



FAIRFAX WOMEN'S SOCCER ASSOCIATION

RULES

February 2023

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FAIRFAX WOMEN'S SOCCER ASSOCIATION RULES

1. MEMBERSHIP

- a. Open Division: Women 19 years of age or older (18-year olds may play with approval by the Board) who are not concurrently playing on college or junior-level teams.
- b. Masters Division: Women 30 years of age or older (or who will turn 30 years of age at any time during the season for which registering).
- c. Grand Masters Division: Women 40 years of age or older (or who will turn 40 years of age at any time during the season for which registering).
- d. GGM Division: Women 50 years of age or older (or who will turn 50 years of age at any time during the season for which registering).
- e. Gold Division: Women 60 years of age or older (or who will turn 60 years of age at any time during the season for which registering).
- f. Only FWSA members will be allowed to play in FWSA sponsored games, with the exception of tournaments.
- g. Summer & Winter Soccer: Women 19 years of age or older (18-year olds may play with approval by the Board).
- h. The Winter/Spring season is the period from 1 January to 30 June; the Summer/Fall season is from 1 July to 31 December.

2. REGISTRATION

- a. All members are required to complete online registration and submit the registration fee established by the Board. Proof of residency in Fairfax County must also be submitted. Name and address must match registration. Proof must include a readable current address and date. That is, if a driver's license is used, the expiration date must be readable and current. Acceptable proof other than a driver's license include a DMV ID card, a voter registration card, and an active military ID card. If player does not provide proof of Fairfax County residency, the additional fee as set by the county must be submitted.
- b. Beginning with the Fall 2004 season, teams in non-compliance with Fairfax County's residency requirements for adult sports organizations cannot become any more non-compliant. New teams that wish to join FWSA must be comprised of at least 67 percent Fairfax County residents. The Fall 2004 season will establish each team's base level of compliance, which will then be reviewed each fall. If county residency on these teams has increased, the team's base level will be raised for subsequent seasons.
- c. Teams must be registered with a minimum of 14 players prior to the deadline established by the Board. Exceptions may be approved by the Board.
- d. Each registered player must be listed on the team roster. The Team Representative (or alternate) should be able to produce the team roster at each game. Players should have a photo ID showing date of birth available at all games. Failure to produce the roster and photo ID by the end of the game when requested by the opposing Team Representative (or alternate) or a Board member

may result in forfeiture of the game. Player rosters are for the benefit of the opposing team only, not the referee.

- e. Initial roster — At least two weeks prior to the Team Representative meeting, Team Reps must review the number of registered players to ensure team viability. If less than 14, notify the appropriate Division Commissioner, who will bring the issue to the Board's attention.
- f. Teams may have a roster of up to 25 players, but no less than 14 players. Teams that are consistently unable to field a team without using the Sub Team may be asked by the Board to add players.
- g. Additions to Team Rosters — The policy for registering players is as follows:
 - 1) A player may be added to the official roster provided the individual has completed online registration, provided proof of residency (if applicable), and paid the registration fee in full.
 - 2) A team MAY NOT register a player after the eighth week of a season. The eighth week will be defined by the schedule published at the beginning of the season.
 - 3) A player may not change teams after the first scheduled game of the season without Board approval.
 - 4) Player Placement — For the lowest division in each age group, vacancies on teams with fewer than 17 players will be filled from new player registrations by the FWSA Recruiter.
 - 5) Players may register with more than one Division, provided age requirements are met, but may not register with more than one team in each Division.

3. FEES

- a. Registration:
 - 1) Players must have paid in full to be considered registered and eligible to begin play. League registration fees for officers (as defined in the Bylaws) will be waived. Out-of-county fees apply.
 - 2) If a player registers after one-half of the season (fifth week of original schedule), the fee is one-half of the increased registration fee. Out-of-county fees apply.
- b. Late Registration — Players returning to any team registering after the registration deadline will pay the increased registration fee established by the Board. Exception: Individuals registering on time for one team may register late without penalty for additional teams if not previously registered with the other teams.
- c. Multi-team Registration — Out-of-county players who are registered for multiple teams must pay the out-of-county fee for each team registration.
- d. Returned Checks — Registrants whose checks are returned by the bank for any reason will be assessed any associated bank charges.
- e. Refunds — Prior to the first scheduled game, refunds may be given for any reason and will include out-of-county fees. The deadline for requesting a refund will be the day before the first game of the original, published schedule. Requests must be in writing to the appropriate Division Commissioner. No partial refunds will be given.

