

# LMYA YOUTH SOCCER LEAGUE

House Rules — 2022

LMYA Soccer is an independent community organization not affiliated with any national or international soccer federation and provides its own “House Rules.” However LMYA recognizes and abides by IFAB Laws of the Game (<http://www.theifab.com/laws>) which governs the sport of soccer from FIFA’s highest international competitions down to the youth level.

Where the LMYA House Rules modify the IFAB rules, LMYA House Rules shall supersede. Where LMYA House Rules are silent, IFAB rules apply. If conflict exists in the mind of the referee among these laws and rules, the referee is directed by the League to apply the strictest, safest interpretation.

## 1. Age Groups:

- A. All players will be grouped according to their current school grade.

## 2. Player’s Equipment:

- A. Players wearing hard orthopedic casts, whether covered or not, shall be ineligible to play any in game. In addition, belt buckles, rings, earrings, bracelets, external orthodontic retainers, helmets and/or similar items may not be worn. Earrings must be removed, any player wearing tape over earrings shall not be allowed to play unless the earrings are removed. Medical bracelets ARE allowed so long as they are secured with tape and the medical information is visible. Nothing may be worn which presents a hard or sharp surface to another player. It is recommended that removable internal orthodontic retainers be removed while playing. No hats or caps with a rigid bill will be allowed.
- B. No player shall participate wearing hard soled street shoes or without shoes. Screw-on cleats are permissible if they comply with IFAB rules. Stamped rubber cleats that are part of the sole are acceptable, even if smaller than IFAB requirements. Baseball shoes and other shoes with prominent toe cleats will not be allowed.
- C. With the exception of the goalkeepers, all players shall wear a standard team uniform only, with a clearly visible number.
- D. All players must wear shin guards. Players without shin guards will not be allowed to play.

- E. Prior to the game the referee shall make sure that each player's equipment is in proper order. If the referee determines that a player's equipment is unsafe that player shall be ineligible to play until the equipment is brought into compliance.

### 3. Substitutions:

- A. Unlimited System: In the K – 2<sup>nd</sup> grade levels, player substitutions are unlimited and can occur at any time.
- B. Water Break System: 3<sup>rd</sup> grade players can only be substituted after water breaks and at the half or because of injury or cautioning of a player.
- (i) When there is an injury, only the injured player may be substituted. The coach may choose to play short, thereby allowing the injured player to return during the period in which he was injured.
- (ii) When a player is cautioned that player may be substituted with permission of the referee or the coach may choose to play short.
- C. Free System: For 4<sup>th</sup> grade and above water breaks will be employed, but a free substitution system shall be used. A coach or player must signal to the referee that a substitution is desired. A substitution can only be done with the approval of the referee. A new player may not enter the field of play without the permission of the referee and until the substituted player has left the field. Player(s) may only be substituted at one of the following times:
- Prior to a throw-in no matter which team it favors.
  - Prior to a goal kick, by both teams.
  - After a goal, by both teams.
  - After an injury, when the referee stops play, by both teams.
  - At water break or half time.
  - When the referee stops play to caution a player, only the cautioned player may be substituted, prior to the restart of the game.
- (i) The number of substitutes shall be unlimited.
- (ii) The players who have been replaced may subsequently return to the game.
- D. Injury Substitutions: The referee shall immediately stop play for an injury when the injured player remains on the ground or appears to be unable to continue playing.

**PLAYER SAFETY SHALL AT ALL TIMES BE THE REFEREE'S MAIN CONCERN.** After the referee has stopped play, the referee shall signal permission for the player's coach to enter the field and attend to the injured player. With the referee's permission, the injured player may leave the field and a substitute may enter.

- (i) No player, substitute or coach may enter or leave that field unless authorized by the referee.

#### **4. Number of Players:**

A. Teams may have on the field at any time the following number of players:

- (i) K – 2nd: **4 players** no goalkeeper

- (ii) 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade: **7 players**, one of whom shall be the goalkeeper.

- (iii) 4<sup>th</sup> 5/6<sup>th</sup> Grade: **9 players**, one of whom shall be the goalkeeper.

- (iv) 7/8<sup>th</sup> Grade and above: **11 players**, one of whom shall be the goalkeeper.

- (v) If a division is short players at the start of the season, the commissioner will have the discretion to direct the teams in that division to play a different number of players than the maximums stated above to keep parity within the division.

B. If a team does not have enough players to fill every position at the beginning of the match, the match will be played so long as the minimum number of players designated in paragraph 4C. are in attendance.

