

Adult League Outdoor Soccer Rules and Regulations – 2024

Maryland SoccerPlex.

The Maryland SoccerPlex Rules for **Outdoor** Adult Soccer Leagues are governed by FIFA Laws, modified for outdoor play. The following rules shall precede FIFA Laws if conflict with said rules should arise.

PRIOR TO THE START OF THE SEASON

TEAMS: All participating teams must have **FULL payment by the kickoff of the first game.** Special request for schedule of games, 2 weeks before the start of season. In addition, the deadline to pay the deposit is the same date as registration deadline.

DIVISIONS AND BRACKETS: Every team can request the division or bracket which they consider fit best for the level of the team. However, Divisions and brackets will be made based on the roster, past records (including behavior records) and recent standings.

ROSTERS: *A new roster is required each session for all adult leagues. A roster must be in before the season starts or the team will not be permitted to play.* A roster generated by **LeagueApps** will be the roster used for the games.

- Maximum of 14 players permitted on the roster.
- At least 7 players must be rostered for the first game.
- No individual will be allowed to participate in the league unless he has been properly registered in the roster.
- A registered player may play in more than one Adult League (Men's Open, 30+, 40+, 50+, Coed), however, a player may not play on multiple teams in the same division.
- Check-in is required prior to every game, for every team and every player. Failing to check-in will automatically record the game as a forfeit for the team failing to do so.
- **The administration will freeze rosters at kickoff of the team's 3rd match. No exceptions.** Any team using a player not on the roster will, at a minimum, forfeit the game the player participated in, and the team plays down one player for the duration of the game.
- Protests of illegal players should be made prior to the start of the game (to the referee or field manager on duty). Illegal/Ineligible players include:

1. Player not listed on the **official** roster.
2. Players not meeting the age requirement of the league.
3. Player serving a RED CARD suspension.

COACHES: In addition to the players a maximum of 1 additional adult (coach or otherwise) is permitted on the player's bench.

- No coaching is permitted from the opposite touchline.
- Anyone else will be asked to leave the player's bench and return to the spectator's side of the field.

EQUIPMENT:

BALL: Size 5 regulation soccer ball required. Must be provided by the HOME TEAM for each game.

FOOTWEAR:

Standard molded cleats, turf shoes and flats are the only acceptable footwear.

SHIN GUARDS: Players **MAY NOT** participate **WITHOUT shin guards.**

JERSEYS: Each player must have a **PERMANENT** number displayed on his/her jersey. The same number must also be denoted on the roster.

All field players shall wear jerseys of the SAME single uniform color.

JEWELRY: Except for wedding bands, no jewelry (necklaces, piercings, earrings, bracelets, soft wristbands, hair bands etc.) are permitted to be worn on the field. Disciplinary action shall be taken against all offenders.

OTHER: Braces, splints, soft casts etc. must be approved by the referee prior to the start of the game. Referee has the final approval on all safety equipment worn during the game, provided it is not a danger to themselves or others.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS REQUIRED ON THE FIELD:

Men's Open, Men's 30+ (7v7)

Maximum: 6 field players + 1 goalkeeper

Minimum: 5 players must begin, continue, and conclude each match

Men's 40+, Men's 50+ (8v8)

Maximum: 7 field players + 1 goalkeeper

Minimum: 6 players must begin, continue, and conclude each match

Coed Open (7v7)

Maximum: 6 field players + 1 goalkeeper

Minimum: 5 players must begin, continue, and conclude a match

Minimum of 2 males/females (excluding goalkeeper) on the field at all times. A team may begin, continue, and conclude a match with 1 male or female but the team must play with 4 field players + 1 goalkeeper.

DURATION OF PLAY: There are two 25-minute halves with a 2-minute halftime.

(No stoppage or time added to regulation games.)

The official will start the game clock as scheduled, but if either team has fewer than the minimum number of players a **five (5) minute grace period will be allowed** to produce the minimum required. (The clock runs during the grace period and time is not added to the end of the game.) If a team does not have the minimum number of players required after the grace period, a forfeit shall be awarded to the opposing team, with the resulting score registered as a 3-0 result.

TERMINATED GAMES: If the official must terminate a game due to weather or other necessary circumstances, the following rules shall apply:

I. If the game is terminated after the first half has been completed, the game will be considered a complete game and the score at the time the game is terminated will stand.

II. If the game is terminated prior to the first half ending, the game will be rescheduled by the Maryland SoccerPlex staff at later date and the score will revert to 0-0.

FORFEITED GAMES: Forfeited games will be recorded as 3-0 scores and 3 points in the standings for the non-forfeiting team. A team that does not show up to a game or does not have the minimum number of players after the 5-minute grace period forfeits the game. In addition, any team walking off the field before the end of either half to protest a referee's decision or Maryland SoccerPlex policies, will forfeit the game, lose 3 points in the standings, and **may be banned from the league.**

RESCHEDULE REQUEST: If a team can't make a scheduled game, they can ask for a reschedule. Reschedule requests must be notified to the administration **by email only** 72 hours prior to the game. Every reschedule request with less than 72 hours notification, will be discarded.

