California passed Assembly Bill No. 2007 which requires a school district, charter school, private school, or youth sports organizations if it offers an athletic program, to immediately remove an athlete from an athletic activity for the remainder of the day if the athlete is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury, and prohibits the athlete from returning to the athletic activity until the athlete is evaluated by a licensed health care provider, trained in the management of concussions, and acting within the scope of his or her practice, and the athlete receives written clearance from the licensed health care provider to return to the athletic activity. The law also requires, on a yearly basis, a concussion and head injury information sheet to be signed and returned by the athlete and athlete's parent or guardian before the athlete's initiating practice or competition.

### **Reporting Head Injuries**

All suspected head injuries must be reported within 24 hours in the GotSport Scoring and SOCAL Soccer League must be notified within 24 hours of injury.

The Match Report must be sent to [headinjuryreports@socalsoccerleague.org](mailto:headinjuryreports@socalsoccerleague.org)

### **Clearing Head Injuries**

For a player to return to match play, the Club shall provide SOCAL Soccer League the medical clearance from the Licensed Health Care Provider on their letterhead or note stamped with the Licensed Health Care Provider's name, address and phone number. The Medical Clearance MUST state clearly that the player may return to FULL and Unconditional Return to Play. Report must be sent to [headinjuryreports@socalsoccerleague.org](mailto:headinjuryreports@socalsoccerleague.org)

## **Substitutions**

As per FIFA guidelines, unlimited substitutions are allowed in all age groups, Flights 1, 2, 3 and 4 as follows (not including SOCAL NPL):

- Unlimited substitutions are allowed during any stoppage.
- Teams may substitute only with the Referee's permission. Substitutes must wait at the halfway line (off of the Field of play) until the Field Player has left the Field of play and/or the Referee has indicated the substitute may enter the Field of play.

## **Substitutions - Discovery NPL**

- 3 moments, per half, for substitutions. Half-time does not count as a moment. Re-entry is allowed per half at the moments used by the coach. Subbing on the moment of an opposition, still counts towards a team's 3 moments.
- In accordance with the new USSF Head Injury guidelines, a substitution for a suspected head injury will not count against re-entry rules.

## **Field Rules Violation of field rules may result in team or spectator suspensions.**

### **Field Closures must be reported to [fieldclosures@socalsoccerleague.org](mailto:fieldclosures@socalsoccerleague.org)**

- No animals of any kind are allowed on the sideline at any SOCAL game. Check the venue you are playing at to confirm if pets are allowed at the venue. Regardless, THEY ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BE ON THE SIDELINES or BEHIND THE GOALS or in close proximity to the field of play to protect the players safety as well as the spectators safety.
- No artificial noise makers such as drums, air horns, drones etc. are allowed.
- No Alcohol
- No Illegal Drugs
- No Weapon of any type.

Parking Fee may apply at Silverlakes, SoCal Sports Complex, Galway Downs, Surf Cup Sports Park and Rancho Mission Viejo Riding Park.

## **Equipment**



## Player Uniforms

Opponents must wear colors that distinguish them from each other, and also the Referee and the Assistant Referees. **The home team wears light uniforms while the away team wears dark uniforms.** Each goalkeeper must wear colors that distinguish them from the other players, the Referee, and the assistant Referees. All players on a team except the goalkeeper shall wear identical uniforms (shirts, shorts, and socks).

- If there is a conflict in the uniform color, the away team shall change uniforms.
- Player numbers must be affixed to the back of the uniform shirt. Each Player on a team shall wear a unique number.

## Game Ball

The home team is the team listed first on the official schedule. The home team will furnish three game balls.

## Safety

A Player must not use equipment or wear anything which is dangerous to themselves or another Player.

**Casts** - No orthopedic (hard) casts, air splints, or metal splints may be worn. Players will be allowed to play in a soft cast at the discretion of the Referee.

**Long Finger Nails** - exceptionally long finger nails may be considered dangerous and whether or not a player may play with them is at the discretion of the referee.

**Jewelry** - Absolutely no jewelry, including rings, chains, watches, jewelry, hair clips, bobby pins, earrings, bracelets, rubber bracelets, or excessively long fingernails may be worn while participating in any SOCAL games. Only Medical Alert Warning Bracelets may be worn and shall be taped to secure them to the Player's body.

