

SOCAL Soccer League

Handbook



2022-2023 Season



A US Club Soccer Sanctioned League

SOCAL Mission

SOCAL was created to allow Clubs to do what is in the best interest of their players. With a focus on developing players and providing multi-faceted programming, SOCAL has grown to be the leading youth sports soccer program in Southern California

SOCAL Core Values

Guided by our Founding Philosophy and Core Values, SOCAL's purpose is to set the highest standards for soccer Clubs to develop players to their fullest potential – physically, emotionally, and ethically through:

Collaboration

We collaborate with our soccer community to make wise decisions.

Joy

We celebrate soccer and take fun seriously!

Impact

We make a meaningful difference.

Integrity

We strive to do the right thing.

Agility

We move quickly.

Competition

We believe that healthy competition is essential to progress.

Education

We are committed to learning and development.

SOCAL Staff Contacts

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Cris Gilmore	Director of Special Programming	cris@socalsoccerleague.org
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Christine Van Slyke	Customer Experience Manager and League Support	christine@socalsoccerleague.org
Melika Pirodan	Social Media, Marketing and League Support	melika@socalsoccerleague.org

SOCAL Club Membership

Membership in SOCAL is considered and reviewed by application. Applications for new member Clubs begin January 15th of each year and closes February 28th of each calendar year. All member Clubs must meet our criteria of membership as outlined in the application and be accepting of our rules, policies, and procedures. Our competitions are governed by regulations approved by the Technical Committee and our membership and are written in this handbook. The Technical Committee shall rule on all disputes and issues pertaining to SOCAL competitions. The Technical Committee may overrule stated rules, policies, or procedures in this handbook if it is determined to be for the good of the game. Additionally, all participants in SOCAL events are members of US Club Soccer and therefore must adhere fully and faithfully, both to the letter and the spirit, to its stated bylaws, rules, and policies.

When SOCAL's rules and policies are in direct conflict with the rules of another League or governing body, SOCAL may be restricted from implementing certain rules. However, our Code of Ethics must be adhered to at all times.

New one-time Membership Club League Fee \$3,500.00

Criteria for Consideration into SOCAL Includes:

Clubs must identify a minimum of 5 teams to participate in the SOCAL.

Clubs must have an established and identifiable Director of Coaching.

Clubs must have a Board of Directors and a specified Club Administrator.

Clubs must have sufficient home fields to accommodate all teams within the Club.

Clubs must have a player development program in place and be willing to support the platform of development that SOCAL is based on.

Geographical location of the Club applying will be considered.

Home Field Requirement

Clubs should have at least one game-quality Field (5-time slots) per eight teams. In the event of a complaint about the quality of a Field, the appropriate League Staff shall determine if a Field is game quality. All new Venues must be added to [GotSport](#) by July 15th.

Field Requirements

Fields shall conform to FIFA (Law 1) and be adjusted to an age group. The home Club is responsible for marking and setup of the field. All fields must be properly marked, GOALS MUST be properly anchored down, and have corner flags. GOALS MUST BE PROPERLY ANCHORED DOWN. The suitability of corner flags, goals safely anchored and playability of the field are the sole and final discretion of the Referee under the laws of the game. Be sure to discuss any concerns you may have about the field prior to the start of the game. Once the game begins it will be considered a played game.

Club Requirements

In order for a Club to be considered a member of SOCAL, the following conditions must be satisfied:

1. All teams participating in SOCAL events must belong to a single legal entity, with a single leadership structure, a single financial structure, and a single governance structure.
2. All teams participating in SOCAL events must have a common Club name, logo, and uniform (which should be unique to their Club) and should practice/play games in the same geographical area of operation.
3. All teams participating in SOCAL events must operate under a single technical structure/plan and report to a single Director of Coaching.
4. All players participating in SOCAL events must be registered under a single US Club Soccer sanctioned Club.
5. All Clubs participating in SOCAL must meet the minimum of 5-teams playing in the same geographical area, playing on the same size field.
6. All Clubs participating in SOCAL must have field availability on Saturday's and Sunday's for home games.
7. All teams within the member Club MUST wear the Club uniform. Teams may not wear uniforms from other Clubs.

Required Club Contacts

Each Club's GotSport account must be kept up to date with the proper contact information. Please keep in mind that this is the primary method by which SOCAL communicates with your Club. Failing to have the proper contact information may result in your Club missing vital League communication. Each Club shall maintain the following Club contacts with a current email address:

1. Club Administrator
2. Coaching/Technical Director/DOC AND/OR Executive Director
3. Registrar
4. President
5. Field Scheduler
6. Treasurer

Code of Ethics

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

For All Members

- A. Know, respect, and follow the letter and spirit of the [Laws of the Game](#).
- B. Treat others with respect and courtesy.
- C. Adhere to the rules and policies of SOCAL, [US Club Soccer](#), and [US Soccer](#).
- D. Recognize the rights, dignity, and worth of all – regardless of gender, ability, cultural background, or religion.

