



# **Loudoun County PRCS Soccer League Playing Handbook and Rules**

**Loudoun County Department of Parks, Recreation, and Community Services  
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[www.loudoun.gov/fieldstatus](http://www.loudoun.gov/fieldstatus)**

## **1.00 Administrative Regulations and Information**

**1.01** The following Adult Soccer Leagues shall be played in accordance with FIFA laws of the game:

- a. Women's Leagues
- b. Men's Leagues
- c. Coed Leagues

**1.02** Qualification for participation in Adult Soccer Leagues is based on the following criteria:

- a. Submission of a timely filed team application.
- b. Submission of a timely filed roster, signed by a designated team manager, which documents full legal name (no nicknames), signature, address, zip code, and telephone number for each player. At 33% of a team's roster must include Loudoun County residents.
- c. Submission of the entry fees payable to County of Loudoun on or before the established deadline date. **Partial fees will not be accepted.**

**1.03** All rosters, roster changes, protests or any other paperwork affecting the administration of this league will not be considered official unless PRCS is notified in writing on the designated form. Papers sent by mail should be verified by telephone. **Incomplete paperwork will not be accepted.**

**1.04** Tournament Play. At the conclusion of regular season play, some leagues will have post-season tournaments scheduled. **The Commissioner may decide to curtail the length of the tournament due to limited fields and/or time constraints. However, it is the intention of the League Office to play all intended regular and playoff games.**

**1.05** Any question or situation not included in these rules or official interpretation thereof, shall be referred to the League Commissioner for final disposition.

**1.06** Standings will be calculated by awarding teams three points for a win, one point for a tie, and zero points for a loss. In case of ties, the order of tiebreakers follows:

- a. Total Wins
- b. Head-to-Head
- c. Total Points Allowed
- d. Total Points Scored
- e. Winning Percentage

## 2.00 Coaches/Managers

**2.01** The coach, manager or his/her designee shall be the team representative.

**2.02** The team representative shall be responsible for the following:

- a. Attending all league meetings.
- b. Informing team members of the outcome of league meetings or protest review.
- c. Attending the annual soccer team captain's meeting. **Teams not represented at the annual captain's meeting may not submit protests on game situations or rules interpretations.**
- d. Knowing the league rules and informing team members as to their interpretation.
- e. Distributing league materials to team members.
- f. Controlling the conduct of his/her players and spectators.**
- g. Acting as liaison to the League Office.
- h. Fees, rosters, protest's and any other league paperwork required by the League Office and the timely submission of the same.
- i. Informing the Commissioner of game results; including goals scored and goals against. Failure to inform the Commissioner of the score will result in the game being scored 1-0.
- j. Gathering photos for player passes by the captain's meeting.**

## 3.00 Officials

**3.01** Officials shall be members of an approved association holding a current contract with PRCS.

**3.02** Officials shall be assigned to games by the official's association designated assignor.

**3.03** Officials shall be paid from entry fees held in trust by PRCS.

**3.04** At unlighted fields the fitness of the grounds for a game shall be decided solely by the official(s). At lighted fields the fitness of the grounds for a game shall be decided by the official(s) and/or the facility attendant. Failure to abide by the official's or facility attendant's decision shall result in disciplinary action by the League Commissioner. The intent of this rule is to prevent injury to players and protect fields from inappropriate usage.

**3.05** The officials shall keep the official time of the game.

**3.06** The officials shall collect player passes at the start of the game to ensure each player is legally eligible to play. The officials shall also withhold player passes if any player is red carded. He/she must mail the player pass to the Commissioner along with a game report.

## **4.00 Entry Fees**

**4.01** The entry fee shall be an established amount to cover league expenses, including, but not limited to, the following:

- a. Officials (where applicable).
- b. Registration and user fees.
- c. Awards.
- d. Administrative overhead (supervision, maintenance, lights, etc.).

**4.02** The entry fee will be announced each year and must be paid on or before the deadline date established by the League Office.

**4.03** A team roster and application must accompany each team's entry fee in order to be considered for a league. **Failure to abide by this policy may delay or prevent a team from registering.**

## **5.00 Player Eligibility**

**5.01** A player must be eighteen (18) years of age **and** out of high school prior to the opening game of the season.

**5.02** A player may participate on only one (1) team in each of the defined leagues (see Rule 1.01) under the jurisdiction of PRCS. Example: A male or female player may play on one team in each of the following leagues: Men's, Women, and COED, but they may not play on two teams in a Men, Women, or Coed league (this includes division). An individual may serve as a non-playing coach/manager for more than one team.

