

**Michigan State Premier Soccer Program
Rules and Regulations
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**RULES AND REGULATIONS
OF
MICHIGAN STATE PREMIER SOCCER PROGRAM**

Rule 1. General Cases and Line of Authority.

Section 1. General Cases. In general cases, the Premier Program shall be responsible for governing those persons associated with its' functioning and operation. It is the duty of all officials and coaches to report immediately any infraction of these rules to the Premier Program MSPSP Board of Directors.

Section 2. Line of Authority. Should any person, team or league want to appeal any adverse decision, the line of authority shall be to the Premier Program MSPSP Board of Directors and then to the MSYSA.

Rule 2. Disciplinary Ruling and Minimum Punishments.

Section 1. Red Card Offenses: Any player, coach or team official who is sent off during or after a game as evident by the issuance of a Red Card by the official shall receive a minimum one (1) game suspension. The head coach shall be responsible for any person(s) associated with the team guilty misconduct at a match.

Section 2. Additional Punishment. The MSPSP Disciplinary Committee upon review of all issued red cards may impose additional suspensions and disciplinary action.

Section 3. Persistent Misconduct. Players, coaches, or other team officials guilty of persistent misconduct before, during, or after a game as evidenced by the issuance of two Yellow cards or a Red card by the official at the game site shall receive a minimum of a one (1) game suspension.

Section 4. Pushing or Striking.

- (1) Players guilty of pushing or striking any coach, team official, or referee shall receive a minimum of one (1) year suspension; whether or not such an offense occurs at a game.
- (2) Coaches, managers, or other team officials guilty of pushing or striking any league official, coach, manager, player, referee, or assistant referee shall receive a minimum of a two- (2) year suspension; whether or not such an offense occurs at a game. Repeat offenders shall be barred from any further participation in the Premier Program.

Section 5. Sent Off. Team officials sent off the field by the official at the game site shall receive a minimum of a one- (1) game suspension.

Section 6. Alteration and/or Falsification of Birth Records and/or Rosters. Any coach, manager, team official, or player who knowingly alters any roster or game report or causes any roster or game report to be altered, or falsifies any birth date or causes any birth date to be falsified, or affixes or causes to be affixed to any pass card a photograph of any person other than the person named thereon may receive up to a seven (7) year suspension.

Section 7. Multiple Offenses - Coaches and/or Teams.

- (1) Any coach, manager, team official, or player receiving three (3) Yellow cards in any single playing season shall automatically be issued a Red card for the next physically played Premier Program game. This is considered a one- (1) game suspension.
- (2) Any coach, manager, team official, or player receiving two (2) Red Cards is immediately suspended without notice from participating at any Premier Program games until an appearance before Premier Program Disciplinary Committee. It is incumbent upon the offender to request such a hearing from said Committee.

Section 8. Tournament Suspensions. Any Red card suspension from any USYSA sanctioned Tournament not served within the issuing tournament(s), shall be served with a one (1) game suspension in the next physically played Premier Program game. Additional tournament issued suspensions shall be reviewed by the Disciplinary Committee for the imposition of additional penalties.

Section 9. Playing Suspended Players. Any coach who allows a player to play in a game, during which that player was to serve a suspension, shall receive a two (2) game suspension. Repeat offenses by the same coach shall result in a Disciplinary hearing at which further action may be taken. Any team, which allows a player, who has received three (3) Yellow cards or a Red card, to play in a game, during which that player was to serve a suspension, shall suffer a forfeit of that game, and may be subject to a fine set by the MSPSP Board of Directors.

Section 10. Participation by Suspended Team Officials. Any coach who allows a team official (coach, assistant coach, manager, etc.) to participate in a game, during which that team official was to serve a suspension, shall receive a two (2) game suspension. Repeat offenses by the same coach shall result in a Disciplinary hearing at which further action may be taken.

Any team, which allows a team official to participate in a game, during which that team official was to serve a suspension, shall suffer a forfeit of that game, and may be subject to a fine set by the MSPSP Board of Directors.