4. UNIFORMS

- a. Uniform Selection — Team uniform color selection and changes must be approved in advance by the appropriate Division Commissioner. When teams elect to change the color of their team jerseys, they must request permission in writing from the appropriate Division Commissioner to ensure that there will be minimal color conflict. Existing team colors will not be adopted by newly formed teams.
- b. Uniform Requirements — Players must have permanent numbers on the back of their regular team jerseys.
 - 1) Players with the same shirt number as another teammate may NOT play.
 - 2) Uniformity in team shirts, such as coloring, pattern, etc. is required.
 - 3) Alternate Jersey — Permanent numbers are not required. Alternate jerseys must all conform to same color group.
 - 4) Visible apparel under shirts may be of different length, and a different color than the basic color of the shirts.
 - 5) Any team which does not comply with these rules may forfeit the game if both of the following apply:
 - i. The opposing Team Representative (or alternate) notifies the offending team captain of the objection; and
 - ii. The offending Team Representative (or alternate) does not rectify the situation.
- c. Uniform Conflicts — In the event existing division teams with the same or similar color uniforms are scheduled to play, the HOME team will wear its own color and the VISITING team will wear alternate jerseys to avoid confusion of players.
- d. FWSA players on the field are required to wear appropriate athletic clothing (Activewear) which could include shorts, skorts, any type of leggings, or sports pants. These must be free from any dangerous details (e.g. protruding buttons, jewelry, sequins, etc.)

5. TEAMS AND DIVISIONS

- a. Division Composition — The Board will decide the distribution of teams across divisions prior to each season with a primary objective of keeping divisions as evenly balanced as possible for scheduling purposes. Divisions are sub-divided into different levels of play, with the exception of the Gold Division, with Blue being the highest level of play and White being more recreational.
- b. New Teams — Placement within a particular division of all newly organized teams will be considered on an individual basis by the Board.
- c. Team Reorganization — In the case of a team reorganization, for whatever reason, the group that has the majority of team players [at least seven players] from the previous season will retain the team divisional standings and, if desired, jersey color and team name. The remaining players may petition the Board for team admission.
- d. Individual Playing Time — All players at the lowest division levels must be allowed to play a minimum time equivalent to one-half a game.

6. REFEREES

- a. Referee Requisites — The league shall obtain licensed referees for all officially scheduled games.
- b. Referee No-Show — If the designated officials are late or absent, it will be the responsibility of the competing teams to select a mutually acceptable individual to be the referee. In this case, "Referee Requisites" does not apply.
- c. If only one of the designated referees is present, the game shall proceed, and the Division Commissioner shall be informed as soon as possible of the absence of the other referees. The game must begin within fifteen minutes of the scheduled starting time or field availability.
- d. Every effort must be made to play the scheduled game as there is no guarantee the game can or will be rescheduled. Teams involved in games having forfeit conditions as described in Rule 10c shall play the game to completion.

7. PROTESTS

- a. Game Protests — Games may not be protested for any reason, even if the referee misapplied FIFA rules. The final result of the game as played must stand.
- b. Card Protests — Teams may not protest judgment calls made by the referee, to include the awarding of yellow and red cards. There will be no exceptions.

8. POSTPONEMENTS

- a. Game Cancellations — In case of adverse weather or field conditions, the Fields Commissioner or her designee, or Fairfax County entities will cancel or postpone games as appropriate. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE COMMISSIONERS. Players will be notified by the Board.
- b. Once the referees have taken the field, only the referees or an official representative from Fairfax County's Neighborhood and Community Services can cancel the scheduled game. If the game is abandoned after the second half has begun, the game will be considered a complete game.
- c. TEAMS MAY NOT mutually agree to postpone or cancel a game prior to the game. If this occurs, the two teams will each be fined \$110.
- d. Any team that does not play a scheduled game, including makeup or rescheduled games, will forfeit that game.
- e. Schedule Changes — Team Representatives should submit to the scheduler their special requests for the season by the deadline established by the Board. Special requests for schedule changes will not be accepted after the schedule is set except for a special ruling by the Board based on unusual circumstances.
- f. In the event of a cancellation of either the first or last game of the day, the teams playing what becomes the actual first or last game of the day shall perform field duties. Division Commissioners will notify teams of these changes.