**5.03** Any player suspended or barred from participation in these leagues by PRCS is ineligible to participate on any team in any league under the Loudoun County jurisdiction until the suspension is lifted. Suspended players must take the initiative to contact the League Office to apply for reinstatement of eligibility. (Participation includes coaching as well as playing).

**5.04** A team playing an ineligible player shall automatically forfeit all games in which this player participated. Participation is defined as being rostered on a team, playing or serving as a player-coach.

**5.05** Any player using an assumed name shall be permanently barred from these leagues.

## **6.00 Team Rosters**

**6.01** Team roster, application form, entry fee, proof of residency, and non-resident fees must be submitted to the League Office by the entry deadline each year. Rosters must be typed or printed on the roster form provided by the League Office in original form. Rosters must list the full legal name (no nicknames), signature, address, zip code, jersey number, and either a home or work telephone number for each player, manager or coach. Incomplete rosters and duplicated copies will not be accepted. **Teams failing to comply will not be considered for the league.**

**6.02** For participation in these leagues, all rosters must be comprised of at least 33% Loudoun County residents, and this percentage must be maintained throughout the season. Place of employment does not qualify a player as a resident. Exception - corporate/company teams may participate provided that:

- a. The corporation, company or agency must be based in Loudoun County or has a branch office in Loudoun County.
- b. All players must work for the corporation, company, agency or the branch office based in Loudoun County.
- c. Thirty-three (33) percent of the rostered players must live in Loudoun County. Proof of residency required.
- d. Entry fee must be paid by a corporation, company, agency or recreational fund check to County of Loudoun by the established deadline date.

**6.03** All roster changes, (i.e., additions, deletions, etc.), must be made in writing on a separate change of roster form and filed with the League Office prior to that player's participation in league games. Added players must sign the change of roster form. A team roster may be changed by team managers or coaches only.

**6.04** Roster changes will be allowed until before a team's fourth game played. A request for an emergency roster change after the deadline will be judged by the League Commissioner, whose decision will be final.

**6.05** A player who is dropped from a team may not be reinstated to that same team during the same season.

**6.06** A "returning team" is defined as a team having played the previous season, which, for the current season, is comprised of 33% of the previous season's rostered players. (Team does not have to play under the same team or sponsor's name).

**6.07** If it is determined that a team roster is falsified the team representative shall be suspended from participation in the Loudoun County Adult Soccer League for the remainder of the season plus one additional year.

**6.08** Each roster will be limited to a maximum of 25 players.

**6.09** Playoff eligibility will be as follows:

- a. Spring/summer leagues - All players on the final roster as of the changes deadline.
- b. Fall leagues - All players on the final roster as of the changes deadline.

**6.10** At the discretion of the League Commissioner, the top two (2) teams in each division at the end of the season may be moved up to the next higher division the next season played. The bottom two (2) teams may be moved to the next lower division.

**6.11** Teams shall provide player passes to the referee(s) prior to the start of the game.

## **7.00 Uniforms and Equipment**

**7.01** Uniforms are required for all teams in all leagues. Each uniform must contain a visible and clearly defined number not to exceed two digits.

**7.02** Enforcement of uniform requirement: If a player does not wear a uniform consistent with the team color(s) and number(s), or if a player wears a jersey bearing the same number(s) as another player, he/she cannot participate.

**7.03** Absolutely no jewelry is allowed to be worn during play with the exception of medical and religious bracelets or necklaces. A player wearing either must tape down the item to the skin and may allow the medical alert identification to be shown. If a player wishes to wear a religious item, he/she must have a letter certified by his/her religious leader and sent to the Commissioner. He/she must also tape down the item to the skin. Players wearing glasses must have shatterproof lenses or eyeglass protectors. It is the responsibility of each player to comply.

**7.04** All soccer balls will be provided by the home team and must meet current FIFA requirements for size, dimensions, design, and other regulations.

**7.05** Shin guards must be worn by all participants and be covered by socks.

**7.06** Soccer or athletic shoes can only be worn during play.

**7.07** Metal (or metallic in nature) cleats and screw-in cleats are prohibited in the League during play.

## **8.00 Forfeiture**

**8.01** If the required number of players (8), six men and two women, or five men and three women, for COED, has not been met by the scheduled starting time, the team having the required number shall win by forfeit, and the score shall be 1-0. If both teams fail to have the required number of players, the game shall be declared a double forfeit and will not be rescheduled. If an official fails to appear, the facility attendant will call forfeits.