Section 11. Failure to Appear. Any coach, manager, team official, or player who fails to appear at a scheduled disciplinary hearing without due cause and seventy-two (72) hours notice will be suspended until such time as another hearing can be scheduled.

Section 12. Application of Suspensions. All suspensions and/or probation's listed in sections 1 through 10 of these rules apply to the next physically played Premier Program game, whether or not such game is within the same season or seasonal year. Any forfeited game, canceled game or postponed game is not considered a played game.

Rule 3. Insurance.

Insurance shall be obtained through MSYSA via each team's affiliated league.

Rule 4. Laws of the Game.

Section 1. Rules of Play. The rules of play shall be the "Laws of the Game", as published by F.I.F.A. All contests sanctioned by Premier Program shall abide by the "Laws of the Game", and the modifications as permitted by the Premier Program shall be published under separate cover.

Section 2. Bylaws. All teams, players, coaches, managers, team officials, clubs, and/or leagues will follow the Bylaws of this Premier Program, MSYSA and USSF.

Rule 5. Game Rules.

Section 1. Abandonment of Game.

- (1) Any game, which is abandoned because of inclement weather or darkness after 2/3 of the regulation time has been played, will be considered as a completed game. If 2/3 of the regulation time has not been completed, the game will be replayed in its entirety prior to the end of the scheduled season.
- (2) Any game abandoned for any other reason shall result in a review by the MSPSP Board of Directors as to the circumstances leading to the abandonment and a decision shall be rendered.
- (3) Any game not played by the end of the MSPSP season will incur a fine set by the MSPSP Board of Directors.

Section 2. Length of Games and Size of Ball. The length of games and the ball size shall be as follows:

<u>Age</u>	<u>Length of Game</u>	<u>Ball Size</u>
U-19	2 – 45 Minute Halves	Size 5 Ball
U-17	2 – 45 Minute Halves	Size 5 Ball
U-16	2 – 40 Minute Halves	Size 5 Ball
U-15	2 – 40 Minute Halves	Size 5 Ball
U-14	2 – 35 Minute Halves	Size 5 Ball
U-13	2 – 35 Minute Halves	Size 5 Ball

Section 3. Substitutions. Substitutions shall be unlimited. Substitutions are permitted by either team at any stoppage of play with the referee's permission and receiving a signal from the referee to enter the field. Substitutes must enter the field of play at the half after the player(s) they are being substituted for leave the field of play.

Section 4. Reporting of Scores. The winning team is responsible for notifying the Premier Program Statistician of the outcome of the game per instructions issued prior to the beginning of each season immediately following the game, to notify him/her of the outcome. In the event of a tie score, the home team shall be responsible for reporting the score. If A Game Score Is Not Reported Properly Within Forty-Eight (48) Hours Of The Date And Time The Game Is Played, A Penalty Set By The MSPSP Board or Directors for Each Violation Shall Be Imposed Upon The Team In Violation.

Section 5. Delayed Game Start. Any team delaying the start of a scheduled game by more than fifteen (15) minutes without authorization from the Premier Program shall forfeit the game to their opponent and shall be responsible for full payment of the game officials' fees.

Section 6. Failure to Appear for a Game. In the event that both teams do not appear for a scheduled game and the Referee rule the grounds playable, then both teams shall be assessed with a loss and the referee's fees.

Section 7. Coaching from the Sidelines. Giving direction to one's own team on points of strategy and position is allowed pursuant to and in accordance with FIFA rules of the game. No mechanical or electrical devices are permitted and no coach manager, team official, or substitute is to be anywhere except on the sidelines within 25 yards of the halfway line of that team's bench side of the field during the game. Only those persons in possession of a passcard shall be allowed within the permissible coaching area. Likewise only persons with a pass card showing them to be a player, coach, Director of Coaching, assistant coach, manager, or team official shall be allowed to coach (give direction from the sidelines). Teams shall take opposite sidelines for their benches. Home teams have choice of preferred sidelines. Parents must take the same sideline as their respective team.

