

**NorCal Premier Soccer League
2024**

Super Rec Rule Modifications



A US Club Soccer Sanctioned League



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NorCal Premier Mission

We elevate soccer by developing Players, Clubs, Coaches, and Referees.

NorCal Premier Core Values

Collaboration

We collaborate with our soccer community to make wise decisions.

Joy

We celebrate soccer and take fun seriously!

Impact

We make a meaningful difference.

Integrity

We strive to do the right thing.

Agility

We move quickly.

Competition

We believe that healthy competition is essential to progress.

Education

We are committed to learning and development.

Guided by our Mission and Core Values, NorCal Premier Soccer's ("NorCal's") purpose is to set the highest standards for soccer Clubs and develop Players to their fullest potential—physically, emotionally, socially, and ethically.

Membership in NorCal is an automatic acceptance of our rules, policies, and procedures. Our competitions are governed by regulations approved by the League Office, which are written in the [NorCal Handbook](#). The League Office shall rule on all disputes and issues pertaining to NorCal competitions. The League Office may overrule stated rules, policies, or procedures in this handbook if it is determined to be for the good of the game. Additionally, all participants in NorCal events are members of US Club Soccer and, therefore, must adhere faithfully, both to the letter and to the spirit, of US Club Soccer's stated bylaws, rules, and policies.

The NorCal Super Rec Handbook outlines rule modifications specific to the NorCal Super Rec Competitions. Any issue not specifically addressed in this document will revert back to the rules outlined in the NorCal Handbook.

Definitions

As used herein, the terms listed below shall have the following definitions:

Adult: Any Coach, Director of Coaching, Trainer, Manager, Official, (Team) Parent, or other individual 18 years of age or older affiliated with a Club and having access to a Player, the Player's parents, or the Player's contact information that is not available publicly.

Club: Any entity (such as a Club or academy) admitted as a member of NorCal Premier.

Coach: Any individual engaged in Coaching or training Players on behalf of a Club, whether in a paid or voluntary, permanent, or temporary capacity.

Director of Coaching: Any individual employed by or volunteering for a Club as a Director of Coaching, Executive Director, Technical Director, General Manager, or assistant to any of the above-listed roles and all Adults filling similar roles regardless of title. A Director of Coaching oversees each team in their Club and each team's involvement in NorCal competitions.

Field or Facility: Any Facility or Field used by a Club to conduct tryouts, Training Sessions, or games (other than tournament games).

League Office: Any individual employed by or volunteering in any capacity for NorCal Premier Soccer, including, but not limited to, the Board of Directors, employees, staff, and committees.

Player: Any Player holding a valid Player pass from US Club Soccer and currently playing for a NorCal Club.

Recruiting:

- Outside the NorCal Tryout Window: "Recruiting" refers to making any contact or communication with a Player who is registered with another NorCal Club, in which the Player is asked or allowed to join a Club, attend a tryout or Club training session, or play or guest play for another Club, without first receiving permission from the Director of Coaching of the Player's Club.
- Inside the NorCal Tryout Window: "Recruiting" refers to making an initial or first contact or communication with a Player who is registered with another NorCal Club, in which the Player is asked or allowed to join a Club, attend a tryout or Club training session, or guest play for another Club, without first receiving permission from the Director of Coaching of the Player's Club.

Referee: Any Referee licensed by the United States Soccer Federation for the current year.

Training Session: Any Club-sanctioned or private training session or practice.

Code of Ethics

As a NorCal Premier Member, your adherence to the Code of Ethics signals your commitment to adhering to the basic laws of the organization and thus upholding the basic moral standards of the soccer community at large.

For All Members

- A. Know, respect, and follow the letter and spirit of the [Laws of the Game](#).
- B. Treat others with respect and courtesy.
- C. Treat all Match Officials with respect at all times - pre-game, during the game, and post-game.
- D. Adhere to the rules and policies of NorCal Premier Soccer, [US Club Soccer](#), and [US Soccer](#).
- E. Recognize the rights, dignity, and worth of all – regardless of gender, ability, cultural background, or religion.

