**2017 Erie Soccer League Coed 9v9 Soccer League Procedures, Rules, and Laws of the Game**

Except where other provision in these Laws are made, USSF Laws apply. Each Law is numbered to correspond with the appropriate Law of the Game. Additional note is that the Erie Soccer League is volunteer-run. Common sense is and should be applied to all league matters not directly covered by the laws below. When applicable, the team captains will be included in a vote of common sense when extenuating circumstances apply.

**Law 1 Playing Area**



**Goal Size**

The goals shall be 7 feet high x 21 feet wide.

**Law 2 The Ball**

Normal rules apply. The Erie Soccer League provides 1 match ball for each match.

**Law 3 Number of Players**

Maximum number of players per team, including goalkeeper is 9v9 on the field. The breakdown is eight (8) field players – of which a minimum of three (3) female players are required for the coed division. Should a team not have three female players available, they must “play short”. In order to play or continue playing, there must be at least one (1) female player available, suited, and playing in the match.

A match may not START if either team consists of fewer than six players. The minimum number of players in a team required for a match to CONTINUE is also six. Should a team fall below this, normal rules apply.

Each team must not have a squad greater than 16 players.

Any number of substitutes may be used at any time with the permission of the referee. A player who has been replaced may return to the playing area as a substitute for another player. Subs are permitted “on the fly” providing the exiting player is within a “short distance” of the player entering the field of play.

As best practice, all team members should receive equal playing time where possible.

For all other substitution rules, normal rules apply.

**Law 4 Playing Equipment**

**Players must wear shin guards**. Shin guards must be covered entirely by the socks.

Correct footwear must be worn for the surface of the pitch. Soft or firm ground cleats are strongly suggested on the grass playing fields.

Teams are required to wear the same color jerseys or tshirts as one another. If there is a conflict in colors, the team designated as the home team will be required to change their colors. ALL teams are required to bring an alternate color uniform. All members of a team must match in color. Slight variations in shade will be permitted. However, teams and players must refrain of trying to pass off entirely different colors (wearing RED or WHITE when the team’s color is ORANGE). This will not be permitted and players may be asked to leave the field of play to don the proper color shirt before being permitted to return to the match. There will be no exceptions to this rule.

**Law 5 Referees The Authority of the Referee**

Each match is controlled by 1 match official and two linemen who have full authority to enforce the Laws for 9v9 Football in connection with the match to which they have been appointed.

The powers and duties of the referee are as normal rules apply.

**Law 7 Duration of the Game**

Each game will consist of two 24 minute halves with 1 minutes for halftime. There will be no “added time”.

**Law 8 Start and Restart of Play**

**Procedure**

A kick-off is taken at the centre of the playing area to start the game and after a goal has been scored.

Opponents must be 8 yards away from the ball and in their own half of the field. The ball must be played forward. Otherwise, normal rules apply.

**Law 9 Ball In and Out of Play**

Normal rules apply

**Law 10 Method of Scoring**

Normal rules apply.

**Law 11 Offside**

Offsides does not apply.

**Law 12 Fouls and Misconduct**

We all have to work/go to school in the morning, so use your head and show respect to yourself, your fellow teammates, opponents, league staff, and spectators.

Sliding challenges are not permitted in coed soccer. A player found guilty of making a sliding challenge for the ball shall be shown a yellow card for unsporting behavior.

**Law 13 Free Kicks**

For all free kicks opponents must be 8 yards from the ball. Otherwise, normal rules apply.

**Law 14 Penalty Kicks**

Position of the Ball and the Players:

All players except the defending goalkeeper and kicker must be outside the penalty area and at least 8 yards from the penalty mark. All other normal rules apply.

**Law 15 Throw-in**

Normal rules apply.

**Law 16 Goal Kick**

Normal rules apply.

**Law 17 Corner Kicks**

Normal rules apply.

**Additional Notes & Rules**

All discipline issues covered in the main Erie Soccer League rule set will both carry over and apply to the 9v9 divisions and vice versa. The executive board of the Erie Soccer League reserves the right to refuse or revoke admission of any player or team if they are not in “good standing”.

At the conclusion of the match, the referees shall secure both match balls. The referee will meet with the Field Marshall to communicate the score and the cards awarded for the completed game. The field marshal shall document the information accordingly. Any injuries or “incidents” shall require an additional Erie Soccer League match report that shall be turned in within 48 hours of the end of the match.

**League Regulations**

An ADULT soccer year consists of seasons:

*Winter 2* • *Spring* • *Summer*• *Fall 1* • *Winter 1*

A ***season*** is generally an eight week period of league competition in which 8 games are played.

These playing rules and regulations apply in full for the “outdoor” portion of the playing year.

***League/Division Structure***

Leagues are formed based on the following groups.

***Gender***

• *Co-Ed (Male and Female players on the same team)*

***Competition Level***

• *Recreational (Div 4 and/or 3)* • *Intermediate (Div 2)* • *Competitive (Div 1)*

***Division by Skill/Ability Level***

Each league will contain teams of varying levels of skill and experience; therefore,

Divisions may be formed to group teams by estimated playing ability.