**Exception:** Both captains can agree before the match begins to:

1. Allow a team to start with 2 Women and play a player down (Ex: 2 Women , 8 Men)
2. Allow a match to start up to 10 minutes late if a team is waiting on players. In this case the time will be taken off of the first half time. (Ex: if the match starts 5 minutes late, the first half will be 35 minutes and the second half will be 40 minutes).
3. COED only. A team must have no more than 8 men participating in a game, but may have as many as 9 women participating.

**8.02** A team forfeiting two league games because of failure to have the required number of players will be dropped from further participation until their case is reviewed. All games will stand and no part of the franchise fee will be returned.

**8.03** Using an ineligible player shall result in forfeiture (see Rule **5.00**).

**8.04** If a team does not have like uniforms that are consistent in color and numbers, then that team shall forfeit.

## **9.00 Protests**

**9.01** Under official soccer rules, decisions involving an official's judgment may not be protested. If a ruling is believed to conflict with the league rules regarding **eligibility only**, a captain may protest the game by notifying the official(s) who will note the time of the protest. Notification of intent to protest must be made immediately upon discovery. A written protest must then be submitted to the League Office postmarked within 48 hours after the game is played. A **\$58.00** fee must accompany each protest. If the appeal is granted, the fee will be returned. A postage meter machine tape will not be accepted as a postmark.

**9.02** Each protest must contain the following information:

- a. Date, time, and place of the game.
- b. Names of officials.
- b. The rule and section of the official rules or league rules under which the protest is made.
- c. The decision and conditions surrounding the making of the protest.
- d. All essential facts involved in the matter protested.
- e. What the expected outcome of the protest should be (what is the protestor expecting to happen).

**9.03** Protests will be reviewed by the League Commissioner and any one he requests to assist him. The League Commissioner's decision will direct whether the protest will be denied, or whether the game will be replayed from the point of the protest, or will be forfeited. The decision of the League Commissioner is final.

**9.04** If any of the procedures for protest are not followed, the protest will not be accepted.

## **10.00 Cancellation/Postponement of Games**

**10.01** The League Commissioner shall have the authority to set, change, or reschedule date, time and location of all games. Games may be rescheduled for any available day. **Make up games will likely be played Saturday or Sunday's.**

**10.02** Games will not be postponed for any reason other than inclement weather or unfit playing conditions of the field, in which case games will be postponed by the League Office, the Facility Attendant, the Officials before the game starts or by the Officials after the game is in progress. A game in progress suspended for inclement weather or other cause is subject to a fifteen (15) minute delay, or thirty (30) minute delay for lightning. After any delay the game *may* be "called" and shall be rescheduled and replayed at the point of interruption (Exception: In Tournament play, games will be rescheduled and resumed at the exact point that play was suspended). If the first or subsequent game of a playing cycle is officially postponed due to unfit playing conditions, then the remaining games scheduled for that field are also postponed. (Exception: If a game is postponed due to lightning, subsequent games of the playing cycle may be played if the official(s) determines that the threat of lightning and/or rain has passed). In this instance the fifteen (15) minute delay will not take effect. Recorded cancellation information may be obtained by calling 703-777-0456.

**10.03 Dates and facilities designated by the League Office for regular season, postponed, playoff and tournament games must be met by all teams or a forfeit will result. Notification of makeup dates for postponed games will be made as soon as possible. After such notification, the responsibility of the League Office has ended.**

### **11.00 Code of Conduct for Players and Others**

#### **11.01 Coaches, manager, and players shall not:**

- a. **At any time lay a hand upon, shove, strike or be guilty of a physical or verbal attack upon any official, facility supervisor, player or spectator. Penalty: Suspension from all sports activities sponsored by PRCS and possibility of assault charges being filed. Length of suspension will be determined on a case-by-case basis.**
- b. Bait or be guilty of objectionable demonstrations of dissent at an official's decision, or refuse to abide by an official's decision. Penalty: Warning by official and/or ejection from the game for the player and coach / manager.
- c. Make an abusive verbal attack upon any official, facility supervisor, player or spectator or loss of control by the player. Penalty: Ejection from the game for the player and the coach / manager.
- d. Use unnecessarily rough tactics in the play of the game against the body or person of an opposing player. Penalty: Warning and/or ejection from the game and suspension from the league until his / her case has been reviewed by the League Commissioner.
- e. Disobey or attempt to circumvent league rules and regulations or the intent thereof. Penalty: Suspension for the remainder of the season.
- f. Use profanity. At the official's discretion; if a player is using improper or excessive profanity the player will be ejected from the game.