**Shin Guards** - All players are required to use shin guards at all times. They must be worn properly and be professionally manufactured and unaltered. Socks must completely cover shin guards.

**Braces** - Elastic-type supports without any metal, carbon fiber, hard plastic, or like devices are permitted provided the Referee does not deem the support to be potentially harmful to other players.

**Eyeglasses** - players who must wear eyeglasses are encouraged to wear sports goggles. Lenses must be unbreakable and frames must be unbreakable plastic or sturdy metal at referee discretion.



## League Discipline

### Violation of League Rules

The SOCAL Discipline Committee and the SOCAL League Administration shall have the authority to suspend, fine, disqualify or otherwise impose sanctions on players, team officials, or competing Clubs for violating SOCAL Rules, Policies & Code of Ethics, or for any action or conduct not in the best interest of soccer or the SOCAL Soccer League. Any breach of SOCAL State Cup Rules outlined in this Handbook should be reported to [redcardreports@socalsoccerleague.org](mailto:redcardreports@socalsoccerleague.org) All reports of violations may only be reported by a Club's Director of Coaching or President. All decisions made by SOCAL State Cup Discipline Committee and SOCAL League Administration are final.

### Administrator Red Cards/Forfeits

If there is no properly licensed coach affiliated with the Club present during the entire game, the manager may finish coaching the game AS LONG AS the manager has a proper US Club SOCCER staff passcard. If the manager does NOT have a US Club SOCCER staff passcard then the game will be considered a forfeit. If the coach is sent off and no other coach affiliated with the Club is available to continue as coach, the referee will terminate the match (see Emergency Coach below). Any coach sent off must be out of sight and sound prior to, during and after the game.

**Emergency Coach:** In emergency situations, anyone associated with the Club and has the appropriate license may coach the game as long as the staff has a current US Club passcard with the same Club.

## Penalty For Coach's Expulsion (Send Off) and/or Falsifying Documents

If a coach is sent off for irresponsible behavior he/she is unable to coach any team in their Club for 3 playdates after the send-off. The game in which the coach is sent-off is not included in the suspension. **Any coach send-off is 3-games, Club wide. No coaching of any team for 3 games including any other team they coach until the 3rd game has been served in which the card was issued. No other team can be coached during the suspension period. Coaches may be suspended for playing an illegal player. Playing Illegal players: \$500 per instance**

## Illegal Player/Falsification of Documents

A team shall forfeit each and every game in which and a possible fine may be imposed:

An unregistered player/coach/manager participated in the game.

A player was improperly entered on the team's roster.

Any infraction of Club Pass rules.

A player or coach currently serving a suspension or injury game/s that participates in a game and has not been released by the League.

Any team using, or attempting to use, an illegal Player shall forfeit the game, the Coach of the team using the illegal Player will be suspended from all SOCAL competitions for a minimum of 3-games.

6. Falsification of records, documents, player identification passes, or in any other matters or manner, shall be grounds for immediate suspension from further participation in the SOCAL Soccer League with any team or Club and in addition can be subject to a Trial Board hearing.

## Playing Illegal players - \$500 per instance

## Red Card/Double Yellow Reporting Process for Referees

In any game where a Red Card, Double Yellow or Send Off is issued, the Referee must complete a USSF Supplemental Report and the Match Report within 24 hours and submit it via email to [redcardreports@socalsoccerleague.org](mailto:redcardreports@socalsoccerleague.org)

## Red Card/Double Yellow/Send Off Reporting Instructions

All Games Including NPL - **New 2023-2024**

**Failure to Report by Team Issued the Red Card/Double Yellow or Send Off Fine: \$200 per instance**

All Game Scores and Red Cards/Double Yellow/Send Offs must be entered in [GotSport](#) by **BOTH TEAMS** within 48 hours after the game. **However, for teams that play back to back Saturday and Sunday games, scores and Red Cards/Double Yellow/Send Offs must be posted on Saturday.**

Send Offs include any spectator, player, coach or manager told to leave the game by the referee regardless of being shown a card or not.

