



**SUBURBAN YOUTH  
SOCCER LEAGUE  
NEW JERSEY**

**PLAYING RULES  
&  
REGULATIONS**

# Suburban Youth Soccer League NJ Rules & Regulations

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## I. Goals and Objectives

The Suburban Youth Soccer League New Jersey (SYSLNJ) is a not-for-profit, recreational soccer program based in North/Central New Jersey; it is the purpose of SYSLNJ to:

- Administer an organizational structure to schedule games among participating towns/teams; and
- Prescribe rules and regulations that will ensure safe, enjoyable, and fair competition.

A youth program should be, as its name implies, a program for the kids. To win at any cost may be the proper attitude for the highly skilled player, but this attitude is contradictory to the basic objectives of SYSLNJ. Stacking teams, holding tryouts, forming all-star teams, etc., may produce a climate of excellence for a talented few, but will not in the long run be beneficial to the vast majority of young people involved. Many of the SYSLNJ regulations have been written specially to implement this philosophy as far as practicable.

SYSLNJ was founded as a way for children to continue playing soccer in a semi-competitive environment while developing their individual soccer skills, knowledge of the game, and sportsmanship. The SYSLNJ is composed of teams from towns in North and Central New Jersey. Affiliated clubs are selected deliberately to minimize the amount of travel required.

In order to support the SYSLNJ objectives, each town is required to:

- Conduct open, publicized registrations with the aim of achieving maximum participation.
- Distribute players to teams as evenly and fairly as possible, either through a draft or the assignment of players by knowledgeable club/town officials.
- Enter competitive, balanced teams when more than one team is entered in a playing division.
- Note that it is permissible to create teams within a division based on school grade (i.e., a U13 team consisting of all 6th graders and a U13 team consisting of all 7th graders) with the condition that the teams within a grade are of roughly similar skills. The drafting process is set up to address such teams. See the section on 'Stacking'.

### A. The SYSLNJ Soccer Year

SYSLNJ Soccer organizes and administers two seasons of play in each soccer year. The soccer year follows the calendar year. The fall season starts in September and runs through mid-November; the spring season begins in early April and ends in mid-June. Depending on the calendar/holidays/school vacations, each season is approximately 10 games long. The League hosts/organizes a SYSL Cup, a day in which back-to-back, first-place playoff games for each U13 and above division are to be played as well as a U9/U11 Round Robin Tournament consisting of minimum 3 games each team.

SYSL Cup hosts help facilitate trophy/medal distribution, referee assignments, game scheduling and ultimately showcases SYSLNJ.

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## **B. SYSLNJ Applications and League Fees**

### **1. Applications to the League**

Towns/Clubs wishing to be a part of SYSLNJ must apply to be a member of the league through an application process. As designated in SYSL Bylaws. An application form must be completed and submitted providing the individual club's information regarding participating teams, their respective levels, referee assignments, field availability, and all other required information. The form can be found on our website ([www.SYSLNJ.com](http://www.SYSLNJ.com)) under About / Join SYSL.

All applications will be reviewed by the SYSLNJ Executive board and a decision will be made, in a timely manner, as to whether or not the Town/Club is accepted into the league. Written notification will be provided to all applicants as to their acceptance or denial into the league.

### **2. League Fees**

SYSLNJ registration fees are used to manage the program, provide trophies, etc. Each participating team is charged an administrative fee for each season of play.

Clubs/towns make payments (checks payable to SYSLNJ) for each participating team. League fees will be \$125 per team, payable net 30 from the date of the invoice. The SYSLNJ administration continues to do its best to maintain low fees; however, they are subject to change at the discretion of the SYSLNJ board.

Late Fee: \$100 penalty fee will be assessed if the league fees per team are not paid until the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the season and the town will not be allowed to participate in Playoffs / Finals Fest if the invoice is overdue by the 7<sup>th</sup> week.

Work Bond: Each Club will pay (at the beginning of each season) \$200. If a Club sends a volunteer to a SYSL Sanctioned Event for an cumulative time of 4 hours, this can be done by different volunteers, then the Club will be credited the fee towards next season's registration fees.

## **II. SYSLNJ Organization**

The League has selected a governing board to provide direction for the program. A list of SYSLNJ Executive Committee Members for the current season is maintained on the SYSLNJ website ([www.SYSLNJ.com](http://www.SYSLNJ.com)) under "League Contact Information". In addition, SYSLNJ Constitution and Bylaws can be found on the same website for further information regarding how the league is run.

Each town/club designates an individual to act as their "Club Representative" to act as a liaison between the town or club's soccer organization and SYSLNJ. This person is responsible for ensuring that:

- The town's fields are available and satisfactory for SYSLNJ play.
- All home games are scheduled.
- Teams have qualified Team Officials and a sufficient number of players to form stable, competitive teams.
- Qualified, certified, age-appropriate referees are assigned and paid promptly.
- The town pays its pro-rata share of all agreed upon SYSLNJ expenses in a timely manner.

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- **All registered teams meet the age (State-mandated calendar year birthday cut-offs) and balance requirements of the League as set forth in its Bylaws**

Town Representatives need to have all their town's Team Officials attend bi-annual SYSLNJ Executive Committee Open Team Officials Meetings in Fall and Spring seasons.

## III. Player Eligibility

### A. Age Restrictions

Each season, the SYSLNJ attempts to have at least one boy and one girl's division for each age group. In the event that there aren't enough teams of boys or girls in each age group to form a division, the SYSLNJ reserves the right to either combine or eliminate divisions. Also based on level of play, the SYSLNJ might create multiple divisions for each age group. Players must be below the age limit to play in a given division. Age waivers can be issued on a case-by-case basis each season. Town Reps must secure permission for this player from the SYSLNJ Executive Board and appropriate Age Group Committee prior to the commencement of a given season.

Calendar birth year is the current method to determine eligibility for levels of play in SYSLNJ. The age cut offs for the current season is maintained on the SYSLNJ website ([www.SYSLNJ.com](http://www.SYSLNJ.com)).

### B. Player Eligibility (U9 – High School Levels)

- **Carded/Travel players** are eligible, in an unlimited capacity, for all divisions in SYSLNJ. When submitting rosters, Club Reps must identify all these players as being carded/travel. This allowance is to help towns field teams in SYSL for the season and provide extra practice and playing time for these carded players. Town carded players must adhere to the following parameters
  - (1) All travel team games and practices must take precedent. If there are any conflicts, travel games and practices must be attended before any SYSL scheduled events and;
  - (2) SYSL players must be played first when there are more than 11 players per game.
- High School level will be limited to those who have aged out of U15 and have not yet graduated High School. **MUST STILL BE IN HIGH SCHOOL.**
- High School **Junior Varsity** players are eligible for SYSLNJ.
- High School **Varsity players** are eligible for SYSLNJ. When submitting rosters, Club Reps must identify varsity players. Varsity status is determined at the start of the SYSLNJ/High School season. All teams with Varsity Players MAY BE flighted in the Highest Division.
- Players may only be listed on one roster in a division. A player can be listed on no more than two teams' rosters if they are in different divisions (e.g. U13 and U15).
- No player can play listed on a roster more than 1 division up (e.g. a U10 player cannot play U15)
- Girls can be listed on the rosters of boys' teams; however, boys cannot be listed on the rosters of girls' teams.
- Guest players **ARE NOT** permitted in SYSLNJ games. Only rostered, eligible players may participate.

