

# Adult Soccer Rules and Regulations

## SoccerPlex 2017

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The Maryland SoccerPlex Rules for **Indoor and Outdoor** Adult Soccer Leagues are governed by FIFA Laws, modified for indoor/outdoor play and the following rules. The following rules shall precede FIFA Laws if conflict with said rules should arise.

### I. PRIOR TO THE GAME

- a. PLAYER PASS:** Every adult player who participates in a Maryland SoccerPlex adult league, whether indoor or outdoor, must obtain an official Player Pass issued by the SoccerPlex. To be issued a Player Pass, players must show an official government issued identification with picture and date of birth, sign a liability waiver and conduct policy and pay a fee of \$5. The Player Pass includes a picture of the player, their name, the league in which they are playing and an expiration date. Player passes are checked against the official roster prior to every game. If a player does not have a card, they are ineligible to play. If a player has a card but is not on an official roster, they are ineligible to play. If a player has lost or forgotten their card, they must pay \$25 for a replacement Player Pass. **There are no exceptions.**
- b. ROSTERS:** A new roster is required each session for all adult leagues. A roster must be turned in before the season starts or the team will not be permitted to play.
- i.** Maximum of 16 players permitted on the roster.
  - ii.** No individual will be allowed to participate in any league games or other activities unless a waiver form has been properly completed and the individual has been properly registered.
  - iii.** A registered player may play in more than one Adult League (Men's Open, 30+, 40+, Coed), however, a player may not play on multiple teams in the same division.
  - iv.** The administration will freeze rosters at kickoff of the team's 3<sup>rd</sup> match. **No exceptions.** Any team using a player not on the roster will, at a minimum, forfeit the game the player participated in and the team plays down one player for the duration of the game.
  - v.** Protests of illegal players should be made prior to the start of the game.  
Illegal/Ineligible players include:
    - 1.** Player not listed on the **official** roster
    - 2.** Player using another player's pass
    - 3.** Player not meeting the age requirement of the league
    - 4.** Player serving a RED CARD suspension
    - 5.** Player without an official current Player Pass

- vi. Home Team: The team listed 1<sup>st</sup> on the schedule.
- c. **COACHES:** In addition to the players a maximum of 1 additional adult (coach or otherwise) is permitted on the player's bench.
- i. No coaching is permitted from opposite touchline.
  - ii. Anyone else will be asked to leave the player's bench and return to the spectator's side of the field.
- d. **EQUIPMENT:**
- i. **BALL:** Size 5 regulation soccer ball required. Must be provided by the HOME TEAM for each game.
  - ii. **CLEATS:**
    - 1. **Indoor:** Turf shoes or flats (including black soled) are acceptable footwear indoors. Molded cleats and metal studs are prohibited. Use of molded cleats may result in disciplinary action.
    - 2. **Outdoor: Standard molded cleats, turf shoes and flats are the only acceptable footwear.**
  - iii. **SHIN GUARDS:** Players **may not** participate **without shin guards.**
  - iv. **JERSEYS: Each player must have a PERMANENT number displayed on his/her jersey. The same number must also be denoted on the roster.**
    - 1. Each team is required to have 2 permanent numbered jerseys – a dark color and a light color. In the event that both teams have similar color jerseys, the home team shall change to its alternate color.
    - 2. **All field players shall wear jerseys of the same single uniform color.**
  - v. **JEWELRY:** Except for wedding bands, no jewelry (necklaces, piercings, earrings, bracelets, soft wristbands, hair bands etc) are permitted to be worn on the field. Disciplinary action shall be taken against all offenders.
  - vi. **OTHER:** Braces, splints, soft casts etc must be approved by the referee prior to the start of the game. Referee has the final approval on all safety equipment worn during the game, provided it is not a danger to themselves or others.
- e. **NUMBER OF PLAYERS REQUIRED ON THE FIELD:**
- i. Men's Open, Men's 30+
    - 1. Maximum: 6 field players + 1 goalkeeper
    - 2. Minimum: 5 players must begin, continue, and conclude each match
  - ii. Men's 40+, Men's 50+
    - 1. Maximum: **7 field players + 1 goalkeeper (Outdoors)**
    - 2. Minimum: **6 players must begin, continue, and conclude each match (Outdoors)**
    - 3. Maximum: 6 field players + 1 goalkeeper (**Indoors**)