Section 8. Home Team Responsibilities.

- (1) If that both teams wear uniforms that are of the same or similar colors, the home team must effect a change to colors that are distinct from those of the opponent. (See Rule 12 Visitor may change)
- (2) The home team shall be responsible for the condition of the grounds, the proper field markings, and proper equipment. Goal nets and corner flags are required. If entry fees for the facility are collected, the home team shall be responsible for reimbursing the entire referee crew.
- (3) The home team shall be responsible for providing a game ball.
- (4) In the event the referee declares the condition of the grounds improper due to improper or no markings, no corner flags, or no nets; the game is to be rescheduled. Both teams will pay their half of the referee fees for the cancelled game. The referee fees for the rescheduled game will be paid in full by the team whose field did not comply with the MSPSP Rules and Regulations. The rescheduled game will take place at the home field of the original visiting team.
- (5) The home team shall be responsible for all facility entry fees for visiting teams in advance of their entry to the facility.

Section 9. Team Display of Sportsmanship. The traditional line-up for good sportsmanship shall take place prior to the start of the game and be presided over by the referees and coaches. All players, substitutes, coaches, assistant coaches, managers, or other team officials shall participate. Infraction of this rule constitutes unsporting conduct and is subject to disciplinary action as such.

Rule 6. Age Limit Definition.

Section 1. Youth. The term **Youth** as applied to these bylaws shall mean an amateur player who has not attained his/her 19th birthday before the first day of January of the seasonal year in which he/she applies for registration.

Section 2. Attaining Age Limit. Players attaining the limiting age for any age group on or after January 1st, will be eligible to play for the remainder of the seasonal year.

Section 3. Reinstated Player. A reinstated player shall mean a player who has been reinstated to an amateur youth status.

Section 4. Age Groups.

- (1) Eligibility for age groups shall be determined by a player's age on January 1st of the seasonal year.
- (2) There will be single year age group (U-13 through U-19) in both the Boys and Girls divisions when enough teams are registered to comprise a division.
- (3) If there are not at least four (4) teams registered in an age division, there will be no division for that particular age group.
- (4) No team shall be allowed to play in an age group unless a minimum of 51% of the rostered players on that team were born within the year(s) specified for that specific age group. Exceptions to this rule are applied at the discretion of the MSPSP Board of Directors and to the U19 High School Open Division as defined in Rule 22. Automatic exceptions are granted for the 16/17, 17/18, and 18/19 seasonal years.
- (5) No team shall be allowed to roster players who are too old for the age group in which they are playing.
- (6) No player may play up more than two (2) age divisions except as defined in Rule 22.

Rule 7. Proof of Age.

Section 1. Authority to Contest. Any player can be called upon to prove his/her legal age by the MSPSP Board of Directors or the Registrar.

Section 2. Legal Proof of Age. A birth certificate, drivers' license, passport, board of health records, certificate of naturalization, or alien registration card shall be sufficient for proof of age.

Rule 8. Player Registration, League Entry and Team Affiliation Requirements.

Section 1. Player Registration

- (1) Players are registered to and mutually bound with a team when the Premier Program Registration form is signed by the player, his/her parent or guardian (for players under age 18) and the team coach and once MSYSA player fees have been paid to a responsible team/club/member organization. A copy of the signed and dated registration form must be given to the player at this time and no registration form shall be signed until or on or after the third Saturday in June. Completion of this form by all parties binds the player to that team and its' affiliating league and binds the team and its' affiliating league to that player for the entire seasonal year which runs from September 1st to August 31st unless a release is granted under Rule 10.
- (2) Each affiliating league which wishes to sponsor a team or teams in the Premier Program shall be required to submit to the appropriate Premier Program officer various forms as may be required for the operation of the Premier Program and pay all fines, dues or fees, that may be levied by the Premier Program.
- (3) Payment for team affiliation into the Premier Program must be submitted by the league that affiliates the team(s).
- (4) The final registration date for each playing season shall be determined by the Premier Program Board of Directors.
- (5) Proof of age and eligibility are to be confirmed by MSPSP affiliating leagues. MSPSP will not collect birth certificates.
- (6) MSPSP affiliating leagues or clubs are responsible for the collection of player and coach concussion awareness documentation pursuant to Michigan Compiled Laws (MCL) 333.9155 & 333.9156 and Michigan Public Acts 342 and 343 of 2012.