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## C. Age Verification & Photo Identification

AGE VERIFICATION - Club Reps are responsible for checking birthdates and confirming that unauthorized players are **NOT** included on team rosters. In the event that a team has carded players or approved Age Waiver players, Club Reps must identify them to the League and obtain approval where necessary. Towns may face discipline up for not identifying its travel, carded, varsity or age waived players.

PHOTO IDENTIFICATION – SYSL requires a Photo ID for each rostered child for the U13 through High School Age Groups. Photos will be utilized at check in by referees to ensure all rostered players are present. Photos must be uploaded to the SYSL site and should be approximately the same size and style as a passport photo

## D. Insurance and Registration

Every affiliated town/club participating in the SYSLNJ season **MUST** meet the minimum insurance qualification as set forth by the New Jersey Youth Soccer Association. All participating players must be registered with their respective clubs, having all registration forms and waivers properly signed and dated by the legal guardian of the player before the player participates in practice or league-sponsored matches. Any player who does not meet the above minimum requirement is considered an unregistered player and therefore ineligible for play in SYSLNJ. **See Section XI. Insurance for more information.**

## IV. Referee Assignments

SYSLNJ will follow the following guidelines for officiating:

1. The home club must provide and pay for a qualified (i.e., capable of refereeing at that age level and currently certified by the USSF) referee. The referee should know both FIFA and SYSLNJ rules, be properly dressed and be able to control the game. Only one individual per town should assign referees for home games. **SYSLNJ strongly suggests a team of three age appropriate refs be employed for all U11-HS games. One ref for U9 is typically satisfactory.**
2. Standards for referee assignment to an SYSLNJ match must include current USSF certification, and the demonstrated ability to effectively and consistently apply FIFA and SYSLNJ rules during match play. **It is REQUIRED by the league that the CENTER referee be at least two (2) years older than the division match he/she is officiating.** Towns **MUST NOT USE** any referees who do not meet all of these above criteria.
3. **If a town/ club has difficulty finding a qualified age appropriate referee in accordance with SYSL rules for a particular game, then they MUST notify SYSLNJ Board Member in advance of the game,** so that SYSL may have time to (1) try to find a qualified referee for the game or (2) advise Town Rep that a Town Delegate must be at the game in question.
4. Suggested **compensation for a referee starts at \$50 for a U9 game and \$100 for U11 and above, but is ultimately at the discretion of the home town.**
5. Efforts to schedule referees should be made well in advance (no later than the Tuesday night before the game date). The responsibility to provide a qualified referee rests explicitly with the home team and its local soccer organization.

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6. A thirty-minute waiting time for a referee to appear should be observed, if possible (depends on field availability). A late arriving referee will continue a game begun before he/she arrives. **If the referee does not show, the game must still be played.** The first choice to referee the game will be any USSF certified referee who is at the site. Lacking a certified referee, the Team Officials **must** agree to an alternative referee and must abide by his/her decisions for the entire game. It is **not** acceptable to choose one individual to referee the first half and another to referee the second half (unless this is due to late- arriving ref).
7. A referee's authority extends before, during and after the game from the time he/she arrives at the field until the time at which he/she leaves the area.
8. SYSL assigned Referees **WILL** be Paid for Games that are cancelled within 48 hours of game start time, unless game is cancelled due to weather. If Referees Show up to Game location, they **WILL** be Paid Game fees.
9. All other Referees will follow Home Teams Referee Assignors Guidelines. Please check with home team Assignors for Details.

## V. SYSLNJ Playing Rules

FIFA ([www.fifa.com](http://www.fifa.com)) and SYSL ([www.SYSLNJ.COM](http://www.SYSLNJ.COM)) rules govern games. Specifics and exceptions are noted in this section.

### Fall 2025- Spring 2026 Age Group Structure

Age Group	Field	Goal Size	Players	Birth Year	Grade Level	Game Time	Heading	Slide Tackle	BOL	Ball Size
<b>High School</b>	Full Sided	8' x 24'	11 v 11	2008-2011	8 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	80 min 2-40 min half 5 min HT	Yes	Yes	No	5
<b>U15</b>	Full Sided	8' x 24'	11 v 11	2011-2012	7 <sup>th</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	80 min 2-40 min half 5 min HT	Yes	No	No	5
<b>U13</b>	Full sided	8' x 24'	11 v 11	2013-2014	5 <sup>th</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	70 min 2-35 min half 5 min HT	Yes	No	No	5
<b>U11</b>	Small sided	7' x 21'	8 v 8	2015-2016	3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	52 min 2 -26 min half or 4-13 min Qtr 5 min HT Running Clock for Water breaks	No	No	Yes	4
<b>U9</b>	Small sided	6.5' x 18.5'	8 v 8	2017-2018	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade & Below	52 min 2-26 min half or 4-13 min Qtr 5 min HT Running Clock for Water breaks	No	No	Yes	4

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**Water Breaks CAN BE given, with the agreement of the Referee and BOTH Team Officials before the game starts. Once agreed for Water Breaks, it MUST be done for the ENTIRE game. A running Clock will be done for the Water Breaks, and a minimum of a 5 minute half time break.**

## **A. Game Rosters and Roster Confirmation Process**

### **Game Rosters**

The suggested maximum **roster size** is **eighteen** (18) players for U13 - HS divisions and **fourteen** (14) players for U9 & U11 divisions. Larger rosters to accommodate a town's players must be approved by the League prior to the season. Rosters must be submitted by Club Reps to the League before the first week of play of each season and must be approved.

Each Town / Club must list at least one (1) Team Official, that is 18 years of age or older, to be on record as being responsible for game confirmations as well as be available to be at game on game day. This Team Official should be someone other than the Town / Club Representative.

**'Stacking'** teams – when creating teams, Club reps should make an effort to avoid the creation of 'super' teams by 'stacking' the team with the better players. However, creating teams within a division (i.e., U13) having players from the same school grade (a team of all 6th graders and a team of all 7th graders) is permitted and not considered 'stacking' as long as the teams are equally weighted. The flighting process is set up to address such teams.

### **Roster Confirmation**

Rosters are required to be submitted for each team playing in SYSL. The procedures to follow with rosters are as follows:

1. **All rosters will be posted on the SYSLNJ website for the review by the SYSL Administration.** Rosters will be submitted by Town Reps to the SYSLNJ Administrative Director. Preliminary rosters are due before the season starts at a previously agreed upon date by SYSL Board. All rosters MUST include all players full name, dates of birth. Player's Jersey number, and contact email address should be provided as well but is not mandatory. A Jersey Number **MUST** be on the Uniform in order for the Player to play. Final rosters will be due 3 weeks into the season at a previously determined date. **There will be no changes or additions to the rosters after the final roster due date.**
2. **PHOTO ID** - SYSL requires a Photo ID for each rostered child for the U13 through High School Age Groups. Photos will be utilized at check in by referees to ensure all rostered players are present. Photos must be uploaded to the SYSL site and should be approximately the same size and style as a passport photo.
3. Team Officials not providing **CORRECT** rosters will be subject to disciplinary review by the board. SYSLNJ reserves the right to assess a penalty for teams without rosters that have played games.