The League Administrator, in conjunction with the Erie Soccer League Executive Board of Directors and Division Commissioners reserve the right to move teams into the proper playing division if it is in the opinion of the collective board that the team is not appropriate for the division in which they registered.

***Gender***

Co-ed (Male/Female) teams are recommended to include a minimum of (4) female players

on their roster. Coed teams must have **at least three female players** on the field. If only one

or two female players ares present at game time she cannot be replaced by a male player.

For all intents and purposes, the goalkeeper is considered “gender neutral” and does not count towards the “three female rule”.

**Adult Coed Roster Guidelines**

*The purpose of the coed roster guidelines is to fairly and more accurately gauge the skill*

*levels of the various coed divisions (1-3). In the spirit of these guidelines, team managers*

*should do their best to register and roster their teams, per game, according to the*

*following guidelines. The EPIC Coed Director reserves the right to move teams up or down divisions*

*based upon team performance and our best judgment of a team’s skill level and overall mentality.*

*Rosters may contain no more than eighteen (18) players. Of which, 16 may suit up for any given match and two players will be considered “reserves”.*

**Division Guidelines:**

**Division 1** (Competitive/Elite) – This division is geared towards the college and high school players, but welcomes those who want to play at a more competitive pace and against very good competition. Players & teams possessing this similar mind-set are encouraged to play in this division. This division plays with 5 male & 3 female field players plus a goalkeeper. This division plays on Tuesday evenings at the Family First Sports Park Small Grass fields and will have one referee per game and two linesmen.  Each team is responsible for paying the referees $20 cash prior to kick-off.

**Division 1 Player Eligibility** - A team's roster is compiled of: any player at least 16 years of age, male or female that wishes to compete at the highest skill level possible.

**Division 2** (Intermediate) - This Division is much more competitive than the Coed Rec Division. However, the overall team skill level is not at the point to compete with teams in the Coed Elite Division. The ideal player is adequately skilled to above-average skill and wants to play at a more competitive pace than the Coed Recreational Division offers. This Division will also be a good place for those who used to play at a high level, but haven't played in a few years and want to ease back into the game and for those who are coming off injury and are not yet able to play at the level they played before injury. This division plays with 5 male & 3 female field players plus a goalkeeper. This division plays on Tuesday evenings at the Family First Sports Park Small Grass fields and will have one referee per game and two linesmen.  Each team is responsible for paying the referees $20 cash prior to kick-off.

**Division 2 Player Eligibility** - A team's roster is compiled of: players at least 18 years of age, no more than two (2) Division 1 male players and two (2) Division 1 female players. The goalkeeper may have played at any divisional level. **Players over the age of thirty (30) are exempt from rostering eligibility** (these players and goalkeepers do not count against the division 1 or 2 player count).

**Division 3** (Recreational) – This division is recreational and is ideally an entry level to organized soccer or for those who haven't played in years and want to restart without having to go "full speed". The ideal player is inexperienced but has at least a basic understanding of the game or has some experience and wants to play for fun, rather than competition. Players who are more skilled in nature that have the mentality of using team play to help elevate the play of others are also welcome in this division. Players and teams in this Division should have the mind-set of playing for fun, playing at a low-competition level and with low aggression. Players with the "just win" mind-set, or those who are going to challenge the referee's every call, will not be a good fit in this Division (See Modified Division). This division plays with 5 male & 3 female field players plus a goalkeeper. This division plays on Tuesday evenings at the Family First Sports Park Small Grass fields and will have one referee per game and two linesmen.  Each team is responsible for paying the referees $20 cash prior to kick-off.

**Division 3 Player Eligibility** - A team's roster is compiled of: players at least 18 years of age no more than one (1) Division 1 male player and two (2) Division 1 females. The goalkeeper may have played at any divisional level.  Players 30 years of age and older and goalkeeper are exempt from divisional eligibility guidelines.

***Rosters/Waivers and Player Eligibility Information***

Team Managers must complete their team’s roster by having each player on their team complete the online membership via League Apps, and roster onto their respective team of each participating season. The League Apps roster will be synched with the official USASA roster by the League Admin. The USASA roster serves as the official roster for playing purposes. All players must be rostered on their registered team **before** they can step on the field of play.

In order to appear on the official USASA roster, the player must provide photo identification and a $25 registration fee. This registration is valid for the entire calendar year.

We emphasize the importance of planning ahead by making sure your roster contains enough players to cover for injuries, vacations, etc. Teams are permitted up to 16 players on the roster. Teams are encouraged to sign up possible emergency substitutes who might be able play if problems arise, even if they don’t plan on playing.

The use of any ineligible or undocumented players in a match will result in the forfeiture of the match, and possibly the suspension of up to one year to the coach and/or Team Manager responsible, and a suspension of up to one year to the offending player. Similar penalties apply to any situation in which a player or coach is found to have supplied the EPIC Coed staff with fraudulent or incorrect information, or has failed to provide EPIC with proper documentation.

An adult player may NOT be registered on more than one team in the same division. Players may not register with more than three teams per season on a given playing night.

