

2026 MSLax Policies and Procedures

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2026 MSLax Policies and Procedures

Introduction

This handbook will provide useful information relevant to member associations fielding teams during the spring and summer seasons and off-season activities.

Bylaws

MSLax activities are governed by the [Bylaws](#) as published on the league web page.

Board and Committee Members

The Board of Directors, comprised of nine members, manage the activities of MSLax throughout the year. If you need to contact a specific board or committee member, contact information can be found on the MSLax website located [here](#). Further descriptions of responsibilities for each board or committee member can be found in Articles 3 and 4 of the Bylaws.

Team Fees

Team fees will be posted on the MSLax website by the time of the annual membership meeting each year to give associations ample time to incorporate MSLax fees into their budget.

MSLax charges fees per team based on division (8U, 10U, 12U, 14U, 18U). The fee for each division may vary depending upon the following criteria:

- MSLax team administration fee
- Officials fees based on number of games played:
 - ✓ 8U plays 4 league games and 1 Jamboree in summer league
 - ✓ 10U plays 6 league games in summer league
 - ✓ 12U/14U/18U plays 8 league games in summer league
- Summer Tournament play

Annual team fees are located on the MSLax website under the Season Information tab located [here](#).

Line of Communication

MSLax provides league structure to over 25 associations, which in turn supports lacrosse structure and activities for over 1000 players, coaches, and administrators. With so many participants, it is important to follow the line of communication when seeking clarification or raising issues such as those related to officiating, age or player eligibility, fees, or affected policy. Parents and coaches are encouraged to refer to the MSLax Policies and Procedures Guide before contacting MSLax with an issue. If the issue remains unresolved, parents and players should first work through their coach to resolve the issue. If not resolved, a coach should contact their association representative who should work with the appropriate MSLax Age Coordinator to discuss and resolve the issue. If the issue is still unresolved, the Age Coordinator should contact the MSLax Director of Rules, Policy, and League Operations, who is familiar with MSLax's overall operations. If the issue remains unresolved, the MSLax Director of Rules, Policy, and League Operations should bring the issue to the MSLax board, who will resolve the matter. It is the goal of MSLax to provide as much information as possible in this guide and on our website to resolve issues in a timely and efficient manner.

Issues related to officiating or unsportsman-like behavior, or if there is praise, regarding league games should be reported on the [Game Feedback Form](#). All forms submitted will be reviewed by MSLax within 7 days. If there are officiating issues during the spring or summer tournament, bring it to the MSLax Tournament Director for discussion and resolution.

Annual General Meeting

The MSLax Fall Annual Meeting is held in late September or early October each year. Once set, the exact date can be found on the MSLax website, and an email will be sent out to all associations with the meeting information.

At the meeting, the following activities take place:

- Reports are distributed regarding activities of MSLax, including the previous year's activities
- Pertinent information and direction of MSLax are communicated regarding the upcoming season
- Association Member representatives vote to elect new MSLax board members for two-year terms that have expired
- Association Member representatives vote to accept any new associations into MSLax
- Association Member representatives vote on any official league business

Each member association must send one representative to the meeting. Each association is allowed only one vote per voting item.

Association Requirements

Association profiles

Each association must be affiliated with a school district for purposes of assigning geographic eligibility. See Geographic Boundary Guidelines section in this document for further details. Each member association should provide a short profile description for MSLax to post to the league website by March 1st of the current playing year or earlier. Send this information to the MSLax President at president@mslax.net.

Association profiles should include:

- Website URL
- Important contact information (association and team contacts)
- Field addresses

Membership status

See MSLax Bylaws Article 2, Sections 1-4 for information on association membership, including status: provisional, good standing, or probationary.

New Association Applications

New association applications for consideration are to be submitted via email to the MSLax Secretary at secretary@mslax.net by January 1 of each year. The board will review the application at a monthly meeting and decide to formally recommend the club be admitted to the league at the annual MSLax general meeting. Also see MSLax Bylaws Article 2, Section 2 for further details.

Team Registration

Official registration periods will be posted on the MSLax website. Generally, registration for the season opens in early January. Associations register teams through the MSLax website, with payments made by credit card at the time of registration. If there are questions about registration, email the MSLax President at president@mslax.net.

Determining Playing Level of the Team Prior to Registration

In order to register teams, associations will need to determine at which competitive level to field their teams. See below for more details. Please discuss with the appropriate MSLax Director of Development at development@mslax.net if you have any questions regarding level of play.

Consequences and Process for Team Withdrawal

If a team does not have enough players to field a team in league play, the association representative has until registration close to notify MSLax that they are resigning their team from designated league play to receive a full team refund.

If an association withdraws a team from MSLax after the withdrawal deadline listed above, registration fees will not be returned, and the association may be placed on provisional probation for a length of time to be determined by the MSLax Board of Directors.

