

Mesilla Valley Soccer League General Rules

Ratified on February 18th, 2008

Article I – Playing Year

The playing year shall begin on September 1 and end on August 31 the following year. The playing year shall be divided into fall, spring and summer playing seasons. The schedule for each playing season shall be prepared by the Scheduler or by a committee appointed by him/her.

Article II – Fees

Player fees shall be determined by the Board of Directors prior to each playing season. These fees shall be commensurate with the budget and shall provide for the operating expenses of the league.

Article III – Audit

An audit of the league finances shall be conducted at the end of each playing season. Three members of the Board of Directors, excluding those authorized to sign checks, shall be appointed by the President to conduct an audit.

Article IV – Divisions

For the purposes of equitable competition and ease of scheduling, the teams of the league shall be assigned to conferences according to their level of play. Provided there are an adequate number of teams, there will be a men's and women's division. Within each division, teams will be assigned to a conference according to their level of play as shown by their previous records. A new team will be assigned to a conference by the Scheduler.

Teams finishing in the last place of their conference may be moved down one conference and those finishing in the first place of their conference may be moved up one conference for the following season. If insufficient men's and women's teams exist to provide reasonable schedules for both divisions, co-rec teams will not be allowed. If one of the divisions has sufficient teams to provide an acceptable schedule the cross division scheduling will be used to provide a full playing schedule.

Article V – Age

A player must be at least fourteen years of age to play on a team in the league. To play in the men's Over 30 division, the players must be over the age of 30 at the time of play. For the Women's "D" division, 3 players under the age of 26 will be permitted to be registered. During the summer, 5 players under the age of 26 are permitted.

Article VI – Team Size

A team may have an unlimited number of registered players.

Article VII – Player Assignment, Transfer and Release

Once a player has registered with a team, that player is bound to that team. If a player wishes to change teams, he/she may do so only if:

- 1) The team with which he/she is registered must sign a transfer form acknowledging that the player is transferring and the player has no unpaid fees. (Transfer forms will be made available by M.V.S.L. These forms must be used for a valid transfer and must be submitted to the League Registrar no later than two (2) days prior to game day.)
- 2) The receiving team must sign accepting the player.

- 3) The player pays a \$5 transfer fee
- 4) A player may transfer only once per season.
- 5) Entire transfer process must be completed no less than 2 days prior to participating in the next scheduled match.
- 6) There will be a \$5 replacement fee for lost cards.

If there is a dispute between player and old team representative, then the League officers will resolve the dispute. Players are only allowed to transfer through the middle of the season. This entire process must be completed prior to the 5th game of the season. Any penalty points and/or sanctions will follow the player to the new team. A player must have played at least 5 games with new team in order to be eligible for post season play. (Teams will be allowed 2 exceptions for this in the Fall season only, to accommodate high school players)

Article VIII – Team Responsibilities

Home Team

The home team shall have the responsibility to:

- 1) Choose home side of the field. Bench and spectators are to remain on their side of the field during the entire game and halftime.
- 2) Change jerseys in case of a conflict of colors with the visiting team.
- 3) Provide game balls.

Visiting Teams

The visiting team shall have the responsibility to:

- 1) Take the side of the field opposite the home team. Bench and spectators are to remain on their side of the field during the entire game and halftime.
- 2) Provide game balls

All teams must be in good standing and all fees due to League must be paid to be eligible for post season play. This includes team registration fees, player registration fees, and all team/player fines and processing fees.

Article IX – Protests

The team representative intending to protest a game must notify the referee and the opposing team rep of the intention either prior to, at halftime or immediately after the game.

Written Protest Required

The protesting team must submit the protest in writing to the President (or Vice President in the President's absence) of the league within 48 hours of the protested game. The protest must explain in detail how the protesting team was put to an unfair disadvantage and/or show how the team was treated in a manner not commensurate with the aims and ideals of the league. Unfair treatment of a team member shall be considered unfair treatment of the team. The decisions of the referee on points of fact connected with play shall be final so far as the result of the game are concerned. If the protest is upheld, the game shall be replayed with a different referee at a time set aside for make-up games.

Fee Required

A \$25 filing fee must accompany the written protest, to be refunded only if the protest is upheld. If the protest is not upheld, the matter will be closed and the filing fee will be retained by the league.

