# 2024 USLY Referee Manual

**Mission Statement**
The mission of the USL Youth Referee Program is to improve the capability of USL Youth to succeed in its mission through the provision of the most qualified officials, who will provide the utmost professional officiating services to all of its members.

**Vision**
The USL Youth Referee Program will utilize all of its resources in concert with FIFA, USSF, CSA and their respective Referee Programs in the discovery, preparation, education and training of soccer officials whose performance warrants consideration for promotion to FIFA level officiating.

**Values**
The USL Youth Referee Program values its game officials who are able to recognize and accept the role of the referee in the game of soccer at all levels.

The USL Youth Referee Program values its game officials who possess:

The highest standards of ethics and integrity;
The highest standards of mental and physical fitness;
The unique skill of identifying and incorporating into their game assignment the various cultures, beliefs, and awareness of the diversities of players and coaches.

The USL Youth Referee Program values officials who are open to critical self-evaluation and receptive to constructive criticism from USSF & CSA assessors or qualified USL Youth observers in the analysis of their performance.

**Strategic Direction**
The USL Youth Referee Program will:

Establish a working and developmental relationship with the USSF and CSA to ensure an appropriate environment for education, training, development, and assessment of game officials to be appropriately promoted;
Develop a system by which referees officiating in USL Youth are assigned to leagues and matches that correspond with their abilities, fitness and experience;
Provide USL Youth referees with the appropriate administrative support and information to ensure the highest level of success;
Provide all member leagues and affiliated teams weekly disciplinary action and individual player penalty point summaries;
To enforce the well-defined policy and process with regard to appeals;
Continue to develop a team-driven referee performance evaluation program;

**Definitions**

**"FIFA"** shall mean Federation Internationale de Football Association, the entity governing professional soccer internationally, or its successors.

**"LEAGUE"** shall mean USL Youth.

**"CLUB"** shall mean the organization that has been granted membership in the LEAGUE.

**"Minimum Standards"** shall mean the minimum standards that must be met by all member CLUBS. **"Season"** shall mean the time period in any year during which official games are played in the LEAGUE. **"Facility"** shall mean the LEAGUE approved playing facility utilized by the CLUB during the season.
**"LEAGUE Marks"** shall mean the trade names of the LEAGUE and its program trademarks that may be amended or supplemented by LEAGUE from time to time.

**"LEAGUE Rules"** shall mean the playing and operational rules and policies of the LEAGUE.

**"USSF"** shall mean United States Soccer Federation (also known as U.S. Soccer), the governing entity for soccer in the United States.

**"CSA"** shall mean Canadian Soccer Association, the governing entity for soccer in Canada.

**USL Youth**
USL Youth is managed by United Soccer LEAGUES, LLC. United Soccer LEAGUES, LLC operates under the auspices of United Soccer LEAGUES, better known as USL. The LEAGUE is a Member of the United States Soccer Federation and is an amateur league.

**Divisions**
USL Youth reserves the right to change any Division for purposes of scheduling and standings. This right also includes the ability USL Youth to move a CLUB or team into different Divisions or add additional divisions, as needed.

Compliance with Minimum Standards
CLUBS are required to comply with the defined Minimum Standards. The LEAGUE Director shall have the power to penalize CLUBS, individual CLUB members, or officers for non-compliance of Minimum Standards with penalties consisting of warnings, loss of points, fines, and temporary or permanent suspension from soccer activities.

The LEAGUE office regularly monitors compliance. In addition, CLUBs are encouraged to report situations to the LEAGUE office which, on the surface, appear to be in non-compliance with Minimum Standards. Reporting non-compliance on the part of other CLUB should not be viewed as a negative but rather as a positive attempt to maintain consistent LEAGUE-wide standards that ensure professionalism and fairness both on and off the field. While all CLUBs are required to adhere to Minimum Standards, some CLUBs, because of extenuating circumstances, may have been given exemptions to some Minimum Standards that are approved in advance.

**LEAGUE Structure Governance**
All competition in the LEAGUE is governed by regulations approved by the LEAGUE Office. LEAGUE may modify the Handbook from time to time, provided that any changes to the Handbook shall be effective only after CLUB is notified of the change. LEAGUE shall, from time to time, create and amend LEAGUE Rules including those governing game conduct, players, player eligibility, referees, game cancellations, rescheduling games, playoffs, championships, scorekeeping, facilities, suggested minimum advertising, and other factors relevant to the operation of a soccer league. LEAGUE shall consider the advice of Advisory Committees in amending the LEAGUE Rules.

**Playing Rules**
All games under LEAGUE jurisdiction shall be played according to the rules and regulations recognized by the LEAGUE, which shall be the same rules set by FIFA / U.S. Soccer (USSF) / Canadian Soccer Association (CSA), except for those exceptions authorized by FIFA/USSF/CSA herein. https://www.ussoccer.com/referee-program/laws-of-the-game

The U-11 and U-12 age groups will play 9v9 respectively and use a size 4 ball. All other age groups will play 11v11 and will compete with a size 5 ball during the regular season and at USLY Finals.

**The Playing Season**
The season, as designated by the LEAGUE and planned around specific divisional needs, will run from **May 11th** through **August 18th**. No games will be played past **August 18th**.

Limitations on Participation in Other Leagues - CLUB recognizes that the LEAGUE invests considerable time and resources in the promotion of the LEAGUE and each of the CLUB members. Although the CLUB is permitted to compete through other USSF Member Organizations, under USSF Bylaws, the CLUB must adhere to the commitments to the LEAGUE in the event of a conflict with other USSF Member Organization LEAGUES, games, cups, or player identification programs. If another USSF Member Organization intentionally or unethically positions events to interfere with CLUB games through the LEAGUE, the CLUB will notify the LEAGUE in writing.

**Point System**

The LEAGUE will operate under a point system. The LEAGUE Office reserves the right to deviate from the regular season point system to resolve issues with LEAGUE standings or the USLY Finals.

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

Schedule Changes

Rescheduling Policy and Fines Following the deadlines for scheduling (schedules have gone live on MOD 11), LEAGUE approval is needed, and fines will be ensued for any changes other than a rain out, Air Quality (AQI), or field closure. All rescheduling must be completed through MOD 11 once the schedule is live. An email to the league is necessary if there is a delay in response from the opposing team. A team cannot request changes for more than 50% of its originally scheduled matches during the regular season. Games rescheduled on or within seven (7) days must pay referees in full. If payment is not made to the referees, the club will forfeit the payment from its security bond.

**Rule 207 – League Standings**

The LEAGUE office is responsible for tracking and determining the official standings of all teams in the LEAGUE. These results will be constantly updated and posted on the LEAGUE website. Official LEAGUE standings include keeping track of games played, wins, losses, ties, goals scored for, goals scored against, goal differential and total LEAGUE points. In divisions that contain multiple groups, the winner of each group will advance to the USL Youth Finals, even if a team that finishes second in a group has more points than the winner of a separate group. For example, if the winner of Group A has 10 points and the second-place team in Group A has 9 points, but the winner of Group B has 8 points, the winner of Group B advances.

Breaking ties in the LEAGUE Standings, the breaking of ties in the final standings, playoffs and USL Youth Finals is accomplished by applying the following criteria in order (may use per game percentage when different number of scheduled games situation exists):

- Head-To-Head record based on total points in LEAGUE games.
- Total wins in LEAGUE games
- Goal difference in LEAGUE games (goal average may be used if different number of scheduled games).
- Goals scored in LEAGUE games.
- Ranking based on points earned against top four group finishers. This tiebreaker will not be used if four or fewer teams comprise the group.
- FIFA Fair Play – Team with fewest disciplinary points in LEAGUE games. (If number of games is unequal, points will be divided by games played to arrive at a common basis for comparison).
- Lottery conducted by USLY at LEAGUE office.

**Tiebreaker Procedures – Regular Season & USL Youth Finals**

Regular season games that end in a tie at the end of regulation will remain a draw. Following USL Youth regulations once the first half of a game is completed, if the game needs to be terminated for any reason beyond the first half, the result is final.