Scholarships and Financial Aid

Team Financial Aid

There are various USA Lacrosse programs and grant options for new associations starting a lacrosse program. Associations should check the USA Lacrosse website for the grant offerings (<https://www.usalacrosse.com/grant-offerings>). If further grants are needed, associations have an option to fill out a [MSLax Grant Application](#).

MSLax Player Scholarship Application

Players and families in need of financial help should seek assistance through their local community associations.

Uniform Guidelines

Sponsorships, Uniforms

It is up to the individual association to maintain a suitable team logo design and slogan on a youth player's uniform. No references to bars, alcohol, saloons, tobacco or smoking products, illegal substances, or other inferences inappropriate for youth should be present on uniforms.

MSLax follows the current USA Lacrosse uniform guidelines for youth girl's lacrosse. Players are responsible that their equipment and uniform conform to all required and allowable standards, as defined by USA Lacrosse rules.

Uniforms: [USA Lacrosse Girls' Uniform Guidelines](#)

Equipment: [2026 USA Lacrosse Girls Lacrosse Youth Rule Book](#), pgs 29-32.

MSLax Rule Override for 8U Uniforms

MSLax recognizes that uniforms for this division should not be cost prohibitive. Teams should have a single-color top that fits appropriately for the player and is one of the association's designated colors. Teams may choose to have a reversible pinnie. MSLax recommends that teams have player names, numbers, etc. on the uniform to assist coaches with on-field directions and penalty administration, but it is not required.

Uniform Waivers

Should a team have extenuating circumstances and need to use a different uniform type, color, or size, the association representative should contact the MSLax Director of Rules, Policy, and League Operations at operations@msslax.net to apply for a waiver via email. Waivers should be submitted prior to ordering any uniforms. The MSLax Board of Directors will review the request and provide a ruling at the next scheduled board meeting.

Age Eligibility Guidelines

MSLax establishes age eligibility divisions, when possible, to promote a safe and sportsperson-like environment. MSLax believes that the league and associations should provide playing opportunities that, as much as possible, aim to establish a "level playing field" among players of similar age.

Groupings will be as shown and published by USA Lacrosse each year with the modification that MSLax uses on even numbered divisions. Therefore, ages are grouped into divisions as follows: 8U, 10U, 12U, 14U, and 18U. At the determination of MSLax, there may be subdivisions to these divisions based on skill level. "A" level is for more experienced players and "B" level is for newer or less experienced players. The age division birthdates can be found on the MSLax website under [Age Guidelines](#).

Age eligible 9th grade players will be allowed to play 14U. This includes those girls who played for their high school program in the spring.

"A" and "B" Division Team Designation Policies

10U and 12U

Associations having more than one 10U or 12U team must field one team as an "A" team and one team as a "B" team, or they may field both as "A" teams.

14U

Associations having more than one 14U team must field at least one team as an “A” team. A player who played high school in the spring on a 10th grade/B team or a JV team may play at the “A” or “B” level in the summer. A player who played Varsity must play at the “A” level. Associations can submit for an exception to MSLax to play at the “B” level if there are extenuating circumstances. Determining factors include, but are not limited to, age, skill level, and development opportunities.

Teams Short of Players

If a 10U, 12U, or 14U A team is short of players for a game, B players for the specified age level may play up to A or players can play up one age level, however, only 3 players can move up per game. In addition, A level players may not play down on specified B teams and one cannot play down an age level. These should not be the same players every game.

Club Players

Club team players may play at either the “A” or “B” level based on team skill level in their community.

Policies on Playing Up

Players may play up one division at their association’s discretion and no waiver from MSLax is required. The player, parents, coach, and association should all be in agreement that playing up a level is in the best interest of the player. However, the decision should not be made lightly. The player who is playing up should ideally be in the top third of the team that she is moving up to. There is no limit to the number of players who may play up. If several players all want to move up, then it would likely be better that they all stay at their appropriate age level.

No Playing Down

No player may play on a team at a lower age level than designated per the USA Lacrosse age eligibility definitions. Players may however play down based on limited skill level or based on grade level in school. If an association would like to petition this rule for a rare exception, petitions are to be submitted by the association representative through the [Age Waiver Request Form](#). Waivers are received by the MSLax Director of Member Services for decision. A petition based solely on date of birth will not be approved, i.e. a birth date late in the year. See [Petitioning Eligibility](#) below.

Petitioning Eligibility

MSLax's rules on eligibility are firm. However, if an association wishes to petition an eligibility rule for a rare exception, they may do so by having their association representative submit a petition to the MSLax board via an [Age Waiver Request Form](#). Petitions should be submitted prior to registration close for spring or summer seasons. Petitions must be submitted by the association representative. No petitions will be considered coming directly from a coach or parent. The MSLax Board will review petitions at the next monthly board meeting or through email communication after receipt. Decisions will be communicated shortly thereafter to the association representative.

Geographic Territories and Non-Association Eligibility Guidelines

MSLax players are expected to play for the association that corresponds to the player's residential address (school district).