## Spectator Send Offs

Spectator Send Offs must be reported in GotSport under Red Cards, at the bottom of the players/coaches list for each team is "OTHER". Select "OTHER", in the field that appears, type in the name of the spectator and their relation to the player at the game and click save. Email the match report to [redcardreports@socalsoccerleague.org](mailto:redcardreports@socalsoccerleague.org)

### **Red Card/Double Yellow/Send Off Reporting Instructions**

1. Both Teams collect Match Report at the end of the game from the referee.
2. Both Teams enter the Score and Red Card/Double Yellow/Send Offs/Head Injury immediately into GotSport.
3. If a Red Card/Double Yellow is issued, both teams must send a copy of the Match Report to [redcardreports@socalsoccerleague.org](mailto:redcardreports@socalsoccerleague.org) with the MATCH # in the subject line.
4. A Player that receives a Red Card/Double Yellow on Saturday will automatically be suspended for the next match regardless of receiving a suspension notification.

### **How to Ensure a player is cleared after receiving a Red Card/Double Yellow/Send Off**

1. Send a copy of the Match Report to [redcardreports@socalsoccerleague.org](mailto:redcardreports@socalsoccerleague.org) after every game suspension served.
2. Enter the score in GotSport immediately after each game. The system will not clear the player unless the score is entered.

### **Suspensions**

- The game in which a player, coach or parent is sent-off does not count in the suspension.
- Any suspended Player used during a game will be considered an illegal Player and the team, Coach and Club will be penalized accordingly, fines may apply.
- Players can not play for any SOCAL team while serving their suspension.
- Red cards do not carry over between League games and State Cup unless the suspension involves Referee Abuse.
- If a player is issued a suspension and the match is forfeited, rained out, game schedule changed or postponed for any reason the suspension will carry over to the next scheduled match. If there are no matches remaining on the schedule for the player, the End of Season Carry Over Policy will apply.
- The suspensions will apply to the league game(s) immediately after the game in which the card is received.
- Coaches may not coach any team until his/her suspension is served.
- It is the team's and/or Club's responsibility to ensure their Red Carded Player/Coach/Spectator serves the applied game suspension(s). It is also their responsibility to ensure that their Player/Coach/Spectator serves any additional suspension determined by the Discipline Committee.

**All decisions made by SOCAL Discipline Committee are final.**

## **End of Year Red Card Carryovers**

Players, Coaches, or Spectators that receive a red card at the end of the season and they have NOT served their suspension will be carried over to the following year. If the player, spectator, or coach switches clubs the suspensions will follow them wherever they go. Suspensions MUST be served in the SOCAL Fall Season. State Cup or tournaments do NOT COUNT as serving the suspension. End of Year Carryovers will not prohibit player, coach, or spectator from participating in other tournaments including State Cup unless suspended by US Club as well.

## **Red Card/Double Yellow Offenses**

### **Card Codes for Reporting Purposes**

#### **Cautionable Offenses or Yellow Cards**

- UB – Unsporting Behavior
- DT – Dissent
- PI – Persistent Infringement of Laws
- DR – Delay Restart
- FRD – Fails to Respect Distance
- E – Enter Field Improperly
- L – Leave Field Improperly

#### **Send Off or Red Cards Suspensions**

- SFP – Serious Foul Play - 1 Game
- VC – Violent Conduct - 3 Games (will be reviewed for additional suspension)
- S – Spitting - 3 Games (will be reviewed for additional suspension)
- DGH – Denies Goal Opportunity Handling - 1 Game
- DGF -Denies Goal Opportunity Foul - 1 Game
- AL – Abusive/Offensive Language - 1 Game (will be reviewed based on offense)

- 2CT – Second Caution - 1 Game
- IRB – Irresponsible Behavior - Coaches/Managers/Spectators

**Coaches - Any coach send-off is 3-games, Club wide. No coaching of any team for 3 games including any other team they coach until the 3rd game has been served in which the card was issued. No other team can be coached during the suspension period.**

**Spectators- Any spectator send-off is a minimum 3 Game suspension.**

**Referee Abuse - By player, coach or spectators will be reviewed for appropriate length of suspension.**

**\*Coaches, Team Administrators and Spectators can be shown Yellow or Red Cards.**

## **League Discipline Guidelines**

### **Contents**

- 1.1 Objective and Scope
- 1.2 Players- Class of Infraction
- 1.3 Players – Penalties for Infractions
- 1.4 Coaches etc. – Class of Infraction
- 1.5 Coaches etc. – Penalties for Infractions

### **1.1 Objective and Scope**

1.1.1 To establish a recommended, but not mandatory, set of guidelines for SOCAL Soccer League Trial Boards for uniform enforcement of "Reported"\* infractions by use of corrective penalties.