For Clubs

- A. Require sportsmanlike conduct at all times.
- B. Provide a safe playing environment.
- C. Address issues with other Clubs in a professional and timely manner.
- D. Ensure that all Adults and Players in your Club are familiar with the rules and expectations of NorCal Premier Soccer.
- E. Respect the Facilities used by other Clubs.
- F. Actively uphold the Recruiting, Tryouts, and Player Transfer Policies (see Section 4)

For Coaches

- A. Place your Players' physical, mental, and emotional development and well-being ahead of all else.
- B. Continuously seek education on sound Coaching techniques.
- C. Model and teach good sporting behavior.
- D. Coaches are held responsible for the actions of their team's spectators.

For Players

- A. Participate for your own enjoyment and development.
- B. Take responsibility for your sportsmanship and conduct.

Section 1: Administration/ Management

1.1 - Super Rec Club Definition

The conditions outlined on the [NorCal Club Membership Page](#) must be satisfied for a club to be considered a Super Rec member of NorCal Premier.

1.2 - Club Contacts

Each Club's GotSport account must be kept up to date with the correct contact information ([Instructions for updating contacts](#)). Please remember that this is the primary method by which NorCal communicates with your Club. Failing to have the correct contact information may result in your Club missing vital league communication. Each Club shall maintain the following contacts with a current email address:

1. Director of Coaching/ Technical Director - this should be a person responsible for the program
2. Registrar
3. President
4. Referee Assignor (USSF Certified).

1.3 - Home Field

Clubs should have at least one game-quality Field (5-time slots) per eight teams. Teams may ask that they play all away games. In the event of a complaint about the quality of a Field, the League Office shall determine if a Field is game-quality.

1.4 - Club Pass Rule

Each Player registered with US Club Soccer can be used for any age-appropriate team within the registered competitive level (ie: recreational or competitive) in the issuing Club. Thus, Players can move within their Club, allowing individual teams to make changes from game to game due to illness, injury, vacation, or other conflicts. Players with competitive US Club Soccer passes may NOT participate in NorCal Super Rec competitions.

It is considered unethical for teams to move Players to teams in a lower-level division within the same Club to create a competitive advantage. If NorCal determines that a Club has moved Players into a lower-level division to create a competitive advantage and this has impacted the integrity of the competition, a sanction may be imposed against the Team and/or Club. This could include, but may not be limited to, declaring the game a forfeit.

1.5 – Match Scheduling

The NorCal League Office will provide dates for all matches and scheduling deadlines. Each club will schedule its home matches or provide a list of fields with dates and times available for the League Office to schedule matches. Clubs requesting the League Office to schedule dates and times for matches must request this in writing to the appropriate event coordinator prior to the close of team registration. All games must be scheduled (time and location) by the deadline provided by the NorCal League Office.

If a team arrives late for kick-off, there is a 15-minute grace period. NorCal encourages games to be completed, but a late-game start should not impact the subsequent scheduled game(s). If a

game is delayed, regardless of the reason, the referee may shorten the match (playing two equally shortened halves) if they inform both coaches before the match.

1.6 - Rescheduling Games/ Rainouts

Once a game has been scheduled, both clubs must agree on any scheduling change. In the event of a forced reschedule (rain, smoke, etc.), the home club must work with their opponent to reschedule the match on a date that works for both teams. All forced reschedules should be rescheduled within one week of the original match date. If a reschedule date cannot be agreed on, the match will result in a “no contest.”

1.7 - Cancellation/ Forfeit Policy

Teams must give their opponent a 72-hour warning if they forfeit a match, or they will incur a \$400 fine.

1. **Forfeit**—A forfeit occurs when a team cannot attend a scheduled game and the teams cannot agree on a time to reschedule (after the scheduling deadline has passed). A forfeit results in a 3-0 win for the team not at fault. A team unable to attend a scheduled game because of an accident or “Act of God” should immediately notify the opponent and the [Event Coordinator](#). The League Office will review and rule on the situation in these circumstances.
2. **No-Show** - A no-show occurs when a team willfully does not attend a game agreed to by the teams and gives no notice to their opponent. The penalty for a no-show shall be a forfeit (unless the opponent agrees to reschedule the match) to the opposing team with a 0-3 score and a fine of \$400 imposed on the Club. Any no-show from a team may result in the offending team being removed from the competition by the League Office.