- A team representative must call 24 hours in advance to let the SoccerPlex staff know of any team that won't make a scheduled match.

DURING THE GAME

KICKOFF:

The ball may be played in any direction on the first touch. A goal can be scored on the first touch.

SUBSTITUTIONS:

Unlimited "on the fly" substitutions. Must occur at the halfway line and must not interfere with the flow of play. An indirect free kick shall be awarded for any improper substitution. Improper substitutions may result in a YELLOW CARD.

OFFSIDES: There is **NO** offside in our outdoor league.

SLIDE TACKLING:

Slide tackling an opponent is **not permitted** under any circumstance. (See rule for goalkeepers.) The minimum penalty will be a direct free kick awarded to the opposing team. Additional disciplinary action (including but not limited to a RED CARD and game suspension) may result for intentional, repeated, or violent slide tackling.

RESTART RULES:

The "6 Second Rule": A restart must occur within 6 seconds of placing the ball for a free kick, corner kick, throw-in, or goal kick. Failure to do so will result in a caution and an indirect free kick for the opposing team at the spot, or if the spot is inside the penalty area, immediately outside the penalty area.

The "5 Yard Rule": Opposing players must give five yards on all direct kicks, indirect kicks, and corner kicks. Failure to do so may result in a re-kick. A **YELLOW CARD** may be awarded upon Referee's discretion.

SPECIFIC RULES FOR GOALKEEPERS:

- Punts and drop kicks are **not permitted**. The ball must be distributed by a throw, normal place kick or kick from a dribble.

- Goalkeepers must release the ball within 6 seconds after gaining possession and returning to their feet.
- Goalkeeper may NOT use his/her hands if the ball is intentionally passed (with their feet) to him by his own teammate.
- Failure to abide by above stated rules will result in an indirect free kick immediately outside the penalty area.
- Keepers may use unlimited steps to bring the ball to the boundary of the penalty area.
- keepers are permitted to make a sliding save or slide tackle within the penalty area.

INJURIES: Any player who is bleeding must leave the field of play immediately.

- Time will not be stopped for injuries. However, play will be stopped to allow the injured player to leave the playing field safely while time moves on.

BALL OUT OF PLAY: If the WHOLE ball has crossed the goal line or touchline, whether in the air or on the ground, the restart is a goal kick, corner kick or throw-in.

PENALTY KICKS: Players taking penalty kicks are limited to the players on the field as time expires.

The kicker is not limited to a one-step approach but must wait for the referee to blow his/her whistle to approach the kick.

POINTS SYSTEM AND PLAYOFFS

POINT SYSTEM: Three (3) points for a win, 1 point for a tie, and 0 points for a loss.

There is no overtime in any Maryland SoccerPlex adult soccer games. Games tied at the end of regulation are recorded as ties.

PLAYOFFS: Only the top 4 teams with the most points at the end of the season will advance to the semi-final and finals rounds. All other teams in the division will play consolation games to finish out the season.

TIEBREAKERS: Ties for Playoff position and for Playoff participation will be broken down utilizing the criteria set forth below:

- Head-to-Head result
- Least amount of goals against in the season
- Most amount of goals scored in the season
- Lowest number of forfeits

NO TIES: Playoff games must result in a winner. In the event of a tie at the end of regular time in playoffs, there is NO OVERTIME. Teams go directly to penalty kicks. Three kickers from each team will be chosen from the players on the field at the end of regulation time. If still tied after 3 kickers, sudden death penalty kicks will commence.

- If there is still a tie and no more time to play, both team representatives can agree to a coin-flip to be conducted by the referee or a Maryland SoccerPlex staff to break the tie.

CONDUCT POLICY

SPORTSMANSHIP: Individuals are expected to play under control and within the rules of the game, and to the best of their ability will avoid causing injury to themselves and others using the facility.

CARDS: All cards given by referees are final and are not subject to protest.

- **YELLOW CARD:** Any player receiving a YELLOW CARD must return to their bench with a replacement for 2 minutes.
- **RED CARD:** A RED CARD will result in the ejection of the player for the duration of the match without replacement. A RED CARD can pertain to those on the field and those on the bench.
Additionally:

The player receiving the RED CARD **must leave the playing area** and go to the parking lot, accompanied by a team representative when possible.

Failure to leave the playing area and go to the parking lot may result in the forfeit of the match for the player's team, suspension of the coach or team representative, or other disciplinary action.

Further disciplinary action shall be taken against all players receiving RED CARD pursuant to the Rules below.

COACHES/SUBSTITUTES/SUBSTITUTED PLAYERS: Coaches, substitutes, and substituted players can be issued both YELLOW and RED CARDS and are subject to the same rules as the players on the field.

- In the event of a coach or bench players receiving a RED CARD, the team will play a man down for the remainder of the match and the coach/bench player will be asked to leave the playing area and go to the parking lot.
- A game will be terminated if a team has only four (4) or fewer players total for all divisions, and five (5) total for Men's 40+ and 50+ divisions.

GOALKEEPERS: Goalkeepers must serve their own penalties if issued a YELLOW or RED CARD.

