

METROPLEX PREMIER LEAGUE

RULES & REGULATIONS

As of JULY 2019

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RULES & REGULATIONS

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METROPLEX PREMIER LEAGUE RULES & REGULATIONS

I. ELIGIBILITY

- A. Any person of proper age is eligible to play in this League.
- B. Any person under suspension from this or any other Association, league or group must petition the Executive Board for permission to play in this League.
- C. Any person currently registered as a professional soccer player will be eligible for play in the Metroplex Premier League.
- D. Age requirement dateline will be the first scheduled game date of the current season.
- E. Age Division Eligibility (as of January 1 of the current soccer year)

All Open Divisions Sixteen (16) years of age or older.

Premier Division
Division 1 - Pro Amateur
Division 2 - Elite Amateur
Division 3 - Amateur
Division 4 - Recreational Amateur

Players must reach the proper age (16 and older) on or before the first scheduled game date of the current playing season.

- F. Proof of age will be required by all players. Valid proof of age will be in the form of one of the following:
 - 1. State Issued Drivers License
 - 2. State Issued Identification Card
 - 3. Passport
 - 4. Government issued Citizen Identification Card
 - 5. Military Identification
 - 6. Digital Identification

G. REGISTRATION

- A. All required fees, registration forms, identification cards and other forms or information must be fully completed (typed or legibly printed) and submitted to the League on the designated registration date(s) for each season.
 - 1. Rosters will have a minimum of fifteen (15) players and no maximum.
 - 2. Rosters must show complete player information (name, address, city, state, zip code, phone number, and date of birth), team information and any other required information.
 - 3. All fees are due on the designated registration date(s).
 - 4. Any checks received for payment to this League that are returned by the bank for whatever reason will result in an additional bank fee of the maximum amount allowed by Texas State Law, not to exceed \$50.00 due Metroplex Premier League (MPL). The team and/or player issuing the check(s) will not be allowed to play until all monies are recovered.
 - 5. Any team that is not current on their fees will not be allowed to play. Their opponent will receive a forfeit win.
 - 6. Any team who withdraws once the season schedule is prepared will not receive a refund.
 - 7. Any team withdrawing to escape playing in an assigned division will not be allowed to return for a period of one (1) year.
- B. Game Reschedule
Home Team will be the one who picks (3) dates that they are able to host the game in case a reschedule is necessary.
- If Home & Visitor Club can not cooperate on reschedule date , League will propose a date and neutral site where both clubs will incur cost.

II. REGISTRATION (con't)

- C. Only with good cause and approval of the Secretary/Registrar can a team register after the designated registration date(s) for each season.
- D. Each player must have a signed liability release on file with this League before being allowed to play. The release shall be considered valid and in force each time the player presents a ID Card to a game official and participates in a league scheduled activity. Cancellation of the signed liability release may be requested by the player in writing to MPL.
- E. All teams will be registered with U.S.S.F. through USSSA Soccer and this League.
- F. Players may register with no more than one (1) registered team in Metroplex Premier League. The player(s) can only be registered to a team at team registration and league scheduled roster change sessions. Exception, Secretary/Registrar may, with good cause, allow player(s) to be registered at other times. Players are not restricted from registering with another U.S.S.F. sanctioned playing association.
- G. In order to maintain a constant and fair level of competition, the League President reserves the right to place teams in a division other than requested.
 - 1. For the divisions that contain more than one (1) playing division, a team may be moved to an upper or lower division based on the team's past playing record.
- H. For the purposes of maintaining records of discipline, a team shall be considered a returning team if there are a minimum of five (5) players registered from the previous team. Any discipline or monetary assessments shall be the responsibility of the returning team. In the case of a team splitting to form two or more teams, any discipline assessments shall be assigned to whichever team has the players with the most penalty point total from the previous season.

III. ADD/DELETE/TRANSFER

- IV. After registration and only with good cause and permission from the Secretary/Registrar can a team add players. No changes will be allowed to a roster after August 1st for the Fall season and March 1st for the Spring season.
- V. Any team releasing players after registration must notify to the League in written.
- VI. A player is bound to a team for a given season once they have signed the release/registration form and the league has received the player's registration fee. Only with just cause and extreme circumstances may a player transfer to any other team during a season and only with written permission of the League Registrar and a written release from his present team, providing they comply with rules A and B above, and Metroplex Premier League Rules.