9. GAME RULES

- a. Length of Games — All scheduled FWSA games will typically consist of two 45-minute halves with a five-minute rest at halftime, unless otherwise scheduled.
- b. Substitution will be made as follows:
 - 1) Own team possession on throw-in and opponent may substitute if the team with possession substitutes (piggy back);
 - 2) Either team may substitute on a goal kick;
 - 3) Either team may substitute after a goal is scored;
 - 4) One for one substitution on an injury when referee calls an injury time out;
 - 5) Cautioned player;
 - 6) Either team may substitute at the half.
- c. Goalie Possession — The goalie has possession of the ball when in CONTROL OF THE BALL WITH ONE (1) HAND. The goalie may NOT be touched when in possession of the ball. The ball may not be touched by the opposing team when the goalie has possession.
- d. Potentially Harmful Devices — No player may participate in a game while wearing an exposed cast, brace, or other potentially harmful device. All casts and braces (i.e., metal and hard plastic) must be padded and covered. Jewelry should either be removed or padded and covered. Exposed metal or hard plastic will not be allowed.
- e. Shin guards are not mandatory for FWSA players. Although FIFA requires shin guards for each player, FWSA players are exempt and may play without shin guards at their own risk. [Note: Some referees may insist that all players on the field wear shin guards. The referee has the authority to enforce such safety requirements. Plastic shin guards must be covered].
- f. Coaches and/or spectators will not be permitted behind the goal area. Coaching is allowed only from a team's own sideline. Inappropriate conduct not to be tolerated by TEAM PLAYERS, COACHES, and/or SPECTATORS includes:
 - 1) Abusive or degrading language;
 - 2) Physical threats or assault;
 - 3) Behavior induced by alcohol or the influence of controlled substances;
 - 4) Support or encouragement of poor sportsmanship, including harassment of less-skilled players;
 - 5) Harassment of referees;
 - 6) Entering the field of play except for substitution or injury;
 - 7) Disputing or attempting to influence the referee's decision; and
 - 8) Non-control of spectators by teams responsible.Should any of the above behavior be reported, the Board will investigate and take appropriate action, which may include expulsion from FWSA.
- g. Reporting Red and Yellow Cards — All cautions and ejections (yellow and red cards) must be reported by the Team Representative (or alternate) to the appropriate Division Commissioner. If a

Team Representative (or alternate) fails to report a caution (yellow card) before the team's next game, the team will forfeit its next game. Failure to report an ejection (red card) before the team's next game will result in a TWO game forfeiture: the game in which the ejection was issued and the next game. Remember, an official is not required to actually show a card. A warning or verbal communication of any kind is sufficient under FIFA rules. If in doubt, after the game ask the referee if a caution or ejection was issued.

- 1) Red card penalty — Red cards result in immediate expulsion from the game. Red-carded players must leave the premises of the field immediately. Anyone receiving a red card will also be ineligible for the next game. The penalty for a red card received during the last game of a season will carry over to the first game of the next Fall/Spring season. Anyone receiving three red cards in one season for unsportsmanlike conduct will be immediately expelled from FWSA.
 - 2) Yellow card penalty — Receipt of three yellow cards in a season, or two yellow cards in a single game, will equal one red card and result in ineligibility to play in the next game.
- h. Slide tackling is permitted only in games with two Open Division teams.
- i. Divisional Standings — Point System — The divisional standings are determined by the following:
- 1) Three (3) game points for each win;
 - 2) One (1) game point for a tie;
 - 3) Zero (0) game points for a loss; and
 - 4) Minus one (-1) game point for a forfeiture.
 - 5) A bonus point will be awarded for each goal scored, up to three goals.
- j. Tie Breakers — A tie in the regular season consists of teams having equal game points at the end of the season. Tie breakers will be determined as follows:
- 1) Head-to-Head Competition;
 - 2) Bonus Points;
 - 3) Total Goals Scored Against.
- k. Forfeiture Penalty — Standings — In the case of forfeiture, the winning team will be awarded three (3) game points, three (3) goals for, zero (0) goals against, and three (3) bonus points. The forfeiting team's standings will show a loss of one (-1) game point, zero (0) goals for, three (3) goals against, and zero (0) bonus points.
- l. For the first game of the day and for evening games, teams are required to place corner flags and goals. These instructions may vary depending on the field assignment. The Board will issue appropriate instructions to all Team Representatives prior to the first game of the season.
- m. Return of Equipment - Teams are responsible for returning and locking all field equipment to the appropriate storage location after the last scheduled game. Storage units must be locked after the last scheduled game. Failure to comply with this rule may result in forfeiture of the game.