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4. Team Officials must use only those players on their roster. If it is found that a Team Official intentionally uses un-rostered players, the SYSL Board will institute disciplinary action. In cases with multiple infractions, Team Officials may be subject to expulsion, and their club may be subject to monetary fines.
  
5. A complete roster which includes players name, DOB and photo for U13 – HS and player name and DOB for U9 and U11 must be presented to the head referee before the start of each game beginning Week 1. If no roster or an incomplete roster are presented, disciplinary actions will be levied by the Disciplinary Committee.
  - a) If no roster is presented, the game will be played however the coach will be suspended one game for the 1<sup>st</sup> Offense, subsequent offenses will be addressed by the DC accordingly.
  - b) If a player is not listed or listed with missing information, they will not be allowed to play.
  - c) Rosters **MUST BE** in PHYSICAL Form, (Paper Form), and be an SYSL Approved Roster. Digital Rosters **WILL NOT** be accepted.
  - d) Roster will be Locked on Week 3 of each Season, Then **ONLY** Rosters with Official SYSL Stamp will be accepted by Referees. **If Roster Presented DOES NOT have a stamp it will be treated as if No Roster was presented.**

## **B. Attire**

Teams must play in SYSLNJ similar colored shirts and shorts as well as over-the-calf socks – covering their shin guards. Players are expected to have their shirts tucked in and socks pulled up and the referee will enforce this dress code. Every player should have a proper uniform and a number on the shirt. NO number, NO play. Duplicate numbers are allowed.

**UNIFORM is defined as** a Shirt with Sleeves and Number on the back in a matching color for the entire team. Shorts, socks, shin guards, and soccer cleats are all still required but they do not need to match in color, but attempt to have closeness in color to teammates as far as shorts are concerned

Where there is a conflict in team colors, the home team must change shirts or don pinnies. Goalkeepers must wear a color/pinney to distinguish themselves from the field players; they need not wear a numbered jersey. They may wear long pants, gloves, pads, rubber helmets or soft-billed caps. Soccer cleats or sneakers must be worn by all players. In cold weather, players may wear warm garments under their shirts. Players may also wear sweat pants in the event of inclement weather, preferably the same color as the shorts that comprise the teams uniform.

### **1. Safety Equipment**

- a. **Shin guards are mandatory for SYSLNJ competitions.** The referee will ensure that all players are wearing shin guards as part of the inspection of player equipment before the start of the match. No player shall be allowed to play without shin guards. **Shin guards shall be AGE AND SIZE Appropriate, MINI Shin Guards are NOT Allowed.**
- b. **Mouthpieces are strongly encouraged for competitors wearing braces.** Any player wearing fixed orthodontic devices are strongly encouraged to wear full mouth guards during competition.

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- c. **Soccer shoes shall be of the molded cleat design and must not include a “ front stud”** . No screw-in spikes or spikes with metal tips shall be permitted for use in SYSLNJ competitions.
- d. **Eyeglasses and/or hearing aids must be secured.**
- e. SYSL recommends the use of goggle-style glasses for safety but is not required and regular glasses may be used.
- f. **In accordance with the FIFA laws of the game, no form of jewelry will be allowed. Covering of Earrings and Nose Piercings with Tape or Band-Aids IS NOT allowed, ALL Jewelry MUST be removed. Religious Necklaces may be worn but must be secured to the Body.**

Players **may** wear gloves or kneepads **with the permission of the referee**. Cut-off sweat pants and such worn beneath the shorts must not extend below the shorts. Slide pants worn under player shorts may extend below the shorts and should match the color of the player's shorts.

Bandannas, sweat bands, hair ties, religious headwear and such may be worn when properly secured and when they do not pose a distraction to others or give an advantage to the wearer. The referee has the final say on these items.

**Players wearing rigid / hard casts or any metal braces may not participate in any SYSLNJ games per USSF and SYSL Rules. Wrapping of Rigid Cast is NOT acceptable.**

**Team Officials must be sure that their players are dressed according to the laws of the game. Team Officials will be held responsible if their players are illegally equipped, for example wearing earrings or illegal footwear and may receive a yellow caution card for this infraction.**

## **C. Positioning on the Sides of the Field**

Players and Team Officials from both teams MAY occupy one side of the field, This is at the discretion of the Host Club, and **must remain on their side of the midfield line during play**. The parents and spectators of both teams shall occupy the opposite side of the field. **Nobody is permitted to stand or sit behind either goal line during play**. A team shall be permitted to have no more than three Team Officials on the side with players and Team Officials.

## **D. Regular Season**

1. **Both coaches are responsible for communicating with each other by 8:00 PM on the Tuesday before the game. Coaches should confirm the day, date, time, field.**
2. The home team must provide a properly lined field, nets, corner flags, staked goals, a qualified (certified) referee and the game ball as per the chart above.
3. Regardless of whether or not a field is officially lined with “Coaches Boxes”, all coaches must acknowledge the appropriate area to stand during game time. This area runs parallel to the touch line, at least 10 feet (3.05m) from the touch line, and extends approximately 20 yards (18.29m) from a five-yard neutral zone measured from the halfway line in both directions. Team benches should be separated by a 10-yard neutral zone.
4. Referees must be provided and paid for by the home team. **SYSLNJ strongly suggests a team of three age appropriate refs be employed for all U11-HS games. One ref for U9 is typically satisfactory.** Suggested minimum SYSLNJ referee fees are \$120 for U11 (3 man crew) and above games and \$60 for U9 games. (Assistant referees are assigned by the home team's club and their fees must also be covered by the home team.)