During USL Youth Finals matches that require a winner, games ending in a tie after regulation will play two 10-minute overtime periods. If the match remains tied after the overtime periods, FIFA kicks from the mark (penalty kicks) will determine the winner.

Notes:
League games refer solely to games that count towards the regular season standings. If more than two teams involved in a tiebreaker situation have played each other an UNEQUAL number of times, these tiebreakers will be skipped, and advancement will be based off of point percentage (total number of points earned divided by total possible points).

**Rule 208 - Game Length**
Game lengths for the regular season are as follows:

| AGE | GAME LENGTH | HALFTIME |
|---|---|---|
| U11 | 2 X 30 | 10 |
| U12 | 2 X 30 | 10 |
| U13 | 2 X 35 | 12 |
| U14 | 2 X 35 | 12 |
| U15 | 2 X 35 | 12 |
| U16 | 2 X 40 | 12 |
| U17 | 2 X 40 | 12 |
| U17/19 (Girls Only) | 2 X 45 | 12 |
| U18/19 (Boys Only) | 2 X 45 | 12 |

If the game is tied at the end of regulation during the regular season and group play during USL Youth Finals, the final score will remain a tie.

**Rule 209 – Substitutions**

Regular Season: Unlimited substitutions for all age groups and genders.

USL Youth Finals: Unlimited substitutions for all age groups and genders.

*A substitution occurs when the referee gives permission for a player from a team's bench to enter the field to replace a member of the same team that is currently on the playing field.

Regulation Time
A team may have no more than 18 eligible players for games from the official CLUB roster that shall be submitted on MOD 11 via Digital Match Report (DMR) printed from the LEAGUE website. For the 2024 season, unlimited substitutions will be permitted for the U11-U19 age groups for the regular season and USL Youth Finals.

Water Breaks
Water breaks must be provided for both teams, as close to the middle of each half as possible, when the heat index exceeds 89.6 degrees Fahrenheit.

**Rule 210 - Eligibility**
All players and coaches must present their USL Youth Digital Match Roster (DMR) to the Referee prior to each game. If the individual's picture is not on the USL Youth DMR, the individual will not be eligible for the game. Any player that has been suspended for or during the game will have their name crossed out on the game report. A suspended player must not be present on the team sideline and may not be in uniform. Players from within the same club are allowed to play on a team in an older age group. Players are NEVER allowed to play on a team in a younger age group who they are not age eligible for.

Furthermore, clubs with multiple teams in the SAME age group are forbidden from having players participate on more than one team throughout the regular season and Finals. Players who do this are considered Illegal and forfeit/fines will ensue. US Club, USYSA, or any other league passes are not accepted for USL Youth games. All players and coaches must have their name and photo listed on the Digital Match Roster, **No Exceptions**.

**Rule 211 – Goal Differential Rule**
The Goal Differential Rule shall be placed into effect if the winning team has a score differential of seven or more goals. The differential will be capped at seven goals. Please also note that in the final standings the goal differential will be capped at seven goals per game for any and all games. (i.e. An 8-0 win will be awarded +7 (7-0) in goal differential for the winning team). Losing teams will never have goals taken away from them. (i.e. A 12-3 win will be adjusted to 10-3 to reflect the +7 cap). Please note that players scoring after the 7 goal mark will receive credit on the public statistics on the LEAGUE website but only +7 goals will be counted towards the score line. This rule wil also apply to the USL Youth Finals.

**Rule 212 - Incomplete Games**
In the event that a game cannot continue through full regulation time, the game will only count if one- half of the game was completed. If a game is suspended prior to the expiration of the first half due to inclement weather or extenuating circumstances, it will resume within the next 24 hours (or some other date/time agreed upon by the competing teams and the LEAGUE office) **starting at the same minute that the game was originally suspended and with the same score.** The LEAGUE cannot guarantee that these re-starts will be played with either the same players or the same referees. Therefore, referee fees will have to be paid again for the re-start. The Referee has the final decision on suspending games due to weather or field conditions. Should a game be started and deemed incomplete before halftime, the referees shall still be paid for this game, as well as the rescheduled game.

Grace Period Before Abandoning a Game
Unless both teams, the referee and the LEAGUE office agree to an alternate plan, teams must wait one hour before abandoning a game that has been delayed. LEAGUE personnel must be notified of any postponement issues immediately via cell phone. Given the difficulty and cost of rescheduling, every attempt should be made to play the game regardless of the length of the delay. In the instance that the teams and the referees wait the designated amount of time, but the match is unable to be played, the referees are to be paid 50% of the match fee.

**Rule 213 – Game Delays and Postponements**
A team unable to attend a scheduled game for any reason should immediately notify the opponent, the LEAGUE office, and the referee assignor via telephone or email. The game may end up being delayed, forfeited, or otherwise. Each situation will be reviewed by the LEAGUE office, which shall render a decision that may be appealed through LEAGUE RAD procedures (refer to Review, Appeals & Discipline section of the Handbook).

Authority to Delay or Postpone a Game
A game may be delayed or postponed due to unfavorable weather and/or other adverse conditions beyond the control of the participating teams which would make the playing of the game impractical for players or dangerous for players, other participants, or spectators. Having fewer than 11 players (9 for U11 and U12) at the match is not an adequate reason for postponing a match. The LEAGUE office reserves the right to delay, postpone, or cancel a game due to unfavorable/extreme weather conditions.

Postponing a Game Prior to Start
A game may be postponed no earlier than two hours prior to kickoff due to inclement weather, unless agreed to by both teams and the LEAGUE. In a case where a third party (stadium owner) closes a stadium, a game may be cancelled more than two hours prior to kickoff, as long as the LEAGUE and both teams are notified in writing by the stadium owner/managing authority. If referees are not given the proper notification of the postponement and arrive to work the match, they are to be paid by the home team or the team causing the postponement. Teams can split the referee costs, if an agreement can be reached to do so. CLUBs must notify referee assignors of the postponement. Referees will only receive payment for weather related cancellations if they're not notified properly.

Game Cancellation Criteria

Game cancellation should only happen under dire circumstances. However, the safety of participants in LEAGUE events shall always be the highest priority. Factors that the referee and the LEAGUE shall consider include whether or not the teams have requested the cancellation, difficulty in rescheduling the game, current and forecasted weather conditions (Heat Index must exceed 92 degrees Fahrenheit), travel conditions, and the current whereabouts of teams and officials. If referees are not given the proper notification of the cancellation and arrive to work the match, they are to be paid by the home team or the team causing the cancellation. Teams can split the referee costs, if an agreement can be reached. Clubs must notify the referee assignors of the cancellation.

- **Heat Index** – Hydration breaks will not be allowed unless the temperature is or expected to reach 92 degrees Fahrenheit or higher. The stoppage should be at a normal stoppage or as close to the midpoint as possible. A match can be cancelled if the heat index surpasses 92 degrees Fahrenheit. If a match is to be canceled due to heat index, a phone call must be made to a League Representative and both clubs must agree before it is officially abandoned.
- **Air Quality (AQI)** – In the event air quality is poor leading up to a match please contact the League office to determine if the match will be played. If the AQI is 100-150 both teams must agree to play, and hydration breaks must be added during each half. If the AQI is 150 or above the air quality will be deemed unsafe and the match will need to be rescheduled or relocated to an indoor facility.

**Lightning Safety / Severe Weather Information**

The safety of players, coaches, management and spectators is the primary concern in any weather event that occurs during all USL Youth matches.

By understanding and following the below information, the safety of everyone shall be greatly increased. Ultimately, **as the referee, YOU HAVE FINAL SAY over delaying or restarting a game due to weather**. Waiting to stop play or not waiting to start play may result in a serious injury or loss of life. Act responsibly when dealing with such events during your games.

Coordinate with the Game Day Operations Director regarding impending threatening conditions. The team operations director (or appointed person) shall monitor weather conditions via phone calls to the local National Weather Service office, local television weather centers or online with real time radar. They can better watch the situation as it develops, allowing you to focus on the game in hand.