For Clubs

- A. Require sportsmanlike conduct at all times.
- B. Address issues with other Clubs in a professional and timely manner.
- C. Ensure that all Adults and players in your Club are familiar with the rules and expectations of SOCAL.
- D. Respect the Facilities used by other Clubs.
- E. Actively uphold the Player Transfer Policy.

For Coaches

- A. Place your Player's physical, mental, and emotional development and well-being ahead of all else.
- B. Continuously seek education on sound Coaching techniques.
- C. Model and teach good sporting behavior.

For players

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

Zero Tolerance Abuse Policy

All PARENTS/SPECTATORS must follow the SOCAL League Parent Code of Conduct.

All COACHES must follow the SOCAL League Code of Conduct.

If a PARENT/SPECTATOR is sent-off from a game, the parent will serve a minimum 3-game suspension to be enforced by the Club, team manager and team coach. A suspended parent that comes to a game during their suspension will result in the game being forfeited and the coach and manager being suspended from the next 3-games.

If there is a second incident of a PARENT/SPECTATOR send-off from the same team, the team will be placed on probation for the remainder of the season (including State Cup). A third incident will result in the team being dropped from the League

If a COACH is sent-off from a game, the coach will serve a minimum 3-game suspension from coaching ANY TEAM IN THE Club that participates in the SOCAL League. A second coach send-off for the same coach will result in a 1-month suspension from coaching ANY team in the Club

Referee abuse by a PLAYER will carry a 6-game, minimum suspension

Referee abuse by a COACH will carry a 1-season, minimum suspension from coaching ANY team in SOCAL

Referee abuse by a PARENT/SPECTATOR will result in the player of the offending parent/spectator being listed as ineligible for the remainder of the season from all games in SOCAL

Issues involving parents from opposite teams that results in the game being stopped before it's completed will result in the game being a double forfeit and the next scheduled game will also be forfeited for each team, a \$500 fine charged to each Club and both teams will be placed on probation for the remainder of the season. Any further issues and the team will be dropped from the League

PARENTS/SPECTATORS that verbally or physically assault any venue staff or SOCAL staff at any SOCAL event will have their player banned from participating in the League for the remainder of the season (including State Cup)

ANY PERSON who touches, confronts, chases, bullies, follows, cusses at, threatens, waits for, tries to fight, attacks or assaults a referee will be banned FOR LIFE from the SOCAL League and will be turned over to US Club Soccer for further disciplinary actions.

SOCAL Soccer League Parent Code of Conduct

FOLLOW THE GOLDEN RULE: Always treat others (coaches, parents, officials, and players) the same way that you would want you and your child to be treated. Set the example by showing respect, dignity, and total sportsmanship at all times. Avoid profanity, especially when players or younger family members of players are present on the sidelines or at designated team events.

ACT YOUR AGE: Youth soccer is for the kids. If you find yourself becoming too emotionally involved in what's happening on the field, take a step back, walk away and relax. Remember, your childhood is over. Give the players the freedom to enjoy themselves without pressure.

BE SEEN, NOT HEARD: Nothing is better for a player than having their parents on hand to watch them play. And nothing is worse for a player than hearing a parent booing, taunting, screaming or making comments at, or about, players, coaches, fans or officials (that includes your own team as well as your opponent). Offer applause and cheers of encouragement for both teams following a good play or a great effort, otherwise keep quiet.

MOTIVATE THROUGH CONFIDENCE: Try and identify a positive from every game or practice to help build confidence. A player's sense of achievement is the greatest motivator.

DON'T QUESTION AN OFFICIAL'S CALL: You may not agree with a call, but it's not your job (or the players or coaches either) to officiate the game. Never should an official's call be argued by a spectator. Accept the call and move on, while staying positive. **PUT WINNING AND LOSING IN PERSPECTIVE:** Games have winners and losers. Keep reminding your player about this reality and the need to deal with both outcomes. Players should avoid getting too cocky when they win and too upset when they lose. Overcoming adversity is required in life and in sports, so focus on how your player can respond to adversity instead of complaining. Attempt to relieve the pressure of competition, not increase it.

BE A ROLE MODEL FOR YOUR PLAYER AND FOR THOSE AROUND YOU: Lead by setting a positive example in a challenging situation. Players need more positive examples than criticism or negative behavior.

CHAIN OF COMMUNICATION: Parents shall not email the League. All communication shall go through Club Administration. Any communication from a parent directly to the League will go unanswered.

WE ARE NOT REFEREES: We recognize many of the referees are young and learning to referee. We agree to support their learning efforts as we do youth players. We also agree not to address any referee, no matter age, gender or level of experience, in any way. We understand that should we want to become a referee there is a pathway of education to explore in order to become certified.

SOCIAL MEDIA: We agree to not criticize or make any negative comment on or through social media or online regarding an opposing team, player, referee, staff member or the soccer community in general. We understand there are channels for feedback and communication with SOCAL and will use these channels to communicate.

ALCOHOL IS NOT FOR YOUTH SOCCER GAMES: We understand that there is no alcohol allowed at the soccer fields. Nor will drunk and disorderly behavior be tolerated. Anyone caught with alcohol will be banned from SOCAL.