Teams receiving a Forfeit or No-Show should not enter a score for their game but rather fill out a [PAD Match Report Form](#) to report the Forfeit or No-Show. The Competitions Committee will review the report, and an official ruling will be issued, along with any fines and reimbursements. Competition staff will enter the game score and mark the match as a forfeit.

1.8 - Fines

The NorCal League Office may impose the following fines:

1. A team drops out of the league after the final brackets are posted: \$250 + forfeiture of application fee
2. A team drops out of the league after the first game is played: \$100 per game missed.
3. No-show/Forfeit within 96 hours of a scheduled game: \$400
4. Failure to report a red card within 48 hours of the match: \$150
5. Illegal Player: \$500
6. Use of each unlicensed referee: \$500
7. Any Club that does not complete payment within 60 days will be subject to a late fee of 15% (club payment only)

Section 2: League Discipline

All League Discipline is covered in [Section 3 of the NorCal Handbook](#).

Section 3: Competition Rules

3.1 - Playing Rules

All games under league jurisdiction shall be played according to the rules and regulations recognized by the NorCal Premier League, which shall be the same rules set by FIFA/ U.S. Soccer (USFS) except for those exceptions authorized by [FIFA](#) or USFS.

3.2 - Equipment

1. Player Uniforms

Opponents must wear colors that distinguish them from each other, and also the Referee and the assistant Referees. It is recommended that the home team wears dark uniforms while the away team wears light uniforms. Each goalkeeper must wear colors that distinguish them from the other Players, the Referee, and the assistant Referees. All Players on a team except the goalkeeper shall wear identical uniforms (shirts, shorts, and socks).

- a. If there is a conflict in the uniform color, the home team shall change uniforms.
- b. Player numbers must be affixed to the back of the uniform shirt.
- c. If undershirts or shorts are worn, they must match the jersey's or shorts' primary color. If tape or other material is applied externally to the socks, it must be the same color as the part of the sock to which it is applied.

2. Safety

A Player must not use equipment or wear anything dangerous to themselves or another Player.

- a. **Casts**—Orthopedic (hard) casts, air splints, or metal splints may not be worn. At the discretion of the referee, players will be allowed to play in a soft cast.
- b. **Jewelry** - No jewelry, including rings, chains, watches, jewelry, hair clips, bobby pins, earrings, bracelets, rubber bracelets, or excessively long fingernails, may be worn while participating in NorCal games. Only Medical Alert Warning Bracelets may be worn and shall be taped to secure them to the Player's body. Earrings and other piercings cannot be taped and must be removed.
- c. **Shin Guards**—All Players are required to wear shin guards at all times. They must be properly worn, professionally manufactured, and unaltered. Socks must completely cover the shin guards.
- d. **Braces** (e.g., knee, elbow) - For the safety of the Player, it is strongly recommended that a Player does not wear a brace during NorCal games. Braces are allowed as long as the Referee decides that the brace will not or cannot hurt the Player wearing the brace or any other Player. All metal, metal-like, or plastic brace supports are to be adequately covered for the duration of the match. Elastic-type supports without any metal, carbon fiber, hard plastic, or like devices are permitted, provided the Referee does not deem the support to be potentially harmful to other Players.
- e. **Eyeglasses** - Players who must wear eyeglasses are encouraged to wear sports goggles. Lenses must be unbreakable, and frames must be unbreakable plastic or sturdy metal.

3.3 - Game Details

	U12	U14	U16	U19
Field Size (yds)	70/80 L 45/55 W *	100/120 L 50/80 W		
Penalty Area (yds)	14x36	18 x 44		
Goal Area (yards)	5x16	6 x 20		
Minimum # of Refs**	1			3
Number of Players	9v9	11v11		
Minimum # of Players	6	7		
Playing Time	2x30	2x35	2x40	2x45
Half-Time	10 min			
Ball Size	4	5		
Goal Size (feet)	6.5x18.5 - 7x21	8x24		
Free Kick clearance	8 yd	10 yd		
Penalty Kicks	Yes (mark at 10 yds)	Yes (mark at 12 yds)		

* Use of cones for lines is allowed

3.4 - Match Officials

Match officials must be current-year USSF licensed referees. The match officials shall consist of one Referee, except for the U19 age group, which shall consist of one Referee and two assistant Referees. All matches may continue with one Referee and two Club Linesmen or one Referee, one Assistant Referee, and one Club Linesman. If no match officials are present, NorCal encourages both teams to play a friendly, which will not count as an official match. The away team should file a [PAD Match Report Form](#) to receive an official ruling on the outcome of the match. The use of an unlicensed referee will result in a forfeit for the home team.