If a team has enough players to fill every position they do not need to adjust the number of players on the field to match a team that does not have enough players. For instance, in a 7/8<sup>th</sup> grade match if one team has 9 players and another has 11 or more the team with 11 or more does not have to play 9 v 9. However, if both coaches agree to play with fewer players and the referee agrees the numbers can be altered.

C. If a team does not have the following minimum number of players 10 minutes after the official starting time it must forfeit the game:

- (i) Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades: **3 players**

- (ii) 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade: **5 players**

(iii) 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grade: **7 players**

(iv) 7<sup>th</sup> Grade and above: **9 players**

## 5. **Miscellaneous Rules:**

- A. Free Kicks: In the K - 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade divisions all fouls shall be penalized by the awarding of an indirect free kick.
- B. Kick Ins: In the K - 2<sup>nd</sup> grade divisions all balls that go over the touch lines or goal lines shall be restarted with an indirect kick in from the line nearest where the ball went out.
- C. Throw-Ins: 3<sup>rd</sup> grade division and up the ball shall be thrown in if it goes over the touch lines. In 3<sup>rd</sup> grade only, if the ball is improperly thrown in, one re-throw shall be allowed (the referee is encouraged to instruct) and if the thrower plays the ball a second time before it has been touched or played by another player, one re-throw shall be allowed.
- D. Corner Kicks: In K - 2<sup>nd</sup> grade all corner kicks are taken from the intersection of the touch and goal lines and corner kicks are indirect. In 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and up corner kicks are taken from within the corner arc and are direct.
- E. Offside: This law shall not be applied to K - 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. In 3<sup>rd</sup> grade games, an offensive player can be in the offside position if posted within the defensive side of the build-out line when the ball is played across that line by the player's own team and that player is affecting play. In 4<sup>th</sup> grade and up standard offside rules apply.
- F. Drop Ball: Each drop ball re-start, occurring after play has been stopped by the referee while the ball is inside the Penalty Area, shall be re-started with a drop to the goalkeeper, otherwise it is dropped to the player closest to where the ball was when play was stopped. Any drop ball restart shall be given to the team who last touched the ball.
- G. Duration of the Game: The duration of the game shall be the defined periods as shown below:
  - (i) K - 2<sup>nd</sup> - four 10 minute periods with water breaks.
  - (ii) 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Grade - two 25 minute halves with water breaks at 12 ½- minutes.
  - (iii) 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade - Two 30-minute halves with water breaks at 15 minutes.

(iv) 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade—Two 35 -minute halves with water breaks at 17 ½ minutes.

(v) Water breaks are 2 minutes in duration.

(vi) The break at half time shall be no more than 10 minutes.

#### H. Goalkeepers:

- (i) K – 2<sup>nd</sup> grade no goalkeepers.
- (ii) 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade no goalkeeper may play more than ½ the game.
- (iii) 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade and up goalkeepers may play entire game.
- (iv) When a substitution of a goalkeeper is made the goalkeeper must report to the referee before going entering the goal.
- (v) Goalkeepers in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade are not allowed to punt the ball.

#### I. Charging the Goalkeeper:

Any contact with an opposing goalkeeper when the goalkeeper is within his/her own penalty area, and which, IN THE OPINION OF THE REFEREE, was intentionally initiated by an opponent and WAS AVOIDABLE, shall be considered as Charging the Goalkeeper and may result in immediate ejection. Whether or not intended, "severity" shall be judged by the degree of the violence and danger in the offense. Severity is not to be judged on the basis of whether the goalkeeper is injured.

- A. No player shall harass or interfere with the goalkeeper while he/she is attempting to put the ball in play. The result of such behavior will be an indirect free kick and could result in a caution.

### 6. **Coaching Positions:**

- A. In Kindergarten, one coach from each team is allowed on the field. Coaches must stay near the sidelines and not interfere with the flow of the game.

- B. In 1<sup>st</sup> Grade and up Coaches must stay in the technical area defined as an area (1) yard behind the touch line and (10) yards in length extending from the halfway line toward the penalty area. Coaches must stay on the same side of the field and may not stand on both sides. Both team benches should be on the same side of the field, opposite that of the spectators. No coach, substitute, or player is to be anywhere but at this/her appropriate technical area during the game.