Section 2. Player Possession of Pass Card.

- (1) All coaches, managers, and players shall present to the referee their pass cards and shall have a current photograph of the named individual permanently affixed, before the start of each game.
- (2) All pass cards are to be returned to the Coach.
- (3) If a player, coach, manager, or other team official is ejected for misconduct, then the Referee official must sign the Referee Game Report at the conclusion of the game. **It is incumbent upon the Coach, Assistant Coach, Manager, or other team official to institute the proper suspension for committing such misconduct and indicate the reason for sitting out on subsequent Game Reports.**
- (4) Should any players' pass card not be available, they shall be permitted to play in the game after having fulfilled the requirements of rule 9. However, they shall be open to "Challenge" by the opposing team under rule 9.
- (5) A fee set by the MSPSP Board of Directors shall be assessed for the replacement of a lost pass card.

Section 3. Application Fees and Performance Bond.

- (1) Application fees shall be set prior to registration for each season.
- (2) Performance Bonds in an amount to be determined by the Premier Program Board of Directors may be required.

Section 4. Multiple Registration.

- (1) A player cannot play for more than one team in the Premier Program.
- (2) In the case of a player being registered to more than one team, the Premier Program team must be his/her primary team.
- (3) No pass card shall be issued by the Premier Program for tournament play only.
- (4) No teams participating in the Midwest Regional League (MRL) or National League may play in MSPSP.

Section 5. Club Passcards:

- (1) MSPSP registered teams may utilize players from within both the same club and MSPSP affiliated league to participate in the team's MSPSP league games.
- (2) Players utilized in this manner are considered "Club Passcard Players".
- (3) Players wishing to Club Passcard to an MSPSP team must be currently registered with MSYSA.
- (4) Players can Club Passcard up a maximum of two age groups from their eligible age group.
- (5) MSPSP teams are limited to five (5) club passcarded players per game.
- (6) Teams utilizing an MSPSP club passcard player must meet all other roster requirements.
- (7) Game day rosters may not exceed 18 total players including club passcarded players.
- (8) Players can Club Passcard a maximum of twice a week with the week starting on Sunday.
- (9) Players may Club Passcard within their own age group only from a lower division team to a higher division team.
- (10) Players cannot club passcard down in competition or age groups from their primarily rostered team. MRL and National League players may not participate in MSPSP.
- (11) At the U13 age group in the fall season, players may Club Passcard across the statewide divisions. Players registered on a statewide team may not Club Passcard into the regional division. Regional division players may Club Passcard onto statewide teams.
- (12) Players needing to serve a suspension for misconduct are not permitted to club passcard until their suspension is served with their primary rostered team. Suspensions may not be served in club passcarded matches.
- (13) Select and Recreational MSYSA registered players may club passcard in MSPSP matches. Club passcarding Select and Recreational players must be age-eligible for the MSPSP division.
- (14) U13 MSYSA Directors Academy players may NOT club passcard to U13 MSPSP Matches. All other Directors

Academy to MSPSP club passcarding scenarios are permitted.

Section 6. Violation of Club Passcard Procedures: A violation of MSPSP club passcard procedures will be reviewed by the MSPSP Board of Directors. Punishments can include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:

- (1) Replaying of the match with the violating team paying for match fees including referee and facility costs.
- (2) Match forfeiture.
- (3) A monetary fine to the offending team, coach, or league.
- (4) Suspensions of the offending coach.

Rule 9. Challenge of a Player not in Possession of a Player Pass Card.

Section 1. Procedure.