Fines

The SOCAL League Office may impose the following fines:

1. A team drops out of the League after final brackets are posted July 1 - July 15: \$500
2. A team drops out from July 15th - August 15th: \$1000
3. A team drops out after August 16th – start of League play: \$2000
4. A team drops out once the season starts: \$2000 plus any applicable referee fees and forfeit fees through the 2 weeks of games after the team drops.
5. Playing Illegal players - \$500 per instance (non-US Club Soccer registered players)
6. No-show/Forfeit: \$250 plus Referee Fees for the first no-show/forfeit and \$500 plus Referee Fees for all no-shows/forfeits after the first offense.
7. Any team that does not complete payment within 60 days will be subject to a late fee of 15%

All fines collected by SOCAL will be added to the travel fund for teams qualifying for national events via SOCAL competitions, after the deduction of Referee fees or Field Rental Costs.

All fines and fees due to SOCAL Soccer League will be invoiced in GotSport and the credit card on file will be processed net 30 days. [How to Pay Invoice- GotSport](#)

League-to-Club Communication

Communication will come from League Staff to Club Officials and/or Team Contacts. Please make sure all contact information for the appropriate required officials are updated in the GotSport system.

All communication to any SOCAL Staff member regarding a game MUST include the Game # in the subject line of the email. Emails to SOCAL staff from parents, managers or coaches will not be replied to and Clubs should instruct their members and staff that all communications must come to designated Club Officials for review and, if necessary, the Club Official may reach out to a SOCAL staff member for assistance.

2022 SOCAL Team Fall League Applications

Teams from new and returning SOCAL Clubs, may begin the application process on March 15th. Team applications will be accepted through June 1st. After that date, no teams may be added without special consideration from the Technical Committee.

A team is only considered for approval if the team fee is received. Each participating SOCAL Club will submit payment in GotSport via credit card or one Club check. Checks must be postmarked by June 1st.

Non-High School Age teams will play 12 league games.
High School Age teams will play 10 league games.

SOCAL Competition Rules

Team Management

In order to compete in SOCAL events, each team must have at least one team manager or coach whose duties may include, but are not limited to: printing Match Report and providing them to the referees, referee payments, travel arrangements, reporting of scores, and communication with appropriate Club officials. All team managers/coaches must have access to a current email address that is checked on a daily basis and a telephone number connected to a 24-hour answering system during the season.

Coach, Manager and Club Staff Registration and Requirements

All Club staff including Coaches, Managers and Staff must all complete the US Club requirements and SOCAL Requirements in GotSport. All staff must be registered with US Club Soccer each year.

[How to Add Coach or Manager to Team](#)

US Club Soccer Staff Requirements

[US Club Background Check](#)

[Annual SafeSport](#)

[Submit Disqualification-Suspension Review](#)

SOCAL Requirements

Sudden Cardiac Arrest

[Heads Up - Concussion Training](#)

SOCAL Coaching License - Coaches Only

Player Registration

players shall be registered through GotSport according to [US Club Soccer](#) rules.

US Club Soccer Player Passcard/Match Report

All players and Coaches must present their US Club Soccer player passcards to the Referee prior to the match. If the individual picture is not on the ID card and the card is not laminated, the individual will not be eligible for the match. Photos of player or coach cards are acceptable. players may only play for one Club, during any SOCAL match. [How to register and pay GotSport.](#)

Only players who are listed on the official GotSport/US Club Game Report will be eligible to play in SOCAL matches. Club passed players may be handwritten or entered in GotSport as a Club Pass Player on the Game Report.

Players turning 18 within the calendar year will be required to take a [SafeSport](#) course.

Forgotten US Club Soccer Player Passcard

If a team forgets their US Club Player passes for a SOCAL game the game can begin and can continue play if the player passcards are at the game by half-time. GotSport Digital or photos of cards will be accepted. All managers and coaches are able to access [Virtual ID's in GotSport.](#)

Guest players

No guest players (players with a Player Pass from another Club or League) are allowed to play in SOCAL competitions. Guest players are not the same as Club Passed players.

Playing Rules

All games under League jurisdiction shall be played according to the rules and regulations recognized by the SOCAL Soccer League which shall be the same rules set by FIFA/U.S. Soccer (USSF) except for those exceptions authorized by FIFA or USSF.

All decisions made by SOCAL Discipline Committee and SOCAL League Administration are final.