4. Minimum: 5 players must begin, continue, and conclude each match  
**(Indoors)**

iii. Coed Open

1. Maximum: 6 field players + 1 goalkeeper
2. Minimum: 5 players must begin, continue, and conclude a match
3. Minimum of 2 males/females (excluding goalkeeper) on the field at all times.  
A team may begin, continue, and conclude a match with 1 male or female but the team must play with 5 field players + 1 goalkeeper.

iv. **ALL LEAGUES:** The official will start the game clock as scheduled, but if either team has fewer than the minimum number of players a **five (5) minute grace period** to produce the minimum required. (The clock runs during the grace period and time is not added to the end of the game.) If a team does not have the minimum number of players required after the grace period, a forfeit shall be awarded to the opposing team, with the resulting score registered as a 3-0 result.

f. **DURATION OF PLAY:** There are two 25-minute halves with a 2-minute halftime.

- i. Running clock shall start at the scheduled kick-off time. Follow up with rule I.e (iv) where applicable.
- ii. No stoppage/additional time will be added.

g. **TERMINATED GAMES:** If the official must terminate a game due to weather or other necessary circumstances, the following rules shall apply:

- i. If the game is terminated after the first half has been completed, the game will be considered a complete game and the score at the time the game is terminated will stand.
- ii. If the game is terminated prior to the first half ending, the game will be rescheduled by the Maryland SoccerPlex staff at a later date and the score will revert to 0-0.

h. **FORFEITED GAMES:** Forfeited games will be recorded as 3-0 scores and 3 points in the standings for the non-forfeiting team. A team that does not show up to a game or does not have the minimum number of players after the 5 minute grace period forfeits the game. In addition, any team walking off the field before the end of either half to protest a referee's decision or Maryland SoccerPlex policies, will forfeit the game, lose 3 points in the standings, and **may be banned from the league.**

- i. A team representative must call 24 hours in advance to let the SoccerPlex staff know of any team that won't make a scheduled match.

## II. DURING THE GAME

### a. KICKOFF:

- i. The ball may be played in any direction on the first touch. A goal can be scored on the first touch.

### b. SUBSTITUTIONS:

i. Unlimited "on the fly" substitutions. Must occur at the halfway line and must not interfere with the flow of play. An indirect free kick shall be awarded for any improper substitution. Improper substitutions may result in a YELLOW CARD.

c. **OFFSIDES:** There is NO offside for **INDOOR** nor **Outdoors**

d. **SLIDE TACKLING:**

i. Slide tackling an opponent is *not permitted* under any circumstance. (See rule for goalkeepers.) The minimum penalty will be a direct free kick awarded to the opposing team. Additional disciplinary action (including but not limited to a RED CARD and game suspension) may result for intentional, repeated, or violent slide tackling.

e. **RESTART RULES:**

i. **The "6 Second Rule":** A restart must occur within 6 seconds of placing the ball for a free kick, corner kick, throw-in, or goal kick. Failure to do so will result in a caution and an indirect free kick for the opposing team at the spot, or if the spot is inside the penalty area, immediately outside the penalty area.

ii. **The "5 Yard Rule": Applies to Outdoor Leagues. Opposing players must give five yards on all direct kicks, indirect kicks, and corner kicks. Failure to do so may result in a re-kick. A YELLOW CARD may be awarded upon Referee's discretion.**

iii. **The "12 Foot Rule":** Applies to Indoor Leagues. Opposing players must give twelve feet on all kicks, including corner kicks. Failure to do so may result in a re-kick. A YELLOW CARD may be awarded upon Referee's discretion.

iv. **INDOOR:** If a ball strikes the ceiling or a light fixture, the ball will be spotted at the point of contact and an IFK will be awarded to the opposing team.

1. The exception being if the ball is spotted inside the penalty area, the restart will commence from just outside the penalty area.

f. **SPECIFIC RULES FOR GOALKEEPERS:**

i. Punts and drop kicks are not permitted. The ball must be distributed by a throw, normal place kick or kick from a dribble.

1. **INDOOR:** A throw or restart (goal kick, DFK or IFK) cannot go beyond midfield unless it is touched by another player or the ground prior to crossing the midfield line.

2. **INDOOR:** If the ball fails to touch another player or the ground prior to crossing the midfield line then an IFK will be awarded to the opposing team at the spot where the ball crossed the midline.

ii. Goalkeepers must release the ball within 6 seconds after gaining possession and returning to their feet.

iii. Goalkeeper may NOT use his/her hands if the ball is intentionally passed ( with their feet) to him by his own teammate.