No match officials, other than Club Linesmen, may have family members in the game they are working. Club Linesmen may only signal when the ball has left the Field of play; they may not call offside or fouls. If one or more of the assigned Match Officials are missing, the game may be played with a Referee and up to two Club Linesmen. Clubs should not use the dual referee system if Match Officials are missing.

3.5 - Assignment of Match Officials

Match officials shall be assigned and paid by the home Club for each match. Each Club is required to have a current-year certified USSF Referee Assignor active in assigning Referees for all NorCal games in their Club and listed in their GotSport account. Failure to do so will result in Club sanctions from NorCal, which may include a review of a Club's membership.

3.6 - Protests

Protests regarding the match must be made via the Match Report Form below and must include a photo of the signed game card. On-field Referee decisions cannot be protested. No match condition protests will be allowed at NorCal-hosted events. All protests should be made via the [PAD Match Report Form](#).

3.7 - Point System

All NorCal Premier Leagues operate under a point system. The system awards three points for a win, one point for a tie, and no points for a loss.

3.8 - League Standings

Official standings of teams, the keeping of which is the responsibility of the League Office, are tabulated regularly and displayed on each competition page of the NorCal website.

3.9 - Ties

If a league game is tied after regulation, the tie stands and will be posted as a tie.

3.10 - Tie Breakers

In case of a tie on points in the standings within a league, the following will be used as tiebreakers:

1. "Head to head" points (win/lose/draw) between teams
2. Overall Goal Differential (up to 4)
3. Goals for (up to 4)
4. Goals against (up to 4)
5. Most points against the highest non-tied team in the group
6. Best goal differential against the highest non-tied team in the group
7. Most shutouts
8. Fewest red cards
9. Coin toss

If more than two teams are tied, the tie-breaking process will be used until a winner is determined. The tie-breaking procedure does not revert to the previous criteria if one team is eliminated.

When a season/group can not be completed due to exceptional circumstances and teams have played an unequal number of games, NorCal may use Points Per Game (PPG) to decide standings.

3.11 - Excessive Goal Differential

Teams may win by no more than a six-goal differential. Any teams winning by excessive margins will result in the following sanctions:

1. Warning and no standings point awarded for the match
2. Coach suspended

3. Team removed from the League, and the Club reviewed for future participation.

3.12 - Incomplete Games

In the event that a game cannot be completed due to events outside of the team's control the game will stand if at least half of the game was played. Games not completed for all other reason may be ordered to be replayed. However, if any team is directly responsible for the termination of the game, no matter how much of the match remains, due to poor sportsmanship towards a Referee, opposing fans, or opposing Players, the team will be required to forfeit the match. This could also lead to other NorCal League Office or NorCal PAD Committee sanctions. If a match is suspended prior to the expiration of one half, the game shall be replayed at a time agreed upon by the competing teams in consultation with the NorCal League Office. In the event of an incomplete game, the home team shall fill out a [PAD Match Report Form](#), while the away team should fill out a [Game Report Form](#) and indicate that the game was incomplete. The NorCal League Office will then make a ruling on the game result. *Referees must also submit an incident report for all matches that end early.*

3.13 - No Re-Entry Protocol (for Head Injury and SCA)

In accordance with the US Club Soccer return to play guidelines and State of California legislation, any Player removed from the Field for a suspected head injury or SCA (sudden cardiac arrest) will not be allowed to return to the Field of play for the remainder of that same day and must be cleared by a Licensed Healthcare Provider before returning to play in the future. If a Licensed Healthcare Provider (as defined in California Health and Safety Code Section 124235(b)(2)) is present at the game for the purposes of the evaluation and management of concussion or cardiac conditions (they must be identified to the Referee prior to the start of the game), they may clear a player to return to the Field of Play in the same game, if a concussion or SCA is no longer suspected by the Licensed Healthcare Provider.

A Licensed Healthcare Provider is defined by CA law AB-379 as an individual:

“who is trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and is acting within the scope of the provider's practice for evaluation and management of concussions or other head injuries” and/or an individual “who is trained in the evaluation and management of cardiac conditions and is acting within the scope of that provider's practice for evaluation and management of sudden cardiac arrest, fainting, and shortness of breath.”