- (1) If a player does not present a player pass card to the Referee prior to the game, he/she shall give his/her name, signature, and birth date to the Referee, who shall note this information on his Referee Game Report, and shall at the conclusion of the game, advise the coach of the opposing team of this information and make it available to him/her.
 - a. In the event a player is club passcarding and does not present a player pass card to the Referee prior to the game, he/she shall follow the above criteria as well as provide the team name they are officially rostered on for the Referee to indicate on the Game Report.
- (2) The opposing team coach has a right to challenge such a player by contacting the Vice-Chairperson for verification that the challenged player(s) is/are properly registered and eligible to play. If the Premier Program records show the player(s) is/are properly registered and eligible to play, the matter is finished.

Section 2. Penalties. If a challenged player(s) is/are not properly registered or eligible to play, the offending team shall automatically forfeit that game and the coach may face further disciplinary action by the Premier Program, and receive up to a seven (7) year suspension under Rule 2 Section 6.

Rule 10. Player Release, Transfer, and Roster Limit.

Section 1. Release. A registered player, a player that has signed the proper MSPSP Registration Form, shall be committed to one Premier Program team for the entire seasonal year. Once registered, a player should remain with his/her team until the tryout deadline of the following seasonal year. However, any player wishing a release shall be granted one. Any player wishing to be released must make the request to the MSPSP Office. Releases will always be granted but a transfer to another team is not guaranteed.

Section 2. Inter-Premier Program Player Transfer. MSPSP will only approve a transfer from one MSPSP team to another MSPSP team if the following conditions are met:

- (A) The player transfer is supported (approved) by the player's originally registered team, club and league (documentation required).
- (B) The player transfer is supported (approved) by the player's new team, club and league.
- (C) The transfer occurs during the MSYSA Transfer Window (November 1st- March 1st).
- (D) All other MSYSA and MSPSP Rules and Regulations are followed.

Section 3. Poaching. Any player, coach, team official, player parent or guardian, or any other agent associated with the team who attempts to induce a registered player to change MSPSP teams from the day of Premier Program registration to the third Friday in June of the seasonal year, shall be considered poaching. Any of the above that are charged with poaching shall be brought before the MSPSP Disciplinary Committee.

The period of time on or after the third Saturday in June until the day of registration of the Premier Program shall be the designated open recruiting period. During this period of time any player, coach, manager, trainer, player parent or guardian, team official, or any other person associated with the team, may freely discuss new affiliation with players, **who have not registered with any other Premier Program team** for the following seasonal year. Any attempt to induce a registered player to change teams during the present seasonal year or for following seasonal year shall be deemed poaching.

Section 4. Transfer Cut-off Dates. Transfers in MSPSP may only occur in the month of January and must adhere to MSPSP Rule 10 Section 2.

Section 5. Team Tryouts. The date for team tryouts for MSPSP teams will be established by Michigan State Youth Soccer Association and will be adhered to by all Premier Program teams. All tryouts for teams playing in the Premier Program shall be advertised or published in the MSYSA Tryout Publication. No fees may be charged to any player for attending a team tryout. No

player shall sign a registration form as a requirement for the tryout. Any form so executed shall be declared null and void by the Premier Program.

Section 6. Roster Limit.

- (A) No team shall be admitted to the Premier Program with less than fifteen (15) players.
- (B) Teams may roster no more than 22 players per team.
- (C) Game day rosters may only contain 18 of the 22 players registered to the team.
- (D) Team coaches/managers must designate a maximum of 18 active players on the match report before the start of each match.
- (E) Non-participating players may sit on the team bench but they must be either in street clothes or non-game day jerseys.

Section 7. Roster Additions.

- (1) Anytime a named goalkeeper is injured and out of play, another goalkeeper may be added for the remainder of the season, through the normal registration process.
- (2) Anytime a team's active roster drops to fourteen (14) players, due to injury or resignation of players, that team shall be allowed to add players to their roster through the normal registration process until they have reached an active roster of fifteen (15) players.
- (3) Player additions to MSPSP rosters are permissible up to forty-eight (48) hours before a teams' first match except for additions outlined in Rule 10 Sections 7. 1 and 7.2 (which can occur at any point in the season).

