



All basic rules of play as described by FIFA and USSF, adapted for Mass Soccer 7v7 Leagues

*Drafted 6/2/25*

**I :** The Field of Play - 155' x 90' with no boards.

**II The Ball:** The game balls will be supplied by the home team. Ball Size: 5

**III Rosters & Standings:** League Standings & Tie Breakers:

- Standing are determined by accumulated points (3 points for a win, 1 point for a tie, 0 points for a loss)
- If two teams finish with the same record and points the following in this order will determine the tie breaker:
  1. Head to Head (if split then go to the second tie breaker)
  2. Goal Differential
  3. Goals Against
  4. Goals For
  5. Coin Flip Team

**Rosters:**

- The first team listed on the schedule is the home team. If both teams are wearing the same color, it is the home team that must change colors or wear pennies.
- Teams must use Mass Soccer online rosters.
- Only players on the roster can play.
- A team may challenge a roster BEFORE the start of a game. If the challenge is done at half time or after the game, the result of the game will stand.
- Players must have a valid Membership ID in order to play.
- If your team is short players you may ask the Referee and opposing team if it is ok to "Borrow" players for the night. This is a "sportsmanlike" rule, and only is allowed id there is not enough players to play.
- Max Roster size is 18 players.

**Players of the Field:**

- Each team consists of six (6) field players and a goalkeeper.
- Minimum number of players needed to start play will be five (five), four (4) field players and a goalie.

#### **Substitutions:**

- Substitutions are allowed “on the fly” at any time. During substitutions, the following conditions shall be observed:
  - a) the players leaving the field shall do so through the door at the bench.
  - b) The players entering the field shall do so but not until the players leaving the field is within one yard from the bench.

#### **Changing the Goalkeeper:**

- Any of the other players on a team may change places with the goalkeeper during a stoppage of play and/or provided the referee is informed before the change is made.

#### **IV Player Equipment:**

- Each team must have matching jerseys. It is at the referee’s discretion if a team is considered to have matching jerseys.
- Shin guards are mandatory

#### **V Referees:**

- A referee will be appointed to officiate each game. Their power of penalizing shall extend to offenses committed when play has been temporarily suspended and when the ball is out of play. Their decisions connected with the game shall be final, unquestionable and shall be extended to players, coaches, and spectators. Referees have the discretionary power to stop the game for any violation (at his/her opinion) and to suspend or terminate the game whenever, by reason of the elements, interference by spectators, or other cause, he/she deems it necessary.
- A referee shall refrain from penalizing in cases where he is satisfied that, by doing so, he would be giving an “advantage” to the offending team. If the referee applies the advantage clause and the advantage which was anticipated does not develop at that time the referee shall penalize the original.

#### **VI Score Keeping**

- The referee shall keep an accurate account of the score and prepare the game report to be turned into Mass Soccer Operations via email at: [Operations@Mass-Soccer.org](mailto:Operations@Mass-Soccer.org)

- The referee will not add additional goals to the scoreboard when there is a 5-goal difference in the score. Any additional goals scored will be kept on the game report only.

#### **VII: Duration of the Game:**

- All league matches will consist of two (2) twenty-four (24) minute “running time” halves with a two (2) minute break at half-time.
- No timeouts.
- A referee may stop the clock in the last minute of the game for obvious game delaying tactics (i.e. kicking the ball away, standing in front of the ball etc...) in which the goal differential between the two teams is 2 goals or less. The clock will restart when the ball is kicked.
- All playoff games must have a declared a winner. In the case of a tie at the end of regulation time, the teams will play one (three) 3 minute overtime period. The first one to score a goal will win the game. If necessary penalty kicks (as stated by FIFA) will then be taken to declare a winner. Penalty Kicks will be 3 players. Any player can be amongst the 3 whether they were on the field or not. If still tied after the 3 shooters, then it is sudden death PK's.

#### **VII Start of Play:**

- The home team will kick off the ball.
- The ball may be kicked either forward or backward. Every player shall be on their side of the field and at least five (5) yards from the ball. The kicker may not play the ball again until it has been touched by another player.
  1. Kick-offs are Indirect Kicks.
  2. The teams shall switch sides at half-time.
  3. Stoppages of play for any unforeseen reason shall be restarted by an indirect kick by the team that, in the referee's discretion, last had possession of the ball.

#### **IX Ball In and Out of Play:**

- The ball is out of play when it completely crosses an out of bounds line or touches any part of the netting outside. Restarts for balls going out of bounds shall be restarted by an indirect free kick from the point closest to where the ball went out of bounds.
- The defending team shall stand at least three (3) yards from the ball for all free kicks.
- The offensive team, including the goalkeeper, shall have six (6) seconds to put the ball back into play once they are in possession of the ball. Failure to do so will result in the ball being turned over to the opposing team with an indirect free kick. If the goalkeeper does not play the ball in six (6) seconds the opposing team will be awarded an indirect free kick outside the penalty area.