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5. The start of play begins with movement of the ball. The ball does not have to move forward to begin play. A goal can be awarded from the kick-off, or restart of play from the center line.
6. A goal cannot be scored directly from the drop ball restart, the ball must touch another player before entering the goal on a drop kick restart to be considered a goal.
7. For scheduling purposes, at least 90 minutes should be allowed between game start times.
8. SYSLNJ has no goal differential rule to limit game length and all games WILL be played to its entirety. Games will not end early based on goal differential.
9. SYSL has a **Competitive Game Rule** for all games, including playoffs and finals. All games that end with a score of a six (6) goal or less score differential (i.e. 6-0, 7-1, etc) are within the requirements of the rule. Games with a final score differential greater than six (6) goals (i.e. 7-0, 8-1, etc) are a violation of the rule. **PLEASE REFER TO SECTION V. G. for more Details.**
10. No overtime will be played if a non-playoff game ends in a tie. Game times may be shortened (hot weather/scheduling problems, etc.) if both coaches agree to do so before the game begins. Game length cannot be changed after the game has started unless there is an obvious mismatch between the teams. In this case, the game may be shortened if both coaches agree. Coaches may also agree to play quarters due to hot weather but must agree to this beforehand. A Running Clock will be used for the Water Breaks.
11. **All players must play at least half of each game (including playoffs).** The only exceptions would be in circumstances involving team discipline (e.g. many missed practices or misbehavior) or injury. The opposing coach must be notified if a player is not expected to play at least one half of the game. It is strongly recommended that coaches attempt to provide equal playing time to all their players, especially in the U9s.
12. The **minimum number of players** to start the game is Nine (9) for the U13, U15 and HS divisions and six (6) for the U9 and U11 divisions. There must be nine (9) players (6 for the U9s and U11s) present no later than 15 minutes after the scheduled start time (for the home team; 30 minutes for the visiting team if coming from another town), or the game is subject to a forfeit. At least seven (7) players (6 for the U9s) are needed to continue a game (in the event of injuries or Red Cards) or game abandonment (and possible forfeiture) may result.
13. During regular and post season games, teams may only play with a **maximum of one (1) more player than an opponent** who is "playing short." That is, if a team has only seven (7) players (6 for the U9s), the other team may only play with 7 (U9s) or 8 (U11, U13, U15 and HS).
14. In the case where a team becomes short-handed through disciplinary ejection (2 yellow cards on a player or a red card), opposing teams may play up to two (2) more players than the shorthanded team. This includes teams who become shorthanded due to red cards in previous games.
15. **Free substitution** is allowed for both teams after any dead ball provided the player is up and ready to enter play and is given permission by the referee. If a team substitutes for an injured player(s), the opposing team has the right to make an equal number of substitutions. Goalkeepers can be exchanged for field players at any stoppage of play with the referee's permission. **All player substitutions must be made at the center line of the field, and only done so upon the acknowledgement of the center referee.**
16. **Slide tackling** is only allowed at the High School Level / Age Group. Our **definition** of Slide tackling is "deliberately leaving your feet for the purpose of challenging the ball for play. This does not apply to goalies in their penalty area"
17. **Buildout Line is Enforced for U9/U11 Divisions.** The buildout line is used to promote the ball being played out of the back in a less pressured setting. BOL must be marked either by painting lines directly on the field or by using four (4) cones (two on each side) to indicate the lines.
  - a. When a goalkeeper has the ball, either during play (from the opponent) or from a goal kick, the **opposing team must move behind the BOL.**

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- b. Once the opposing team is **retreating** towards the BOL, the goalkeeper can pass, throw, or roll the ball to a teammate (NO PUNTING).
  - c. Once the ball has been touched by a teammate (by either rolling or passing) then the opposing team can cross the BOL and play resumes as normal once the defending team has touched the ball
  - d. Offside offenses SHALL only be an Offense between the Build out line and the Goal line, to be called on the offensive.
18. As stated in #8 above, games are expected to be played full time to allow for maximum player participation. In games where a team has scored 6 or more goals than their opposing team, the referee and coaches have the right to end the game early upon discussion of the game at or after halftime during a stoppage in play. In cases where the game is decisively noncompetitive, coaches from both teams must approach the referee and come upon a mutual agreement as to ending the game early or how the remainder of the game will be carried out.
19. **Player protection:** For all age groups, Girls (crossed arms over the chest) and Boys (crossed hands over the groin area) are allowed to protect themselves in this manner without penalty or handball call by the referee regardless of the player's distance to the ball. If there is an obvious advantage taken by lifting arms/hands and directing the ball, penalty/handball can be called.
20. **Minimum Game Requirement:** Teams must play a minimum 6 games out of a 7-game regular season or 7 games out of an 8-game season in order to be eligible for playoffs. The SYSL Board, in conjunction with the Club Council, reserves the right to adjust the minimum requirement on a season-by-season basis.
21. **Addendum To IFAB Law 12** - The following will apply in all age divisions, flights, and games, without any exception. When a player is shown the yellow card and cautioned during a stoppage in play, the cautioned player shall be required to be substituted off and removed from the field before the restart of play is allowed. The player may be allowed to return to the field as soon as the next substitution opportunity, in accordance with the normal substitution procedure and with the permission of the referee, at the discretion of the coach.
  - a. This procedure shall apply even if it causes a team to play short until the next substitution opportunity.
  - b. If multiple players are shown the yellow card and cautioned, this procedure will apply equally to all players.
  - c. The only exception shall be a player shown the yellow card and cautioned for the second time in the same game, as described below.
  - d. A player who has been shown the yellow card and cautioned for a second time in the same game will be shown the red card and sent off in accordance with Law 12. There is **no change** to any part of this provision of Law 12 (the team must still play short).

## **E. Playoffs**

1. All the season games and make-up games should be played by the last weekend before the playoffs start.
2. In order to be eligible for the playoffs, teams must have played/completed a minimum of 6 games out of their 7- game regular season or 7 games out of an 8-game season or as determined prior to season start.
3. If the participating teams cannot commit to play all the playoff/consolation games and the championship game, the Town Rep must notify the League a week before the start of the playoffs.
4. **All players must play at least half of each playoff game.**

# Suburban Youth Soccer League NJ Rules & Regulations

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5. All playoff/consolation games should be played by Tuesday and scores reported by 12:00 midnight. If the game is not played the defaulting team will have to pay the penalty of \$100 to SYSLNJ and the game will be treated as forfeit resulting in a 1-0 win to the other team.
6. If both teams are not able to play the game due to any unforeseen circumstances with no fault of either of the teams then the team with higher seeding moves up.
7. During the playoffs, each team should be allowed to play with the full complement of players up to a 1 player advantage. Sportsmanship is the ultimate goal of SYSLNJ. Whether playing with a full side or one player up, it is the responsibility of the coaches to monitor their teams play to prevent a runaway outcome. With that in mind, it is unfair to penalize a player on a large team with diminished playing time when the opponent cannot field a full squad.
8. Addendum To IFAB Law 12 as mentioned in Section D. Regular Season Point 21 applies to all Playoff games as well.

## **F. Playoff - Tie-breakers**

Playoff games ending in a tie in regulation time will be resolved in the following manner:

- Ten-minute full overtime period that consists of two five-minute halves where teams switch sides.
- If teams are still tied, the match will be decided by a FIFA rules shootout with alternating penalty kicks.
- Penalty kicks are as follows:  
The first 5 Kickers to kick, If Still tied,  
The 6<sup>th</sup> Kicker from each team shall kick and this will continue until a winner.  
No Player shall Kick twice until the entire team has taken a kick.

## **G. Competitive Game Rule Clarification and Discipline**

As mentioned in SECTION V. D. 9, for all games, including playoffs and finals. Games that end with a six goal or less score differential (i.e. 6-0, 7-1, etc) are within the requirements of the rule. Games with a final score differential greater than six (6) goals (i.e. 7-0, 8-1, etc) are a violation of the rule.

**For all violations, the referee will submit a goal differential report.** This report must be submitted online at [www.SYSLNJ.com](http://www.SYSLNJ.com) within 24 hours of the completion of the game. The referee will provide information regarding the game play and will include their observations and opinions of the efforts made by the winning team official(s) to keep the game competitive.

**It is the sole responsibility of team officials to ensure their compliance with this rule.** Team officials should **NOT** rely upon game officials to remind them of the requirements of this rule, nor should game officials be expected to offer guidance on compliance.

To effectively comply with the requirements of this rule, team officials may use any or all, but are not limited to, the following suggested tactics:

- Remove one or more players from the game (play shorthanded)
- Move normally defensive players to offensive positions
- Require players to make a minimum number of passes before taking a shot on goal
- Require players to make any shot on goal with their non-dominant foot
- Designate only one player to be allowed to shoot on goal

# Suburban Youth Soccer League NJ Rules & Regulations

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Team officials are strongly discouraged from using instructions such as “don’t score” or “don’t shoot” at greater than a normal speaking volume or at times other than when speaking to players on the sidelines.