Section 8. Penalties.

- (1) Any player found to be guilty of violating any of the above sections of this Rule 10 shall appear before the Disciplinary Committee and may receive up to a five game suspension
- (2) Any coach, manager, trainer, or team, club or league official found guilty of violating any of the above sections of Rule 10 may appear before the Disciplinary Committee and may receive up to a two (2) year suspension.

Rule 11. Game Reports.

Section 1. Team Responsibilities. Both teams shall be responsible for entering all appropriate information, on a legible report prior to the start of the game.

Section 2. Referee Responsibilities.

- (1) The referee shall verify the identity of the players, coaches, managers, and team officials with their pass cards immediately upon arriving at the field.
- (2) Prior to the start of the game the Referee shall make sure that each player's equipment is in proper order.
- (3) Prior to the start of the game the referee shall make sure that all goal nets and corner flags are properly installed and in proper repair, that the field has the proper makings, and that the ground is fit for play.
- (4) The referee shall not allow any player who does not possess a pass card to participate in the game (see Rule 8 for exceptions) nor shall he/she allow any individual without a pass card to accompany the team in their bench area.
- (5) The referee shall ensure all coaches, assistant coaches and managers have a valid MSYSA Risk Management (background check) card.
- (6) The referee shall keep a complete record of the game on the official Referee Game Report. Upon completion of the game the Referee shall check this report before signing his/her name.
- (7) The Referee shall mail his/her report to the Statistician, and the referee shall include in this mailing any supplemental disciplinary report he/she may wish to make.

Section 3. Referee Qualifications.

- (1) All referees will be registered on USSF referee registration forms through the State Referee Association. No person shall officiate as a referee or neutral lines person in any match under the sanction or jurisdiction (direct or indirect) of the USSF who is not registered with this Federation unless both coaches agree and sign the game report stating such agreement. All referee assignors must be USSF certified assignors.
- (2) If, due to unforeseen circumstances, a registered referee is unable to officiate, club or team officials may agree upon some other person to act in the emergency. Such emergencies shall be explained in writing by team officials and/or referee assignors and submitted with the Referee Game Report.
- (3) Referees may not officiate a game in which a team participant is a member of his/her family unless both coaches agree and sign the game report stating such agreement.
- (4) In the event both coaches do not agree on an alternate referee (per Section 3 Paragraph 2) the game will be replayed at the home team's home field and the referee fees will be paid equally by both teams.

Section 4. Referee Game Reports The Premier Program Referee Advisor will be apprised of improperly completed Referee Game Reports

Section 5. Referee Assignors

- (1) Referee Assignors may not assign 25% or more of an individual age groups matches to themselves or their direct family members.

Rule 12. Requirements of Players.

Section 1. Shin Guards. All players are required to wear shin guards at all times while on the field of play. Shin Guards must be completely covered by socks at all times.

Section 2. Player Possession of Pass Card. All players wishing to participate in a Premier Program game must be in possession of an official Premier Program Pass Card, which must be signed by the player, and have a current photograph of the player permanently affixed (see Rule 8 for Exceptions to this rule).

Section 3. Uniforms.

- (1) In the event that the uniforms of both teams in the game are similar color and the referee determines that one team must change uniforms, the home team shall change uniforms unless both coaches agree that the visiting team may change.
- (2) All players must be in full Premier Program identified numbered uniforms. Each player's jersey shall have on the left chest or on the left sleeve the Premier Program Patch or a same size representation. All players on the field of play representing one team must have unique numbers on their uniforms. Players are not allowed to switch numbers after the team has been checked in by the referees without notifying the referee of the change.
- (3) The Premier Program shall provide, if requested, two Premier Program patches. The patch must be permanently affixed (sewn on only) to the left chest or left sleeve of the jersey.
- (4) A team may be assessed a per game fine set forth by the MSPSP Board of Directors for each violation of Rule 12 Section 3.

Section 4. Minimum Playing Time.

Minimum playing time per player shall be established and monitored by each league and/or club.