- iv. Failure to abide by above stated rules will result in an indirect free kick immediately outside the penalty area.
  - v. Goalkeepers may use unlimited steps to bring the ball to the boundary of the penalty area.
  - vi. Goalkeepers are permitted to make a sliding save (slide tackle) within the penalty area.
- g. INJURIES:** Any player who is bleeding must leave the field of play immediately.
- i. Time will not be stopped for injuries. However, play will be stopped to allow the injured player to leave the playing field safely while time moves on.
- h. BALL OUT OF PLAY:** If the WHOLE ball has crossed the goal line or touchline, whether in the air or on the ground, the restart is a goal kick, corner kick or throw-in.
- i. PENALTY KICKS:** Players taking penalty kicks are limited to the players on the field as time expires.
- i. **Outdoors: The kicker is not limited to a one-step approach but must wait for the referee to blow his/her whistle to approach the kick.**
  - ii. **Indoors:** Penalty kicks will be taken at the top of the **BLUE LACROSSE CIRCLE (10 YARDS FROM GOAL LINE)**. The kicker is not limited to a one-step approach but must wait for the referee to blow his/her whistle to approach the kick.

### **III. POINTS SYSTEM AND PLAYOFFS**

- a. POINT SYSTEM:** Three (3) points for a win, 1 point for a tie, and 0 points for a loss.
- i. There is no overtime in any Maryland SoccerPlex adult soccer games. Games tied at the end of regulation are recorded as ties.
- b. PLAYOFFS:** Only the top 4 teams with the most points at the end of the season will advance to the championship rounds. All other teams in the division will play consolation games to finish out the season.
- c. TIEBREAKERS:** Ties for Playoff position and for Playoff participation will be broken down utilizing the criteria set forth below:
- i. Head-to-Head result
  - ii. Least amount of goals against in the season
  - iii. Most amount of goals scored in the season
  - iv. Lowest number of forfeits
- d. NO TIES:** Playoff games must result in a winner. In the event of a tie at the end of regular time in playoffs, there is NO OVERTIME. Teams go directly to penalty kicks. Three kickers for each team. If still tied after 3 kickers, sudden death penalty kicks will commence.
- i. If still tied, then penalty kicks result. The three (3) players to take the kicks must come from those on the field when time expires.
    - 1. Three kicks per team, then sudden death.

2. Both team representatives can agree to a coin-flip to be conducted by the Maryland SoccerPlex staff.

#### **IV. CONDUCT POLICY**

- a. **SPORTSMANSHIP:** Individuals are expected to play under control and within the rules of the game, and to the best of their ability will avoid causing injury to themselves and others using the facility.
- b. **CARDS:** All cards given by referees are final and are not subject to protest.
  - i. **YELLOW CARD:** Any player receiving a YELLOW CARD must return to their bench with a replacement for 2 minutes.
  - ii. **RED CARD:** A RED CARD will result in the ejection of the player for the duration of the match without replacement. Additionally:
    1. The player receiving the RED CARD **must leave the playing area** and go to the parking lot, accompanied by a team representative when possible.
    2. Failure to leave the playing area and go to the parking lot may result in the forfeit of the match for the player's team, suspension of the coach or team representative, or other disciplinary action.
    3. Further disciplinary action shall be taken against all players receiving RED CARD pursuant to the Rules below.
  - iii. **COACHES/SUBSTITUTES/SUBSTITUTED PLAYERS:** Coaches, substitutes, and substituted players can be issued both YELLOW and RED CARDS and are subject to the same rules as the players on the field.
    1. In the event of a coach receiving a RED CARD, the team will play a man down for the remainder of the match and the coach is asked to leave the playing area and go to the parking lot.
    2. A game will be terminated if a team has only four (4) or fewer players total for all divisions, and five (5) total for Men's 40+ divisions.
  - iv. **GOALKEEPERS:** Goalkeepers must serve their own penalties if issued a YELLOW or RED CARD.
- c. **THE MARYLAND SOCCERPLEX HAS A "ZERO TOLERANCE" POLICY TOWARDS FIGHTING AND OTHER VIOLENT PHYSICAL CONDUCT INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO SPITTING, PUSHING, STRIKING, KICKING, AND WRESTLING ("VIOLENT PHYSICAL CONDUCT"). ANY PLAYER ENGAGING IN VIOLENT PHYSICAL CONDUCT (AND, IN CERTAIN CASES, THE PLAYER'S TEAM) WILL BE DISCIPLINED PURSUANT TO THE RULES BELOW AND MAY FACE CIVIL OR CRIMINAL CHARGES.**
- d. **COACH/TEAM REPRESENTATIVE RESPONSIBILITY:** It is the responsibility of each player and the coach/team representative to control the conduct of the players on their team and to be aware of the status of their player's infractions. Failure to comply may

result in further disciplinary measures that may include suspension of the team or the coach/team representative, and forfeiture of games played in.