Team officials are further encouraged to communicate to the game officials, if possible, what steps they are taking to comply with the rule, either during stoppages, or at the conclusion of the game, in a normal speaking volume and away from players.

The Disciplinary Committee will review all reports of violations of the Competitive Game Rule. If the team official(s) are found to have made reasonable efforts to comply no further action will be taken. If the team official(s) are found to have NOT made reasonable efforts to comply the Disciplinary Committee may assess disciplinary action in accordance with the following guidelines, although more or less stringent action may be assessed at the discretion of the committee.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Official Warning / Yellow Card to the Team Official(s) from the DC.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense – One (1) game suspension for the Team Official(s) and the game score will be recorded as a tie.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense – Team suspension from the Playoffs/Finals, suspension or expulsion from SYSL for the involved team official(s) and / or fine to the Club

## **H. Post Season – SYSL CUP**

### **1. Championship or 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Finals Games**

Teams that participate in Post Season Playoff games and continue through to participate in the Finals Games whether it be Championship Game or 3<sup>rd</sup> Place, are required to field a team for these Finals games when they are scheduled. If a team “forfeits” or does not have enough players to field a team to play the game, that team’s club will be fined for non-participation. FINE will be equivalent to the Referee Fees that would have been paid for that game.

### **2. SYSL U9 / U11 Tournament**

The U9 / U11 End of the Season Tournament is meant to give the younger age groups a post season event to finish out their season. If, for whatever reason, a team is unable to participate in the tournament, a minimum 7 days’ notice should be given so that an alternate team can be found to take its place or rescheduling of games can occur. FINE will be equivalent to the Referee Fees that would have been paid for that game.

## **VI. Flighting of Teams**

The Club Representative will be responsible, upon town registration, to rate the teams from the town as “strong,” “medium” or “weak” in the division. SYSL uses a ranking system of 1 through 5 with 1 being a very strong team and 5 being a new or unknown team. Where practicable, the Flighting Committee will do their best to avoid having strong and weak teams meet during the season in hopes of avoiding a potential mismatch, which is ultimately not fun for either team. The Committee reserves the right to change the team ratings and has the ability to re-flight teams based on the guidelines set forth in SYSLNJ Bylaws under the Age Group Committee.

# Suburban Youth Soccer League NJ Rules & Regulations

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## VII. Scheduling of Games

The SYSL Administration will work with the towns and teams to develop a competitive schedule. The Administration will set the pairings for each week and factor in team and club conflicts when developing the draft schedule. Each club/town is then responsible for setting the date/day, time and field for home games. Game Date and Times SHALL be scheduled NO LESS than 2 weeks ahead of the Originally scheduled Game date. Clubs shall notify SYSL Administration with any issues.

Clubs/Towns SHALL work with opposing teams to schedule a date and time that will work for both teams.

If conflicts arise, a minimum of 3 game dates and times should be offered. EVERY attempt should be made to schedule the game. If Conflicts can not be resolved between the 2 CLUB representatives, then SYSL should be notified of the situation.

In some instances, a club may not be able to provide a **pitch** for their teams. In these cases, the games will be played at the opponent's location. However, the team whose club could not provide a pitch will be responsible for covering referee fees based on the normal referee fees determined by the opponent's club.

As mentioned in Section IV. Referee Assignments Sub Section 3, **if a town/ club has difficulty finding a qualified age appropriate referee in accordance with SYSL rules for a particular game, then they MUST notify SYSLNJ Referee Coordinator in advance of the game**, so that SYSL may have time to (1) try to find a qualified referee for the game or (2) advise Town Rep that a Town Delegate must be at the game in question.

Any club that has a team that withdraws from the League after schedules have been set will forfeit the League fee and be subject to a \$100 penalty. That team may also be ineligible to participate in the following season.

At the end of the regular season, each division will be ranked by total accumulated points. The top eight teams in terms of points earned will be seeded in a SYSL Cup flight from 1 thru 8.

At the discretion of the SYSLNJ Executive Committee – very large or small divisions may have modified playoff formats in any given season.

Due to unforeseen events (weather or other) where entire weekends could be lost, the board may choose to shorten the season by any number of games. Standings will be manually adjusted based on the reduced amount of games. Teams that do get more games played, in spite of the event, **will get their worst result eliminated**. Ranking will only take into account the best games played for the season.

The league makes every attempt to maintain an even number of teams within any given flight. However, in some cases, that is not possible due to the difference in strength between the teams within that same division. In the event of an odd numbered team flight, the scheduling software will assign one of the teams, within that flight, an extra game. This game must be played just like any other. The team that plays the extra game will have the choice to eliminate one game result from their individual point standings.

# Suburban Youth Soccer League NJ Rules & Regulations

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## VIII. Rescheduled Games

Every attempt should be made to play all games as scheduled as soon as possible, DO NOT wait until the end of the season to make up games. Known conflicts and town available playing days and times will be taken into consideration when the schedule is developed and, while weather and unforeseen circumstances can interrupt the schedule, changes should be kept to a minimum. If conflicts arise, a minimum of 3 game dates and times should be offered. EVERY attempt should be made to schedule the game. If Conflicts can not be resolved between the 2 CLUB representatives, then SYSL should be notified of the situation.

**The game schedule for a weekend is "set" NO LATER THAN 10:00 PM on the Wednesday preceding.** No further requests unless there is an emergency situation. Games cannot be changed to a different day/time without the approval of the opposing Team Official and Club Representative.

Games not able to be played in the week that they are originally scheduled can only be changed with the permission of the Town Reps and only for extraordinary reasons--e.g. no registered Team Official available, death in family, unexpected church/community event, etc. **As long as a team has 9 or more players for U13 and up (6 in the U9s and U11s), a regularly scheduled game cannot be postponed or canceled.**

During the Regular Season:

- **Team Officials cannot reschedule games on their own.**
- Games that need to be **rescheduled must have their new date set within 5 days of the original play date.** The game does not have to be played within 5 days; only the date must be set in this time frame. BOTH Teams must confirm the Make-up Date within the 5 Days. Once Confirmed Neither Team may Cancel without the Approval of the Executive Board, the Team requesting the Cancellation May be subject to Forfeiture of the game.
- If a game is not rescheduled within the 5-day time period, SYSL Board reserves the right to assess a penalty to the team unable to comply.
- Games must be made up by the start of playoffs at a mutually agreed upon date and time. If this cannot be arranged, the SYSL Administration will contact Town Reps to establish the date and time (and location if necessary) when the game must be played.
- NOTE: Teams must play 6 out of 7 games in a regular season in order to be eligible for playoffs.

**Playoff Games Must be played on the Saturday or Sunday on which they are scheduled.** If a team must move the game to later than Sunday and the other team agrees, a note to the SYSL Board must be sent which identifies which team making the request to move the game. If, **FOR ANY REASON**, the game is not played prior to the next round of the playoffs, the team making the change request forfeits, then the opposing team advances (meaning, if you ask to have the game changed to a day later than Sunday and you then cannot play on the rescheduled date, you forfeit the game).