VII. PAYMENT OF REFEREE (Game Officials)

Payment of referees and assistant referees will be done by the teams prior to the start of the games. Teams must use cash to pay the game officials. The amount will be determined by Referee assignor per market value at the time of the season , of which two (3) are assigned to each game.

- A. Failure to pay game officials will result in forfeiture of the game, an appearance before the Appeals & Disciplinary Committee, and the posting of bond money to insure against future problems of payment to game officials.
- B. Failure to pay game officials includes lack of monies at the scheduled game time.

IV. PAYMENT OF REFEREE (Game Officials-con't)

- C. Should a team fail to pay the officials for a scheduled game, payment of the officials **MUST** be received in the MPL office prior to any further participation in league play and Rule VIII, Letter B will be strictly enforced.
- D. Should a team forfeit for failure to appear for the game, not enough players, no ID cards, the team responsible for the forfeit is required to pay the entire referee fee incurred (referee and assistant referees) plus an additional \$25.00 assessment to Metroplex Premier League prior to any further participation in MPL activities.

V. TEAM CAPTAIN/ COACH/ CLUB MANAGER or REPRESENTATIVE RESPONSIBILITY

- A. Responsible for their team's conduct on and off the field of play, this includes litter control and alcoholic beverage consumption.
- B. Responsible for their team's spectator conduct. The referee has the authority to insist that the coach or acting coach deal with the misconduct of the spectators and resolve the problem. Failure to do so may result in the coach's or acting coach's dismissal from the field and/or termination of the match.
- C. Keep coaches and spectators within ten (10) yards, either side, of midfield.
- D. Home teams must provide (4) suitable game balls for the referee to use in the game. (See Rule VI, Letter C)
- E. Provide "league issued" game sheet to the game official.
 - 1. Only game sheets issued by this league through player registration are allowed. No players' names may be written in or players' names changed on official MPL League Club Roster. The team captain / team manager is responsible for providing an updated game sheet at each game. Any player's name(s) found to be "written in" or in any way altered on the game sheet will result in a minimum of 1 point deducted from the team's standings.
 - 2. Game sheets will be filled out completely with opponent, date of game, and jersey numbers prior to the start of the game.
 - 3. If the opposing team has an illegal player, or if the team wishes to play the game under protest, write it down on your game sheet before the game or before the end of the game and have the referee initial the notation at that time.
- F. E-mail or Text Photo of the game sheet to the League office within forty-eight (48) hours after the game has been completed.

If the game sheet is not "league issued", not properly completed and mailed or faxed in, the team is subject to disciplinary action by the League Commissioner / President. A Forfeit will be given to the club who did not turn Game sheet.

VI. EQUIPMENT

- A. A team must wear a uniform of same color and style. Each shirt must have a different number of a contrasting color that matches the player's number on the game sheet. Numbers must be a minimum of six (6) inches high, and sewn, stenciled, heat transferred or in some way permanently affixed to the back of the shirt. Taped or non-stenciled handwritten numbers are not permitted.
 - 1. Where jerseys of the competing teams are so similar as to create possible player identification problems (color conflict) on the field as determined by the referee, the home team will change to alternate jerseys and number rules will apply. Alternate jerseys may consist of pullover, see-through mesh pennys of a contrasting color to both teams.

VI. EQUIPMENT (con't)

2. Team goalie must be assigned a number and must wear that number while playing on the field. However, a number is not necessary while playing in the goal. Goalie jersey must be of contrasting color to both teams.

VII. Playing shoes must meet FIFA standards and be in safe repair.

VIII. Game ball will be a size 5 and conform to FIFA standards.

IX. Shinguards are mandatory. Shinguards must be manufactured specifically for protection of the shins and will be made of suitable material (rubber, plastic, polyurethane or similar substance). Shinguards must be covered entirely by socks.

VII. PLAYING RULES

Unless otherwise modified by these rules, all competition under jurisdiction of this League will be governed by the FIFA Laws of Soccer.