Hearing

The Judiciary committee will meet for the sole purpose of resolving the protest. The representatives of both teams and the referee of the game shall be notified of the time and place of the meeting at least seven days prior to the meeting. The meeting will be closed with only one representative from each team and the referee appearing before the Judiciary Committee. The Judiciary Committee will hear from all parties and decide by majority vote whether to uphold the protest. The decision of the Judiciary Committee with regards to protests is final.

Failure to Appear

If the representative of the protesting team fails to appear within thirty minutes of the scheduled meeting, the protest shall be dropped and the matter resolved. The league will retain the filing fee.

Individual Card Protests

An individual may protest a card received during a game by submitting a written protest, accompanied by a \$25 filing fee, within 48 hours of the protested card. If the player wishes to have the hearing on the protest scheduled prior to their next regularly scheduled game, the protest must be submitted within 24 hours of the protested card. The written protest and filing fee should be submitted to the MVSL President or Vice President.

The Judiciary Committee will hear the protest. Although a card given by a referee cannot be removed, if the protest is upheld the related penalty and/or penalty points may be amended. Also, in the event the protest is upheld, the \$25 filing fee shall be refunded, otherwise the filing fee shall be retained by the league. The findings of the Judiciary Committee with regard to the protest are final.

Article X – Player Rules

To be eligible to participate in a league tournament, a player must have been registered with the team on which he/she is to play and must have played in at least 2 regularly scheduled season games with that team.

Article XI – Rules of Play

Laws of the Game

The FIFA Laws of the Game shall apply to any and all competitions sponsored by the league except as provided herein.

Substitutions

There shall be unlimited substitution of players during a game. Substitutions may be made at any time with the consent of the referee.

Tie Breakers

Tie breakers will be used in tournament play for the championship and consolation games only. A tiebreaker shall consist of two 10 minute overtime periods with no "sudden victory", as per FIFA laws. If still tied at the end of overtime play, the winner will be decided by penalty kicks as per FIFA laws.

Article XII – Unacceptable Behavior

The Mesilla Valley Soccer League seeks to provide individuals with a respectful, safe and enjoyable environment in which they may challenge, improve, and develop individual and team skills. To this effect, the league will not tolerate disrespectful or violent behavior toward any individual(s).

Alcohol:

As per City of Las Cruces and Las Cruces Public School District rules and regulations, alcohol consumption is not permitted on or in the vicinity of any of the soccer fields.

Appeals of Referee Decisions During a Match:

A team's captain may occasionally request a referee to explain a point of law or a decision provided that this does not adversely affect the flow of the game and is done in a respectful manner. Referees are not required to explain their decisions, but must deal with the team captain (and all other players and team officials) in a respectful manner. On matters regarding points of law, it is recommended that referees educate players on FIFA or local laws as is appropriate for the situation. No other team member may

communicate with referee (unless requested by referee) prior to, during, or after game. Team reps should be marked accordingly with appropriate attire that makes their status obvious (IE – Captain's armband)

Appeals of Fines and/or Suspensions:

Team Representatives may appeal any fine or penalty to the League Judiciary Committee as detailed in Article IX of the League's Constitution and by-laws. Decisions of referees can not be reversed unless there was a technical mistake in the issuance of a caution or send-off.

Failure to Show Up for a Match:

Any team that fails to have the minimum required number of registered players checked in and ready to play by ten minutes after the scheduled match time shall forfeit the match. Zero points shall be awarded to the team failing to have sufficient players ready to play. If both teams fail to have the minimum number of players checked in and ready to play by ten minutes after game time, the match shall not be played and zero points shall be credited to both teams. Referees shall not extend this ten-minute limit. A \$25 fine (per occurrence) shall be levied against all teams that fail to have an adequate number of players ready to play by the required time.

Abandoned Match:

A match that is abandoned by the referee for behavioral problems by players or officials of any team shall be credited as a win for the opposing team regardless of the score or remaining time of the match. A minimum \$50 fine will be levied against the offending team. Additional fine(s), suspension(s), or expulsion(s) may be levied following a review by the MVSL Judiciary Committee.

Player Misconduct:

The following fines and suspensions shall be levied for any player(s) that receive a send-off (red card) before, during or after a match. The league reserves the right to issue suspensions and fines in 'special circumstances' even if the referee did not issue a card.

Multiple offenses (except for 'aggravated' misconduct) will be compiled for one calendar year beginning with the first game of the Fall Season. With the exception of aggravated offenses, fines and suspensions are specific for a specific player playing in a specific division (*i.e.* a player receiving a one game suspension in men's open may continue to participate in men's over 30).