When a lightning detector is unavailable, you can determine the distance of lightning in your area by counting the number of seconds between the flash and the first sound of the thunder and dividing by five (5). This will give you the distance in miles from your location. Remember, if you are in a higher elevation, the lightning can come upon you much quicker, and your reaction time is greatly hindered.

***30-30 Rule: When you see lightning, count the time until you hear thunder. If this time is 30 seconds or less, seek proper shelter. If you can't see the lightning, just hearing the thunder is a good back up rule. Wait 30 minutes or more after hearing the last thunder before leaving the shelter.***

The following guidelines have been recommended by the National Severe Storms Laboratory (Norman, OK)

The existence of blue sky and the absence of rain are not protection from lightning. Lightning can, and does, strike as far as 10 miles away from the rain shaft. It does not have to be raining for lightning to strike. **Many lightning casualties occur in the beginning, as the storm approaches** because many people ignore initial precursors of high winds, some rainfall and cloud cover. Generally, the lightning threat diminishes with time after the last sound of thunder, but may persist for more than 30 minutes.

**Be aware of how close lightning is occurring**. The flash-to-bang method is the easiest and most convenient way to

estimate how far away lightning is occurring when no lightning detector is available. Thunder always accompanies lightning, even though its audible range can be diminished due to background noise in the immediate environment, and its distance from the observer. **To use the flash-to-bang method, count the seconds from the time the lightning is sighted to when the clap of thunder is heard. Divide this number by five to obtain how far away (in miles) the lightning is occurring. For example, if an individual counts 15 seconds between seeing the flash and hearing the bang, 15 divided by five equals three; therefore, the lightning flash is approximately three miles away.**
Lightning awareness should be increased with the first flash of lightning or the first clap of thunder, no matter how far away. This activity must be treated as a wake-up call to all personnel. The most important aspect to monitor is how far away the lightning is occurring, and how fast the storm is approaching, relative to the distance of a safe shelter.
**Recognize that personal observation of lightning may not be sufficient**; additional information such as a lightning detection system or additional weather information may be required to ensure consistency, accuracy and adequate advance warning.
**When larger groups are involved, the time needed to properly evacuate an area increases**. As time requirements change, the distance at which lightning is noted and considered a threat to move into the area must be increased. Extending the range used to determine threat potential also increases the chance that a localized cell or thunderstorm may not reach the area giving the impression of a “false alarm”.
Know where the closest "safe structure or location" is to the field or playing area, and know how long it takes to get to that safe structure or location.
Safe structure or location is defined as:
Any building normally occupied or frequently used by people, i.e., a building with plumbing and/or electrical wiring that acts to electrically ground the structure. Avoid using shower facilities for safe shelter and **do not use** the showers or plumbing facilities during a thunderstorm.

In the absence of a sturdy, frequently inhabited building, any vehicle with a hard metal roof (not a convertible or golf cart) and rolled-up windows can provide a measure of safety. A vehicle is certainly better than remaining outdoors. It is not the rubber tires that make a vehicle a safe shelter, but the hard metal roof which

dissipates the lightning strike around the vehicle. DO NOT TOUCH THE SIDES OF THE VEHICLE!
If no safe structure or location is within a reasonable distance, find a thick grove of small trees surrounded by taller trees or a dry ditch. Assume a crouched position on the ground with only the balls of the feet touching the ground, wrap your arms around your knees and lower your head. Minimize contact with the ground because lightning current often enters a victim through the ground rather than by a direct overhead strike. **MINIMIZE YOUR BODY'S SURFACE AREA, AND MINIMIZE CONTACT WITH THE GROUND! DO NOT LIE FLAT!** If unable to reach safe shelter, stay away from the tallest trees or objects such as light poles or flag poles), metal objects (such as fences or bleachers), individual trees, standing pools of water, and open fields. Avoid being the highest object in a field. Do not take shelter under a single, tall tree.
Avoid using the telephone, except in emergency situations. People have been struck by lightning while using a land-line telephone. A cellular phone or a portable remote phone is a safe alternative to land-line phones, if the person and the antenna are located within a safe structure or location, and if all other precautions are followed.
When considering resumption of any athletics activity, NSSL staff recommends that everyone should ideally wait at least 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning or sound of thunder before returning to the field.
People who have been struck by lightning do not carry an electrical charge. Therefore, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is safe for the responder. **If possible, an injured person should be moved to a safer location before starting CPR.** Lightning-strike victims who show signs of cardiac or respiratory arrest need emergency help quickly. Prompt, aggressive CPR has been highly effective for the survival of victims of lightning strike.

Rescheduling a Postponed Game
To avoid having non-played games, any postponed game must be rescheduled within five (5) business days of the original date of the game. If a game is not rescheduled within five (5) business days, the game will be rescheduled by the LEAGUE office. Any non-played games will result in no points being awarded to either team, and the game will be recorded as a non-played game unless it is deemed by the LEAGUE that the game should be a forfeit.

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Rescheduling a Cancellation

To avoid having non-played games, any cancelled game must be rescheduled within five (5) business days of the original date of the game. If a game is not rescheduled within five (5) business days, the game will be rescheduled by the LEAGUE office. Any non-played games will result in no points being awarded to both teams and the game will be recorded as a non-played game unless it is deemed by the LEAGUE that the game should be a forfeit.

Rescheduling Considerations

The LEAGUE Office shall have the authority to review all the facts (including fault on the part of either team, unavoidable conditions, expenses for both teams, and requests by a team to take a particular action in the best interests of the LEAGUE) in determining whether and when a game shall be rescheduled, who should bear the financial burden as a result of the cancellation or rescheduling, whether the game should be forfeited or cancelled permanently, and whether other fines should be levied. The integrity of the LEAGUE and the home team schedule shall be given considerable weight in the resolution of these matters. Unless the sanction or remedy is set forth specifically in any LEAGUE rules or regulations, the LEAGUE office shall decide what action to take and its decision shall be final. Note that the committed schedule was finalized during the scheduling process and submitted to the LEAGUE with times and venues.

Written Explanation of Postponement/Cancellation

Whenever a game is postponed or cancelled, the LEAGUE must receive written notice within 24 hours of postponement or cancellation, including (if necessary) a statement from the owner of the stadium/playing facility.

Facility/Stadium Clearances are Final

Once a team has approved its individual schedule and the LEAGUE schedules are released, the LEAGUE office assumes that a team's home facility/stadium is cleared for all dates on its schedule. The League will not automatically accept a postponement or cancellation of a game after schedules have been approved because a stadium is no longer available.

**Rule 214 – Forfeits**

Should any team associated with the CLUB fail to appear at a scheduled LEAGUE game, the CLUB shall incur a forfeit fee of $600 per incident. Other penalties for forfeits are as follows:

- A loss of three (3) additional points in the LEAGUE standings and a 3-0 win given to the opposing team.
- The team that forfeits is precluded from participating in any LEAGUE Championship events, per LEAGUE review and at the LEAGUE's discretion.
- The CLUB must send the full fees to each referee assigned to the game within five (5) business days or the LEAGUE will use the team's bond to pay each referee assigned to the forfeited game. A violation of this rule will result in a fine of $50.00 USD.

A team unable to attend a scheduled game because of an accident or weather should immediately notify the opponent, the LEAGUE office, and the referees via telephone. Each situation will be reviewed by the LEAGUE office, which shall render a decision that may be appealed through LEAGUE RAD procedures (refer to Review, Appeals & Discipline section of the Handbook).

**Rule 218 – Liability**

LEAGUE Clubs assume all risks, responsibilities and liabilities for loss, damage, injury or death while using property and facilities during games in LEAGUE, whether such loss, damage, injury or death be occasioned by the team or by the LEAGUE, its officers, agents, or otherwise.

Playing Field Dimensions and Markings

The game shall be played on a field that remains a constant size throughout the LEAGUE season, unless the LEAGUE approves a change at least SEVENTY-TWO (72) hours in advance of the game. The dimensions and markings of the field shall conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

Condition of the Field of Play
Each CLUB shall work with its facility/stadium management to ensure the field is in the best possible condition for each game.