**11.02 No person or persons shall possess and/or partake in alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs or tobacco products of any kind while participating either as a team member or spectator at programs administered by PRCS:**

- a. First offense: Player shall be suspended for the team's next ten (10) games. Player will also be ineligible for any other Loudoun County league games during the suspension. Should the suspension be imposed with less than ten (10) games remaining in the season, the suspension will carry over to any post season tournament, and/or the next sport league in which the suspended player is enrolled.
- b. Second offense, and each offense thereafter: Suspension will double in number of games suspended (i.e., second offense-twenty (20) games, third offense-forty (40) games, etc.).
- c. Spectators will be asked to leave the facilities, and/or prosecuted.
- d. In all cases, player/spectator is subject to prosecution.
- e. **Note that tobacco may be used in areas other than "play areas" (softball fields, soccer fields, playgrounds, etc.). An acceptable location to use tobacco is a parking lot.**

**11.03 Any coach or manager who uses an ineligible player shall be automatically suspended from the next two games his/her team plays and will be placed on probationary status for a period of one calendar year.**

**11.04 Any coach, manager, or player who is placed on probationary status and is reported again for violating the "Code of Conduct" or league rules will be given a minimum penalty of suspension for the remainder of the season.**

**11.05** If a player, manager, or coach is ejected from a game, he/she must leave the park or facility in a timely manner and may not return for any other games played that night. He/she is also automatically suspended from the next game his/her team plays. If the suspended person does not leave the park or facility in a timely manner, or is guilty of a second offense during the suspension, he/she will be subject to additional disciplinary action as directed by the League Commissioner.

**11.06** All sections of rule **11.00**, Code of Conduct for Players and Others, are not subject to protest or review.

## **12.00 Playing Rules**

**12.01** All games will feature two 40 minute halves with a five minute half time. At the end of regulation time, if the score is tied the game will be scored as such.

**EXCEPTION: During playoffs the overtime procedure will be two five minute periods. If after the second overtime session there is not a winner the game will go to penalty kicks. The lineup for penalty kicks needs to be male/female or female/male. If a team gets to a point where every female on the team has participated in the penalty kicks and there is still no winner the cycle for women participating in the penalty kicks shall start over.**

**Example:**

**Round 1: Male 1 Round 2: Female 1 Round 3: Male 2 Round 4: Female 2  
Round 5: Male 3  
Round 6: Female 3 Round 7: Male 4 Round 8: Female 1 (If the team has only 3 women) Round 9: Male 5**

**12.02** Slide tackling is prohibited from the league. The penalty is a yellow card.

**EXCEPTION: Sliding to kick a ball or prevent it from leaving the field is acceptable.**

**Slide tackling when an opposing player is within the immediate vicinity of the ball at the beginning or the end of the slide tackle is prohibited.**

**12.03** There shall not be more than eleven players allowed to play (10+1 goalie). A game may be started with eight players.

COED: The gender ratio for COED play shall be eight men and three women. A team cannot exceed the limit of men but may increase the number of women allowed to play, so long as the total amount of players on the field does not exceed 11; no more than nine women may participate at once.

Teams may start or continue a game with 2 women & 8 men., Once a team drops below two females at any point during the game the game will be forfeited and the win awarded to opponent.

**12.04** Substitutions may be made with the consent of the referee(s) during the following conditions:

- a. During a throw-in only by the team in control of the throw.
- b. During a goal kick.
- c. After a goal has been scored and before the kick off.
- d. When a player is injured. The player may be replaced and no other substitutions are allowed from that team. The opposing team may substitute one player in this situation.
- e. After a yellow card. The team manager/captain may request to substitute the cautioned player.

**12.05** Rules of the game, fouls not resulting in a caution and sending-off offence will follow FIFA laws of the game.

**12.06** Yellow cards (cautionable offences) are given to those players committing any of the following offences:

- a. unsportsmanlike behavior;
- b. showing dissent by words or action;
- c. persistently infringing FIFA and/or Loudoun County laws of the game;
- d. delaying the restart of play;
- e. failing to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick or free kick;
- f. entering or re-entering the field of play without the referee's permission;
- g. deliberately leaving the field of play without the referee's permission;
- h. improperly wearing jewelry;
- i. slide tackling

**12.07** Red cards (sending-off offences) are given to those players committing any of the following offences:

- a. serious fouls;
- b. violent conduct;
- c. spits at anyone;
- d. denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball (this does not apply to a goalkeeper within his/her own penalty area);
- e. denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick;
- f. Uses offensive or insulting or abusive languages and/or gestures;
- g. Receives a second yellow card in the same match.

**Any player receiving a red card must leave the Park immediately. Failure to abide by this provision could result in the offending player's team forfeiting the game.**