If a player lives within a geographic association that does not have a girls program or there are extenuating circumstances in which a player's legal guardians wish their child to play for an adjacent, non-association team, or school district in which they are enrolled, follow these steps to apply for a non-association waiver:

1. Contact the home association representative that corresponds to your residential address via email and inform them that you wish to have your child play in an adjacent association and would like their approval of the player release. Copy the MSLax Director of Member Services on this email.
2. The home association representative should fill out the [Release to Play in a Non-Association Waiver Request Form](#). The MSLax Director of Member Services will receive a copy of this waiver to monitor the date the waiver was created and the time frame involved with the player decision. If your geographic area does not have an association, fill out the waiver and put "N/A" in the fields for home association information.
3. The home association representative has 7 calendar days from receipt of the request to respond to the parent to either approve or deny the release of the player from their association. If no response is provided, then the association by default has released the player.
4. The MSLax Director of Member Services will notify MSLax Board of the home association representative's decision, and the waiver form will be updated with the resulting decision by the MSLax Webmaster, Secretary, or President.
5. If the player is released by the home association team, the receiving association representative has 7 calendar days from receipt of the request to respond to the player parent by email to accept or deny the incoming player. If no response or approval is provided, then the receiving association has by default accepted the player.

- Parents and associations should be aware that the association for whom a player wishes to join is not required to accept the player, nor is their home association required to release the player. Associations should have space available and have placed all past players from their teams and all new players in their geographic area on a team before placing players from a different geographical area on the team. Once a player is released, there is no guarantee that if the player wishes to return to the home association that there will be a roster spot available.
 - If a parent is found to have falsified a request, the league will investigate and the player will be ineligible for play until resolved.
6. After receiving documentation of the approval from both association representatives, register your child for the association that was approved.
 7. If you are denied your request, the home association representative may send an email to the respective MSLax Age Level Coordinator for review. If the issue cannot be resolved through arbitration with the appropriate MSLax Age Level Coordinator, the matter will be submitted to the MSLax Board of Directors for review and a final determination will be made. MSLax Board decisions are final and cannot be appealed.

Submitting Team Rosters

Team Rosters

All MSLax teams must submit team rosters prior to the roster deadline. All rosters must include valid and current USA Lacrosse numbers for each player and coach.

Roster Rules

Associations are strongly encouraged to provide coaches and parents with a copy of the MSLax Age Eligibility section of this Policies and Procedures Handbook. This section outlines the age divisions, policies for playing up or down an age division, switching teams, being a guest player for another team, etc.

Roster Submission Instructions

MSLax will require rosters to be submitted. Instructions for submitting rosters to the MSLax league will be provided to member associations prior to league play. If there are any questions, the association representative should contact the MSLax President at president@mslax.net.

USA Lacrosse Membership

For insurance purposes, USA Lacrosse and MSLax require all players, head coaches, and assistant coaches to be members of USA Lacrosse through the end of the season. These membership numbers must be included for every player and coach on the team roster form. All rosters will be verified with USA Lacrosse for active membership, which includes completing age verification.

Mandatory background checks are required for adult coaches to coach MSLax teams. This is included in the USA Lacrosse coaches membership fee. Look for this in the USA Lacrosse membership sign-up located [here](#).

Roster Changes

Changes to submitted rosters should be sent to the MSLax President at president@mslax.net for review. Roster changes should be limited, as teams should be playing with the same players throughout the entire season and through the end of season tournament.

Certified Coaches Checklist

Requirements

USA Lacrosse and MSLax require that all coaches become USA Lacrosse Bronze level certified coaches. This is included in the USA Lacrosse coaches membership for no additional fee..

Details include:

1. Apply for an annual USA Lacrosse coach membership [here](#). Players who coach can hold a dual membership for playing and coaching.
2. Complete the USA Lacrosse background check.
3. Complete the online USA Lacrosse Abuse Prevention, Cardiac Care, Concussion, and Cultural Competency courses.
4. Pass the USA Lacrosse Annual Rules Test.

Once coaches complete these components, they are officially certified and will have more standardized knowledge on the field to teach MSLax youth lacrosse players how to play safely and consistently. Bronze level certification covers coaches, but MSLax highly recommends other USA Lacrosse courses for coaches' continued learning. This helps gain credibility with parents and administrators that coaches take their job seriously and are committed to being the best coaches they can be. In addition, coaches have access to online drills and knowledge via the USA Lacrosse website. More information on certification can be found on the [USA Lacrosse Coaches Certification](#) website.

Concussion Training

Each coach in MSLax must take an online concussion awareness course. This is included in the USA Lacrosse Bronze Level Certification. Proper concussion recognition and management is important for continued player safety.