Grass Specification
The grass length on game day shall not exceed ONE and ONE-HALF (1 1/2) inches.

Corner Flags and Center Circle
Corner flags shall be on posts not less than FIVE (5) feet high with non-pointed tops. The center of the field shall be marked and have a circle, which has a TEN (10) yard radius, drawn around it.

Goal Area
At each end of the field, a line perpendicular to the goal line shall be drawn parallel on each side of the goal and SIX (6) yards from each goalpost. This line shall extend SIX (6) yards into the field of play from the goal line. A line running parallel to the goal line shall be drawn connecting the ends of the two perpendicular lines, forming the "goal area."

Penalty Area
At each end of the field, a line perpendicular to the goal line shall be drawn parallel to each side of the goal and EIGHTEEN (18) yards from each goalpost. This line shall extend EIGHTEEN (18) yards into the field of play from the goal line. A line running parallel to the goal line shall be drawn to connect the ends of the two perpendicular lines, which shall form the "penalty area." Within the penalty area, there shall be a "penalty spot" Twelve (12) yards from the goal line with dimensions and markings that shall conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

Corner Area
At each of the four corners of the field, measuring from the corner flags post, a partial circle having a radius of ONE (1) yard shall be drawn inside the field of play.

Goals
Each goal shall be centered on the goal line an equal distance on each side from the corner flags. Game day goals shall be the size approved by FIFA.

Bench Area
Both the home and visiting CLUB's benches shall be placed on the same side of the field designated by the facility/stadium field plan. The home CLUB shall designate the bench locations at the start of the season and shall not change these locations during the season. The bench area shall be marked according to FIFA's technical area markings. It is suggested that the home CLUB provide tents over each bench.

Player Appearance
Players and all CLUB staff shall maintain a neat, clean and professional appearance at all times.

Player Uniforms, Equipment and Identification
Each player shall be uniformly dressed in jerseys, shorts, and socks for pre-game introductions and the game. Players shall ensure that their shirts are tucked in and their socks are up while on the field and bench for both pre- and post-game activities. Only officially rostered players may be in uniform. Other players shall be in warm-ups. No player shall sit on the bench in street clothes. The LEAGUE may permit an approved player in street clothes on the bench but permission must be requested in advance.

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All players shall wear uniforms supplied by their home CLUB. All uniform markings must be specific to the CLUB that is registered with the LEAGUE. Outside club uniforms are not permitted to be worn.

Goalkeeper Uniform and Equipment
The goalkeeper's uniform shall be different colors that the CLUB uniform. The goalkeeper uniform and equipment shall conform to FIFA guidelines.

Compression Pants
Slide pants (or thermal compression shorts) may be worn under uniform shorts if they are the predominate color of the uniform shorts. All players wearing slide pants shall wear the same style, which may not extend more than TWO (2) inches below the uniform shorts or beyond the top of the knee.

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Other Equipment
All players in uniform on game days shall wear shin guards. Equipment deemed dangerous by the referee shall be removed and all FIFA equipment rules shall be complied with and enforced by the referee.

**Rule 601 – Assignment of Game Officials**
Game officials for each game are assigned by USSF or CSA Certified Referee Assignors with the assistance of LEAGUE and must be in good standing and currently registered through either the USSF or CSA. Here shall be a minimum of one (1) referee and two (2) assistant referees each game. This regulation will also apply to teams listed as the home team at neutral site events where the LEAGUE will fairly and evenly assign this designation.

A supplemental game report for each separate and unusual incident or send-off must also be submitted through MOD 11. the game report should be completed on MOD 11 no later than 24 hours after the match.

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*Referees are required to validate the official match report in MOD 11, ensure all statistics are correct and verify the score, cautions, and send offs at the end of each match. It is imperative that the referee take time to ensure that the form is completed entirely and accurately.*

**Rule 602 – Payment of Game Officials**
The HOME team must pay the game officials prior to the start of the game. The referee fees are as follows: All States & Provinces:

| AGE | U11 | U12 | U13 | U14 | U15 | U16/17 | U18/19 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Referee | 50 | 50 | 60 | 60 | 60 | 70 | 75 |
| AR1 | 30 | 30 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 45 | 50 |
| AR2 | 30 | 30 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 45 | 50 |

The fees for officiating games are set by LEAGUE, and subject to regular review. Referees, Assistant Referees are eligible to be compensated for services if they:

- Arrive at the proper time and perform assigned services.
- Review game report for completion and accuracy and sign game report.
- Arrive at the proper time, unless for some reason the game has been already postponed without the referees being properly notified in advance due to an error by the league or teams.

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- Arrive at the proper time and either of the competing clubs fails to appear for the game.
- Perform assigned services, but for some reason, the game is not completed.

**Rule 604 - Game Week Responsibilities for Home CLUB**
Email visiting CLUB directions to the venue. Contact the visiting CLUB within 14 days prior to the game to review and verify plans regarding hotel, transportation, directions, phone numbers, kickoff times, etc.

**Rule 605 - Game Week Responsibilities for Visiting CLUB**
Email the home CLUB to verify the game venue and game time are correct at least 14 days prior to the game.

**Rule 606 - Pre-Game Responsibilities of Home CLUB or Hosting CLUB at Neutral Site**
- Home Team must submit their Digital Match Roster (DMR) on Mod 11 at least one (1) hour prior to kickoff. If the team does not have their starting lineup submitted, they must contact the league to have their roster set. Games will not kickoff without a roster. Failure to do so will result in a forfeit. If a player is listed on the Game Report, but does not have a photo, they will not be permitted to play in the game.
- Ice and water must be provided for both benches and should be replenished on request or at halftime. (Except at designated Neutral Sites)
- Home CLUB must report to the stadium at least 60 minutes before the start of the game.

**Rule 607 - Pre-Game Responsibilities of the Visiting Club**
- Visiting CLUB must report to the stadium at least 60 minutes before kick-off.
- Visiting CLUB coach/team administrator must submit Digital Match Roster (DMR) on Mod 11 at least one (1) hour prior to kickoff. If the team does not have their starting lineup submitted, they must contact the league to have their roster set. Games will not kickoff without a roster. Failure to do so will result in a forfeit. If a player is listed on the Game Report, but does not have a photo, they will not be permitted to play in the game.
- Visiting CLUB must bring all of their own necessary medical supplies (pre-wrap, tape, cold packs, etc.)
- Must notify home team of any possible game day transportation problems that may delay arrival and start time.

**Neutral Site Policies**
- Referee fees are to be split prior to the match by both clubs involved.
    - For the Midwest Division, fees will be split between teams at every game, including games not at neutral sites.
- Field rental fees (if applicable) are to be paid prior to the match to the correct personnel.
- Games cancelled at a neutral site within 7 days are subject to potential field rental costs, hotel costs, etc. The LEAGUE office will review these scenarios.

**Rule 608 – Home CLUB Requirements for Referees**
All CLUBs are required to provide a comfortable, safe, and welcoming environment for referees with the basic necessities of an athletic event. At no time should the home or visiting CLUB imply criticism of the game officials or refereeing in general or make comments that criticize the opposing CLUB. CLUB who fail to heed the above guideline will be subject to disciplinary action by the LEAGUE office including fines and suspensions.

**Rule 609 – Pre-Game Procedures**
Prior to kick-off, LEAGUE pre-game procedures, as described below, shall be implemented. While these procedures shall not vary, additional activities may be included based on the home CLUB's game day entertainment, presentations, and dignitary or VIP recognitions.

Check In Procedure

The center official will be responsible for checking in players and coaches prior to kickoff via Mod 11. Both teams are required to submit their Digital Match Reports (DMR) 1 hour prior to kick off. In order to make sure this process is done correctly, officials will not receive payment from teams until the check in process is complete. Officials receiving payments from teams will be confirmation that the check in process was done correctly. If officials or teams are having trouble accessing their rosters via MOD 11, they will need to reach out to their divisional managers.

CLUB Warm-Up Period

Each CLUB shall be entitled to a concurrent warm-up period of no less than TWENTY (20) minutes.

