

Youth Outdoor Soccer Rules and Regulations (2026)

Maryland SoccerPlex

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

I. PRIOR TO THE GAME

- a. ROSTERS:** A roster generated by **LeagueApps** will be the roster used for the games.
- i. Each team must have a current Official MSF Roster prior to the start of every match at the field, and until the successful completion of the match. (MSF Staff has copies of all team rosters.)
 - ii. No individual will be allowed to participate in any league games or other activities unless a waiver form has been properly completed and registered in our system, **LeagueApps**.
 - iii. Protests of illegal players should be made prior to the start of the game.
Illegal/Ineligible players include:
 1. Player not listed on the **official** roster
 2. Player not meeting the age requirement of the league
 3. Player serving a RED CARD suspension
 - iv. Home Team: The team listed 1st on the schedule.
- b. COACHES:** In addition to the players a maximum of 1 additional adult (coach or otherwise) is permitted on the player's bench.
- i. No coaching is permitted from opposite touchline.
 - ii. Anyone else will be asked to leave the player's bench and return to the spectator's side of the field.
- c. EQUIPMENT:**
- i. **BALL:** 08U – 12U Size 4 ball, 13U – 19U Size 5 ball
 - ii. **CLEATS:**
 1. Grass or turf cleats are allowed.
 - iii. **SHIN GUARDS:** Players **MAY NOT** participate **WITHOUT shin guards**.
 - iv. **JERSEYS:** Each player must have a **PERMANENT** number displayed on his/her jersey. The same number must also be denoted on the roster.
 1. In the event that both teams have similar color jerseys, the home team shall be responsible for a different colored jersey/bib.
 2. **All field players shall wear jerseys of the SAME single uniform color.**
 - v. **JEWELRY:** 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.

- vi. **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.

d. NUMBER OF PLAYERS REQUIRED ON THE FIELD:

13U – 19U Play (11 v 11)

- 1. Maximum: 10 field players + 1 goalkeeper
- 2. Minimum: 7 players must begin, continue, and conclude a match

- ii. **ALL LEAGUES:** 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.

e. DURATION OF PLAY:

- i. **13U – 19U:** 35-minute halves.
- ii. Stoppage/additional time will be added to game if necessary.

f. 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 a later date and the score will revert to 0-0.

g. 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.**

- i. 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.

II. DURING THE GAME

a. KICKOFF:

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

b. SUBSTITUTIONS: Substitutions may be made from midfield with the CONSENT OF THE REFEREE at the following times and is unlimited. Players leaving the game should come off the field prior to new players entering the field.

- i. Prior to a throw-in in your favor the opposing team may substitute as well if the team in favor is making substitutions
- ii. Prior to a goal kick, by either team
- iii. After a goal, by either team
- iv. After an injury, by either team when the referee stops play, one for one
- v. At half time
- vi. When a player receives a yellow card (a caution), the coach may substitute for that player only; the other team may not substitute

OFFSIDES: There are offsides in our outdoor league.

c. SPECIFIC RULES FOR GOALKEEPERS:

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

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

- i. 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.

e. 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.

III. CONDUCT POLICY

a. 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.

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

- i. **YELLOW CARD:** Any player receiving two YELLOW CARDS in the same game, will result in the ejection of the player for the duration of the match without replacement
- ii. **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:

1. The player receiving the RED CARD **must leave the playing area** and go to the parking lot, accompanied by a team representative when possible.
 2. 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.
 3. Further disciplinary action shall be taken against all players receiving RED CARD pursuant to the Rules below.
- iii. **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.
1. In the event of a coach or bench player receiving a RED CARD, the team will play a man down for the remainder of the match and the coach will be asked to leave the playing area and go to the parking lot.
- c. **THE MARYLAND SOCCERPLEX HAS A "ZERO TOLERANCE" POLICY TOWARDS FIGHTING AND OTHER VIOLENT PHYSICAL CONDUCT INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO SPITTING, PUSHING, STRIKING, KICKING, AND WRESTLING ("VIOLENT PHYSICAL CONDUCT). ANY PLAYER ENGAGING IN VIOLENT PHYSICAL CONDUCT (AND, IN CERTAIN CASES, THE PLAYER'S TEAM) WILL BE DISCIPLINED PURSUANT TO THE RULES BELOW AND MAY FACE CIVIL OR CRIMINAL CHARGES.**
- d. **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.
- i. This includes use of illegal players – those not registered properly on the team roster or not current with facility registration fees.
 - ii. Coach/Team representative are responsible for any player leaving the bench area and entering the field of play during a fight.
- e. **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE:**
- i. 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:
 1. Player suspension for a minimum of 1 or more games
 2. Player suspension from other Maryland SoccerPlex activities
 3. Player suspension for 1 or more years from Maryland SoccerPlex soccer activities and/or other Maryland SoccerPlex activities
 4. Player's team forfeit 1 or more games

5. Player's team excluded from Playoffs
 6. Player's team suspended for remainder of the season and excluded from additional seasons, without refund
 7. Player or Player's team permanently excluded from Adventist HealthCare Fieldhouse soccer activities and/or other Maryland SoccerPlex activities, without refund
- f. MINIMUM DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS:** The Maryland SoccerPlex has established minimum disciplinary actions related to the following offenses. Nothing shall prevent the Maryland Soccer Plex from increasing the minimum disciplinary actions in their sole and absolute discretion.
- i. 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.
 - ii. 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.
 - iii. 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.
 - iv. VIOLENT PHYSICAL CONDUCT:**
 1. Any player that engages in Violent Physical Conduct will be suspended at a minimum from all Adventist HealthCare Fieldhouse and/or Maryland SoccerPlex soccer activities for 1 year from the date of incident.
 2. 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.
 3. 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 Adventist HealthCare Fieldhouse and/or Maryland SoccerPlex adult soccer activities for a minimum of 1 year from the date of incident, without refund.
 - v. 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 Adventist HealthCare Fieldhouse and/or Maryland SoccerPlex activities (including soccer) for a minimum of 1 year from the date of incident.

- vi. 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.
- vii. 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.
- viii. SPITTING:** Any player, manager, coach, or spectator who spits on an opponent, teammate, official, and/or a member of 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 Adventist HealthCare Fieldhouse and/or Maryland SoccerPlex activities.