Requirement for Return to Play

After any suspected incidence of a concussion occurring in an MSLax game, the coach of the affected player is requested to send this information to the MSLax President via email at president@mslax.net. As part of that protocol, parents may be required to provide evidence of clearance to return to play from an authorized medical provider depending on the nature of the suspected injury. The authorized medical provider must provide unconditional clearance to play in writing. The medical provider letter should be kept on file by the association for reference or review by MSLax.

Officials

MSLax will provide all appropriate on-field officials for league games and end of season tournaments as part of the league registration fee.

MSLax helps coordinate officials training with the Girls Lacrosse Officials of Minnesota (GLO). Two officials are assigned per game for 12U, 14U, and 18U levels. One official is assigned at the 10U level and play days/tournaments for 8U. Each team pays fees for their home games to cover the expense of the officials' time, approved travel, assigning fees, and administrative fees.

To learn more about officials or to become an official, email Chuck Thayer at thay1chu@gmail.com.

Assignments and Arbiter

Officials are assigned to games via the web-based assigning tool [Arbiter Sports](#). GLO will input all games into Arbiter after schedules have been made. Officials assigned to your scheduled games will be listed within Arbiter. If you have questions about referee assignments or Arbiter access, please contact Chuck Thayer at thay1chu@gmail.com.

Arbiter also allows you to share feedback, unsportsmanlike behavior, or praise for officials assigned to your games. You can also fill out a [Game Feedback Form](#) and the MSLax board will discuss these issues directly with the officials.

Recruiting Officials

In areas where there are shortages of officials, your association may be asked to send association representatives to officials training. This is training for MSLax youth games only. It consists of one classroom training and one field training sessions. For more information, email Chuck Thayer at thay1chu@gmail.com.

Parents

Parents have a major impact on their children's lives, in sports as in every other aspect. Parents, including those who coach their own children, do best for their children when focusing on sports as a developmental opportunity rather than a win-at-all-cost proposition. A positive parent is a Second-Goal Parent®, who focuses on and embraces the Second Goal, the life lessons. A positive sports parent demonstrates unconditional love for children regardless of athletic performance, as well as a relentless commitment to aid their child in processing the ups and downs of youth sports.

Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA)

MSLax recommends that at least one parent from each team take a PCA online course. See <https://positivecoach.org> for more information on online courses offered.

Parent Volunteer Roles

There are league-specific volunteer positions where parent help is needed on a regular basis. For every game played, parents of the home association are needed to help with score table duties (one scorekeeper and one timer per team) and sideline managers. Typically, only 2-3 individuals are needed to man the scoring table and assist the officials in ensuring the game proceeds smoothly, but the redundancy allows for balanced, accurate, and efficient scoresheet tallying, timing, and game progression.

Sideline/Chill Manager

In accordance with NFHS and USA Lacrosse Sportsmanship Conduct guidelines, it is recommended that each team provide a designated Sideline/Chill Manager for games. The sideline/chill manager must be an adult and be onsite for the duration of the game. They are to help model proper behavior and attitude as well as encourage, maintain, and manage the sportsmanship of spectators and fans on the sidelines. The Sideline/Chill Manager is the off-field counterpart and support to the officials who manage the on-field behavior of the players and coaches. Sideline/Chill managers will introduce themselves to the officials prior to the coin toss, and will notify an unruly fan or spectator that unsportsmanlike behavior may lead to ejection and/or a game cancellation by the officials. Please report any unsporting behavior on the [Game Feedback Form](#).

Code of Conduct (Players, Parents, Coaches)

MSLax and associations must ensure that all parents, players, coaches, and officials conduct themselves by the [USA Lacrosse Code of Conduct](#). If there are any code of conduct issues during league games, report them on the [Game Feedback Form](#).

Enforcement

The officials' jurisdiction extends from 30 minutes before the game until the officials leave the playing venue. Officials should be on the field and be in charge of the game 30 minutes prior to game time. They should work with the Sideline/Chill Manager to remove individuals violating the code of conduct from the sidelines. If necessary, officials may eject players, parents, or coaches from the field or from the surrounding venue within that window of time. If a situation occurs after the game ends and before the officials leave the playing venue for an offense that would warrant a red card/ejection during a game, the officials can issue a post-game ejection to the offending player, parent, or coach to be served in the team's next scheduled game.

Ejections

Players who are ejected for non-fighting related reasons, for example a red card, are barred from playing in the next scheduled game.

The first time a player is ejected from a game due to fighting, they are barred from playing in the next two games. The second time the same player is ejected from a game for fighting, a formal grievance and review procedure will be executed on the respective player. This rule does not apply in the case of a player fouling out of a game.

A parent ejected from a game will be barred from attending the next scheduled game.

A coach who is ejected from a scheduled game must leave the field and venue immediately and is barred from coaching the next scheduled game. If a coach is ejected from a game a second time, a formal grievance and review procedure will be executed on the respective coach.

All types of ejections listed above rollover to the next season if they occur at post-season events.