Pre-Game Responsibilities of Officials

Check Home and Visiting CLUB rosters via MOD 11 to confirm information listed is correct, players and staff that are present are listed on the game reports and have photos. The Center Referee is responsible for inputting the correct stats on the Game Report via MOD 11. Check field, nets, corner flags for damage. Confirm game time and venue via Assignr.com.

Each team will be required to upload their game day roster to MOD11 no later than one hour prior to kick-off. The Digital Match Roster will list the game details and include the roster for each team. Referees will check the rosters listed on the Digital Match Roster. All jersey numbers must match what is submitted to the league and listed on the Game Reports. If a player is listed on the Game Report, but does not have a photo, they will not be permitted to play in the game.

If the team does not have their starting lineup submitted, they must contact the league to have their roster set. Games will not kickoff without a roster. Failure to do so will result in a forfeit.

**Rule 610 – Game Procedures**

The game shall commence on the referee's signal. During the game, the referee is in control and in charge of the game. In conjunction with the Field Manager, the referee shall ensure the game begins on time and that the second half starts at the designated time.

Halftime

Halftime shall officially begin as soon as the referee blows his/her whistle signifying the end of the first half. The duration of halftime for all games shall be twelve (12) minutes unless otherwise authorized by the LEAGUE. The home CLUB shall provide and replenish the water, ice, and cups for the visiting CLUB as needed.

**Rule 611 – Postgame Procedures**

At the conclusion of the game, the following post-game procedures shall be followed.

Official Score Sheet

The center official will be responsible for submitting the final game report via Mod 11. The Digital Match Roster and Game Report in MOD11 must be completed immediately following the game and no later than midnight of the day of the match. Officials will input goals, substitutions, and misconduct. Incident Reports/Supplemental Reports may be found in the MOD11 DMR Notes Section and should be filled out for any serious incidents below:

- Ejections (Player and Staff)
- Serious Injuries
- Head Injuries (regardless of whether they return to play)
- Issues with Spectators
- Game Delays and Postponements
- Issues with Field Conditions

- Other events Officials deem noteworthy

Officials do not need to submit a match report in the assigning platform.
The official Score Sheet shall be submitted to the LEAGUE office through Mod 11 **no later than 24 hours** after the completion of the game. The game scores, statistics, and cards must be entered digitally through Mod 11.

**Rule 612 – Game Day Presentation**

Each CLUB's game day presentation objective shall be to ensure a professional and consistent atmosphere for all LEAGUE games. This goal shall be accomplished by adhering to uniform standards developed by the LEAGUE. While variations resulting from local traditions are expected, the CLUB shall ensure the game day presentation is highly professional. Each CLUB shall develop its own signature presentation, which shall remain consistent throughout the season.

**Rule 613 – Game Conduct**

Coaches, Athletic Trainers, and Non-Playing Bench Personnel Attire

Coaches and assistant coaches are strongly encouraged to wear professional attire during the game. Jeans and sandals are prohibited.

Approaching Game Officials

Coaches, assistant coaches, parents and other CLUB personnel are not permitted to enter the playing field to approach the game officials before, during, at halftime, or at the conclusion of any LEAGUE game. Game officials shall report such behavior, which is subject to LEAGUE disciplinary action. Similarly, CLUB staff shall not confront game officials in the locker room, corridor, parking lots, or any area surrounding the complex. A violation of this rule will result in a fine of $100.00 USD.

Approaching Game Officials

Coaches, Team Staff, and Parents shall not approach Game Officials prior to the game, at the end of the half, on the way to or from the locker room to lobby for a certain call or approach to the Game, or to criticize a Game Official's performance. The Coach's Evaluation of Referees is the proper vehicle to express such opinions. The Referee shall report all such incidents in the Referee Game Report, and offending individuals shall be subject to a LEAGUE fine and/or suspension.

Entering the Field

A Player, Coach or other Team Staff member entering the playing field during a USL Youth game when not authorized to do so shall be fined and/or suspended by the LEAGUE. No player, coach, team staff member, or parent shall threaten a referee verbally or physically nor make contact before, during, or after the match.

Injury Guidelines for CLUB and Officials

Given the changes relative to game officials being in complete charge of game timing, as is common in international competitions, officials will no longer stop the clock for time lost through situations described in Law 7 of the FIFA Laws of the Game (substitution, assessment and removal from the field of injured players, wasting time, or other causes). Instead, the time lost will be managed on the field by the referee, who has complete discretion regarding the exact amount of time to be recovered. The intent of Law 7 is to recover the time lost due to excessive delays for injuries, substitutions, goal celebrations, and so forth.

Serious injuries, however, are likely to be the most common situation for which the referee is called upon to add time at the end of a period of play. The time to be recovered includes the original assessment of the injury and, where necessary, the removal of the injured player from the field by medical personnel.

It is absolutely imperative that Athletic Trainers cooperate with officials in the application of the following FIFA and USSF guidelines.

a. If a player is seriously injured, the referee shall stop play.
b. After assessing the condition of the injured player, the referee shall authorize one, or at the most, two medical staff to enter the field to ascertain the type of injury and to arrange the players swift transport off the field (but not to treat the injury on the field).
c. Any player suffering from an open wound is compelled to leave the field to have the wound treated.
d. To remove the player as quickly as possible, stretcher-bearers shall enter the field with a stretcher immediately upon being signaled by the referee.
e. If the referee has determined that a player must leave the field due to injury, whether or not medical personnel has been signaled to assist the player, the injured player is required to leave the field either on foot or on the stretcher. If the player refuses to comply, the referee shall caution him for hindering the restart of play.
f. If a player has received permission from the referee to leave the field during play for an injury that is serious, that player must get the referee's permission to re-enter the field. If the ball is in play, such a player may only re-enter the field across either of the touchlines. When the ball is out of play, the player may re-enter across any of the boundary lines. Only the referee is authorized to allow an injured player to re-enter the field whether the ball is in play or not.
g. If a player is bleeding, he/she must leave the field immediately to have the bleeding stopped and skin and uniform cleaned as thoroughly as possible (or replace the uniform with a clean one). When the player is ready to return to the game, the referee will inspect the injured area and the uniform for blood at a stoppage in play before permitting the player to re-enter the game. The referee may not delegate this task to another official and must make himself available to inspect the bleeding. The referee inspection can occur only at a stoppage in play and the player may then enter the field from any point on the boundary line. The referee will not stop play for a player's re-entry, but may wait for a normal stoppage in play.
h. If play has been stopped solely for a serious injury with no other breach of the laws of the game, the referee shall restart play with a dropped ball.
i. The referee shall add on time lost for an injury at his/her discretion (whether medical attention has been given on the field or not) at the end of each period of play affected.

Nothing shall be done that would potentially cause further permanent injury to a player. In the case of on-field injuries, it is required that the referee and medical personnel communicate with each other and to use their best professional judgment.

Under no circumstances shall a player be removed if there is an injury to the head, neck, or back until it can be accomplished without risk of further injury or permanent injury to the player. Similar restraint shall be shown for injuries which are deemed to be potentially limb threatening; however, for the majority of less serious injuries, the Athletic Trainer will oversee the removal of the player from the field. The Athletic Trainer and referee shall work together to ensure the safety and well-being of the player while trying to return him/her to play as soon as possible.

<u>Athletic Trainer Guidelines</u>
Adhering to these guidelines, the Athletic Trainer shall utilize the following Universal Athletic Trainer Hand Signals to facilitate the care of an injured player.

1. Ambulance: Athletic Trainer raises hand overhead, extends index finger and rotates finger mimicking the lights of an ambulance siren.
2. Physician: With index finger of either hand, Athletic Trainer points to the corner of his/her ipsilateral eye.
3. Splints: With hands in clenched fists, Athletic Trainer strikes thumb sides of hands together.
4. Spine Board: With hands together, palms open and pronated, Athletic Trainer moves hands apart as if describing a flat surface.
5. Stretcher: Universal signal employed by all FIFA officials when signaling for a stretcher.