# Suburban Youth Soccer League NJ Rules & Regulations

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## IX. Scoring of Games and Standings

### Scoring

1. Teams will receive five (5) points for a win, three (3) points for a tie, and one (1) point for a loss. **The maximum number of points earned for a game is five (5).** Any teams tied at the end of the season will be subjected to the following tiebreakers to determine the order of the standings:
  - a. Head to Head to Head
  - b. Goal Differential. (A 4 Goal MAX score will be deducted from the conflicting Teams. EXAMPLE: a score of 6-2 will be limited to 4 goals for differential purposes..)
  - c. Goals Against
  - d. Coin Flip. To Be done By SYSL Administration
2. **Winning** teams (in the case of a tie, home teams) report the game scores. Although winning teams should report the score, **BOTH teams/Team Officials are responsible for reporting game scores.** Red or Yellow Cards must be reported by the winning teams, within 24 hours of the issuance, to their Town Rep who will report this information to the SYSL Executive Committee.
3. **Scores MUST be reported.** Scores can be reported on the SYSLNJ website and entered directly for each specific game.
4. It is the responsibility of the Club Reps (and Team Officials) to check the website (www.SYSLNJ.com) to verify that correct scores/point totals have been posted.
5. All scores of games must be entered by Monday 12 noon, after each weekend's game. If no score is entered, the scorekeeper will mark it in as 0-0. Town Reps will be reminded if there is a missing score after the first weekend's game, thereafter; no reminder will be given and will automatically result in a 0-0 score.
6. As mentioned in Section VII Scheduling of Games Paragraph 6: Due to unforeseen events (weather or other) where entire weekends could be lost, the board may choose to shorten the season by any number of games. Standings will be manually adjusted based on the reduced amount of games. Teams that do get more games played, in spite of the event, **will get their worst result eliminated.** Ranking will only take into account the best games played for the season.

**Teams can and may have points deducted from their team accumulated total points on a case by case basis by SYSL Executive Board and Disciplinary Committee decision. Examples of such circumstances where deductions can occur, but are not limited to, are as follows:**

- Players or Team Officials receiving Red Cards or Yellow Cards
- Competitive Game Rule infractions
- Other Playing rules violations or repeated infringements of SYSL Policies, Procedure, and Mission

# Suburban Youth Soccer League NJ Rules & Regulations

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## X. Protests and Forfeits

### A. Protests

Team Officials should try to amicably resolve any areas of disagreement together with the referee, if appropriate, in a game-related situation. In the event that a disagreement persists, the game should still proceed and be played to its conclusion.

**In no instance should a game not be played or not continue to be played because one Team Official decides to protest a game. Any Team Official who does so will not have his protest heard and runs the risk of forfeiting the game.** If the Team Officials notice any fault on the roster related to player's age, Team Officials should discuss amongst themselves to clarify. If the issue is not resolved after discussion, then the game should not be played. If the game is played, the SYSL Executive Committee will then assume that both the teams resolved the issue at the field.

If there are any issues that should be brought to the attention of the SYSLNJ Executive Committee, after first discussing what happened with the local Town Rep and Team Officials feel that this is something that warrants further discussion and review, a clear and concise email outlining the matter should be sent in a timely manner the SYSL Executive Committee.

### B. Forfeits

Teams join SYSLNJ to play **recreational** soccer, and when a team forfeits a match, both sides are deprived of the chance to play. As such, forfeits are strongly discouraged. SYSLNJ expects that all games will be played when scheduled.

If one team fails to show up for the game within the allotted grace period, that team **MAY** forfeit the match. The Town rep (not the Team Official) must submit a report to [first.suburban.sysl@gmail.com](mailto:first.suburban.sysl@gmail.com). When SYSLNJ receives a notice indicating that one team failed to appear at a game, the Disciplinary Committee will investigate the reported "no-show."

After an investigation by the SYSLNJ Executive Committee, the club/town of any team that forfeits a match (without a legitimate excuse) will be fined \$100.00 plus Referee Fees. The club must pay this fine within two weeks of notification. Any club/town that has two forfeits in a single season will be put on probation by SYSLNJ for the following full season. If a club/town has a subsequent forfeit during the probation period, that club/town may jeopardize its membership in the League. Towns with multiple seasons with reported forfeits are subject to dismissal from the SYSLNJ.

If the visiting team forfeits the match, that club/town must also reimburse the home team/town for the referee fee paid by the home team. In addition to the fine described above, **any team that forfeits a match during the season, without a legitimate excuse, may not be eligible for playoffs.**

If a game is declared a forfeit for any reason, the final score will be scored as a loss for the team that forfeited the match.

# Suburban Youth Soccer League NJ Rules & Regulations

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## C. Forfeits in Playoffs

As the playoffs for each season necessarily run close to the mandatory end of the SYSLNJ season and teams playing other games in good faith must wait for the result of all division games to proceed, these circumstances require the diligence of the Team Officials and Town Reps involved. Every effort must be made to complete the matches on schedule. Should a game not be able to be played due to scheduling difficulties between the teams involved within the week between the scheduled time and the next scheduled match, both teams will be disqualified from the remainder of the playoffs, with the following exceptions:

1. It is documented that one team was totally responsible for the delay. In such cases, the team responsible will forfeit and the opposing team will move forward.
2. If weather conditions or other uncontrollable environmental factors prevent the play of the match in the aforementioned time frame, the Executive Committee may, at its discretion, extend the deadline for the match to be completed. The participating teams will have to demonstrate the following:
  - i The scheduled field is unusable.
  - ii The opposing team's field is unusable
  - iii The participating teams' Town Rep(s) made a good faith effort to secure a neutral site for the match, but were unsuccessful

**Forfeited Games in the playoffs will be subject to a \$500.00 Fine to the club responsible for the forfeit. If both Teams can not come to a resolution, BOTH Clubs will be Subject to a \$500.00 fine.**

## D. Forfeits of Championship or 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Games

Teams that participate in Post Season Playoff games and continue through to participate in the Finals Games whether it be Championship Game or 3<sup>rd</sup> Place, are required to field a team for these Finals games when they are scheduled. If a team "forfeits" or does not have enough players to field a team to play the game, that team's club will be fined for non-participation. **FINE** will be equivalent to the Referee Fees that would have been paid for that game.

**Forfeited Games in the playoffs will be subject to a \$500.00 Fine to the club responsible for the forfeit. If both Teams can not come to a resolution, BOTH Clubs will be Subject to a \$500.00 fine.**

## XI. Insurance

Each participating club/town must be affiliated with the NJYS or otherwise insured through their town to ensure that proper, adequate insurance coverage is in place. Signed registration forms, including a liability waiver, must be obtained for each player and Team Official prior to the start of practice for the upcoming season.

Every participating town must be fully insured and registered with NJYS. A copy of the certificate of insurance must be provided by the town's soccer association to the SYSL Administrative Director with SYSLNJ listed as additional insured. Failure to provide proof of insurance will result in immediate suspension of member towns until such time and proof of insurance is provided.