Offensive Language Rule Adoption

An official shall eject from the scheduled game any player, substitute, non-playing member of a team, coach, assistant coach, or anyone officially connected with a competing team or fan using a racial slur or derogatory term related to race, religion, color, gender, sexual orientation, or ethnicity.

A coach or assistant coach ejected by an official for using a racial slur or derogatory term shall be suspended from coaching any MSLax team for the next scheduled game. A formal grievance and review procedure will be executed on the respective coach.

Any player that is ejected twice in a season by an official for using a racial slur or derogatory term shall be suspended from playing in MSLax for the next scheduled game. A formal grievance and review procedure will be executed on the respective player.

In the event that a racial slur or derogatory term is not heard by the official, the offended player(s) should inform their coach at the earliest possible time. At the next official time out, the coach should inform the head official, who should in turn inform the opposing coach of the allegation. The offended player(s) and any others who heard the comments are encouraged to file a report via email with MSLax as soon as possible after the game. This gives MSLax a basis to conduct an investigation and take action as deemed appropriate. Please report such behavior on the [Game Feedback Form](#).

MSLax Sportsmanship Incident Reporting Policy

Sportsmanship is an integral part to the growth of the game both on and off the field. MSLax has identified the educating, promoting, and encouraging of good sportsmanship as a priority in an effort to continue the development of the proper culture and spirit of the game. As the sport continues to grow throughout our region, MSLax believes it is important to always instill the best values in and set positive goals for players. In doing so, our lacrosse association must reward those that compete with class and honor at the game, as well as enforce the rules and promote sportsmanship.

MSLax welcomes reports of incidents which honor the game of lacrosse such as players and coaches extending a helping hand, spectators at a host venue making an extra effort to welcome opposing fans, etc. These positive incidents can serve as an inspiration to all of us. We also track and respond to reports of inappropriate sportsmanship using the [Game Feedback Form](#).

MSLax strives to respond to serious claims of inappropriate sportsmanship in a timely manner and in some cases may take action against individual(s) including penalties ranging from suspension from a game to expulsion from the league.

The claims of inappropriate sportsmanship in this policy are independent of an ejection of a player, coach, or fan by an official during a lacrosse game.

The following are types of inappropriate sportsmanship with typical penalties from MSLax (irrespective of any actions by officials and associations):

- Player Sportsmanship (conduct, handshake issues, etc.) – coach to address behavior with the player.
- Coach Sportsmanship (conduct towards players, opponents, junior officials, adult officials; coaching or rewarding dangerous play, etc.) – association representative to address behavior with coach or possible suspension from the next game(s).
- Parent/Fan Sportsmanship (conduct toward players, opponents, or officials) – A variety of consequences, up to and including requiring the offending association to pay for additional officials, or barring specific individuals from attending future games.
- Offensive Language (confirmed ethnic, gender, hate speech, or other slurs; threats of violence) – minimum 1-game suspension.
- Fighting – minimum 2-game suspension.
- Non-fighting ejections that violate the USA Lacrosse Code of Conduct – 1-game suspension.
- False Representation (lying, changing jerseys to avoid suspensions, impersonating another player, impersonating a MSLax Certified Coach, claiming to be MSLax certified, etc.) – minimum 2-game suspension
- Intentional dangerous play on the field (multiple incidents regarding the same player or coach) – minimum 1-game suspension. The MSLax Board of Directors will review all reports on an individual basis and may rule differently based on the factors surrounding the report. Three separate incidents resulting in suspension may result in expulsion from the league.

Grievance Procedure

1. Any person may report a person who abuses or who is suspected of abusing the USA Lacrosse Code of Conduct to the MSLax Board of Directors.
2. Grievances must be submitted in writing to the MSLax Director of Rules, Policy, & League Operations at operations@msslax.net.
3. Incidents should be reported within 10 calendar days of the incident.
4. If the grievance is accepted, the offending party shall be given the opportunity to respond to the grievance in writing.
5. MSLax may take other steps necessary to properly determine the outcome of all grievances, and will attempt to do so in a confidential manner.
6. Persons aggrieved by the findings of MSLax may appeal the outcome within 10 days to the USA Lacrosse Regional Manager, Matt Burke at mburke@usalacrosse.com.
7. MSLax will abide by any final grievance decision passed down by USA Lacrosse.

Game Scheduling, Changes, and Protocol

Game Scheduling

Based on the number of association teams signed up for league play, MSLax creates game matchups. Team matchups are then distributed to association representatives via email in Google Docs. There will be an in-person scheduling/coaches meeting for each spring and summer seasons. Each association is required to have a representative present at the meeting to schedule their association's games based on the matchups distributed by MSLax.

After games are scheduled, the MSLax Webmaster will load game details into the appropriate season on the MSLax website. It is recommended that all teams review their game schedules on the MSLax website 1 week after the scheduling change deadline to ensure all information entered is correct.

The GLO official association can be short of officials. It is requested that team representatives schedule double and/or triple headers (back-to-back games) when able to help with the assignment of refs.