10. FORFEITURE

- a. Immediate forfeiture will be declared when a team fails to field seven players within fifteen minutes after scheduled game time or field availability or fails to maintain seven players throughout the game.
- b. Immediate forfeiture will be declared if a team leaves the playing field and fails to complete a game in progress.
- c. Forfeiture may also be declared under the following conditions:
 - 1) Participation of a non-registered or ineligible player in a game. (Rule 2a)
 - 2) Failure to have fields set up with goals & flags (when necessary) within 15 minutes after scheduled game time or field availability. (Rule 9l)
 - 3) Failure to comply with uniform requirements. (Rule 4b)
 - 4) Failure to play regularly scheduled games. (Rule 8d)
 - 5) Failure to produce player roster and photo IDs by the end of the game when requested by the opposing team captain or a Board member. (Rule 2d)
 - 6) Failure to report red and yellow cards. (Rule 9g)
 - 7) Failure to return/lock goals and flags to the appropriate storage location after the last scheduled game. (Rule 9m)
 - 8) Failure to report all game scores and cards to appropriate Division Commissioner as soon as possible after the game, but prior to the next scheduled game. (Rule 9g)
- d. Forfeit Procedure — These forfeitures (c1-8) will be declared only by the Board. All teams facing a game with any of the above forfeit condition(s) shall "play-on." Teams involved in games having forfeit conditions should notify the Division Commissioner in writing within 48 hours of the game in question. The Division Commissioner must notify the team facing a forfeit condition immediately when a complaint is filed, and that team must be allowed, if it so wishes, to file a written response within 72 hours of being notified of the complaint. Following that, a Board decision must be made as promptly as possible based upon all available information. No further appeals shall then be allowed.

11. FINES

- a. A team may be fined for failure to play a scheduled game, including a makeup game, as indicated in forfeiture Rules 10a and 10b. A team will also incur a fine for not playing a scheduled game (Rule 8d) if the team fails to notify the Division Commissioner at least 48 hours prior to game time. The Division Commissioner will, in turn, notify the scheduler and the opposing team. The fine is \$110.

12. THE SUB TEAM

- a. The purpose of the sub team is to aid in recruiting new players to the league and to help teams avoid forfeits. It is not to be used to win games.

- b. There is one sub team for each age bracket: Open, Masters, Grandmasters, and GGM. Players may sign up for sub teams in more than one age bracket, if age eligible.
- c. Eligibility
 - 1) Registered FWSA players of any age.
 - 2) New players to the league may participate in the Sub Team at no charge for one season, but then must join an official FWSA team or play with the developmental program in order to continue to participate in the Sub Team.
- d. Procedures
 - 1) The sub team list is managed by the Sub Team Coordinator using Google Groups with a sub group for each division. Team Representatives and players must fill out the form to be added to sub groups. Team Representatives and players can use the individual sub group email addresses to request subs or respond to a sub request. If Team Representatives and players want to use the Google Group application (instead of just emailing), they must have a Google account.
 - 2) Team Representatives (or alternates) send sub requests to the appropriate division sub group via the sub group email or the Google Group application. The subject line of the request should include WHEN (date & time), WHERE (field), and the number of subs needed. Requests should also include team name and jersey color. Team Representatives should confirm subs, by name or email, after they respond.
 - 3) Players may only participate as a sub once per day.
 - 4) Subs are placed on teams in order of positive response received. The Team Representative cannot request specific players.
 - 5) Teams that are consistently unable to field a team may be asked by the Board to add players to the roster from the recruitment player pool.
 - 6) At the beginning of each season, those players no longer registered with FWSA are removed from the sub groups. Removed players are notified by the Sub Team Coordinator to provide these players an opportunity to register for a team or let the Sub Team Coordinator know there is a mis-matching email issue with registration.
- e. Rules
 - 1) Teams may request up to 3 subs for a total of no more than 13 players (regular team members plus subs) participating in the game. Subs who respond to the request must be played and should be allowed to play the position in which they feel the most comfortable. The team will provide the sub with a jersey to wear for the game.
 - 2) These 13 players are the only ones who may play on the field for the entire game. No additional players may join the game nor may team members who show up unexpectedly be substituted in for any of the original 13 players. Teams that do not comply will forfeit the game for participation of an ineligible player. (Rule 10c1).
 - 3) Prior to the coin toss, the Team Representative (or alternate) may provide the name of each sub to the opposing Team Representative.
 - 4) By participating in the Sub Team, all players agree to abide by the rules. Failure to do so may result in suspension of Sub Team privileges.

- 5) Failure of a sub to show at a game without notifying the Team Representative may be grounds for removal from the Sub Team if such behavior continues after receiving one warning.
- 6) Exceptions to these rules may be made upon request and are at the discretion of the Sub Team Coordinator and/or Division Commissioner. Affected opposing Team Representative will be alerted of any anticipated change for each game.