SOCAL Soccer League Guideline Matrix

	U8-U10 (2012-2015)	U11 (2012)	U12 (2011)	U13-U14 (2010/2009)	U15-U16 (2007/2008)	U17-U19 (2005/2006)
Field Size (yds)	55/65 L 35/45 W	70/80 L 45/55 W	70/80 L 45/55 W	100/120 L 55/80 W	100/120 L 55/80 W	100/120 L 55/80 W
# of players	7v7	9v9	9v9	11v11	11v11	11v11
Minimum # of players	5	6	6	7	7	7
Roster Limits	12	16	16	26	26	26
# of players allowed to play each game	12	16	16	18	18	18
Goalkeeper	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Playing Time	2x30	2x30	2x30	2x35	2x40	2x45

Half-Time	10 mins	10 mins	10 mins	10 mins	10 mins	10 mins
Ball Size	4	4	4	5	5	5
Goal Size (ft)	6.5x18.5- 7x21	6.5x18.5- 7x21	6.5x18.5- 7x21	8x24	8x24	8x24
Offside	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Substitutions	Unlimited - Flights 1 - 4 on own possession or if other team subs.					
NPL Substitutions	3 moments per half. Re-entry allowed. Half-time does not count as a moment					
Fouls (free kicks)	Indirect & Direct Free Kicks					
Free Kick clearance	8 yd	8 yd	8 yd	10 yd	10 yd	10 yd
Throw-in	Normal	Normal	Normal	Normal	Normal	Normal
Penalty Kicks	Yes (mark at 10 yds)	Yes (mark at 10 yds)	Yes (mark at 10 yds)	Yes (mark at 12 yds)	Yes (mark at 12 yds)	Yes (mark at 12 yds)
Penalty Area (yds)	12x24	14x36	14x36	18 x 44	18 x 44	18 x 44
Goal Area (yards)	4x8	5x16	5x16	6 x 20	6 x 20	6 x 20
Heading	NO As per the Laws of the Game		YES As per the Laws of the Game			
Build-Out Line	Yes	None				

[**LINK TO GAME DAY INSTRUCTIONS**](#)

Eligibility

No players may play for more than one team within a level of play in the NPL in their own age group. Players may club pass "up" between NPL teams outside of their age group and may play no more than 2 games per day. No more than 2 players and 1 goalkeeper (who must play in goal) can club pass to another NPL team from the same club OR to Flight 1. NPL players may NOT club pass to teams in Flight 2-4.

For 11v11 games: Only 18 players may be dressed for a match. The 18 players must be on the official Match Report given to the match official and opposing team before the start of the game. Any players listed on the roster that will not play must have a line through their names on the Match Report. Players not playing may not be in uniform.

For 9v9 games: Only 16 players may be dressed for the match.

For 7v7 games: Only 12 players may be dressed for the match.

ALL DECISIONS MADE BY THE SOCAL ADMINISTRATION AND COMMITTEES ARE FINAL!

Club Pass Rule - PLAYER CLUB PASS LIMITS

Limits for the amount of players that can Club Pass are as follows:

7v7 and 9v9 games – limit 4 players per game

11v11 games – limit 8 players per game (non-NPL games)

Club pass players must be handwritten in on Match Report or added to the team as Club Pass Player in [GotSport](#).

Club Pass Rule - PLAYER CLUB PASS LIMITS (SAN DIEGO ONLY)

Limits for the amount of players that can Club Pass are as follows:

7v7 and 9v9 games – limit 3 players per game

11v11 games – limit 4 players per game (non-NPL games)

Club pass players must be handwritten in on Match Report or added to the team as Club Pass Player in [GotSport](#).

NEW FOR 2022/2023:

****NO players FROM Leagues OUTSIDE OF SOCAL MAY CLUB PASS TO SOCAL TEAMS**

REGARDLESS OF THE League THEY ARE PLAYING IN. All players participating in SOCAL games MUST have US Club SOCCER PLAYER CARDS indicating the player participates in the SOCAL League. ECNL/ECRL player cards are no longer valid in the SOCAL League.

Club Pass Rule - PLAYER MOVEMENT BETWEEN TEAMS

1. Players may play no more than 2 games per day but the player can not play in the same age group, regardless of the flight that their main team plays in. Players can play in older age groups but not younger age groups.
2. Players can Club pass either upward or downward between Flights 1, 2, 3 and 4.
3. Players can Club pass upward to Flight 1 or NPL.
4. NPL players can ONLY Club pass to Flight 1 teams. Limits of Club passing for NPL players is 2 field players + 1 goalkeeper that MUST play in goal (not on the field).
5. NPL players may NOT Club pass to Flight 2, 3 or 4 teams.

Illegal Player/Falsification of Documents

A team shall forfeit each and every game of the team in which:

1. An unregistered player played with the Club in the game.
2. A player was improperly entered on the team's roster.
3. Any infraction of Club pass rules.
4. A player currently serving a suspension or injury game/s that participates in a game and has not been released by the League.

5. Any team using, or attempting to use, an illegal Player shall forfeit the game, the Coach of the team using the illegal Player will be suspended from all SOCAL competitions for a minimum of 3-games.

Falsification of records, documents, player identification passes, or in any other matters or manner, shall be grounds for immediate suspension from further participation in the SOCAL Soccer League with any team or Club and in addition can be subject to a Trial Board hearing.

Playing Illegal players - \$500 per instance (non-US Club Soccer registered players)

Play-Up Guidelines

SOCAL does not allow team to play-up in age with the exception of high school age teams which meet the following criteria:

1. The team is the current State Cup Champion and US Club NATIONALS OR the team is the US Club NPL CHAMPION within their own age group.
2. Individual players are always encouraged to play up. US Club Soccer permits players to play up 5 years.
3. 2022-2023 Season - U12(2011) teams are allowed to play in the U13(2010) age group in order to play in the 11 v 11 format.