Game Protocol

It is MSLax's league policy for teams to contact each other and officials to verify game dates, times, and locations. Communication by phone or email should be confirmed and messages should not be assumed to be received. All team contacts will be distributed by MSLax. If team contacts do not receive confirmation from assigned officials, they should reach out to the assigned officials, which can be found on [Arbiter Sports](#).

Changes Due to Weather

If the home association's game change or cancellation is due to weather or an unforeseen/imminent change of location, please contact the officials assigned to the game, the opposing team, the GLO assigner, and the MSLax President at least 2 hours before travel time to alert them of the change or cancellation. Complete the [Game Change Request Form](#) to reschedule the game.

Game Change Protocol

Association representatives should plan their game dates carefully before the season begins to avoid extra work on game changes, with the assumption that natural changes will occur due to weather.

In order to cancel and reschedule regular season games, the home and away teams should contact each other to find alternate dates and times that are mutually agreeable to both teams.

A [Game Change Request Form](#) then needs to be completed. The home team must then pay a \$10 fee before the game will be rescheduled. This information is seen by both the MSLax President and the GLO assigner, who will update the respective websites so all involved are aware of the new/rescheduled game details.

Game Day Responsibilities

The home team association shall:

1. Provide 2 yellow NOCSAE certified game balls plus 3 balls on each end line (total of 8 balls). Official(s) will not start the game and will cancel a game in progress if balls are not NOCSAE certified. This will result in a forfeit awarded to the opposing team.
2. Report scores to MSLax via the [Score Reporting Form](#).
3. Ensure that the field is lined in accordance with USA Lacrosse rules and the field is in safe playing conditions.
4. Ensure lacrosse goals are in proper condition.
5. Provide the following at the scorer's table:
 - Scorer's table with chairs (Timekeeper and Scorekeeper from home team).
 - Game clock and horn (unless prohibited by city ordinance).
 - A flip scorer or other visible means of score keeping, so that officials can clearly see the score from the field.
 - An alternative possession item displayed at the table and used to determine which team shall receive the ball on offsetting fouls.

All teams must arrive in time with a full team and a MSLax certified coach to be ready to play at the scheduled time or they will be penalized with a forfeit. If there is communication with the opposing team's coach or team representative beforehand, and both teams agree to postpone the start of the game or play with fewer players, the game can be played as planned.

Rules Governing League Play

MSLax follows USA Lacrosse rules which apply to the youth levels. MSLax annually reviews rules and makes modifications for youth level league play. You can find rules and field diagrams using the links below.

[MSLax League Rules](#)

[2026 USA Lacrosse Girls Youth Rule Book](#)

[USA Lacrosse Field Diagrams](#)

Team Rankings and End of Season Tournaments

Team rankings for each season are displayed on the [MSLax website](#) under the Season Info tab. This information is used to place teams in the appropriate competitive bracket of play at the end of season tournaments. Team rankings are based on the following criteria at each level of play:

1. Best overall win-loss record
2. Head to head competition
3. Goals Against
4. Goals For
5. Coin Toss

During tournament play, each team participating will be placed in a bracket based on team ranking and the number of teams participating in the specified tournament. There are normally 1-3 brackets of team play for each level, and each team within a bracket plays 3 pool play games. After pool play competition is completed, teams will be moved into bracket play based on standings. See individual tournament rules for tie-breaker information.

End of season tournaments are a chance for all MSLax players, coaches, association representatives, parents, MSLax board members, officials, and other spectators to come together and enjoy the feeling of tournament competition.

MSLax Drone Policy

The FAA rules concerning the operation of drones are as follows:

“Small unmanned aircraft (drones) may not operate over any persons not directly participating in the operation, not under a covered structure, and not inside a covered stationary vehicle.” Visit <https://www.faa.gov> for more information.

It is illegal to fly a drone in an unsafe manner (directly over the playing area) at any MSLax event (game or scrimmage) being played inside or outside. Proper procedure:

1. If asked, the officials are to deny permission for the individual to fly a drone over the field of play at a game or scrimmage.
2. If the officials notice a drone being flown over the game or scrimmage, they are to stop the event and confer with the home team’s head coach.
3. The home team’s head coach is responsible for ensuring the drone is grounded before play resumes.
4. If it is unknown who is responsible for flying the drone, the local police department may be called to report the unsafe act/incident and to ask for the police to respond to the site.

The event shall not resume until the drone is no longer being flown over the field where the event is being held.

Associations are encouraged to inform their membership of the FAA rules regarding drones. For questions or concerns please contact the MSLax Director of Rules, Policy, & League Operations at operations@mslax.net.

MSLax Safe Sport Policy

USA Lacrosse and MSLax expect our members to create a safe environment to protect athletes, spectators, coaches, and officials. Part of that safe environment is one that is free from potentially harassment and inappropriate behavior from adults toward minors or between minors. The following club recommendations outline the best practices provided by USA Lacrosse and the Safe Sport Act of 2017. More information can be found at <https://www.usalacrosse.com/athlete-protection>.