3.14 – Player Health & Safety

Please refer to our [web page](#), which outlines all requirements in this area.

3.15 - Substitutions

As per FIFA guidelines, unlimited substitutions are allowed in all age groups. However, teams may substitute only with the referee's permission. Substitutes must wait on the sideline (off the field of play) until the field player has left the field of play and/or the referee has indicated the substitute may enter the field of play.

Substitutions by either team are allowed at any stoppage of play with the referee's permission. Referees will be instructed not to allow substitutions deemed “excessive” or of a “time-wasting” nature. Please respect the integrity of the game and do not use the free substitution rules to disrupt the match.

3.16 - Playing Time

Each player must play at least 33% of each match.

Section 4: Rosters

4.1 - Player Registration

Players shall be registered through GotSport according to US Club Soccer rules.

- [Roster Builder Method](#) (R3/4/5 and R6)
- [Recreational Passes \(bulk upload\)](#) (R2)

4.2 - US Club Soccer Player Pass/Roster ([HELP PAGE](#))

- [Region 6 \(Sacramento\)](#) - All Players and Coaches must present their US Club Soccer pass to the Referee before the match. Physical (laminated and non-laminated) and electronic passes are allowed. Electronic passes must be displayed within the GotSport mobile website system. Screenshots of player passes are not allowed. Game cards will also need to be brought to each game.
- [Region 5 \(Sonoma County\)](#) - All Coaches must present their US Club Soccer Coaches pass and game card to the Referee before the match.
- [Region 3-4 \(Bay Area\)](#) - All Coaches must present their US Club Soccer Coaches pass and game card to the Referee before the match.
- [Region 2 \(South Bay\)](#) - All players must be presented to the referee on a roster. No passes are required to be shown.

4.3 - Game Day Roster Limit

Twenty-two players may dress and participate in each match.

4.4 - Competitive Players

Players with a US Club Competitive player pass are ineligible to participate in Super Rec competitions.

4.5 - Guest Players

No guest Players (Players with a Player pass from another Club) can play in NorCal Premier League competitions.

Section 5: Game Day Procedures

5.1 - Pre-Game Procedures

Home Club Responsibilities:

1. Schedule and post-game time/location in the GotSport system
2. Provide a quality Field equipped with goals, nets, flags, and proper lines
3. Assign qualified current-year licensed Referee(s)
4. Provide a copy of the Match Card to the center Referee (if required in your region)

5. Provide a US Club Soccer Player pass (if required in your region) for each Player and nonplayer in the technical area
6. Change jersey colors if there is a color conflict (NorCal encourages home teams to wear their dark colors, while away teams wear light colors)
7. Provide game balls

Visiting Club Responsibilities:

1. Respond to any communication requests from the home Club regarding match scheduling within 24 hours
2. Have a copy of the Game Card in case it is needed
3. Provide a US Club Soccer Player pass (if required in your region) for each Player and nonplayer in the technical area

5.2 - Post-Game Procedure

Following the game, a representative from each team and the referee should gather to review and sign the game card. Additionally, each representative should take a photo of the signed game card for their records.

Home Team Responsibilities

1. [Post score](#) within 24 hours
2. [Report goals and red cards](#) from both teams as recorded on the game card
3. Upload a copy of the signed game card in the score reporting form

Visiting Team Responsibilities

1. If the home team does not post the score within 24 hours, the away team should post the score [along with goal scorers and red cards](#) and upload a copy of the match card.
2. Fill out the NorCal Online Game Report and upload a copy of the signed game card.

5.3 - Personnel on the Bench

A maximum of 3 team officials are allowed in each team's technical area. Team officials must have a US Club pass in order to sit in the technical area. It is highly recommended that teams have several credentialed Coaches or managers with passes for the team just in case something happens to the Head Coach. A US Club pass makes a person eligible to Coach any team in the Club for which that Coach or manager is credentialed.

5.4 – Technical Area

The home team bench and spectators will be on one side, while the away team and spectators will be on the opposite side. If a venue does not have space for this format, the League Office may grant approval for modifications to this policy. If this approval is granted, it will be communicated to all the clubs and teams that may be affected.