Match Officials

Match officials must have a current year USSF licensed Referees. No match officials, other than Club linesmen, may have family members in the game they are working. Club linesmen may only signal when the ball has left the Field of play, they may not call offsides or fouls.

If a referee is not present within the 15 minute grace period for a scheduled game, the game will be rescheduled. The coach or manager of the home team must contact their club to notify them and the club administrator will contact Blake George to reschedule the game. 7 v 7 games may be played with a coach facilitating the game.

Protests

Protests regarding the match conditions (i.e. Field condition, etc.) must be made prior to the start of the match and be clearly written on the official with the center referee. Protests regarding the use of illegal players may be made prior to or following the match and be clearly written on the match report.

Referee decisions cannot be protested. This includes send-offs for players, coaches or spectators.

Videos of games will not be reviewed to support protests or objections.

Point System

All SOCAL League games shall operate under the following point system.

- 3 points for a win
- 1 point for a tie
- 0 points for a loss.

League Standings

No scores or standings in the 7v7 divisions.

Scores are posted but no standings kept in the 9v9 divisions.

Scores and standings are posted in all 11v11 divisions.

SOCAL has promotion and relegation ONLY between Discovery NPL and Flight 1.

Medals are awarded to 1st place winners in all 11v11 brackets only.

Game Scoring

Game Scores must be entered in [GotSport](#) by the WINNING Team within 48 hours after the game.

If the game ends in a tie then the HOME Team must enter the score.

NPL Scoring: Winning Team must enter the score within 24 hours after the game.

If scores are not posted in GotSport by the WINNING team after the required time, the losing team may enter the score.

9 v 9 Team may not post a score above an 8-goal differential (ex. 9-1, 10-2, 11-3). Any score posted with more than an 8-goal differential will be changed to SOCAL staff.

Forfeits

Forfeits will be scored 0-1 against the forfeiting team.

Ties

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

Tie Breakers

Final league standings are based on PPG (Points per game played). If teams are tied at the end of league play, the following will be used as tiebreakers:

1. "Head to Head" results
2. Goal Differential
3. Goals for
4. Goals against
5. Most shutouts
7. Lowest Misconduct points

If more than two teams are tied, the tie-breaking process (1. Head to Head tiebreakers not used if more than two teams are tied) will be used until a winner is determined. The tie-breaking procedure does not revert to previous criteria if one team is eliminated.

All standings in 11v11 divisions are based on an average of Points Per Game (PPG) to decide standings.

Incomplete Games/Abandoned Games

In the event that a game cannot be completed, the game will stand if at least half of the game was played; provided, however, that if any team is directly responsible for the termination of the game, no matter how much of the match remains, due to poor sportsmanship towards a Referee, opposing fans, or opposing players, the team will be required to forfeit the match. This could also lead to other sanctions set forth by SOCAL and/or US Club SOCCER. If there is no result, and the match is suspended prior to the expiration of one half the game, SOCAL will make a determination on the results of the game based on a USSF Supplemental Report submitted by the referee of the game.

The referee may abandon a match if:

1. There are not enough players to meet the requirements of the Law of the competition;*
2. A team is a no-show after the 15 minute grace period;*
3. The field or any of its equipment does not meet the requirement of the Laws and/or is otherwise deemed unsafe by the referee.

*If an away team causes the match to be abandoned, the referee must notify his/her assignor and the referee association will invoice SOCAL for payment. SOCAL will invoice the Club of the forfeiting team.

The referee may terminate a match for:

1. Reasons of safety such as bad weather or darkness;
2. Any serious infringement of the Laws;
3. Interference by spectators.

Terminated games before the commencement of the second half may be replayed in their entirety. Terminated games terminated during the second half may be considered complete. Only the SOCAL League, not the referee, has the authority to declare a winner, a forfeit, or a replay of the match in its entirety. SOCAL Soccer reserves the right to be flexible in decisions regarding terminated matches. The referee must report fully on the events.

Abandoned or terminated games may be ruled a forfeit when the actions of that team's players, coaches or spectators is the cause for the abandonment or termination of the game. All decisions of SOCAL Soccer are final.

Heading Game Rule

For U11 and below, when a Player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred. If a Player does not deliberately head the ball, then play should continue.

This rule shall apply to the age groups of U11 and below. Players who are playing up will play according to the rules of the age group in which they are playing. It is the Club's responsibility to understand the effects of this rule on players playing up.

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

In accordance with the US Club Soccer return to play guidelines, any Player removed from the Field for a suspected head injury or SCA (sudden cardiac arrest) will not be allowed to return to the Field of play unless cleared by a Licensed Healthcare Provider, defined by CA law AB-379 as an individual who is trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and is acting within the scope of the provider's practice for evaluation and management of concussions or other head injuries and/or an individual who is trained in the evaluation and management of cardiac conditions and is acting within the scope of that provider's practice for evaluation and management of sudden cardiac arrest, fainting, and shortness of breath.