Mandated Reporting

Reporting and responding to abuse at the local level should occur at two levels of concern.

1. When child sexual abuse is suspected, it should be reported to law enforcement.
2. When violations of conduct or behavior practices are not believed to be sexual abuse, but inappropriate or higher risk such as being alone with an athlete are suspected, they should be reported to the association representative. Associations are required to inform MSLax of any coach or association representative that has been removed from contact with minors either temporarily or permanently by email to the MSLax Director of Rules, Policy, & League Operations at operations@mslax.net.

Recommended Association Policies

It is recommended that an Athlete Safety Coach be appointed by the leader or a committee in any matters related to this standard. It is also recommended that the association create a small standing Committee for Athlete Safety under the leadership of the Athlete Safety Coach.

Minimum requirements for this position/committee include:

1. Determine local and state reporting requirements for sexual and physical abuse of minors. Develop written policies to require that all members know what they are and how to follow them. Suspected sexual abuse must be reported to law enforcement, not investigated then reported.
2. Develop a reporting process that allows for suspected activities that are not believed to be sexual abuse, but inappropriate or higher risk such as being alone with an athlete, to be reported to the Athlete Safety Coach, MSLax, and USA Lacrosse.

3. Develop a response plan for action when an allegation is made. It should include at an absolute minimum:
 - a. Separation of the parties involved, protection for the minor, confidentiality, reporting to authorities as required locally, reporting to MSLax, and notification to USA Lacrosse.
4. Publicize the reporting process of the association and MSLax to all youth athletes and their parents.

Required MSLax Association Policy

All MSLax associations are required at a minimum to adhere to and educate their membership regarding the MSLax Athlete Coach Interaction Policy and to require current USA Lacrosse Coaches Membership with Bronze Certification.

MSLax Athlete Coach Interaction Policy

One-on-One Interactions

There may be situations that are appropriate for one-on-one interactions with athletes or participants. For example, an individual meeting may be necessary to address an athlete's concerns, training program, or competition schedule. Under these circumstances, coaches, staff members, and/or volunteers are to observe the following guidelines:

- Any individual meeting should occur when others are present and where interactions can be easily observed.
- If an individual meeting is to take place in an office, the door should remain unlocked and open.
- If a closed-door meeting is necessary, the coach, staff member, and/or volunteer must inform another coach, staff member, and/or volunteer and ensure the door remains unlocked.

Individual Training Sessions

An individual training session with an athlete or participant may also be desired or necessary. However, such sessions are subject to the following:

- Under these circumstances, written permission of a minor athlete's parents or guardians is required in advance of the individual training session(s).
- USA Lacrosse encourages parents and guardians to attend the training session(s).

Physical Contact with Athletes

Appropriate physical contact between athletes and coaches, staff members, or volunteers is a productive and inevitable part of sport. Athletes are more likely to acquire advanced physical skills and enjoy their sport participation through appropriate physical contact. However, rules for physical contact must be set to reduce the potential for misconduct in sport. The following principles and guidelines in regards to physical contact with minors should be maintained:

- **Common Criteria for Appropriate Physical Contact:** Physical contact with athletes for safety, consolation, and celebration has multiple criteria in common which make them both safe and appropriate. These include:
 - The physical contact takes place in public.
 - There is no potential for sexual intimacies during the physical contact.
 - The physical contact is for the benefit of the athlete, not to meet an emotional or other need of the person of authority.
- **Prohibited Physical Contact:** Prohibited forms of physical contact, which shall be reported immediately include, without limitation:
 - Asking or having an athlete sit in the lap of a coach, administrator, staff member, or volunteer.
 - Lingering or repeated embraces of athletes that go beyond the criteria set forth for physical contact.
 - Slapping, hitting, punching, kicking, or any other physical contact meant to discipline, punish, or achieve compliance from an athlete.
 - “Cuddling” or maintaining prolonged physical contact during any aspect of training, travel, or overnight stay.
 - Playful, yet inappropriate, contact that is not a part of regular training, (e.g., tickling or “horseplay” wrestling).
 - Continued physical contact that makes an athlete obviously uncomfortable, whether expressed or not.
 - Any contact that is contrary to a previously expressed personal desire for decreased or no physical contact, where such decreased contact is feasible in a competitive training environment.

Electronic Communications & Social Media

With an emphasis on athlete safety, all electronic communications between a coach and athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. As with any communication, the content of any electronic communication should be readily available to share with the athlete’s family. If the athlete is under the age of 18, any email, electronic text, social media, or similar communication must copy or include the athlete’s parents or guardians.

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Blogs, & Similar Sites. Coaches should not have athletes of the association, team or organization join a personal social media page. Athlete members and parents can “friend” the official club, team or organization’s page, and coaches can communicate to athlete members through the site. All posts, messages, text, or media of any kind between coach and athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities or for team-oriented motivational purposes.