# Suburban Youth Soccer League NJ Rules & Regulations

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## **XII. League Relationship with Participating Towns/Clubs**

SYSLNJ operates only through the cooperation of its participating towns. As such, Club decision-making may prevail in many cases, such as deadlines for drafts and adding players, selection and payment of referees, selection of Team Officials, registrations for teams, purchase of uniforms, available dates and times for home games, etc. In cases where a Club adopts a different rule from SYSLNJ, there is generally no problem as long as the club/town does not attempt to supersede or contradict the League. It is important to note that the registration of a team into an SYSLNJ season represents an agreement by the Club to abide by the rules set forth herein. Clubs that actively attempt to subvert, circumvent, or challenge the authority of SYSLNJ to enforce these rules may, at the sole discretion of the SYSLNJ Executive Board, be invited not to participate in future SYSLNJ seasons. All teams must have certified/approved rosters on file with the League before the start of the season. No team may play in the league without a roster on file.

## **XIII. Expected Behavior**

### **A. Associations**

SYSLNJ has fostered a respectful partnership with our affiliated clubs and associations. Associations that register teams with the League become partners in the SYSLNJ mission of competitive recreational soccer. By registering a team with the SYSLNJ, each member organization agrees to abide by the rules set forth herein and to submit to the authority of the SYSLNJ Executive Committee, as it pertains to the teams registered with SYSLNJ. Associations are expected to enforce all League decisions within their respective organizations without reservation. Failure to fully support the exercise of authority over League matters within the organization will result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or ultimately expulsion of the entire Association and its teams from SYSLNJ.

All Clubs & Association Members should communicate the current **SYSL Code of Acceptable Conduct and Spectator Policy** to their participating team officials, spectators and players. The current policy can be found on the SYSL website under Info & Resources.

### **B. Coaches / Team Officials**

Team Officials must conduct themselves in a dignified manner at all times. It is important for the coaches to set the tone for appropriate behavior of the children on the field. Referees, opposing Team Officials, parents and players should be treated with respect and dignity at all times. Disagreements should be resolved as constructively and as privately as possible. **Team Officials need to control not only their own behavior but also that of their players, their parents/guardians and other Team Officials for the team.**

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## C. Referees

**The referee is the ultimate authority on the field** and has the final decision on all game-related matters. While constructive discussion with the referee is encouraged, there should be no attempt by any party to undermine the referee's authority. The referee's authority specifically includes decisions at the field on the advisability of playing or postponing a game due to weather conditions and it starts from the moment they arrive at the game site and ends when they leave the area.

Standards for referee assignment to an SYSLNJ match must include current USSF certification, and the demonstrated ability to effectively and consistently apply FIFA and SYSLNJ rules during match play. **It is REQUIRED by the league that the CENTER referee be at least two (2) years older than the division match he/she is officiating.** Towns **MUST NOT USE** any referees who do not meet all of these above criteria.

As mentioned in Section IV. Referee Assignments Sub Section 3, **if a town/ club has difficulty finding a qualified age appropriate referee in accordance with SYSL rules for a particular game, then they MUST notify SYSLNJ Board Member in advance of the game,** so that SYSL may have time to (1) try to find a qualified referee for the game or (2) advise Town Rep that a Town Delegate must be at the game in question.

## D. Players

Team Officials are responsible for the behavior of their players. Everyone must treat the referees and the opposing team with dignity and respect. Team Officials should actively discourage dirty play, inappropriate language (including cursing, trash talking and ethnic slurs) and all other types of inappropriate behavior. **At the beginning and / or conclusion of each game, the teams and Team Officials must meet at midfield to shake hands.**

## E. Parents/Spectators

Team Officials are also responsible for the behavior of their parents. **Parents/spectators from both teams must sit in separate areas on the side of the field across from the players' benches (no spectators may stand/sit behind either goal during the game).** Spectators should not speak to (or yell at) the referee, the Team Officials or the players on the opposing team, or their own child's team. No one has the right to question a referee's decision or to otherwise attempt to influence the outcome of the game. Spectators cannot enter the field of play unless permitted to do so by the referee.

Parents/guardians should understand what is expected of them--and their children--and also be aware that the Team Official is accountable for their behavior and that the referee has a right to evict any spectator who engages in behavior that he/she considers inappropriate. Inappropriate behavior on the part of a spectator may result in the issuance of a Yellow Card or Red Card to the Team Official. Please see **Section XIV. Discipline & Mediation** for more on expected behavior.

# Suburban Youth Soccer League NJ Rules & Regulations

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## XIV. Discipline & Mediation

The SYSL Disciplinary Committee will be composed of three (3) to five (5) SYSL League Members with a designated chairperson as appointed by the Executive Committee but in most circumstances, is the Deputy Commissioner. The SYSL Executive Board shall be the highest level of appeal in SYSL for matters referred to it. The Committee will base its decisions on the referee game reports and other sources as needed according to the SYSLNJ Rules and Regulations and the Bylaws of the League. **The Committee may also impose additional penalties at its discretion and all decisions are final.**

The SYSL Executive Committee has the responsibility to resolve any disagreements that cannot be resolved by mutual consent or through application of the written League rules. All disagreements will be brought before and referred to the SYSLNJ Discipline and Protest Committee for resolution.

### A. Players

1. It is against SYSLNJ rules for U9, U11, U13 and U15 divisions to **slide-tackle** an opponent during a game. Any occurrence of slide tackling may result in the issuance of a yellow card to the player causing such infraction. Restart play with an indirect free kick. Note: A goalie sliding to make a save within the box is NOT considered a slide tackle and IS legal. Normal procedures for reporting red card and yellow card violations and for point deduction shall be in place as follows. Slide tackling is allowed in the High School divisions only.
2. **Red Cards (per team)**:

Offense	Suspension
Denies an obvious goal scoring opportunity by handling	1 Game
Receives a second yellow caution card in the same game	1 Game
Denies an obvious goal scoring opportunity by fouling	2 Games
Commits Serious Foul Play	2 Games
Uses offensive, insulting or abusive language or gestures	2 Games
Commits Violent Conduct	3 Games

Should a player receive a second red card during the season the suspension will be doubled. **The Disciplinary Committee will review each case and, at its discretion, may issue additional sanctions (i.e. additional team point deductions, etc.)**

### 3. **Yellow Card**

There is no penalty for a single yellow card. However, if a player receives Multiple cautions during the season, the Player MAY receive additional penalties.

### B. **Coaches / Team Officials**

1. Team Officials can receive a Dismissal/ Red or Yellow Cards for their behavior or the behavior of their parents
  - a. **Dismissal / Red Card (Own Behavior)** - The penalty for a red card/dismissal for Team Official is:
    - i. 1st card – TWO (2) game suspension (per team) and a \$100 fine to the Town/Club;
    - ii. 2nd card – SIX (6) month suspension (per team) and a \$250 fine to the Town/Club;
    - iii. 3rd and final card – SYSLNJ suspension for life.

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Team Officials cannot appeal red cards issued. The red cards accumulate over a rolling 24-month time period. Additional penalties may be assessed and points may be deducted at the discretion of the league's disciplinary committee.

\*\*\*In the event of a dispute with a Team Official red card, only the Town Rep has the ability to request an appeal. Appeals must be filed within 72 hours of the red card issuance / notification. Appeal will be presented to the Disciplinary Committee and it will adjudicate the appeal. The penalty for the red card will be effective immediately upon red card issuance and will be carried out while the Disciplinary is reviewing the appeal. All Disciplinary Committee's decisions are final and will be communicated to all parties involved.