THE MARYLAND SOCCERPLEX HAS A "ZERO TOLERANCE" POLICY TOWARDS FIGHTING, OTHER VIOLENT PHYSICAL CONDUCT INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO SPITTING, PUSHING, STRIKING, KICKING, AND WRESTLING ("VIOLENT PHYSICAL CONDUCT). ADDITIONALLY, WE HAVE A "ZERO" TOLERANCE POLICAY TOWARDS ABUSIVE OR THREATENING LANGUAGE, INCLUDING RACIAL SLURS, TO OTHER PLAYERS, COACHES, REFEREES AND SPECTATORS. ANY PLAYER FOUND ENGAGING IN VIOLENT PHYSICAL CONDUCT OR ABUSIVE /THREATENING LANGUAGE (AND, IN CERTAIN CASES, THE PLAYER'S TEAM) WILL BE DISCIPLINED PURSUANT TO THE RULES BELOW AND MAY FACE CIVIL OR CRIMINAL CHARGES.

- **COACH/TEAM REPRESENTATIVE RESPONSIBILITY:** It is the responsibility of each player and the coach/team representative to control the conduct of the players on their team and to be aware of the status of their player's infractions. Failure to comply may result in further disciplinary measures that may include suspension of the team or the coach/team representative, and forfeiture of games played in.
- This includes use of illegal players – those not registered properly on the team roster or not current with facility registration fees.
- Coach/Team representative are responsible for any player leaving the bench area and entering the field of play during a fight.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE:

The Maryland SoccerPlex will review incidents requiring possible disciplinary action within 5 business days of the incident and issue any of the following disciplinary measures in its sole and absolute discretion:

- Player suspension for a minimum of 1 or more games
- Player suspension from other Maryland SoccerPlex activities
- Player suspension for 1 or more years from Maryland SoccerPlex soccer activities and/or other Maryland SoccerPlex activities
- Player's team forfeit 1 or more games
- Player's team excluded from Playoffs
- Player's team suspended for remainder of the season and excluded from additional seasons, without refund
- Player or Player's team permanently excluded from Maryland SoccerPlex soccer activities and/or other Maryland SoccerPlex activities, without refund
- The Maryland SoccerPlex will review and consider, in its sole and absolute discretion, any written statement in the form of a letter or email from the manager, coach or representative of the offending

player's team, if received within 24 hours of the incident giving rise to the possible disciplinary action and if accompanied with a \$50 non-refundable check made out to the Maryland Soccer Foundation. Only Reviews regarding violations of the laws of the game or these rules will be permitted

MINIMUM DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS: The Maryland SoccerPlex has established minimum disciplinary actions related to the following offenses. Nothing shall prevent the Maryland SoccerPlex from increasing the minimum disciplinary actions in their sole and absolute discretion.

RED CARD: Any player receiving a RED CARD shall be suspended for a minimum of 1 game plus suspended from all other Maryland SoccerPlex activities (including games in other leagues) until that 1 game suspension has been served.

3 YELLOW CARDS: Any player receiving 3 YELLOW CARDS in different games of a session will be suspended for a minimum of 1 game. Once the suspension has been served, the YELLOW CARD count for that player resets to 0.

TWO SUSPENSIONS: Any player that receives a second suspension in any session, or separate sessions during the year, (i.e. 2 RED CARDS, 1 RED CARD + 3 YELLOW CARDS, etc.) may be suspended from all Maryland SoccerPlex activities for 1 year or more.

VIOLENT PHYSICAL CONDUCT:

- Any player that engages in Violent Physical Conduct will be suspended at a minimum from all Maryland SoccerPlex adult soccer activities for 1 year from the date of incident.
- Any team that accrues a second incident of Violent Physical Conduct during a session will be suspended at a minimum from the current session without refund and may also face exclusion from future sessions.
- Any incident that involves Violent Physical Conduct from more than 1 player on a team (i.e. player leaving the bench area to join a

fight on the field, will result in the team receiving a suspension from Maryland SoccerPlex adult soccer activities for a minimum of 1 year from the date of incident, without refund.

THREATENING OTHER PARTICIPANTS: Any player, manager, or coach who verbally threatens another player, coach, official, spectator, or Maryland SoccerPlex staff will be suspended from all Maryland SoccerPlex activities (including soccer) for a minimum of 1 year from the date of incident.

VERBAL ABUSE OF OFFICIAL: Any player, manager, or coach who approaches an official or other Maryland SoccerPlex staff with abusive language, or a harsh or threatening tone before, during or after the conclusion of a league game, shall be suspended for a minimum of 1 game.

IMPROPERLY ENTERING THE FIELD OF PLAY: If any player, manager, coach, or spectator enters the field of play during a game (except when substituting or when expressly permitted by the official), the official may terminate the game and/or declare a forfeit against the offending team.

SPITTING: Any player, manager, coach, or spectator who spits on an opponent, teammate, official, and/or a member of the Maryland SoccerPlex staff will be ejected from the game, asked to leave the playing area and go to the parking lot, and will receive a 1 year suspension from any Maryland SoccerPlex activities.