- After a save, the goalkeeper must put the ball into play by a goalie throw to another player or by playing it to his/her feet. There will be no punting or drop kicking of the ball by a goalkeeper. If this occurs, the result will be an indirect kick for the opposing team at the closest spot outside the goal box.
- Any ball passing over the midfield line in the air on a goal kick or goalie throw without touching another player of either team, the boards, or the field will be considered a midfield line violation and will result in an indirect free kick from the midfield line for the opposing team.
- The goalie may not dribble back into the box and pick it up the ball.

#### **X Method of Scoring:**

- A goal is scored when the ball passes completely over the goal line between the goal posts and under the cross bar.
- The team with the greatest number of goals shall be declared the winner. If at the end of play, teams have the same number of goals shall be considered a draw.

#### **XI Offsides:**

- There is no offsides rule in the game of indoor soccer.

#### **XII Fouls and Misconduct:**

- A Direct Free Kick will be awarded if a player does the following:
  1. Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
  2. Trips or attempts to trip an opponent
  3. Jumps at an opponent
  4. Charges an opponent in a violent or dangerous manner
  5. Charges an opponent from behind
  6. Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
  7. Holds an opponent
  8. Pushes an opponent
  9. Charges the goalkeeper while he/she possesses the ball in their hands
  10. Slides or slide tackles-any sort of slide by a field player whether going for the ball or not, no matter if contact is made or not, is considered a slide
  11. Kicks the ball while on the ground (Dangerous play)

12. Obstructs an opponent with no attempt to play the ball If any of the above is committed by a defending player within the penalty area, a penalty kick should be awarded against their team.

- An Indirect Free Kick will be awarded if a player does the following:

When playing as a goalkeeper and within their own penalty area:

1. The goalie throws the ball past the middle line or if a goal kick goes over the midfield line without touching a player, the boards, or the field.
2. The goalie picks up the ball if the ball is deliberately passed back to the goalkeeper by his or her own teammate.
3. GK may not dribble back into the penalty area and pick up the ball. This will result in an indirect free kick for the opponent at the top of the penalty/goal area of the side closest to where the GK committed the infraction.
4. Indulges in time-wasting tactics

- A two-minute blue card penalty will be awarded if a player does the following:

1. Persistently infringes the laws of the game
2. Delays the restart of play
3. Shows dissent by word or action
4. In the opinion of the referee commits a foul that is reckless or uses disproportionate force
5. Holds an opponent or opponents clothing in order to impede their movement
6. Steps onto the field of play with inappropriate or missing equipment (such as playing without shin guards, dangerous jewelry, etc....)

- When a player receives a two (2) minute blue card penalty, that player will serve the two (2) minute in the penalty box, and his/her team will play short-handed for the two minutes. In the event of a goal by the opposing team, the team is no longer required to play short-handed. If a goalkeeper is given a two-minute penalty, another player from the team, may serve the penalty for the goalkeeper. If players from each team simultaneously receive two-minute penalties, both players must serve the entire penalty regardless of any goal being scored during that time.

- A Yellow Card will be awarded if a player does the following:

1. Persistently infringes the laws of the game and has already received a two-minute blue card penalty for his/her actions
2. Shows by word or action, dissent with any decision by the referee
3. Is being guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct

When a player is shown a yellow card that player will serve a full four (4) minutes in the penalty box, and his./her team will play short-handed for the entire four (4) minutes. In the event a goal is scored by the opposing team, the player will not be allowed back on the field. The team must play short-handed for the full four minutes. After a yellow card offense, play will resume with a direct free kick.

- A Red Card will be awarded if a player does the following:

1. Is guilty of a serious foul play
2. Is guilty of violent conduct
3. Uses foul or abusive language
4. Is guilty for a second time of an actionable offense. The red card must be shown to the player, the player must leave the field and the bench area and their team will play short-handed for the full five (5) minutes.

The expelled player will automatically be suspended for one week and may receive additional suspension pending a review of the incident. After a red card offense, play will resume with a direct free kick. (If the expelled player is involved with other teams in other leagues and/or nights that player will not be able to play until the suspension has expired.) Any player who has been shown a red card before the match begins may be replaced by another player. Any player (whether on the field or on the bench) that is shown a red card during the match shall cause his/her team to play short for a full five minutes. Any player that has been shown a red card must leave the team bench area, and at the discretion of the facility management may also be asked to leave the building. Players/coaches may not sit in the team's bench area when they are serving a suspension.