- b. **Dismissal / Red Card (Spectator Behavior)** – Referee can ask the Team Official or team official to remove a spectator (i.e. Parent based on their disruptive behavior as discussed in Section XIII Expected Behavior
  - c. **Yellow Card** - A single yellow card will result in a warning. If a Team Official receives a second yellow card (equivalent to a red card), a two (2) game suspension will be issued. The Discipline Committee may take further action depending on the circumstances of the caution card. A third caution card will result in a three (3) game suspension. Additional penalties may be assessed by the Disciplinary Committee.
2. If a Team Official is ejected from a game, he/she must have a qualified adult (18 or over) available to Team Official the team for the rest of the game. If a player is a Team Official, an individual must be designated.
3. Team Officials who willfully disobey league policy on competition by fielding ineligible players (non-rostered, uninsured, varsity, travel, overage, etc.) will be disciplined in the manner described under ineligible players below.
4. Repeatedly refusing to adhere to the competitive play rules above, or Any Team Official guilty of major infractions of the SYSLNJ competition policies will be suspended according to the following schedule:
  - a. First offense, one game suspension
  - b. Second offense, three game suspension
  - c. Third offense, the Team Official will be permanently banned from the League.
5. Team Officials or spectators receiving Red Cards or who are otherwise removed from a game by the referee must leave the immediate area of the field before play resumes and may not return to the field/complex.
6. **COACHES / TEAM OFFICIALS RECEIVING A RED CARD ARE NOT ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY LEAGUE SANCTIONED ACTIVITY pre-game activities, game, and post-game activities.**
7. **Violations of a suspension ordered by the Disciplinary Committee shall be reported to the Disciplinary Committee. Additional fines, suspensions, or other disciplinary actions, up to and including permanent expulsion, may be ordered by the Disciplinary Committee for proven violations.**
8. Individual Towns/Clubs can impose their own discipline, based on their own Bylaws, in addition to SYSL penalties at any time.

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## **C. Non-rostered Players**

At no time may a non-rostered player participate in an SYSLNJ match. Non-rostered players are not covered under their member club's insurance. A non-rostered player who sustains or causes an injury during practice or a league sponsored event exposes the Team Official, the Executive Board, and the League to unnecessary litigation. Any Team Official found to be fielding a non-rostered player, either in matches or in practice, shall:

- a. Immediately forfeit all matches in which the non-rostered player participated, this will be retroactive to the start of the season,
- b. Be suspended from the league for a minimum of one year, and
- c. Receive a lifetime ban from the League for additional offenses.

## **D. Ineligible Players:**

1. At no time may an ineligible player play for a team during an SYSLNJ match. Any Team Official found to be fielding an ineligible player, either in matches or in practice, shall:
  - a. Immediately forfeit all matches in which the ineligible player participated,
  - b. The team cannot play in the playoffs or SYSL Cup.
  - c. Can be suspended from the league for a minimum of one year, and
  - d. May receive a lifetime ban from the League for additional offenses.
2. Once determined, no appeals will be heard on the above measures and all punishments are mandatory minimums.

## **E. Referees**

As stated in Section III, under referee, the referee is the ultimate authority on the field from the time s/he arrives at the game until the time s/he leaves. Both Team Officials **must** meet with the referee prior to the start of the game for instructions and roster exchange. The referee is instructed to provide zero tolerance for unruly and/or abusive behavior from players, Team Officials or parents. **Team Officials are reminded that they are held accountable for the behavior of the parents of the children on their team.** Team Officials are responsible for providing the rules of comportment to their parents at the beginning of the season and again during the season as behavior warrants. These rules contain, but are not limited to the following:

1. Parents are invited to encourage their children and cheer for good play (from both teams).
2. Parents are specifically prohibited from accosting, yelling at, intimidating or otherwise speaking to an opposing player other than to congratulate good play.
3. Parents are specifically prohibited from accosting, yelling at, intimidating or otherwise speaking to the referee. No exceptions.

At the first indication of disruptive sideline behavior, referees are instructed to escalate discipline according to the following:

1. The referee will immediately halt play on the field.
2. The referee may, at his/her discretion, provide one warning to the offending side's Team Official.
3. It will be the Team Official's responsibility to regain control of the disruption.
4. Any further disruption from the offending side will result in an immediate Card to the Team Official and, at the referee's discretion, ejection of the offending party.
5. Additional disruptions from the same side will result in mandatory ejection of offending parties.
6. Should the referee's authority be challenged in any way during this escalation, the offending side will immediately forfeit the match.

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**Referee abuse:** Zero Tolerance even if the Referee makes a wrong/NO call, please DO NOT humiliate the Referee in front of everyone. In case of a dispute, Team Officials should discuss the situation with their respective Club Reps offline.

**Referee Altercations:** At no time are Team Officials/Players/Spectators permitted to engage, either verbally or physically, with a Referee or Assistant Referee, on the field or in a parking area. Any reported altercations with a referee by Team Official/Player/Spectator will result in:

- 1st offense – Up to \$250.00 fine to Town/Club and possible suspension
- 2nd offense – within 12- month period, up to \$500.00 fine to Town/Club and possible suspension
- 3rd offense – SYSLNJ suspension for life. **All confirmed reports will be sent to NJYSA and USSF for their review.**

**Referee Assignor:** Has to assure that age-appropriate referees are assigned to the games and that all the referees have the most recent USSF certification patch at the game.

**Reporting Cards and Injury:** Referee has to submit via email a detailed report (along with game details) to the SYSL Executive Committee within 24 hours of the game so that the board can take necessary steps.

**Referee Reports:** All Referee reports should be submitted through the referee reporting section of the SYSL website. Reports should be submitted as soon as possible after the completion of the game the report is related to, and no more than 24 hours after the game.

## **F. Special Circumstances**

Standards for referee assignment to an SYSLNJ match must include current USSF certification, and the demonstrated ability to effectively and consistently apply FIFA and SYSLNJ rules during match play. It is recommended by the league that the referee be at least two (2) years older than the division match he/she is officiating. Towns should avoid using any referees who do not meet all of these above criteria.

It is not uncommon to have a youth referee (less than or equal to 18 years of age) at the SYSLNJ level. They have been chosen by their assignors as these youths have demonstrated their ability to officiate recreational games. This does not mean that they are fully qualified expert referees but while competent are learning valuable lessons on the pitch. Our youth referees should be treated with dignity and respect by Team Officials, players, parents and other spectators.

Abuse of our youth referees will not be tolerated and may result in significant disciplinary action including expulsion from SYSLNJ.

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## **XV. Issue Reporting/Resolution**

Wherever possible, Team Officials are expected to resolve conflicts on the field as advised by the referee. It is expected that all issues may be resolved amicably without intercession by the SYSLNJ governing body. However, should a situation arise that requires the Executive Board's attention, email [first.suburban.sysl@gmail.com](mailto:first.suburban.sysl@gmail.com) with unresolved issues. Team Officials, who behave inappropriately, otherwise disturb the smooth completion of a match without cause should be reported to the SYSL Executive Committee via email.

## **XVI. Suspended and Abandoned Games**

If the referee must suspend a game due to weather or field conditions and the first half of the game has been completed, the game will be considered a complete game and the score will stand. If the first half has not been completed, the entire game must be replayed. If the referee abandons the game at any time during the match due to discipline problems, the Disciplinary Committee will decide the result of the game.