Rule 13. Coaches.

Section 1. Licenses. All head coaches of teams playing in Premier division 1 and Premier division 2 shall be required to have a minimum "D" coaching license or a NSCAA National Diploma. All head coaches of teams playing in any Classic divisions shall be required to have a minimum "E" coaching license.

- (1) A head coach of a Classic division team that advances to the Premier division shall have one (1) season to obtain his/her "D" coaching license or NSCAA National Diploma.
- (2) Individuals listed as head coaches in both the Premier and Classic divisions shall be required to attend 80% of scheduled MSPSP matches.
- (3) Head coaches not attending 80% their teams scheduled matches shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Section 2. Coach Possession of Pass Card. All Premier Program coaches, assistant coaches, managers, or other team officials must be identified by an official Premier Program Pass Card, which must be signed by the named individual and have a current photograph of the named individual permanently affixed.

- (1) Passcards for Directors of Coaching will be issued at the discretion of the MSPSP Board of Directors. Directors of Coaching, who have obtained a Director of Coaching Passcard from MSPSP, can coach any MSPSP match for their club.

Section 3. Coaches Responsibilities.

- (1) Each coach is responsible for the conduct of his/her players, other team officials and spectators before, during and after the game and shall instruct all of the above to behave in a proper and respectful manner.
- (2) Each coach is responsible for correctly submitting a legible Referee Game Report, with the proper information to the Referee prior to the start of the game.
- (3) Each coach is responsible for submitting proper pass cards and Referee Fees prior to the start of the game as well as reimbursing any entry fees the referee incurred to enter the facility.
- (4) Each coach must comply with the Coaches Procedures on game day.
- (5) In the event that a coach wishes to protest a game he/she must inform the Referee prior to the start of the match if possible, and will inform the referee in all cases at the end of the match so the Referee may note the reasons for the protest on the Referee Game Report.
- (6) Each coach, assistant coach, manager, and or other team officials must have a valid MSYSA Risk Management (background check) card.

Rule 14. Uniforms.

Section 1. Supply. Each team shall be responsible for acquiring its own uniforms.

Section 2. Sponsor Patch. Sponsorship or advertising (if appropriate) is permitted on player jerseys with the written approval of the MSPSP Program Director and MSPSP Chairperson.

Section 3. Jersey Numbers. All jerseys must be clearly numbered on the back. A number no larger than 4" may be displayed on the right front or center of the chest. No two players on the same team may share the same number except that the goalkeeper may wear any number he/she so desires.

Section 4. Premier Program Patch. Each player's jersey shall be identified by a crest on the left chest or a patch on the left sleeve that may either be silk-screened or the Premier Program patch.

Section 5. Other Jersey Markings. Leagues may display their team name or league name on the front of the jersey only.

Rule 15. Game Schedule.

Section 1. Official Schedule. The official schedule of the Premier Program shall be compiled by the Premier Program Scheduler.

Section 2. Scheduled Dates. Teams must play games according to the official MSPSP schedule.

Section 3. Dual Use of Game Results. There will be no dual use of game results. No Premier Program game can be used to fulfill the requirements of another competition i.e. State Cup.

Section 4. Rescheduling of Games. Games must be played at scheduled date and time. Rescheduling games without proper MSPSP approval will result in forfeiture by both teams. Rescheduled match logistics must be agreed upon by both teams and approved by MSPSP. The MSPSP Board of Directors will set the criteria and possible fees for reschedules.

Rule 16. Determination of Divisional Champions.

Section 1. Game Points. During seasonal play, game points shall be awarded as follows:

- Each victory shall be worth three (3) points.
- Each tie shall be worth one (1) point.
- No points shall be awarded for a loss.

Section 2. Forfeits. Any team, which forfeits a game, shall not be eligible for a divisional championship. The score of any forfeit game shall stand 4-0 against the forfeiting team.

Section 3. Divisional Champions.