## **7. Coaching Conduct**

- A. Coaching conduct is governed by the Coaches Code of Conduct which is available at the LMYA [website \(https://lmyasports.com/soccer/rules-conduct/\)](https://lmyasports.com/soccer/rules-conduct/) and was signed accepted by all coaches.
- B. In general, positive coaching from the sidelines (i.e., giving encouragement and direction to one's own team on points of strategy and position) is permitted, providing such coaching is done from the team's technical area only and:
  - (i) No mechanical devices are used.
  - (ii) The tone of voice is informative and not a harangue.
  - (iii) No coach, substitute, player or spectator makes derogatory remarks, gestures to the referees, other players, substitutes or spectators.
  - (iv) No coach, substitute, player or spectator incites, in any manner, disruptive behavior of any kind.
  - (v) No coach, team official, substitute or player is to use profanity.
- C. Coaches and team officials who fail to comply with the above may be ejected from the game.

## **8. Spectator Conduct:**

- A. The coach shall be responsible for the conduct of his respective spectators. Spectators shall not make profane or derogatory remarks or gestures, dissent from the referee's decision or incite disruptive behavior.

- B. A team's spectator area shall be that area five (5) yards behind the touchline on the opposite side of the field from the player bench. No one, including coaches, is permitted behind the goal line or goal.
- C. The referee has complete discretion and control over the conduct of coaches, players and spectators and has the authority to issue warnings or ejections to coaches and spectators for repeated violations of the rules of conduct.
- D. If a spectator or spectators fail to respond to a team official's request to desist from improper behavior the referee is empowered to eject the offending spectator and or terminate the match. In the above event, a decision as the disposition of the match and disciplinary action will be decided upon by LMYA.
- E. Spectators are encouraged to cheer but should not coach from the sidelines.

**9. The Field of Play and Safety:**

- A. The referee is responsible for determining the suitability of the field and safety of the conditions and has total discretion regarding field conditions. If the referee determines that the field conditions are unsafe the referee will suspend the match and report the conditions to LMYA.
- B. Once the game commences, the referee shall determine if inclement weather or other conditions have rendered a field unplayable and shall suspend the game upon his/her assessment of such conditions.
- C. In the event of lightning the game will be suspended for a minimum of 30 minutes and may be cancelled at the discretion of the referee.
- D. All field dimensions are subject to alteration based on location and conditions but generally are as follows:
- E. K - 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade fields shall be 30 yds x 20 yds with goals at each end, touch lines and goal lines and a center mark.
- F. 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade fields shall be 60 yds x 40 yds with goals at each end, touch lines, goal lines, build out lines, penalty area, goal area, penalty spot, center circle and center mark.
- G. 4<sup>th</sup> Grade fields shall be 60 yds x 40 yds and all markings with the exception of the build out line.

- H. 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grade fields shall be 70 yds x 50 yds and all markings with the exception of the build out line.
- I. 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Grade and up shall be 100 yds x 70 yds and all markings with the exception for the build out line.
- J. Build Out Line – (3<sup>rd</sup> grade) The purpose of the line is to allow the Defensive team to restart play unopposed and maintain possession. Offensive players must return to the midfield side of the build-out line and may not return into the goal side of the field until a defensive player has touched the ball from a goalkeeper possession or a restart kick (free or goal kick). If a quick restart, players are not required to return to the build-out line but cannot challenge until the 1<sup>st</sup> player touches the ball after the ball clearly moves.
  - (i) Offside With the Build Out Line - The build out line will be the new offside marker for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade matches. If an attacking player is on the opposing side of the field and on the goal side of the build out line that player shall be considered in an offside position. If that player receives the ball or otherwise affects play the referee shall whistle for offside and the defending team shall receive an indirect free kick from the spot of the infraction.

## 10. The Ball:

- A. The size of the ball to be utilized in games is shown below:

K – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	#3
3 <sup>rd</sup> – 5 <sup>th</sup> /6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	#4
7 <sup>th</sup> /8 <sup>th</sup> Grade and up	#5

- B. The home team shall provide a game ball acceptable to the referee.

## 11. Referees:

- A. The referee shall provide a **SAFE** environment and an **ENJOYABLE** atmosphere for the players. The referee is charged to do his/her best according to his/her interpretation of the rules of the game. The referee's decision is final and may not be challenged. During games the referee shall have jurisdiction over all coaches, players, substitutes and spectators.
- B. The referee's judgment with regard to the physical condition of the field and its acceptability for play, to the actual happenings and occurrences related to the conduct



of the game and to those prerogatives granted to him/her by IFAB Law shall not be challenged.