<u>Travel Party</u>

No CLUB shall travel to a LEAGUE game with less than Eleven (11) players and Nine (9) players in U11 and U12 respectively.

**Emergency Medical & Evacuation Plans**
Every CLUB shall establish game day emergency medical and evacuation procedures. Above all, necessary precautions shall be taken to ensure spectator, CLUB, and staff safety at all times. As most CLUB do not own their stadiums, it is imperative that security, stadium management, and CLUB officials discuss and coordinate these procedures prior to the game. If your stadium does not have an emergency plan, contact the LEAGUE office immediately.

**Evacuation Plan**
In the event that a stadium or parts thereof need to be evacuated due to an Act of God (earthquakes, hurricanes, and floods), bomb / terrorist threats, fire and smoke, etc., each CLUB shall develop, in conjunction with their stadium, a Game Day Emergency Evacuation Plan. This plan shall include at least the following specifications:

Directions on how to safely and quickly remove all spectators, CLUB, and staff from the affected area.
A detailed list of on-site employees responsible for overseeing an evacuation.
A detailed notification system for law enforcement, fire, or other emergency response departments.

Preemptive measures shall include day of game stadium inspections and advisory to security of their duties and expectations, particularly concerning fights and alcohol abuse, etc. Many municipal and established stadiums shall already have policies in place; CLUB may incorporate existing stadium plans.

**Medical Emergency Plan**
Medical emergencies create a need for immediate medical attention on the field, in the stands, and in press / VIP areas. In addition to field injuries wherein a player is injured during the game, non-participant emergencies may include heart attacks, eye injuries, head or neck trauma, heat exhaustion, obstetrical (labor) emergencies, insect or bee stings, respiratory (choking) problems, fractures, allergic reactions, etc. Utilize the following basic parameters in developing CLUB policies.

Assign staff to report initial problems to the Field Manager. Notify security and any on-site emergency response team immediately of the problem / location and deploy a staff member to the scene.
Once the emergency response team arrives and relieves the staff member, the staff member shall record initial information including time, location, and who placed the injury call before they leave the accident / injury area. This information shall be recorded on the Stadium Incident Report form provided at the end of this section.
If the patient is transported to the hospital, the designated staff member shall record the time of departure, which hospital the patient was transported to, and who transported the patient.
Emergency equipment on site shall be listed in the emergency plan and its location shall be detailed.

*A LEAGUE approved Incident Report can be found on the LEAGUE website and at the end of this handbook.

**Post-Game Reporting**

**Rule 701 – Post game reporting for Officials**
The officials will be responsible for submitting the final game report via MOD11.

**Disciplinary Regulations**

**Rule 801 – LEAGUE Disciplinary System**
The LEAGUE office shall have the authority to suspend, fine or disqualify team officials, or competing CLUBs for violating LEAGUE rules or for any action or conduct not in the best interest of soccer or the LEAGUE. The LEAGUE office has the authority to act on behalf of the LEAGUE regarding any breach of regulations or rules, or it may refer discussion on any breach of the rules to the National Review, Appeals, and Discipline Committee (RAD) for review. The LEAGUE office hands down any final decision on a breach of rules. CLUB and its players must abide by all decisions of game officials during games.

- A sending off will result in a minimum of one (1) game suspension. The Disciplinary Review Committee at the LEAGUE office will determine if further punishment is required. Red cards are not reviewable by the LEAGUE office and CLUB cannot appeal a single game suspension for a red card. CLUB can appeal any additional suspension levied by the LEAGUE.
- Any player accumulating five (5) yellow cards during the regular season will be suspended for the following game.

**Rule 802 - Serving Suspensions during the Regular Season**
The penalties set forth shall apply to all cards awarded to a player in any LEAGUE game. For the purposes of determining accumulations and game suspensions, any games that count as part of a team's official LEAGUE schedule shall be utilized.

Guidelines for sending-off (Current Game)
If the venue has locker rooms provided for each team, players and coaches sent off from the field of play shall be met at the sideline at midfield by home team security and escorted to the locker room and are not permitted to watch the game. They must remain in the locker room for the remainder of the match. Additionally, coaches are not permitted to communicate with their team staff or players during the remainder of the game and are not allowed to remain in the locker room during half time. The type of communication prohibited would include cellular, 2-way radios, electronic / digital, written or verbal. Ejected players or coaches returning to the field of play or stands during or directly following the match are subject to additional sanctions.

If the venue does not have locker rooms provided for teams (ex. USL Youth Finals, Neutral Match Venues), players sent off from the field of play shall be allowed to remain in the technical area, provided they do not disrupt the game. If the player that has been sent off causes disruption, they must be escorted out of the venue by a coaching staff or adult member of the respective club and will not be permitted to watch the game. Coaches sent off must leave the venue if they do not have a locker room provided for them.
**Note: Security personnel should only enter the field at the Referee's request or when actions on the field present an immediate security risk.

Coaching Staff Suspension Parameters & Restrictions
Any manager, coach, assistance coach, Athletic Trainer, or other official bench personnel is prohibited from assuming any official duty at or near the team bench while serving a suspension. Any infringement of this rule may result in the forfeiture of the game and will include discipline for each infraction. (Any Athletic Trainer sent off during a game should remain in the locker room area through the end of the game and may only return to the field with the permission of the referee in the event of an emergency).

Coaches serving suspensions are allowed to communicate with players pre- and postgame only. Suspended coaches may NOT communicate with the team at halftime. Suspended coaches must NOT be on the field during warm-ups and may NOT stand or in any way be in close proximity to the field of play. Following a game, a coach serving a suspension may enter the locker room but must NOT be in or around the field of play. Coaches must sit in the press box or in some location other than in the grandstand or on the sideline. If this is not possible, then the coach is prohibited from attending the game.

Extending a Suspension
In any case, the LEAGUE reserves the right to impose suspensions beyond any of these parameters for offenses deemed to be particularly violent and against the spirit of the game.

Major Game Misconduct
In addition to those offenses set forth above, major fines or suspensions, *at the sole and absolute discretion of the LEAGUE*, shall be levied against Players (whether or not they were awarded a card by the Referee), Coaches or other Team Staff for such game conduct as fighting, provoking a fight, criticizing Game Officials with words or gestures, entering the Game Officials' locker room, physical contact with Game Officials separate from Referee Assault, using excessive force, deliberate attempts to injure spitting, provoking crowd disorders, profane language that can be heard by the crowd or broadcast audience, obscene gestures, improper conduct during the national anthem, taunting, abuse of spectators and others, failure to leave the field when instructed by the Referee to do so, improper conduct following the award of a card, excessive delay tactics or excessive and obvious feigning of injuries, or other unsportsmanlike conduct detrimental to USL Youth. The LEAGUE may levy fines and/or suspensions for such behavior, whether or not it is reported in the Referee Game Report.

**Rule 803 - Suspension During the USL Youth Finals**

Cautions
Any player accumulating three (3) cautions during the LEAGUE championship event group play will be prohibited from participating in the team's next game. Yellow cards are erased after group play and players start clean in the next round unless a player receives his/her third yellow card on the last game of group play and advance to the next round, the player will have to serve the suspension on the next game.

Sending-offs
Any player sent off during the USL Youth Finals will be suspended from the next game unless the season is over. In that case, the suspension will be served in the team's first LEAGUE game the following season.

**Rule 804 - Commencement of Suspensions**
Suspensions shall commence on the first game following the date of the last offense. However, the LEAGUE Office reserves the right to review all suspensions for misconducts that are especially severe or violent in nature. A player or coach that was suspended in a game must serve the suspension of the game with the age group with which they were suspended. No player or coach may participate with another team within the CLUB until suspension has been served with said team.

**Rule 805 - LEAGUE Office Discretionary Power on Suspensions**
The LEAGUE office may, at its discretion, rule that a specific game shall not count toward the completion of a suspension, if satisfied that the game has been purposely arranged by the CLUB with a view toward enabling the player in question to complete his/her suspension at a specific time in order to qualify him/her to play in another specific game.