\*Reported – defined as:

Caution – yellow card  
Ejection – red card

### **Referee Supplemental Report**

Properly submitted and documented letter of information or charge made against any player, coach, administrator or other person by a member or members parent of US Club Soccer.

1.1.2 To eliminate or greatly reduce, the intolerable action, attitudes and activities of some soccer players, coaches, administrators, spectators and others.

1.1.3 To place on notice - The SOCAL Soccer League Membership (i.e. players, coaches, assistant coaches, trainers, team managers, administrators, spectators and all other interested parties) that the infractions outlined in this guideline will no longer be tolerated without corrective action in the form of standardized penalties.

1.1.4 The objective of this guideline will not be realized unless reports of infractions and/or other improper activities from referees, coaches, players, administrators and spectators reach the SOCAL Soccer League.

1.1.5 All red card infractions shall be reported within 24 hours to the appropriate SOCAL Soccer League staff member. Any charge of abuse or assault by a player, coach, parent or spectator against any other player, coach, referee, parent or spectator shall be reported to the SOCAL Soccer League staff, through its President, where it will be forwarded to US Club Soccer for further investigation.

### **Properly Reported matters shall include the following:**

- Supplemental Report must be emailed within the required twenty four (24) hours.
- A letter from the Referee to the SOCAL Soccer League detailing the nature of the offense, emailed within the required Twenty Four (24) hours.

## **1.2 Players – Class of Infraction:**

### **1.2.1 Technical – Class I**

- Swearing (profanity on the field).
- Arguing (beyond dissent) with the Referee or Linesman.
- Harassing or criticizing Referees or Linesmen.
- Yelling at players, coaches or fans.

### **1.2.2 Physical – Intentional – Class II**

- Continued tripping.
- Continued jumping.
- Continued kicking.
- Continued handballs.
- Continued pushing.
- Retaliation to above.
- Other

**1.2.3 Physical – Violent (Intentional) – Class III** Violent conduct, includes violent trip, violent push, attempting to strike a player during play.

- Spitting at opponent, coach, administrator or spectator.
- Verbal threats not considered as assault.
- Throwing or kicking the ball at an opponent during a stoppage of play or in retaliation.
- Tackles from behind which endanger the safety of an opponent.
- Retaliation "Beyond Defense" of his/her person.
- Assault on any player, coach, referee, administrator or spectator. (To be referred to US Club Soccer). SOCAL Soccer League penalties will apply if SOCAL Soccer League refers the case back to the SOCAL Soccer League for adjudication.

#### **1.2.4 Assault or Abuse – All Assaults and all abuse – Class IV**

- Assault or abuse on a player.
- Assault or abuse on a coach.
- Assault or abuse on a referee.
- Assault or abuse on any other persons present.

### **1.3 Players – Penalties for Infractions:**

#### **1.3.1 Class I**

- Yellow card: Referee may caution the player.
- Red card: (1st Report) – Referee's removal of player during the reported game – plus Player to sit out the next SOCAL game.
- Red card: (2nd Report) Player to sit out the next two (2) SOCAL games\*.
- Red Card: (3rd Report) Player to sit out the next five (5) SOCAL Soccer League games\* and Trial Board Hearing to be held. Recommendation to the Trial Board Hearing Committee is a ONE (1) YEAR suspension from date of incident.

Exception for any red card report received after 2nd report: Unusual circumstances may dictate a stronger or lighter penalty to be determined by trial board hearing.

#### **1.3.2 Class II**

- Yellow Card: Referee may caution player.
- Red card: (1st Report) – Referee's removal of player during reported game – plus Player to sit out the next SOCAL Soccer League game\*.
- Red card: (2nd Report) player to sit out the next three (3) SOCAL Soccer League games\*.
- Red card: (3rd Report) Player to sit out the next five (5) SOCAL Soccer League games\* and Trial Board Hearing to be held. Recommendation to the Trial Board Hearing Committee is a ONE (1) YEAR suspension from date of incident.

Exception for any red card report received after 2nd report: Unusual circumstances may dictate a stronger or lighter penalty to be determined by trial board hearing.