#### **XIII Free Kick:**

- As stated by FIFA with the following additions:

1. All players on the opposing team must be at least three (3) yards from the ball when the free kick is being taken.
2. If the team taking the free kick takes more than six (6) seconds the opposing team gets an indirect free kick.
3. If a foul resulting in an indirect free kick is called within the defending team's goalie box, the ball shall be placed at the closest point on the edge of the goalie box.
4. Whoever kicks the ball into play on a free kick may not play the ball again until another player has played the ball

#### **XIV Penalty Kick:**

- Penalty kicks will be taken from the penalty spot of the field, which is the top of the goal box. Approximately 4 paces from the goal.
- One Step Rule will be enforced. Player can take one step back from the ball and one step forward.
- A goalkeeper is permitted to move his feet while remaining on the line (i.e. moving sideways or up and down), but is not permitted to come off the line by stepping or lunging forward until the ball has been played. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves forward.
- When a penalty kick is issued during the course of a game, the player who committed the foul will also be issued a two-minute penalty. If the opposing team scores on the penalty kick, the player does not have to serve the penalty.

#### **XV Kickins:**

- Restarts for balls going out of bounds shall be kicked in from the point closest to where the ball went out of bounds.

#### **XVI Goal Kicks:**

- A goal kick will be taken by the defending team any time a ball leaves the area of play over any point of the goal and is last touched by the attacking team.
- The goal kick may be taken from anywhere within the goal area.
- Goal kicks are INDIRECT kicks and must land or be touched within the defending team's defending half.

#### **XVII Corner Kicks:**

- A corner kick will be taken by the attacking team any time a ball leaves the area of play over any point of the goal and is last touched by the defending team.
- The corner kick shall be taken from the designated spot on each field.
- Corner kicks are DIRECT kicks.



## **Operational Rules**

1. All referee decisions are final.
  - There will be no confronting of any referees. Any individual who threatens a referee shall be expelled from the facilities for a minimum of one (1) year.
  - Management will not hear complaints concerning referees, except in writing to [Sevens@Mass-Soccer.org](mailto:Sevens@Mass-Soccer.org), which cannot be submitted until 24 hours after the game.
  - Only coaches or captains of the team may voice a complaint. Management and the referee assignor will review all referee complaints.
2. Violent Play:
  - The referees are instructed to be wary of foul (pushes, attempts to kick the opponent's legs, etc....) downfield away from the primary action. Any player being called for any foul under these conditions will be given a yellow card and the game will restart with a direct kick. A second offense by the same player will result in a red card.

3. All red cards issued for fighting will result in a minimum three game suspension. The suspension begins on the day the red card is given and is served for consecutive weeks for the duration of the suspension.
4. Any team that clears its bench area to become engaged in a fight with the opposing team will forfeit the game and its next regularly scheduled game. The term “bench clearing” means one or more players leaving the bench area during the altercation. A second offense by the same team will result in an ejection for at least the remainder of the season without a refund or applicable league fees.
5. A fight that starts after the conclusion of the game will result in a forfeit for both teams of their next regularly scheduled game and further suspension upon review of the incident.
6. Due to time constraints, the clock will not be stopped for any reason except for a serious injury incurred in the last three minutes of the game if the score is within three goals and at the referee’s discretion. As player safety is our primary concern, an injury will be treated after the play has been stopped, while the clock is running. The referee may put up to two minutes back on the clock after the injury is treated.
  - A referee may stop the clock in the last minute of the game for obvious game delaying tactics (i.e. kicking the ball away, standing in front of the ball, etc....). The clock will restart when the ball is kicked.
7. Board of Appeals: Any long-term suspension may be appealed and will go through an appeals process. The appeal must be in writing to [Appeals@Mass-Soccer.org](mailto:Appeals@Mass-Soccer.org) and Appeal Committee will make the final decision on all suspensions.
8. If a player accumulates multiple red cards they are subject to serve suspensions and possible banishment.
9. Eligibility Guidelines:
  - Coach/Team captain of both teams must bring a printed roster and give to the referee prior to kickoff.
  - League Commissioner may grant exceptions, if deemed in the best interest of the league operations.
10. Schedule:
  - The clock will start by the referee and continue to run.
  - If at the end of the five (5) minute grace period (at the twenty-minute mark) a team still cannot field at least four (4) players the game will be a forfeit.
  - Forfeited games will be scored 6-0.
  - Scheduling changes, standings, notices, etc.... will be posted on the website [www.mass-soccer.org/sevens](http://www.mass-soccer.org/sevens).
  - Players/coaches are responsible for checking the website for any changes. Failure to check the website is not a valid excuse for missing a rescheduled game, play-off game, Etc.