- C. The referee shall maintain an accurate and complete game record (goals, cautions, ejections, names and times) on the official scorecard, and may, at any time, be called upon by the Referee Coordinator or other proper authority to explain his/her reports.
- D. The referee shall maintain control of the game at all times. If a referee loses control of the game and deems that (i) he/she has exhausted the means available to regain control and (ii) to continue play would jeopardize any player's (or his/her own) safety or the players' enjoyment of the game, the referee shall immediately suspend the game and report such event to the Referee Coordinator.
- E. At the referee's discretion the referee may verbally warn or eject any spectator. The referee shall not restart play until the spectator has left the premises. If the spectator refuses to leave the referee shall have the right to suspend the game. In the case of a suspended game the incident shall be reported to league officials who shall investigate and determine the outcome of the match.
- F. No coach shall serve as the referee or as a linesman.
- G. If the referee fails to arrive at the playing field within fifteen (15) minutes after the official game time, the coaches shall agree upon an alternative volunteer and notify the Referee Coordinator at their earliest convenience after the game. It is recommended that the alternate volunteer shall be knowledgeable of IFAB Law and House Rules and be at least fourteen (14) years of age.
- H. If requested by the Referee, each coach shall provide a linesman. Such linesman shall be at least fourteen (14) years old and shall remain neutral at all times. Linesmen shall not be responsible for calling offside only for determining whether the ball went over the touchline or goal line.

## **12. Warnings, Cautions, and Ejections:**

- A. A Warning to a player or team official shows that the referee is aware of his questionable conduct. The player is thereby placed on notice that further conduct of this nature will result in further action. A warning may be given informally while the game is in progress.
- B. A Caution (yellow card) is administered at a stoppage of play. It is a formal statement to the player or team official that further misconduct will result in the player or official

being sent off the field or in the case of the team official ejected from the game. When the play is stopped, the referee informs the player or official: C.

- (i) that the player or official is cautioned;
- (ii) the reason for the caution; and
- (iii) the consequences of further misconduct
- (iv) if a player is cautioned the player may be substituted with permission of the referee

D. An Ejection (red card) occurs at a stoppage of play. It is an order to the player to leave the field of play or the official to leave the premises. When the play is stopped, the referee:

- (i) records the player's number on the game report card, or the name or position of the team official, together with the nature of the offense; and
- (ii) informs the player or official of the nature of the offense and sends the player off the field or the official off the premises. The ejected player may not be substituted for during the remainder of the game (the team must play short a player) and the official must leave the premises entirely.

E. Spectators can be warned and ejected.

F. Following an ejection (red card), further disciplinary action shall be taken by the League as follows: A player ejected (red card) from play shall be suspended from playing in his team's next league game. A team official ejected from the game shall be at minimum suspended from coaching, or attending his/her team's next two league games. Such player or coach may be subject to additional sanctions by the league.

### **13. Fouls and Misconduct**

A. Unintentional and reflexive use of the hand(s) or arm(s) by girls to protect the chest area and by boys to protect the groin area may be allowed if, IN THE OPINION OF THE REFEREE, such act is UNINTENTIONAL RATHER THAN ANTICIPATORY. The intentional use of hands or arms as a protective aid in chest trapping or other manner of ball control shall not be permitted and shall be treated as a "hand ball." Intentional use of the hands to deny a goal scoring opportunity shall result in an automatic red card.

- B. Slide tackling shall no longer be permitted in any LMYA youth recreational game at any age level. Any player “slide tackling” an opponent shall be penalized by the award of a DIRECT FREE KICK to be taken by the opposing team from the place where the offense occurred, unless the offense is committed by a player in his opponent’s goal area, in which case the free-kick shall be taken from any point within the goal area. Should a player of the defending team “slide tackle” an opponent within the penalty area, he shall be penalized by a penalty kick.
  
- C. All Players 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade and younger shall not head the ball directly from the air in any competition, nor shall these players practice heading the ball in any organized team setting. If a player deliberately heads the ball in a match, the referee shall award an indirect free kick to the opposing team at the spot of the infraction. If the heading occurs within the penalty area, the referee shall move the ball outside the penalty area and award an indirect free kick to the opposing team. Players in 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> are allowed to head the ball in competition as well as organized practice sessions.

#### 15. Blow Out Rule

- A. For all divisions 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and above, a win shall be worth 3 points, a tie worth 1 and a loss worth 0 points with the exception of any team that wins with a goal margin of **greater than five goals** shall receive only 1 point for that win. LMYA encourages Sportsmanship by all participants – players, coaches, fans and Referees and in the spirit of Sportsmanship this rule shall be applied.