A. Game Suspension

1. If a regular season game should be suspended before the second half begins, for reasons other than misconduct or abandonment, it will be scheduled to be replayed in its entirety if determined by League.
2. If a regular season game should be suspended once the second half begins, for reasons other than misconduct or abandonment, it will be considered complete unless determined by League.
3. All post-season games must be complete games. For reasons other than misconduct or abandonment, any game that is stopped prior to the completion of regulation time shall be replayed in its entirety unless the game is past the 70th minute and one team is ahead. Any game that is stopped prior to the completion of any required overtime or kicks from the mark shall recommence at the start of overtime or kicks from the mark, which ever was occurring at the time of stoppage. At the recommence of overtime or kicks from the penalty spot, only the players eligible and present at the time of game stoppage shall be eligible. If the game is stopped due to misconduct or abandonment, the outcome of the game shall be decided by the League and teams will play with the same amount of players on the field when stoppage occurred.

B. Number of Players

1. Number of players on the field will be a maximum of eleven (11) and a minimum of seven (7) per team. A team will have fifteen (10) minutes after the scheduled kickoff time to field the minimum number of players or the game will be declared a forfeit. As soon as the minimum number of players are present within the ten minute period, the game will start.
2. If neither team can field the minimum number of players, the game will be a double forfeit with no points awarded to either team.
3. Each player must submit their own valid I.D. card to the referee or assistant referee and be registered on that team in order to be eligible to play.
4. The Division Commissioner, League Commissioner, League Official has the right to conduct a check of any team as to the eligibility of its players, through a random roster check of both teams that could include verification of the validation of player cards and verification of player identity at anytime during the course of the playing season. Roster checks may not be conducted by persons playing in the same division as the teams being checked.

VII. PLAYING RULES, Letter B (con't)

VIII. Substitution

Substitutions may be made at any stoppage of play with the consent of the referee.

1. The number of substitutions will be limited to 9 subs with no reentry.
2. Players are restricted from participating further in the game once they are replaced.

IX. Misconduct

1. All misconduct will be reported, in writing, to the League Commissioner / President. In addition, all misconduct will be submitted by the referee, in writing, to the League office within forty-eight (48) hours of the offense.
2. The Division Commissioner, League Commissioner, Appeals & Disciplinary Committee, and/or the President will have the authority to suspend or remove players or team officials guilty of misconduct.
3. Serious misconduct will be reported, if necessary, to Metroplex Premier League for further disposition.
 - a. Should a player or team official be reported to this League as being involved in misconduct, abuse or assault (verbal and/or physical) of a referee/assistant referee, league officials, and/or employees, the alleged party will be suspended from all play in this League pending a decision from the Sanctioning body.
 - b. Any player or team official found guilty of misconduct/verbal abuse of a referee/assistant referee, league officials, and/or employees, as deemed by the Sanctioning body, will be assessed \$100.00. Any player or team official found guilty of assault (verbal or physical) of a referee/assistant referee, league officials, and/or employees, as deemed by the Sanctioning body, will be assessed League ban.
4. Send Off before, during or after a game is a automatic suspension for the next played game, including playoff & championship games.
 - a. Any player, coach or captain "sent off" before, during or after a game will not be allowed to participate in any fashion, except as a spectator, while under suspension. Any violation, while under suspension, will result in continued suspension pending a hearing by this League's Appeals & Disciplinary Committee.
 - b. If a player is suspended at the end of the playing season, the suspension will carry over to the next season in this League in which the player participates.
 - c. Suspensions will not carry from one league to another (i.e., coed and indoor are separate from this Association play) unless suspension is assessed by the Sanctioning Body. Any suspension assessed by the League covers any and all participation (youth, referee, coaching, adult play, etc) in sanctioned activities.
 - d. Any participant issued a send-off during a league sponsored event must leave the field area or premises, as requested by the referee, before the game can continue.
 - e. Suspensions received in this league shall be served in this league and shall not prohibit participation in non-league tournaments or events except in the case of serious misconduct reported to the Sanctioning body for further action. Suspensions received in outside tournaments or events shall be served during further participation in those events and shall not affect any play in this league except in the case of serious misconduct which shall be reviewed by the League's Appeals & Disciplinary Committee prior to the player's participation in any league game or event.

VII. PLAYING RULES, Letter D (con't)

5. Law 7 of FIFA rules states a game can be replayed unless the competition rules or organizers determine otherwise.
In the event of an abandoned game due to other than misconduct, the teams involved may replay the game.
(If a game is abandoned due to violent conduct, the team(s) may be suspended following a review.)
Action could take the form of awarding a forfeit win, issuing a double forfeit, declaring that the game be replayed at full or replayed at the stoppage of abandonment with scores intact, once a game is replayed it will stand as final.

VII. PLAYING RULES, Letter D (con't)

9. Automatic multiple game suspension offenses
 - a. Any involvement in fighting one on one or verbal assault/abuse directed at an opponent, official, and/or spectator will be a minimum three (3) game suspension.
 - b. Any involvement in a fracas or joining into a fight will be a minimum four (4) game suspension.
 - c. Any player issued a second send off for Serious Foul Play, Violent Conduct or Foul or Abusive Language during the course of one (1) playing season, an automatic suspension of three (3) games will be assessed in addition to the normal game assessment for the particular foul.
 - d. Any player spitting at/on an opponent or another person will be a minimum five (5) game suspension.
10. Probation and suspensions of players/teams can be established by Metroplex Premier League Appeals & Disciplinary Committee or Executive Committee as part of any disciplinary ruling(s).
 - a. Probation shall be defined by the aforementioned committees, in detail, as to the nature of probation, length of probation, and consequences of probation violation.
 - b. Suspension shall be defined by the aforementioned committees, in detail, as to the nature of suspension and length of suspension.
11. Any team whose conduct results in the loss of a field available to the league shall be ejected from the league immediately and will forfeit the right to play any further games. Such team must appear before the Executive Board before being entitled to participate in the future of this league.
12. Any team found to have attempted to play and/or knowingly played unregistered, ineligible or suspended player(s) shall forfeit the games in which the player(s) participated and the Team Captain, Coach and/or involved player(s) shall be brought before the MPL Appeals & Disciplinary Committee. If it is established that the captain and/or coach is guilty of knowingly playing or attempting to play illegal player(s), the captain and/or coach may be suspended for a minimum of one (1) year from the date of the infraction. The involved player(s) may be suspended from all soccer activities. Any team found guilty of using or attempting to play unregistered, ineligible or suspended player(s) shall have each game in which the player(s) participated declared forfeit.
13. Any team found to have attempted to play and/or knowingly played unregistered, ineligible or suspended player(s) in a post season game, shall forfeit the game and forfeits all rights to any post season awards. The Team Captain, Coach and/or involved player(s) shall be brought before the MPL Appeals & Disciplinary Committee. If it is established that the captain and/or coach is guilty of knowingly playing or attempting to play illegal player(s), the captain and/or coach may be suspended for a minimum of one (1) year from the date of the infraction. The involved player(s) may be suspended from all soccer activities.

VIII. Valid Identification

Valid identification for purposes of play shall be a Any Government issued ID, State, Passport, that has picture of player with birthdate and full name on it. Any digital identification with birthdate and full name with picture will be accepted.

VII. PLAYING RULES (con't)

F.H ydration Breaks

Hydration breaks will be taken if one team requests at the beginning of the game. If the temperature at the start of the game is 90 degrees or above, the hydration breaks shall occur automatically. Hydration breaks will be taken approximately midway through each half, and should not last more than three (3) minutes. Time will not be stopped during hydration breaks.

VIII. FORFEITS

- A. The appropriate Division Commissioner or League Commissioner shall declare a forfeit for any of the following:
1. Failure to pay game official prior to the start of the game or send league referee payment declared forfeit.
 2. Illegal player(s).
 3. No more than 7 players to begin a game.
- B. If a team does not have seven (7) players at the start of the game (Per Rule VII, Letter B, #1) or drops below seven (7) players before the completion of the first half, that game will be a forfeit win for the opposing team.
- C. If a team has two (2) forfeits in a season, they will be required to post a \$50.00 performance bond for each remaining game in the season. The following season, the team will be required to post a \$200.00 performance bond to be eligible to register and play. For the purposes of this rule, a team which is required to post a \$200.00 performance bond shall be defined as consisting of any five (5) players from the prior team who registers together as members of the same team, regardless of change in team name or other player changes.
- D. A declared forfeit win will result in a total of three (3) points toward division standings. A declared forfeit loss will result in a total of zero (0) points toward division standings.
- E. Teams not completing season play.
1. In the event a team is dropped from league play prior to the fifth (5th) game of the season, all games (played or scheduled to play) will be declared forfeit wins for all opponents in that division.
 2. In the event a team is dropped from the league after playing five (5) or more games of the season, all remaining games scheduled will be declared forfeit wins for their opponents in their division and those games already played will stand as played.
- F. A team must notify the League Commissioner, Division Commissioner or League Office at least 48 hours prior to the regular Sunday scheduled game and at least 24 hours prior to a scheduled midweek game of any cancellation (forfeiture) or they will be forced to pay the entire referee fees plus assessment as stated in Rule IV.

IX. TEAM STANDINGS

The following point system will be used to determine a team's division standings:

1. Three (3) points for each win.
 2. One (1) point for each tie.
 3. Zero (0) points for each loss.
 4. In the case where an uneven number of games have been played in a division, team standings will be determined by the average points per game played.
- A.. Should a tie result in the final standings, the following tie breakers shall be used in the order shown:
For purposes for this Rule, a Forfeit win score will be noted as (3) for the forfeit winner and (0) for the forfeit loser.
- Points
Goal Differential
Head to Head

X. PLAYOFFS

- A. There will be two (2) Playoff games in each division.
 - 1. First and fourth place will play each other.
 - 2. Second and third place will play each other.
- B. There will be one (1) Championship game for each division between the Playoff winners. A Team Trophy will be awarded to the Division Champion. Individual awards will be given to each rostered player.
- C. Any team, with the exception of the top division for each, to win two (2) consecutive division championships in their division, will not be eligible for the playoffs for post season play for a third consecutive season in their division (if a team chooses to stay in their division and not move out of the division for one season). The top four teams, (excluding that team) will participate in post season play for that season.
- D. In the event of a tie at the end of regulation time, the following will be the guidelines unless otherwise directed.
 - 1. Thirty (30) additional minutes of soccer divided in to two (2) periods of fifteen (15) minutes each will be played.
 - 2. If the game is still tied at the end of the overtime periods, it will be decided under FIFA penalty kicks.
 - 3. In the event of a pending field condition(s) (i.e., darkness, inclement weather, etc.) The above may be modified prior to the start of the game with consent of both teams' captain or coach. They may elect to modify the length of overtime or go directly to FIFA penalty kicks.
- E. Prior to the first game of the current season, any division by a majority vote of the teams in that division (one vote per team), may elect one of the following playoff alternatives (1 or 2) and must notify the league office in writing.
 - 1. Reduce the season to an ten (10) game schedule.
The Division Champion and Runner-up will be the teams with the most points after Ten games.
 - 2. There will be no playoffs. The Division Champion and Runner-up will be based on the final standings after the completion of the ten game schedule.
- F. Any team forfeiting the final scheduled or rescheduled game of the regular season will not be eligible for post season play.
- G. The MPL Commissioner / President will determine a final date that all regular season games must be played by, after which the playoffs will begin. A divisional season will be deemed complete if 40% of the total games played by a division are completed. If weather or any other unforeseen circumstances eliminates the ability to hold a semifinal, the on the original scheduled or rescheduled week, the semifinals will be postponed for one additional week (depending on field availability). This may also include playing the semi-finals as mini-games (30 minute halves-going directly to "kicks from the mark" in case of tie at the end of regulation) in order to accommodate all divisions in the event of field availability issues. If this alternate semifinal day is also forced to cancel, then top two teams in each division will play in the final. If weather, or any other unforeseen circumstances eliminates to ability to hold a final, the top team will be declared the winner of the division.

XI. PROTESTS AND APPEALS

- A. All protests shall be first made, in writing, within five (5) days to the appropriate Division Commissioner who shall within five (5) calendar days, rule on such protest. All appeals must be accompanied by the appropriate fee (cash or cashier's check):
 - Regular season games
 - All other matters, including Playoff & tournament games
- B. Appeals from the Commissioner's rulings shall be made within five (5) calendar days, in writing, to the League Commissioner who shall rule within five (5) calendar days. Individual appeals for excessive game suspension (3 games or more) must be made directly to the Appeals & Disciplinary Committee in accordance with the Metroplex Premier League By-Laws.
- C. Appeals from the League Commissioner's rulings shall be made in accordance with the Metroplex Premier League By-Laws.
- D. The individual and/or team always retain the right to appeal/protest any decision in accordance with these rules. All decisions at all levels of the appeals process shall stand in full force and effect until changed by a higher authority.

XII. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

If a conflict of interest exists on any playing rule, that situation must be referred to the League committee for review.

XIII. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The League reserves the right to act on the Playing Rules and Regulations or any event or circumstances not covered by these Rules & Regulations where an unexpected or foreseen event occurs that may cause undue hardship if strict interpretation of these Playing Rules and Regulations are applied, however, it will require an official League Members action to implement such a change.