The LEAGUE office may, at its discretion, waive all suspensions for the accumulation of cautions against players and coaches prior to the LEAGUE championship game.

**Rule 806 - LEAGUE Disciplinary Committee**
A panel of individuals from the LEAGUE office shall conduct review of disciplinary issues. Such a panel will consist of at least three (3) people on the USL staff, one of which includes the senior LEAGUE Director.

**Rule 807 - U.S. Soccer Fine for Serious Incidents**
The Secretary General of U.S. Soccer has the power to impose fines up to $10,000 for any incident bringing the game into disrepute.

**Conduct of Teams**

**Rule 901 - Intentional Throwing of Games**
Agreeing or promising to lose a game is in strict violation of LEAGUE rules. Any CLUB or personnel associated with a CLUB who agrees to lose, attempts to lose, or otherwise adversely affects the outcome of any game with which he/she is or may be in any way associated, or who shall solicit or attempt to induce any player or other person associated with a member CLUB to lose, attempt to lose, or otherwise adversely affect the outcome of any soccer game, will be immediately declared ineligible and may be subject to expulsion from the LEAGUE.

Likewise, any person from a member CLUB that is solicited to commit or has knowledge of any of the foregoing acts and fails to inform the LEAGUE office immediately of all facts and circumstances connected with the solicitation shall be declared by the LEAGUE to be permanently ineligible and may be subject to suspension and expulsion from the LEAGUE.

Additionally, any player who, in the opinion of the referee and/or the LEAGUE office, attempts to purposefully lose a game by intentionally scoring an own goal as a field player, or intentionally allowing an own goal to occur while playing as a goalkeeper, will be subject to disciplinary action.

**Rule 902 – Illegal Incentives for Winning a Game**
Any person connected with a member CLUB or team who shall offer or give any gift or reward to a player or other person connected with another member CLUB for services rendered, supposed to be rendered, or to have rendered in defeating or attempting to defeat a competing team or otherwise adversely affect the outcome of any game shall be declared by the LEAGUE office to be ineligible for a period of not less than three (3) years.

Likewise, any person with knowledge of such an incident, who fails to inform the LEAGUE office immediately of such an offer and of all facts and circumstances connected therewith, shall be declared by the LEAGUE office to be ineligible for a period of not less than three (3) years.

Gifts to Referee or Assistant Referees
Any person connected with a member CLUB who shall give or offer to give any gifts or reward to a referee or assistant referee for services rendered or supposed to be rendered in defeating or attempting to defeat a competing CLUB, or otherwise adversely affect the outcome of any part of a game shall be declared by the LEAGUE office to be permanently ineligible.

Likewise, any referee or assistant referee who shall render, or promise or agree to render, any such decision otherwise than on its merits, or who shall solicit or accept such a gift or reward for any such service or decision, shall be declared permanently ineligible by the LEAGUE. Any referee or assistant referee who, having been offered any such gift or reward, or having been solicited to render any such decision otherwise than on its merits, shall be obligated to inform the LEAGUE immediately of such an offer or solicitation and all facts and circumstances connected therewith. Failure to report such solicitation shall be cause for the LEAGUE to declare the official permanently ineligible to work LEAGUE games and will recommend a USSF / CSA suspension from all games.

Betting on Soccer Games
Betting on LEAGUE games by any insider, manager, coach, referee, assistant referee, owner, employee, LEAGUE officer, or LEAGUE official is strictly prohibited. Any person associated with the LEAGUE or individual CLUB who bets any sum on any USL affiliated LEAGUE shall be declared persona non-gratis by the LEAGUE and permanently banned from all LEAGUE activities.

Scandalous Conduct
The LEAGUE office may suspend for an indefinite period and/or impose a fine on any officer, director, player or employee of a member CLUB guilty of gross misbehavior in public, including intoxication, drug use, fighting,

quarreling, indecency or other scandalous conduct whether on or off the playing field when such conduct is, in the LEAGUE's opinion, prejudicial to the best interests of the sport of soccer or the LEAGUE.

Moral Turpitude

Any employee, player or official of any member CLUB or the LEAGUE who shall be convicted of a felony or who shall have been found by the LEAGUE office to have conducted themselves in a manner detrimental to the best interests of soccer or the LEAGUE may be declared by the LEAGUE office to be suspended for such period of time as the LEAGUE shall deem to be appropriate.

Tampering

During the regular season, playoffs and USL Youth Finals, no manager, officer or representative of a CLUB shall approach a registered player, coach or staff member of another CLUB regarding employment unless that contracted party's employing CLUB gives written permission to the requesting CLUB to make such contact. Violations of this rule shall subject the offending party to disciplinary action from the LEAGUE office.

Vandalism/Destruction of Property

No player, manager, officer, or representative of a CLUB shall intentionally damage or destroy the physical property of another CLUB or LEAGUE partner. This prohibition shall extend to the damage and destruction of locker rooms or other area of a leased or owned stadium or facility.

Other Misconduct

Nothing contained in this rule shall be construed as exclusively defining or otherwise limiting conduct, acts, transactions, or practices that are not in the best interests of the sport of soccer or of the LEAGUE. Any and all other conducts, acts, transactions, or practices which are not in the best interests of soccer or the LEAGUE are prohibited and shall be subject to such penalties imposed by the LEAGUE office such as permanent ineligibility, ineligibility for a period of time, suspension of voting rights, suspension from playing, or suspension of an individual from sitting on committee or advisory board, as the facts in the particular case may, in his/her opinion, warrant.

Reporting False Scores

Any reporting of false scores to the LEAGUE office will result in immediate action and CLUB could face fines and other sanctions as deemed necessary by the LEAGUE.

**Rule 1102 – Master Roster**

The LEAGUE Team Roster, located on the official LEAGUE website, is the official player roster of the CLUB. There is no limit to the number of foreign players on the roster, as long as they have the proper international clearance, when applicable. Only 18 players from the CLUB roster can be used for games on each team (16 players for U11 and U12), and these players must also be on the official score sheet for the game. Players can only be on one roster during the season.

Team Rosters & Player Eligibility

The CLUB may have unlimited players on its master roster and shall have a minimum of 11 (minimum of 9 for U11 and U12) and a maximum of 18 players dressed in uniforms, present and eligible to participate in each game (maximum of 16 players for U11 and U12). Club must comply with all LEAGUE and USSF/CSA rules regarding use of foreign players. CLUB must register all players prior to participation in the LEAGUE. The only official roster of eligible players will be located on the LEAGUE website and is the responsibility of the CLUB to manage. LEAGUE may require proof of citizenship or legal residency of each player.

**Rule 1103 - Eligible Player**

A player who is properly registered with the LEAGUE and who is not subject to any kind of suspension by the LEAGUE, USSF or CSA, is considered an eligible player. The LEAGUE office will produce updated discipline reports weekly that specify the eligibility of suspended players.

**Rule 1104 – Ineligible Player**
Players listed on the Master Roster, but not eligible to play due to reasons such as missing a player photo on the official score sheet, registration forms, proof of citizenship, awaiting international clearance, illegal substitutions or serving a LEAGUE suspension shall be considered an ineligible player. Teams using players before they have been properly cleared to compete by the LEAGUE office will be subject to a loss of Three (3) points in the LEAGUE standings, forfeiture of the game in which the ineligible player was used, and a fine of $50 for a violation of this rule.

**Rule 1105 – Illegal Player**
Any player who does not appear on the Official Score Sheet and does not have a photo listed on the score sheet, is not age eligible and competes in a game shall be considered an illegal player. Any team using an illegal player shall be subject to a loss of THREE (3) points in the LEAGUE standings, forfeiture of the game in which the illegal player was used, and a fine of $150 for violation of this rule. For clubs with multiple teams under one age group, players may only be on one master roster. Players competing on a team for which they are not on the master roster are considered illegal. Players are NOT allowed to cross over to other teams after playing in ONE match during the USL Youth season.