Assembly Bill No. 2007

California passed Assembly Bill No. 2007 which requires a school district, charter school, private school, or youth sports organizations if it offers an athletic program, to immediately remove an athlete from an athletic activity for the remainder of the day if the athlete is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury, and prohibits the athlete from returning to the athletic activity until the athlete is evaluated by a licensed health care provider, trained in the management of concussions, and acting within the scope of his or her practice, and the athlete receives written clearance from the licensed health care provider to return to the athletic activity. The law also requires, on a yearly basis, a concussion and head injury information sheet to be signed and returned by the athlete and athlete's parent or guardian before the athlete's initiating practice or competition.

All suspected head injuries must be reported on game day in [GotSport Scoring](#) and SOCAL Soccer League must be notified within 24 hours of injury. All reports must be sent to Christine Van Slyke at christine@socalsoccerLeague.org

Substitutions

As per FIFA guidelines, unlimited substitutions are allowed in all age groups, Flights 1, 2, 3 and 4 as follows (not including Discovery NPL):

- At any stoppage on your own possession.
- If the other team subs on their possession (except for Discovery NPL - see Section 4.2). However, teams may substitute only with the Referee's permission. Substitutes must wait at the halfway line (off of the Field of play) until the Field Player has left the Field of play and/or the Referee has indicated the substitute may enter the Field of play.
- Substitutions by either team are allowed at any stoppage of play with the permission of the Referee.

Substitutions - Discovery NPL

- 3 moments, per half, for substitutions. Half-time does not count as a moment. Re-entry is allowed per half at the moments used by the coach. Subbing on the moment of an opposition, still counts towards a team's 3 moments.
- In accordance with the new USSF Head Injury guidelines, a substitution for a suspected head injury will not count against re-entry rules.

Spectator Seating

NEW for 2022/23 League Play:

ALL SPECTATORS FROM A TEAM will now sit on the same side of the field as their team.

Spectators will no longer sit on opposite sides of the field from their team for League play.

Coaches are responsible for the spectators on their team.

Spectators are not to commingle with spectators from the opposing team.

Personnel on the Bench

A maximum of 3 team officials are allowed in each team's technical area. Team officials must have a current US Club passcard from the Club in which they are coaching in order to sit in the technical area.

A coach must have a minimum Grassroots license to coach a game in SOCAL.

A manager with a current US Club passcard from the Club in which they are may cover for a coach in an emergency situation.

Field Rules

- NO animals of any kind are allowed on the sideline at any SOCAL game. Check the venue you are playing at to confirm if pets are allowed at the venue. Regardless, THEY ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BE ON THE SIDELINES or BEHIND THE GOALS or in close proximity to the field of play to protect the players safety as well as the spectator's safety.
- NO artificial noise makers such as drums, air horns, drones etc. are allowed.
- No Alcohol
- No Illegal Drugs

Parking Fee will apply at Silverlakes, SoCal Sports Complex, Galway Downs, Surf Cup Sports Park. All of these venues charge \$12.00 per car and \$25/RV. Re-entry on the same day is allowed with receipt.

Equipment

Player Uniforms

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

- If there is a conflict in the uniform color, the away team shall change uniforms.
- Player numbers must be affixed to the back of the uniform shirt. Each Player on a team shall wear a unique number.

Game Ball

The home team is the team listed first on the official schedule. The home team will furnish three game balls.

Safety

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

Casts - No orthopedic (hard) casts, air splints, or metal splints may be worn. Players will be allowed to play in a soft cast at the discretion of the Referee.

Long Finger Nails - exceptionally long finger nails may be considered dangerous and whether or not a player may play with them is at the discretion of the referee.

Jewelry - Absolutely no jewelry, including rings, chains, watches, jewelry, hair clips, bobby pins, earrings, bracelets, rubber bracelets, or excessively long fingernails may be worn while participating in any SOCAL games. Only Medical Alert Warning Bracelets may be worn and shall be taped to secure them to the Player's body. Earrings and other piercings that cannot be taped must be removed.

Shin Guards - All players are required to use shin guards at all times. They must be worn properly and be professionally manufactured and unaltered. Socks must completely cover shin guards.

Braces - (e.g. knee, elbow) - It is strongly recommended for the safety of the player. Braces are allowed as long as the Referee decides that the brace will not or cannot hurt the Player wearing the brace or any other Player. All metal, metal-like, or plastic brace supports are to be properly covered for the duration of the match. Elastic-type supports without any metal, carbon fiber, hard plastic, or like devices are permitted provided the Referee does not deem the support to be potentially harmful to other players.

Eyeglasses - players who must wear eyeglasses are encouraged to wear sports goggles. Lenses must be unbreakable and frames must be unbreakable plastic or sturdy metal at referee discretion.