#### **1.3.3 Class III**



- Red card: (1st Report) – Referee’s removal of player during reported game – plus Player to sit out the next three (3) SOCAL games\*.
- Red Card: (2nd Report) Player to sit out the next five (5) SOCAL games\*.
- Red Card: (3<sup>rd</sup> Report) Player to sit out the remaining League games and will not be eligible for State Cup. Recommendations to the Trial Board Hearing Committee is a ONE (1) YEAR suspension from the date of the most recent incident.
- Referee abuse by a PLAYER will carry a 6-game, minimum suspension and offense will be sent to US Club Soccer.

## **Class IV**

### **1.4 Coaches – Class Infraction (includes Assistant Coaches, Trainers, Team Managers, ect.).**

#### **1.4.1 Technical – Class I**

- Swearing (profanity on or at the field).
- Verbal insults or disparaging remarks directed at the Referee or Assistant Referees.
- Verbal insults or disparaging remarks directed at Coaches, assistant coaches, team managers, referees, players, Club officials, spectators or other persons.
- Allowing ineligible players to participate in SOCAL Soccer League games.
- Entering the field of play without the Referee's permission.
- Removing team from field prior to conclusion of game.
- Inciting or encouraging others to commit or engage in Items 1 through 6 above.
- Other

#### **1.4.2 Physical – Class II**

- Coach assault on player (his team or opposing team).
- Coach assault on other coaches, assistant coaches, team Managers, referees, club officials, spectators or any other persons.

### **1.5 Coaches – Penalties for infractions (includes Assistant Coach, trainers, Team manager etc.)**

#### **1.5.1 Technical – Class I**

- Yellow Card: Referee may caution coach.
- Red Card: (1st Report) removal by Referee from reported game – plus coach may not coach in 3 next consecutive SOCAL Soccer League game\*.

Exception – IF the Referee report indicates that the coach’s actions caused the players or spectators to become negatively involved, the coach may be referred to a Trial Board Hearing.

- Red Card: (2nd Report) Coach to sit out the next three (3) SOCAL Soccer League games\* and depending upon the circumstances may be referred to a Trial Board Hearing. Recommendation to the Trial Board Hearing Committee is suspension from the balance of the SOCAL Soccer League Season.
- Red Card: (3<sup>rd</sup> Report) Coach to sit out the next five (5) SOCAL Soccer League games\* and Trial Board Hearing to be held. Recommendations to the Trial Board Hearing Committee is a ONE (1) YEAR suspension from the date of incident.
- Red Card: (After 2nd Report) Coach to sit out the next five (5) SOCAL Soccer League games\* and Trial Board Hearing to be held. Recommendation to the Trial Board Hearing Committee is a ONE (1) YEAR suspension from date of incident.

Exception: Unusual circumstances may dictate a stronger or lighter penalty to be determined by Trial Board Hearing.

### **1.5.2 Physical – Class II**

- Red Card: Referee removal of Coach from the reported game, Coach to sit out the next five (5) SOCAL Soccer League games\* and Coaches actions to be reported to US Club for disposition.
- Full cooperation with police agencies and Courts with respect to any criminal actions brought as a result of infraction(s).
- Referee abuse by a COACH will carry a 1-season, minimum suspension from coaching ANY team in SOCAL.

\* Games – In the case of a coach receiving a red card, the term games shall be considered as a game day. A coach shall not participate in any other SOCAL Soccer League games during the game day or days noted in the class penalties described above.

Note: If no League games remain for persons assessed red card penalties, the penalty assessed shall apply to games in the following season. Failure to comply may result in further Trial Board action.

## **Links to FIFA and US Club Soccer**

### **FIFA AND U.S. SOCCER FEDERATION:**

- **FIFA Laws of the Game**
- **U.S. Soccer Federation Bylaws and Policies**

### **US CLUB SOCCER BYLAWS AND POLICIES:**

- **Bylaws (updated and effective May 2, 2023)**
  - **Clean version**
  - **With redlines showing revisions made May 2, 2023**
  
- **Policy Manual (updated Dec 15, 2021; effective Jan 1, 2022)**
  - **Clean version**
  - **With redlines showing revisions made Dec 15, 2021**
  - **Participant Safety/Risk Management Policies (consolidated document pulled from the overall Policy Manual)**