- (1) Divisional Champions shall be determined on the following basis:
The team with the most game points (subject to adjustment per Section 4 below) shall be declared the Divisional Champions.
- (2) In the event that two teams have tied for the most game points the following tiebreaker shall apply:
 - (a) The winner of head to head competition.
 - (b) The winner of most games.
 - (c) Goal Differential (Maximum of four goals per win).
 - (d) Fewest goals allowed.
 - (e) Team with least number of red/yellow cards issued.
 - (f) Fair play points.
- (3) In the event that more than two teams have tied for the most game points, the following tiebreaker shall apply:
 - (a) The winner of most games.
 - (b) Goal Differential (Maximum of four goals per win)
 - (c) Fewest goals allowed
 - (d) Team with least number of red/yellow cards issued.
 - (e) Fair play points.

Section 4. Unequal Number of Games Played. In the event that teams within a division have played an unequal number of games a calculation will be made to adjust for the different number of games played. For example, if one team played eight games and the other team played ten games the figures arrived at in Section 3 above would be multiplied by 80% (.80) for the team that played ten games.

Rule 17. Ignorance of the Rules.

It is the responsibility of each player, coach, manager, trainer, team official, and league official to know and understand the Bylaws and Rules of the Premier Program. Ignorance of these Bylaws and Rules will not be considered an excuse for failure to follow them and will not be considered as a defense in any Disciplinary Hearing of the Premier Program.

Rule 18. Interpretations of the Bylaws and Rules.

Any interpretation of the Bylaws and Rules of the Premier Program, MSYSA, or USSF shall not be considered as an official interpretation until the interpretation is rendered in writing and signed and dated by an authorized Premier Program Director or Official.

Rule 19. Rulings of the MSPSP Board of Directors.

Any ruling of the MSPSP Board of Directors shall be incorporated as a part of these rules through reference. Rulings shall be documented by the MSPSP Board of Directors and shall be published.

Rule 20. Team Definition.

Section 1. Existing Team.

- (1) An existing team shall be any team that has at least 51% of its players returning from the same sponsoring league from the team's roster of its previous Premier Program season. Exceptions to this rule are applied at the discretion of the MSPSP Board of Directors and to the U19 High School Open Division as defined in Rule 22. Automatic exceptions are granted for the 16/17, 17/18, and 18/19 seasonal years.
- (2) A Team (winning or runners-up in the State Cup), which elects to play the National Regional League, may do so without losing their Team position in the Premier Program. When they return, they will take the place of the Team, which displaced them in the National Regional League. They may also return on their own accord and will displace the lowest placed team of the division that they were in when the Team elected to join the National Regional League.

Section 2. New Team. A new team is any team, which does not meet the requirements of section 1 above; regardless of whether or not that team physically played in the Premier Program in any previous playing season. New teams are subject to placement in the lowest division of a given age group. Any team may petition the MSPSP Board of Directors for divisional placement.

Rule 21. Elite Division Admission.

Section 1. Name. The Elite Division may use a name mutually agreed upon between the Premier Program and its major sponsor for all purposes of advertising and public and community relations.

Section 2. Purpose. The Elite Division is established to provide superior competition in a high quality venue for Premier Program players and teams, U16 and above, to develop and participate in highly skilled youth soccer, sportsmanship, and quality coaching and officiating within the State of Michigan.

Section 3. Method of Entry. Application for Admission to the Elite Division shall be open to all teams U16 and above admitted to the Premier Program. Affiliating leagues must complete an application for entry to the Elite Division for each team they wish to sponsor in this Division. The Premier Program must receive all Elite Division applications no later than the Elite Division application deadline, which may be set by the MSPSP Board of Directors from time to time. Acceptance into the Elite Division is at the sole discretion of the Premier Program MSPSP Board of Directors and shall be based upon the information provided by the submitted Application forms, and team and player history.

Rule 22. Under 19 Open Division.

The MSPSP Board of Directors at its sole discretion may elect to form a U-19 Open Division. Teams applying for entry in this division are allowed to roster players attending high school full time up to and including the U19 age group. No other entry qualifications shall apply to this division except those referring to affiliation.