League Discipline

Violation of League Rules

The SOCAL Discipline Committee and the SOCAL League Administration shall have the authority to suspend, fine, disqualify or otherwise impose sanctions on players, team officials, or competing Clubs for violating SOCAL Rules, Policies & Code of Ethics, or for any action or conduct not in the best interest of soccer or the SOCAL Soccer League. Any breach of SOCAL Rules outlined in this Handbook should be reported to michelle@socalsoccerleague.org who will then initiate an investigation into the alleged breach. Any breach of SOCAL Rules in the Discovery NPL Division should be reported to NPL Commissioner, Blake George blake@socalsoccerleague.org. All reports of violations may only be reported by a Club's Director of Coaching or President. All decisions made by SOCAL Discipline Committee and SOCAL League Administration are final.

Administrator Red Cards/Forfeits

If there is no properly licensed coach affiliated with the Club present during the entire game, the manager may finish coaching the game AS LONG AS the manager has a proper US Club SOCCER staff card. If the manager does NOT have a US Club SOCCER staff card then the game will be considered a forfeit. All staff must have a current Coach US Club Soccer Passcard. Any coach from the team's Club may continue the game if the coach has a valid staff card to present to the referee with that Club.

If the coach is sent off and no other coach affiliated with the Club is available to continue as coach, the referee will terminate the match (see Emergency Coach below). Any coach sent off must be out of sight and sound prior to, during and after the game. **Emergency Coach:** In emergency situations, anyone associated with the Club and has the appropriate staff card may coach the game and a current US Club passcard with the same Club.

Penalty For Coach's Expulsion (Send Off) and/or Falsifying Documents

If a coach is sent off for irresponsible behavior he/she is unable to coach any team in their Club for 3 games after the send-off. The game in which the coach is sent-off is not included in the suspension.

Red Card Reporting Process

In any game where a Red Card is issued, the Referee must complete a USSF Supplemental Report within 24 hours and submit it via email to blake@socalsoccerleague.org and michelle@socalsoccerleague.org

Both Home and Away Coaches or Managers MUST report Red Cards in GotSport within 24 hours. Any Coach/Manager/Spectator Send Off MUST be reported by Home and Away Coach or Manager within 24 hours of game in GotSport.

Suspensions

- The game in which a player, coach or parent is sent-off does not count in the suspension.

- Any Player used during a suspension will be considered an illegal Player and the team, Coach and Club will be punished accordingly.
- Players can not play for any SOCAL team while serving their suspension.
- Red cards do not carry over between League games and State Cup unless the suspension involves Referee Abuse.

It is the team's and/or Club's responsibility to ensure their Red Carded Player/Coach/Spectator serves the applied game suspension(s). It is also their responsibility to ensure that their Player/Coach/Spectator serves any additional suspension determined by the Discipline committee. There shall be two types of suspensions:

The Player/Coach/Spectator shall serve the suspension with the team with whom the violation occurred. players may not compete for another team in their Club until their suspension is served in full.

All decisions made by SOCAL Discipline Committee are final.

End of Year Red Card Carryovers

It is very important that your players and coaches know that if they receive a red card at the end of the season and they have NOT served their suspension it will be carried over to the following year. If the player or coach switches Clubs the suspensions will follow them. Suspensions MUST be served in the SOCAL Spring or Fall season in which the offense occurred. SOCAL State Cup games do NOT COUNT as serving the suspension. End of Year Carryovers will not prohibit you from playing in other tournaments including SOCAL State Cup unless suspended by US Club Soccer also.

Yellow and Red Card Offenses

Card Codes for Reporting Purposes

Cautionable Offenses or Yellow Cards

- UB – Unsporting Behavior
- DT – Dissent
- PI – Persistent Infringement of Laws
- DR – Delay Restart
- FRD – Fails to Respect Distance
- E – Enter Field Improperly
- L – Leave Field Improperly

Send Off or Red Cards Suspensions

- SFP – Serious Foul Play - 1 Game
- VC – Violent Conduct - 3 Games (will be reviewed for additional suspension)
- S – Spitting - 3 Games (will be reviewed for additional suspension)
- DGH – Denies Goal Opportunity Handling - 1 Game
- DGF -Denies Goal Opportunity Foul - 1 Game
- AL – Abusive/Offensive Language - 1 Game (will be reviewed based on offense)

- 2CT – Second Caution - 1 Game
- IRB – Irresponsible Behavior - Coaches/Managers/Spectators

Coaches - Any coach send-off is 3-games, Club wide. No coaching of any team for 3 games of the team that the red card occurred with. No other team can be coached during the suspension period.

Spectators- Any spectator send-off is a minimum 3 Game suspension

Referee Abuse - By player, coach or spectators will be reviewed for appropriate length of suspension. SEE [ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY](#).

***Coaches, Team Administrators and Spectators can be shown Yellow or Red Cards.**

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1.1 Objective and Scope

1.1.1 To establish a recommended, but not mandatory, set of guidelines for SOCAL Soccer League Trial Boards for uniform enforcement of "Reported"* infractions by use of corrective penalties.