From time to time, digital photos, videos of practice or competition, and other publicly obtainable images of the athlete – individually or in groups – may be taken. These photos and/or videos may be submitted to local, state, or national publications, used in team or association videos, posted on team or team-associated websites, or offered to the team’s families seasonally on disc or other electronic form. Such practices are appropriate as long as the athlete or athletes are in public view and such imagery is both appropriate and in the best interest of the athlete, team or association. Imagery must not be inappropriate. The parents or guardians of an athlete may request in writing that their child not be contacted by any form of electronic communication by coaches (photography or videography).

Other Areas of Concern

MSLax prohibits the use of verbal, psychological, emotional, and physical abuse, as well as bullying and hazing.

Verbal Abuse

The most commonly occurring type of abuse in sports includes name calling, hurtful comments regarding performance, swearing at players or game officials, and comments meant to demean a person’s integrity. Examples include:

- Coach to player: “Fatty, lose some weight so you can actually get down the court.” or “I hope you aren’t proud of yourself, you shouldn’t be.”
- Coach to team: “You suck. I thought you were better than that, I guess I was wrong.”
- Coach to official: “Are you kidding me? You have no idea what you are doing, you are going to make us lose the freaking game!”

Psychological or Emotional Abuse

Includes having unrealistic goals or expectations of athletes, keeping athletes from participating in games or practices because of assumed limits or underdeveloped skills, or issuing threats. Examples include:

- A coach putting the success of a team on the shoulders of one “superstar.”
- Before putting a non-starter in the game a coach says, “I guess we will have to let you play, you’re the only one left.”
- Coach to team: “If we lose any games this season, none of you will be invited back next year.”

Physical Abuse

When coaches use any type of hurtful touch causing physical pain or the use of excessive exercise, denial of fluids, and/or imparting unreasonable requests as a form of punishment or a way of creating team discipline. Examples include:

- Slapping, grabbing, spitting, shoving, hitting, or throwing equipment.
- A team lost and the coach demands that his or her players run around the track until they vomit or pass out.
- Team returns late at night after an away contest and goes right to the gym for a punishment practice.
- Team loses by a certain amount of points and after the game the coach makes them or a specific player(s) do that number of sprints.

Bullying

Though bullying can be considered a form of verbal, physical, or psychological abuse, bullying is the deliberate, repeated, and sometimes health-endangering mistreatment of one person (the target) by a perpetrator (the bully), whose destructive actions are fueled by the bully's need to control the target. Examples include:

- Ongoing physical or verbal mistreatment, where a game of usurping control is perpetuated in an attempt to win while the other loses.
- Bullying coaches or players may often target more passive players. As a result, the assaulted person appears to be upset while the bully says things like, "What's the big deal?" or "She asked for it."
- Bullying is also when coaches or players deliberately exclude a player from team activities.

Hazing

Any activity expected by existing team members or coaches themselves of someone joining a team or to maintain full status on a team that humiliates, degrades, or risks emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person's willingness to participate. Examples include:

- Instances in which coaches or other players know about or are participants in any harmful or degrading initiation rituals involving new players.
- Rituals such as walking in cooked spaghetti, running through a line of players who mildly assault the player, performing lewd acts, or drinking excessive amounts of alcohol.

Professional Integrity

The development of any of the above disrespectful relationships between coaches and athletes or athletes with other team-members, compromises the professional integrity of the program and the educational mission of athletics. Coaches exercise power over athletes, whether in giving them praise or criticism, evaluating them, making recommendations that further their athletic goals, or conferring any other benefits on them. In the same way, some athletes may exert power over other athletes as a function of the bullying individual's standing with the coaching staff, school, sponsoring organization, playing time, media attention, or skill level. The use of derogatory language and intentionally hurtful statements from coach to athlete or among athletes is wrong because coaches and sponsoring schools have a professional responsibility for the players. Such situations greatly increase the chances that an athlete may be personally exploited.

Consequences for Violation

Should a coach or leader within an association be suspected of or found to have violated this policy the following actions will be taken by the league independent of what the local authorities or club mandates:

- Once informed, MSLax will investigate and will determine appropriate consequences.
- In the case of a suspension, MSLax will inform USA Lacrosse of the coach membership suspension via email.

Off-Season Playing Opportunities

MSLax encourages interested players and coaches to pursue additional lacrosse activities as long as they do not interfere with a player or coach's MSLax spring or summer season practices and games or MSHSL high school spring play.

MSLax provides a listing of off-season camps, clinics, and tournaments as a courtesy to our members on MSLax website. They are additional lacrosse opportunities for players in the off-season only. MSLax is not responsible for the actions, processes, or procedures of any organization providing tournaments, clinics, camps, travel teams, their staff, or their administration. Visit the [Camps, Clinics, & Tournaments](#) tab on the MSLax website for more information.

Last revision date: January 1, 2026