- i. This includes use of illegal players – those not registered properly on the team roster or not current with facility registration fees.
- ii. Coach/Team representative are responsible for any player leaving the bench area and entering the field of play during a fight.

**e. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE:**

- i. The Maryland SoccerPlex will review incidents requiring possible disciplinary action within 5 business days of the incident and issue any of the following disciplinary measures in its sole and absolute discretion:

- 1. Player suspension for a minimum of 1 or more games
- 2. Player suspension from other Maryland SoccerPlex activities
- 3. Player suspension for 1 or more years from Maryland SoccerPlex soccer activities and/or other Maryland SoccerPlex activities
- 4. Player's team forfeit 1 or more games
- 5. Player's team excluded from Playoffs
- 6. Player's team suspended for remainder of the season and excluded from additional seasons, without refund
- 7. Player or Player's team permanently excluded from Maryland SoccerPlex soccer activities and/or other Maryland SoccerPlex activities, without refund

- ii. The Maryland SoccerPlex will review and consider, in its sole and absolute discretion, any written statement in the form of a letter or email from the manager, coach or representative of the offending player's team, if received within 24 hours of the incident giving rise to the possible disciplinary action and if accompanied with a \$50 non-refundable check made out to the Maryland Soccer Foundation. Only Reviews regarding violations of the laws of the game or these rules will be permitted.

- f. MINIMUM DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS:** The Maryland SoccerPlex has established minimum disciplinary actions related to the following offenses. Nothing shall prevent the Maryland SoccerPlex from increasing the minimum disciplinary actions in their sole and absolute discretion.

- i. **RED CARD:** Any player receiving a RED CARD shall be suspended for a minimum of 1 game plus suspended from all other Maryland SoccerPlex activities (including games in other leagues) until that 1 game suspension has been served.
- ii. **3 YELLOW CARDS:** Any player receiving 3 YELLOW CARDS in different games of a session will be suspended for a minimum of 1 game. Once the suspension has been served, the YELLOW CARD count for that player resets to 0.
- iii. **TWO SUSPENSIONS:** Any player that receives a second suspension in any session, or separate sessions during the year, (i.e. 2 RED CARDS, 1 RED CARD + 3 YELLOW

CARDS, etc) may be suspended from all Maryland SoccerPlex activities for 1 year or more.

**iv. VIOLENT PHYSICAL CONDUCT:**

- 1.** Any player that engages in Violent Physical Conduct will be suspended at a minimum from all Maryland SoccerPlex adult soccer activities for 1 year from the date of incident.
- 2.** Any team that accrues a second incident of Violent Physical Conduct during a session will be suspended at a minimum from the current session without refund and may also face exclusion from future sessions.
- 3.** Any incident that involves Violent Physical Conduct from more than 1 player on a team (i.e. player leaving the bench area to join a fight on the field, will result in the team receiving a suspension from Maryland SoccerPlex adult soccer activities for a minimum of 1 year from the date of incident, without refund.

**v. THREATENING OTHER PARTICIPANTS:** Any player, manager, or coach who verbally threatens another player, coach, official, spectator, or Maryland SoccerPlex staff will be suspended from all Maryland SoccerPlex activities (including soccer) for a minimum of 1 year from the date of incident.

**vi. VERBAL ABUSE OF OFFICIAL:** Any player, manager, or coach who approaches an official or other Maryland SoccerPlex staff with abusive language, or a harsh or threatening tone before, during or after the conclusion of a league game, shall be suspended for a minimum of 1 game.

**vii. IMPROPERLY ENTERING THE FIELD OF PLAY:** If any player, manager, coach, or spectator enters the field of play during a game (except when substituting or when expressly permitted by the official), the official may terminate the game and/or declare a forfeit against the offending team.

**viii. SPITTING:** Any player, manager, coach, or spectator who spits on an opponent, teammate, official, and/or a member of the Maryland SoccerPlex staff will be ejected from the game, asked to leave the playing area and go to the parking lot, and will receive a 1 year suspension from any Maryland SoccerPlex activities.