*Reported – defined as:

Caution – yellow card

Ejection – red card

Referee Supplemental Report

Properly submitted and documented letter of information or charge made against any player, coach, administrator or other person by a member or members parent of US Club Soccer.

1.1.2 To eliminate or greatly reduce, the intolerable action, attitudes and activities of some soccer players, coaches, administrators, spectators and others.

1.1.3 To place on notice - The SOCAL Soccer League Membership (i.e. players, coaches, assistant coaches, trainers, team managers, administrators, spectators and all other interested parties) that the infractions outlined in this guideline will no longer be tolerated without corrective action in the form of standardized penalties.

1.1.4 The objective of this guideline will not be realized unless reports of infractions and/or other improper activities from referees, coaches, players, administrators and spectators reach the SOCAL Soccer League.

1.1.5 All red card infractions shall be reported within 24 hours to the appropriate SOCAL Soccer League staff member. Any charge of abuse or assault by a player, coach, parent or spectator against any other player, coach, referee, parent or spectator shall be reported to the SOCAL Soccer League staff, through its President, where it will be forwarded to US Club Soccer for further investigation.

Properly Reported matters shall include the following:

- Supplemental Report must be emailed within the required twenty four (24) hours.
- A letter from the Referee to the SOCAL Soccer League detailing the nature of the offense, emailed within the required Twenty Four (24) hours.

1.2 Players – Class of Infraction:

1.2.1 Technical – Class I

- Swearing (profanity on the field).
- Arguing (beyond dissent) with the Referee or Linesman.
- Harassing or criticizing Referees or Linesmen.
- Yelling at players, coaches or fans.

1.2.2 Physical – Intentional – Class II

- Continued tripping.
- Continued jumping.
- Continued kicking.
- Continued handballs.
- Continued pushing.
- Retaliation to above.
- Other

1.2.3 Physical – Violent (Intentional) – Class III Violent conduct, includes violent trip, violent push, attempting to strike a player during play.

- Spitting at opponent, coach, administrator or spectator.
- Verbal threats not considered as assault.
- Throwing or kicking the ball at an opponent during a stoppage of play or in retaliation.
- Tackles from behind which endanger the safety of an opponent.
- Retaliation "Beyond Defense" of his/her person.
- Assault on any player, coach, referee, administrator or spectator. (To be referred to US Club Soccer). SOCAL Soccer League penalties will apply if SOCAL Soccer League refers the case back to the SOCAL Soccer League for adjudication.

1.2.4 Assault or Abuse – All Assaults and all abuse – Class IV

- Assault or abuse on a player.
- Assault or abuse on a coach.
- Assault or abuse on a referee.
- Assault or abuse on any other persons present.

1.3 Players – Penalties for Infractions:

1.3.1 Class I

- Yellow card: Referee may caution the player.
- Red card: (1st Report) – Referee's removal of player during the reported game – plus Player to sit out the next SOCAL game.
- Red card: (2nd Report) Player to sit out the next two (2) SOCAL games*.
- Red Card: (3rd Report) Player to sit out the next five (5) SOCAL Soccer League games* and Trial Board Hearing to be held. Recommendation to the Trial Board Hearing Committee is a ONE (1) YEAR suspension from date of incident.

Exception for any red card report received after 2nd report: Unusual circumstances may dictate a stronger or lighter penalty to be determined by trial board hearing.

1.3.2 Class II

- Yellow Card: Referee may caution player.
- Red card: (1st Report) – Referee's removal of player during reported game – plus Player to sit out the next SOCAL Soccer League game*.
- Red card: (2nd Report) player to sit out the next three (3) SOCAL Soccer League games*.
- Red card: (3rd Report) Player to sit out the next five (5) SOCAL Soccer League games* and Trial Board Hearing to be held. Recommendation to the Trial Board Hearing Committee is a ONE (1) YEAR suspension from date of incident.

Exception for any red card report received after 2nd report: Unusual circumstances may dictate a stronger or lighter penalty to be determined by trial board hearing.

1.3.3 Class III

- Red card: (1st Report) – Referee's removal of player during reported game – plus Player to sit out the next three (3) SOCAL games*.
- Red Card: (2nd Report) Player to sit out the next five (5) SOCAL games*.
- Red Card: (3rd Report) Player to sit out the remaining League games and will not be eligible for State Cup. Recommendations to the Trial Board Hearing Committee is a ONE (1) YEAR suspension from the date of the most recent incident.

Links to FIFA and US Club Soccer

FIFA AND U.S. SOCCER FEDERATION:

- **FIFA Laws of the Game**
- **U.S. Soccer Federation Bylaws and Policies**

US Club SOCCER BYLAWS AND POLICIES:

- **Bylaws (updated and effective Apr 13, 2022)**
 - **Clean version**
 - **With redlines showing revisions made Apr 13, 2022**
- **Policy Manual (updated Dec 15, 2021; effective Jan 1, 2022)**
 - **Clean version**
 - **With redlines showing revisions made Dec 15, 2021**
 - **Participant Safety/Risk Management Policies (consolidated document pulled from the overall Policy Manual)**

US Club Policy Manual

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