Aggravated offenses (defined as a prolonged abusive or violent behavior or extremely violent behavior) will be compiled for life.

Reason	First Offense	Second Offense	Third Offense
Player receives second caution in one match (7)	No fine. Player suspended one game (\$5 fee)	\$10 fine Player suspended one game	\$20 fine Player suspended one game
Obvious goal scoring opportunity (5)	No fine. Player suspended one game (\$5 fee)	\$10 fine Player suspended one game	\$20 fine Player suspended one game
Spits at any person (3)	\$25 fine. Player suspended for one game	\$50 fine. Player suspended for one game	\$100 fine. Player suspended for one game
Uses foul or abusive language (FAL) (6)	\$25 fine. Player suspended for one game	\$50 fine. Player suspended for two games	\$100 fine. Player suspended for four games
Serious Foul Play (SFP) (1)	\$25 fine. Player suspended for one game	\$50 fine. Player suspended for two games	\$100 fine. Player suspended for four games
Violent Conduct (VC) (2)	\$25 fine. Player suspended for one game	\$50 fine. Player suspended for two games	\$100 fine. Player suspended for four games
Aggravated FAL, SFP, or VC (AGG)	\$50 fine Player suspended for ten games.	\$100 fine Player suspended for one calendar year.	\$500 fine Player suspended for life.

Article XII(2) – Unacceptable Behavior (Judiciary Committee)

All disciplinary actions will be handled through the Judiciary Committee. This committee will be made up of elected Board members in good standing. The elected Vice-President shall head this committee regardless of other member's board position and will utilize the input for penalty decisions. Any Board member may call for a penalty review for any instance and decision will be made by majority vote. The Judiciary Committee can call for a hearing to obtain input for a penalty resolution or dispute without a team or player submitting a protest. If necessary, or found to be a "special circumstances" instance, then committee can determine if an additional penalty and/or fine is warranted. Team reps will be given a minimum of 72 hours notice of any such hearing and attendance will be mandatory. If a hearing is called to determine or clarify actions of a specific player, then attendance will be mandatory for that player as well as the team rep.

Article XIII – Team Standings

Method

Team standings in the league will be determined on the following basis:

- 1) A team will receive 3 points for a win.
- 2) A team will receive 1 point for a tie.
- 3) A team will receive zero points for a loss.

Resolution of Ties

If two or more teams are tied in points as described above, the leader will be decided by:

- 1) The team with the least number of penalty points assessed.
- 2) The result of head to head play.
- 3) The least number of goals against.
- 4) The greatest number of goals for.

Article XIV – Postponement and Cancellation of Games

Games may be postponed (rescheduled) only if:

- 1) The Fields and Equipment Director determines that the fields are not playable or that play would do serious damage to the fields
- 2) The referee determines that conditions do not allow the game to be played or that continued play would be hazardous to the players.
- 3) Teams may request that a game be rescheduled for the purpose of attending a tournament, but they must give at least one weeks notice.
- 4) All cancellations must be approved by both team reps and the division scheduler.

MVSL Local Laws

Uniforms

Each player must wear a shirt or jersey the same color as the rest of the team.

Each player's shirt or jersey must have a unique number permanently marked and that number must be listed on the team roster with the player's name.

Uniforms may not be shared during the course of any game. Each player must have their own jersey with unique identifying number for the entire duration of the game.

The designated home team is responsible for changing jerseys if the two competing teams are so similar as to create possible player identification problems on the field as determined by the referee.

A player's sock, shorts or sliding pants do not need to be consistent in color with the rest of his/her uniform.

A player may cover his/her legs for protection from the cold or for religious reasons.

The uniform code has been put into effect to aid the referee in identifying players and to accurately identify players when recording misconduct.

All players must wear covered shin guards.

Player Pass Cards

Before a player can play, he/she must have a pass card containing the following:

- 1) Current date (MVSL registration year begins in the fall)
- 2) Signature of the registrar
- 3) Appropriate team name
- 4) Recognizable picture and player's signature laminated to the card

Exceptions may be made by a member of the Board of Directors only under extenuating circumstances.

Team Roster

Team rosters shall be provided by the league through the referee scheduler and league registrar. The roster must show the team's name and list each player and their shirt or jersey number. The referee must verify the accuracy of the roster when inspecting players and player pass cards. If a player is not listed on the game time roster, they are not eligible for that game. If any player not legally registered with the league enters the field of play, the game is subject to forfeiture by the offending team.