**Rule 1106 – League Registration – Score Sheet**
All players, coaches, and staff members must present their official USLY Digital Match Roster (DMR) via MOD 11 to the referee prior to the game. If the individual's picture is not on the USLY DMR, the individual will not be eligible for the game. Teams will be notified by LEAGUE of any missing requirements for obtaining approval for players. Teams can also view any missing documents for players through Sports Engine. Players will not be made available to add to a roster until they have been approved by the League. Until these requirements are met, the individual cannot participate. Additionally, an individual is not considered registered until the team can roster the player onto the team and the players photo appears on the DMR. **Other organization player passes may not be used as a form of identification.**

**Player Registration**

**Rule 1201 – Player Registration Dates**
U-11 Player => Players born in 2014
U-12 Player => Players born in 2013
U-13 Player => Players born in 2012
U-14 Player => Players born in 2011
U-15 Player => Players born in 2010
U-16 Player => Players born in 2009
U-17 Player => Players born in 2008
U-17/19 Player => Players born in 2008/2007/2006 (Girls Only)
U-18/19 Player => Players born in 2007/2006 (Boys Only)
*3 Players born in 2005 permitted for U17/19 & U18/19 age group

Commented [KB6]: Change age groups/birth dates

**Rule 1205 – Player Liability**
Players shall assume all risks, responsibilities and liabilities for loss, damage, injury or death to himself/herself while engaged as a player for a CLUB or as a player on a representative team of the LEAGUE subject to applicable state laws and regulations.

**Code of Conduct**
The LEAGUE will follow FIFA's Code of Conduct. It is just as important for parents and fans to know the Code of Conduct as it is the players and coaches. It is also important that every player on the field understands this Code of Conduct before competing in their first match.

FIFA's Code of Conduct encapsulates all the sporting, moral, and ethical principles for which FIFA has always stood for and which it will continue to fight for in the future regardless of the influences and pressures that may be brought to bear. The ten golden rules not only serve as a credo for FIFA as the world football governing body, but they also reinforce the sense of fraternity and cooperation among the members of the worldwide football family.

**Play to Win**
Winning is the object of playing any game. Never set out to lose. If you do not play to win, you are cheating your opponents, deceiving those who are watching, and also fooling yourself. Never give up against stronger opponents but never relent against weaker ones. It is an insult to any opponent to play at less than full strength. Play to win, until the final whistle.

**Play Fair**
Winning is without value if victory has been achieved unfairly or dishonestly. Cheating is easy, but brings no pleasure. Playing fair requires courage and character. It is also more satisfying. Fair Play always has its reward, even when the game is lost. Playing fair earns you respect, while cheaters are detested. Remember: It's only a game. Games are pointless unless played fairly.
Observe the Laws of the Game
All games need rules to guide them. Without rules, there would be chaos. The rules of football are simple and easy to learn. Make an effort to learn them so that you understand the game better. This makes you a better player or coach. It is just as important to understand the spirit of the rules. They are designed to make the game fun to play and fun to watch. By sticking to the rules, you will enjoy the game more.

**Respect Opponents, Teammates, Referees, Officials and Spectators**
Fair Play means respect. Without opponents there can be no game. They have the same rights as you have, including the right to be respected. Your teammates are your colleagues. You form a team in which all members are equal. Referees are there to maintain discipline and Fair Play. Always accept their decisions without arguing and help them to help you enjoy the game more. Officials are also part of the game and must be respected accordingly. Spectators give the game atmosphere. They want to see the game played fairly, but must also behave fairly themselves.

**Accept Defeat with Dignity**
Nobody wins all the time. You win some, you lose some. Learn to lose graciously. Don't seek excuses for defeat. Genuine reasons will always be self-evident. Congratulate the winners with good grace. Don't blame the referee or anyone else. Determine to do better next time. Good losers earn more respect than bad winners.

**Promote the Interests of Football**
Football is the world's greatest game. But, it always needs your help to keep it as Number One. Think of football's interests before your own. Think how your actions may affect the image of the game. Talk about the positive things in the game. Encourage other people to watch it or play it fairly. Help others to get as much fun from football as you do. Be an ambassador for the game.

**Reject Corruption, Drugs, Racism, Violence** and other dangers to our sport. Football's huge popularity sometimes makes it vulnerable to negative outside interests. Watch out for attempts to tempt you into cheating or using drugs. Drugs have no place in football or in our society. Say no to drugs. Help kick racism out of football. Treat all players and everyone else equally, regardless of their skin color or origin. Show that football does not want violence, even from your own fans. Football is sport, and sport is peace.

**Help Others to Resist Corruptive Pressures**
You may hear that teammates or other people you know are being tempted to cheat in some way. They need your help. Don't hesitate to stand by them. Give them the strength to resist. Remind them of their commitment to their teammates and to the game itself. Form a block of solidarity like a solid defense on the field of play.
Don't be ashamed to show up anybody who you are sure is trying to make others cheat. It's better to expose them and have them removed before they can do any damage. It often takes more courage to denounce what is wrong than to go along with a dishonest plan. Your honesty will be admired but your complicity will not. Don't just say no. Denounce the culprits who are trying to spoil our sport before they can persuade somebody else to say yes.

**Denounce those who Attempt to Discredit our Sport**
Don't be ashamed to show up anybody who you are sure is trying to make others cheat. It's better to expose them and have them removed before they can do any damage. It often takes more courage to denounce what is wrong than to go along with a dishonest plan. Your honesty will be admired but your complicity will not. Don't just say no. Denounce the culprits who are trying to spoil our sport before they can persuade somebody else to say yes.

**Honor those who Defend Football's Good Reputation**
The good name of football has survived because the vast majority of people who love the game are honest and fair. Sometimes somebody does something exceptional that deserves our special recognition. They should be honored and their fine example made public. This encourages others to act in the same way. Help promote football's image by publicizing its good deeds.

All competition rules and minimum standards that are applicable in the U13 through U19 age groups apply to the U11 through U12 age groups. Any exceptions or alterations to those rules and standards are included in the following guidelines:

**Competition Details**

Commented [KB7]: Change birth years

**U11**
Format: 9v9
Birth Year: 2014
Field Size: 80 Yards x 55 Yards (max)
Game Length: 2 x 30 minute halves
Ball Size: 4
Max Game Day Roster: 16

**U12**
Format: 9v9
Birth Year: 2013
Field Size: 80 Yards x 55 Yards (max)
Game Length: 2 x 30 minute halves
Ball Size: 4
Max Game Day Roster: 16

**U13-U19**
Format: 11v11
Field Size: 112 Yards x 75 Yards (max)
Ball Size: 5

Max Game Day Roster: 18

**Field Specifications**

All specifications pertaining to the playing field are uniform with what exist in the U-13 through U19 age groups, with the exception of those listed below that are specific to U-11 through U-12 fields.

- The playing surface should be a natural grass/artificial turf surface in good playing condition.
- Acceptable goal sizes is 7 x 21 feet (preferred), with both goals being the same size.
- Center circle is 8-yard radius.

**Roster Size**

Maximum of sixteen (16) players, with a minimum of nine (9) players for U11 and U12. Maximum of eighteen (18) players, with a minimum of eleven (11) players for U13-U19.

Goalkeepers in U-11 age groups are not allowed to punt the ball past midfield. If a punt lands in the opponent's half of the field, an indirect free kick will be awarded to the opponent at midfield.

**Heading**

USSF has recommended the following guidelines for players in the U11 Age groups. Please note, USL Youth Policies regarding these matters may change as new developments occur.

When a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick (IFK) 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. This rule will only be applied in the U11 Age Group.

**USL Youth Incident Report**

Date: Venue:

Severity: (circle) Critical Significant Minor

Incident Type: (circle)
Automobile Fan Incident Facilities Concessions (Food) Medical / Injury Property Damage

Property Theft Ticketing Other

Parties Involved: (circle)
Ticket Holder Staff / Volunteer Player
Officials Stadium Representative Other

Time of Incident: (am/pm) Location of Incident:

Name(s) of Parties / Co.
*Name Address Phone Number*

Description:

Resolution/Action

Witness #1
*Name:*

*Address:*

*Telephone*:

Description: