



# **Minnesota Women's Soccer League Rules and Regulations**

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[FINANCIAL]

**ARTICLE 1. Fees**

- Section 1.01 Team fees, including USSF fees will be set annually by the MWSL Board of Directors.
- Section 1.02 Failure to pay team fees by the established deadline will result in immediate removal from the schedule. Any game not played will be considered a forfeit in the standings.
- Section 1.03 A fine will be assessed until the dues are received by the MWSL. The amount and timing of the dues will be covered in the Fees and Fines document.
- Section 1.04 Failure to pay team fees by the deadline set by the board each season may result in a weekly fine, teams and its players being prevented from registering for upcoming seasons, and teams playing in a scheduled match. If a team is removed from the schedule due to non-payment of Team Registration Fees, the team will be awarded a forfeit in the standings and they will be responsible for the referee fee as stated in Fees and Fines document.
- Section 1.05 The fee to register a team for a season will be due in full upon registration. A team's registration will not be approved until the fee is confirmed by the MWSL. Teams who withdraw any time after registering will not receive a refund.
- Section 1.06 Any unpaid games (i.e. cancelled games, attempted rescheduled games, games absent a referee, and bye weeks) will not warrant a refund to teams.

**ARTICLE 2. Assessments**

- Section 2.01 The MWSL Board of Directors may assess the members to make up any deficits in the cost of operation of the league that are not covered by team and player registration fees.

**ARTICLE 3. Fines**

- Section 3.01 A fees and fines will be set by the MWSL Board of Directors. Please reference the Fines and Fees document.
- Section 3.02 Payment of a fine must occur within ten (10) days of the date on which the fine was officially levied by an MWSL Board Member. Notification of the levying of a fine may occur either in writing, via phone call, or via fax. Late payments can be assessed according to the Fees and Fines document.
- Section 3.03 Teams' and players' future games are subject to forfeiture until delinquent fines are paid. Teams and/or players may be required to post an additional performance bond prior to reinstatement.

**ARTICLE 4. Performance Bonds**

- Section 4.01 Performance Bonds will be set annually by the MWSL Board of Directors, See the Fines and Fees document for current Schedule of Bonds.
- Section 4.02 Performance Bonds may be drawn on to satisfy member indebtedness.
- Section 4.03 If a team does not complete the official playing season, the bond shall be forfeit.
- Section 4.04 At the end of the official playing season, the remaining balance of the Performance Bond will be refunded to the Team Representative or rolled over to the next applicable season, upon request. It is the responsibility of the Team Representative to initiate either action by contacting the MWSL Treasurer. Performance bonds held by the MWSL that receive no requests from Team Representatives will be rolled over to the next consecutive season. (e.g. summer to the next summer

or fall to the next fall, etc.) Should a team not register for the next consecutive season, and not request a refund or roll-over, the performance bond will be forfeited to the MWSL general fund. No refunds will be issued after team registration of the next season closes.

Section 4.05 The MWSL Board of Directors may determine that an additional Performance Bond amount is required if a member or a team has been a financial or disciplinary problem in a past season(s).

**ARTICLE 5. Payments to the MWSL**

Section 5.01 All payments to the MWSL or to any unit thereof shall be made by credit card via the MWSL website.

**ARTICLE 6. Budget**

Section 6.01 The MWSL Board of Directors shall consider, revise, and approve the budget for the following year.

**ARTICLE 7. Registration**

Section 7.01 A player playing in an MWSL game must be registered with the MWSL Registrar. Youth players must be at least sixteen (16) years old and must receive prior permission from the MYSA to "play up" if they are also current MYSA players. Players under 18 years of age must have a parent or legal guardian signed waiver submitted to the Commissioner prior to their first game.

Section 7.02 Each player must be registered for the season in which they intend to play, and can only be registered with one primary team. Players looking to be a part of multiple teams (that is not their primary team) should be added by the secondary team's manager as guest players to their roster ahead of a game. Any subs must have and present a valid MWSL player pass for the current season. A player's payment for registration is good only for the current season in which they registered and the player must complete the registration process each season, providing a new player pass each season. The method of registration will be set by the MWSL Board of Directors

Section 7.03 Each player will be issued an electronic player pass dated by the MWSL Board, and will be valid for the current season only.

Section 7.04 Each team in the MWSL must complete an online team registration. Each team's roster will be maintained electronically by the MWSL based on player registration.

Section 7.05 During regularly scheduled 11v11 games/competitions, only eighteen, (18) players may be suited up. This number, 18, includes any subs from other teams. During regularly scheduled 7v7 games/competitions, only thirteen, (13) players may be suited up. This number, 13, includes any subs from other teams.

[LEAGUE DIVISIONS]

**ARTICLE 8. League Divisions**

Section 8.01 The MWSL Board of Directors will be responsible for determining the proper division of the league for team registrations. Although consideration will be given to the division and date preference requested by a team, the final determination of division placement will rest with the MWSL Board.

Section 8.02 In determining the proper placement of a team in the overall league structure, the following will be considered:

- (a) the team's preference
- (b) the past record and experience of the team and its players. Teams that placed first or last in division in the previous year may be required to move.
- (c) the level of organization and commitment of the team

(d) the competitive balance of the divisions affected by the team's placement

Section 8.03 If a team does not agree with its placement, it may appeal to the MWSL Board of Directors for reconsideration.

[ REFEREES ]

**ARTICLE 9. Referees**

Section 9.01 Game assignments of referees will be coordinated by the MWSL's Referee Assignor. The Referee Assignor will be contractually employed by the MWSL.

Section 9.02 Referees assigned to MWSL games will have current USSF certification

Section 9.03 The MWSL Board of Directors will expect the Referee Assignor to coordinate the enforcement of MWSL referee codes and penalties.

Section 9.04 The referee is required to complete the game report and send it to the MWSL. If an on-line reporting mechanism is available, the referee is required to use this method in notifying the MWSL of game results.

Section 9.05 In the event of a weather cancellation before half time is reached or of a forfeit, the center referee is required to notify the MWSL within 10 business days. The referee must include on the game report the names and addresses of all the referees present at the game that require compensation. If this information is missing or the referee does not notify the MWSL within 10 business days, the MWSL is not obligated to compensate the referee(s).

[COMPETITIONS]

**ARTICLE 10. Guidelines for Playing on Other MWSL Teams**

Section 10.01 During an individual game, a team may use players registered on other MWSL teams. These players must be added as guest players, defined as players whose names are printed on the roster via the TeamConnect platform, or write-ins, defined as players whose names are physically hand-written on the roster.

- (a) For both 11v11 and 7v7 games, you may have an unlimited number of guest players added to your roster. In addition, you may have a maximum of 4 write-ins on your roster.
- (b) The MWSL Board reserves the right to remedy any situations in where the use of players from other teams is being abused.

**ARTICLE 11. Standings**

Section 11.01 Each division within the MWSL will maintain separate standings.

Section 11.02 Standings will be as follows:

- win = 3 points
- tie = 1 point
- loss = 0 points

- Section 11.03 If, at the end of the season, two or more teams are tied in points, the following will be used to determine relative standing:
- 1) head-to-head competition (won-loss record in head-to-head)
  - 2) inter-team goal aggregate (# goals by team A vs. # goals by team B in head-to-head)
  - 3) ratio of [goals scored by: goals scored against] during the entire season
  - 4) if, at this point, the teams are still tied, a separate play-off game will be held to determine final standings
- Section 11.04 When an official game is later declared to be forfeit, the score recorded will be either the actual score, or 2-0, whichever is the most advantageous for the team winning by forfeit.
- Section 11.05 In order to promote sportsmanship between teams, the MWSL has a 7-goal differentiation. The Commissioner will manually change the score of any game with a spread larger than 7 to reflect only have a 7-point spread. This score will be used in determining standings.

## **ARTICLE 12. Cup Competition**

- Section 12.01 Rules for the Minnesota State Cup:
- 1) Eligibility will be limited to teams that are in good standing with the MWSL.
  - 2) A Minnesota State Association-appointed committee will determine the format of and rules for this competition.
  - 3) The Minnesota State Cup shall have a traveling trophy and each team who wins the Cup will receive a replacement award the following year.

## **ARTICLE 13. Suspended Teams**

- Section 13.01 No team may play against another team that has been suspended by the MWSL or by an organization affiliated with the USSF and/or FIFA.

## **ARTICLE 14. Game Rules and Procedures**

- Section 14.01 All games sponsored by the MWSL will be conducted in accordance with the most current version of the USSF and/or FIFA Laws of the Game, and in accordance with the rules of the MWSL.
- Section 14.02 Every team is responsible to the MWSL for the conduct of its players, team officials, and spectators, and as such, is required to take all precautions necessary to prevent threat or assault against visiting persons or referees.
- Section 14.03 Team managers will have access to an official Gameday Roster/Gameday Report via their TeamConnect platform, which must be printed out and brought to the game by both the home and away team. This game roster/report includes the current game information along with all players approved to play on that team as either a primary member of that team, or as a sub. Only the official team roster/report will be accepted. A fine will be assessed for failure to provide the official game report. See the Fees and Fines document for a list of fines.
- Section 14.04 Each player must show her electronic player pass for the current season to the referee before each game. Late players shall present their pass to a referee before entering the game. If the player fails to present the current season's player pass, the player is prohibited from playing in that game. Teams who allow a player to misuse a player pass card (including but not limited to a MWSL player pass card from a prior season, a player pass card from another league, a player pass card belonging to a different individual, or a counterfeit player pass will be fined. A screenshot of your pass is not a valid pass. See the Fees and Fines document for a schedule of fines. Additional reprimands may be applied based on the decision of the MWSL Board.
- Section 14.05 If a team does not line up with at least seven (7) players within 15 minutes after the scheduled start time of an 11v11 game (or five (5) players for a 7v7 game), the game may not be started and may be

declared forfeit for that team. If both teams fail to line up, the game may be declared forfeit for both teams.

- Section 14.06 As accordance to FIFA Laws of the Game, if a game is not started because of Section 15.05 or Section 17.02, and the referee is being paid the full game fees, the referees are expected to referee a "friendly" game, if it is started within 15 minutes of the forfeit time. (For example, scheduled time is 6:45, one team forfeits at 7:00, referees may leave the field if no friendly game is in progress by 7:15). The exception is if the forfeiture results from field conditions.
- Section 14.07 If no assigned referee appears to officiate a game within 15 minutes after the scheduled start time, the game must be rescheduled. The home team must notify the MWSL Field and Schedule Coordinator immediately. If both the home and away team agree to play and count the game as official, both teams agree that they will not hold the MWSL liable for any injuries or incidents that occur.
- Section 14.08 If one team forfeits a game as described in Section 15.05, 16.03, or 17.02, that team will pay the full referee's fee to the MWSL. The amount will be deducted from the team's Performance Bond and sent to the referee.
- Section 14.09 If both teams are declared forfeit as described in Section 15.05, they will each pay half the referee's fee to the MWSL. The amount will be deducted from the team's Performance Bond of each team by the MWSL and sent to the referees.
- Section 14.10 The referees will be on the field 15 minutes before the game's scheduled start time.
- Section 14.11 Referees will use the 3-person, diagonal system of control, with the exception of the Recreational division which only has one referee present. If only 2 referees are present, FIFA Laws of the Game do not permit 2 referees on the field at one time.
- Section 14.12 The referee will enforce all MWSL and FIFA rules and decide any disputed point. The referee's decision on points of fact connected with the play will be final so far as the result of the game is concerned.
- Section 14.13 For an ejected player, referees must note the names of the ejected player(s), along with the reason for the ejection, on the game report submitted to the MWSL within 24 hours of the incident. For so long as the player is suspended, the MWSL Commissioner will block the use of her electronic player pass, and make ref assignors, opposing teams, and the ejected/suspended player's team manager aware of the suspension. If a suspended player attempts to play during their suspension the MWSL Commissioner has the right to take further disciplinary action.
- Section 14.14 There shall be unlimited substitution during the game, but substitutions will only be allowed at the following points:
- (a) after a goal by either team
  - (b) after a goal kick has been awarded to either team
  - (c) at half-time
  - (d) when a player leaves the field with an injury
  - (e) at a throw-in, but only by the team with the ball
- Section 14.15 Players not currently in the game should remain within a limited area.
- Section 14.16 A game stopped by the referee at or after half time will be declared an official game. The score at the time of stoppage will be the final score unless the game is declared forfeited upon review.
- Section 14.17 A game stopped by the referee before half time, must be replayed, unless the game is declared forfeited upon review. If both the home and away team agree to play and count the game as official, both teams agree that they will not hold the MWSL liable for any injuries or incidents that occur.
- Section 14.18 Both teams are responsible for notifying the MWSL of postponements and referee-no-shows within

48 hours after the game time. Unusual conditions or other issues should also be reported.

- Section 14.19 The burden of rescheduling a postponed game will rest with the team that originally postponed it. If the two teams are unable to decide upon a date, the MWSL Field and Schedule Coordinator will set one. The MWSL Board must declare a forfeit if one or both of the teams fail to appear on the date scheduled.
- Section 14.20 If the game is called due to weather prior to half-time, the MWSL will subtract a small amount from each team's Performance Bond and send it to the referees. If the game is called due to weather at half-time or later, each team will be required to pay the referees the full game fee. Refer to the Fines and Fees document for specific amounts.
- Section 14.21 The Field and Schedule Coordinator must be notified of any changes, reschedules, or cancellations to a game as far in advance as possible to the scheduled game time. Any changes made to a game, initiated by one or both of the teams, can result in a fine (see the Fines and Fees document).
- Section 14.22 If a game is cancelled, for any reason, it may be considered a forfeit for the team initiating the cancellation and a fine may be assessed (see the Fines and Fees Document). If both teams, in agreement with each other, are forfeiting, changing, or re-scheduling their game, both teams will split the associated fine for that game (see the Fines and Fees Document). These fines will be deducted from teams' performance bond.
- Section 14.23 The exception to rules 14.21 and 14.22 is when the field manager prohibits play or changes the field due to field conditions or double-booking. The Field and Schedule Coordinator may request a written letter or verbal confirmation from the field manager to verify the game cancellation or change.

## **ARTICLE 15. Uniforms**

- Section 15.01 All players on a team will wear shirts that match in color, except the goalkeepers, who shall wear colors that contrast with their own team and with the visiting team.
- Section 15.02 Each player will wear a shirt with a number on the back. Each team member must have a different number. The Recreational division and any team playing during the official Fall season is exempt from this rule.
- Section 15.03 When the referee determines that the color of the shirts of competing teams is too similar to play the game, the home team must change. Alternate shirts do not need a number on the back. If there is no remedy, the game will not be played and may be forfeit.
- Section 15.04 Jewelry, in any form, is not permitted to be worn. Jewelry is defined as any ornaments for personal adornment, as necklaces or cuff links, including those of base metals, glass, plastic, or the like. The MWSL also considers any personal adornment that is temporary or permanent to be included within this definition. Examples of jewelry include, but are not limited to: rings, watches, belly-button rings, earrings in any location on the body, dermal implants, and or piercings in the nose or cartilage of the ear. Teams with players not in accordance with this rule may be fined. Exceptions to this rule include medically necessary devices such as a medical alert bracelet. Please note, players may be required to cover medically necessary devices for the safety of themselves and other players.

## **ARTICLE 16. Playing Fields**

- Section 16.01 The home team is responsible for the proper preparation of the field. This includes the playing surface, goals, lines, nets, corner flags and game ball. If the field was scheduled by the MWSL on the team's behalf, the team is responsible to notify the MWSL Field and Schedule Coordinator within 48 hours of any issues with the field. The MWSL will work with the field directly to remedy any problems.
- Section 16.02 If the referee informs the home team that the field is not in compliance with Section 17.01, the home



team must remedy the problem or the game may not be played. The game may be forfeit.

*Section 16.03* The MWSL is a Twin Cities, MN based organization. Therefore, all games must be played within 35 driving miles from the Minnesota State Fairground in St. Paul MN. If you are using an internet based map program to determine this distance, the address for the Minnesota State Fairgrounds is 1265 North Snelling Ave. St. Paul MN 55108

## **ARTICLE 17. Awards**

Section 17.01 Awards may be presented to the top team in each division after the Summer and Fall playing seasons.

## [JUDICIAL MATTERS]

## **ARTICLE 18. Disciplinary Matters**

Section 18.01 The MWSL will have the power to take disciplinary action on violations of the Laws of the Game and of the rules and regulations of the MWSL, USSF, and FIFA.

Section 18.02 The MWSL shall have the authority to:

- (a) levy fines, suspensions, revocations of membership, affiliation, and/or registration
- (b) order forfeiture, replay and/or cancellation of games

Exception: an amateur player cannot be individually fined for her conduct as a player. The team will be responsible for any fines levied against the team as a result of an individual's player's actions.

Section 18.03 The MWSL Commissioner will consider allegations of violations or misconduct by teams or persons and take appropriate disciplinary action.

Section 18.04 The President of the MWSL will act as Commissioner if the decision affects a team with which the Commissioner is associated.

Section 18.05 The Commissioner will provide a written report of all decisions to the Board of Directors and to such parties directly concerned in the decision.

Section 18.06 If any person under the jurisdiction of the MWSL physically assaults a referee, that person will automatically be suspended for one year from the time of the assault. If circumstances warrant, the period of suspension may be extended.

Section 18.07 Cases of referee assault and abuse must be immediately referred to the Minnesota Soccer Association, which has original jurisdiction over such cases. The suspension of the player will be indefinite until the Minnesota Soccer Association ruling is provided.

Section 18.08 When any player is sent off the field by the referee, she will automatically be suspended from playing for her team for a minimum of:

- one game - if the violation is non-physical (e.g. dissent)
- two games - if the violation is physical (e.g. pushing)
- one month - if the violation is for physical assault on another player.

The Commissioner may extend the period of suspension if the circumstances warrant.

Section 18.09 The MWSL has the authority to direct the Referee Assignor that certain referees not be assigned to MWSL games and to request that a referee be suspended, fined, or otherwise disciplined.

Section 18.10 The MWSL Board of Directors may exert original jurisdiction over any disciplinary matter within the MWSL except those specifically called out in the rules and regulations of the Minnesota Soccer Association, USSF or FIFA.

**ARTICLE 19. Protests**

- Section 19.01 Formal protests concerning games sponsored by the MWSL must be filed, in writing, by a party to the game, and be delivered to the MWSL Commissioner within five (5) days of the protested game.
- Section 19.02 A protest will be reviewed and a decision made within five (5) days of receipt. If any decision is required concerning disciplinary action, it will be made within the same five-day period.
- Section 19.03 Upon consideration of a protest, the MWSL Commissioner will have the authority to deny the protest, to order a forfeiture, replay, or cancellation of a game. The Commissioner may take whatever disciplinary actions are required.
- Section 19.04 The MWSL Commissioner will provide a written report of the considerations and decisions to the MWSL Board of Directors and to the involved parties.

**ARTICLE 20. Appeals**

- Section 20.01 Appeals from the decision of the MWSL Commissioner must be made to the President of the MWSL.
- Section 20.02 Appeals must be made in writing, within ten (10) days of notification of the Commissioner's decision.
- Section 20.03 The MWSL Board of Directors will meet and review the protest at an appeal hearing. Such a meeting will be scheduled within fourteen (14) days of the receipt of the appeal. All concerned parties will be notified well in advance and will be invited to attend. A decision will be made to the appeal, in writing to all parties, within five (5) days of the hearing.
- Section 20.04 Appeals from the decision of the Board of Directors may be made to the Minnesota Soccer Association (MSA) in accordance with the rules of the MSA.
- Section 20.05 Suspensions ordered by the MWSL Commissioner shall not be postponed unless the President of the MWSL so orders.

**ARTICLE 21. Board of Directors Procedure When Considering Termination of Membership**

- Section 21.01 A hearing for terminating membership must be convened by the President of the MWSL. It may be held in conjunction with a Board of Directors meeting.
- Section 21.02 The Board of Directors will decide whether membership should be terminated.
- Section 21.03 The Board of Directors will provide the member with a written report of its decision.
- Section 21.04 If the member wishes to appeal the decision of the Board of Directors, it may be done through the appeal procedure described above, except that where this article reads Commissioner, substitute Board of Directors.

**ARTICLE 22. Procedure When Considering Removal of a Director For Cause**

- Section 22.01 A communication to the membership will be made if removal of a Director is requested. A meeting will be called.
- Section 22.02 At least seven-day (7) notice will be given to all parties and to the membership prior to a meeting.
- Section 22.03 The subject Director will be advised of the alleged cause and will be provided with the opportunity to be present and to be heard at such a meeting.

Section 22.04 Any decision to remove the director must be made by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of members of the MWSL present at an open meeting held for this purpose.

**ARTICLE 23. Appeals to the Minnesota Women's Soccer League**

Section 23.01 Appeals to the MWSL shall be made to the Secretary of the MWSL in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the MWSL.

Section 23.02 A copy of the appeal must be transmitted to the President of the MWSL at the same time.

**ARTICLE 24. Exhaustion of Administrative Procedures**

Section 24.01 No member or Director of this league, nor any person affiliated with any member of this league shall have standing to commence litigation in any court against this league, or the Minnesota Soccer Association (MSA), or the USSF, unless such a person has exhausted all administrative procedures for the relief to be sought by such litigation in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of this league, of the MSA, and of the USSF.