Players who are banned or placed in “bad standing” with the Erie Soccer League or any USASA competition are not eligible for this league.

***Eligibility Protests and Inquiries***

Protests regarding the eligibility of an opposing team’s player must be presented to

the EPIC League staff before the end of the match. Play will not be stopped in order to

deal with the protest; it will be handled either before the match, during halftime, or after

the match.

League staff will then investigate the protest and determine disciplinary sanctions if necessary.

In an adult match, league staff will ask the player in question to present valid picture

Identification. If the player fails to demonstrate to the satisfaction of management that

he/she is documented on the team’s official roster; the referee notes this on the back of

the scoresheet along with the player’s name and other relevant details. The player is

expelled from the match. The EPIC board will then determine disciplinary sanctions.

A player who fails to comply with these procedures shall be assumed to be an ineligible

player.

Teams found to field an ineligible player will be fined a minimum of $25. The team is also expected to pay for the player’s USASA registration ($25). Payment of the fine and registration is expected before the team will be permitted to take the field for their next scheduled game.

***Match Results***

Points for match results are awarded as follows:

*• 3 points for a victory*

*• 1 point for a draw*

*• 0 points for a loss*

*• $60 fine is assessed for forfeits in which an opponent does not show up to a game, or fails to provide at least 48 hours’ notice of forfeiture to the EPIC Coed Division Director. Teams that forfeit/no-show are automatically ineligible to win their respective division.*

***Forfeits***

In the event of forfeiture of a match, a score of 3-0 is recorded against the team responsible for forfeiture, and a $60 fine is assessed to the team managers Registration Account.

If a team cannot field the minimum number of players (indicated in Rule 3), after 6 minutes past the start of the clock, the match is declared a ”no-show” forfeit. If both teams “no show,” the official result shall be 0-0. In the event of a “no-show” forfeit, players from teams scheduled for that hour may scrimmage or practice for the remainder of the scheduled time. The referees will be excused from the match.

If a match is abandoned or terminated due to any reason, including a team having fallen below the minimum number of required players, use of illegal players, or misconduct associated with a team, EPIC may, at its discretion, declare the match a forfeit and penalize the guilty team accordingly.

**Determination of League/Division Winner**

In the event that teams in the same league/division finish the season tied on points, their places will be determined by statistical superiority in the following criteria, in this order:

**If exactly two teams are tied in the standings:**

1. Goal Differential (PSD),
2. Goals scored (PS),
3. Goals conceded,
4. Head to head (aggregate head to head score if teams have played each other more than once),
5. If in a playoff division – two five minute halves will be played to break a tie, followed by 3v3 run up penalty kicks, followed by 1v1 until tie is broken.

If three or more teams are tied in the standings:

1. Goal Differential (PSD)
2. Goals Scored (PS)
3. Goals conceded
4. Aggregate score amongst all tied teams (in the standings)
* Note: In the event that item number 4 leaves two teams tied, the process is repeated with the remaining two tied teams using the “two tied teams” format.

**Post-season play**

Division 1&2 leagues will determine their league champion by way of playoffs. For each of these divisions, there will be one “post-season” game per two teams entered. This means that a division with five teams will have two post-season matches. The format for a five team division shall be 1v2 (final), 3v4 (third place match). Divisions containing exactly six teams will experience a 1v4 & 2v3 semi-final, with the two winners meeting in the finals.

Division 3 and below will not contain playoff or post-season games of any sort. The division winner will be determined by the standings as per the above queues.

***Protests of Match Results***

Protests of a match result based on technical issues or on matters of rules and regulations must be reported by the team’s coach to the EPIC Coed Director.

This protest must be submitted by email within 24 hours after the conclusion of the match.

Referee decisions will not be a valid basis on which to protest match results.

***Complaints***

**The team’s captain is the only individual authorized to submit complaints to EPIC staff on behalf of a team regarding the decisions of the match referee or the conduct of the opposing team or facility staff.**

Any questions or complaints must be presented **in writing** by the team’s captain to EPIC staff no later than 24 hours after the conclusion of the match.

If anyone other than the coach (including players, coaches, family or friends of players, and other associated spectators) approaches management with complaints will be directed to submit the complaint through their team’s captain.

Absolutely no complaints *by any individual* may be directed toward referees or staff; such activity may be penalized by expulsion from the facility or league and further disciplinary sanctions to the associated team.

**Disciplinary Procedures**

The Erie Soccer League takes the game of soccer seriously. We aim to provide a safe, fun, yet competitive environment at all our matches. We believe that there should be a mutual level of respect between players, teams, spectators, and officials.

As an organization, we are committed to taking the adult game to the next level in this area. We are committed to identifying opportunities where we as a group can grow and/or better ourselves. An example of such is that all referees have the proper certification and are getting access to proper and appropriate education in addition to getting game experience to apply their education into the real-world game of adult soccer. This is a continuous process.

As players, teammates, opponents, and spectators, we must strive to conduct ourselves in a manner that is appropriate for the game and the league. We should respect our fellow players and teammates, as we’re all sharing in the game that we love. We all deserve better than what we’ve had for the past several years in this area in the Erie, PA Adult Soccer World. Knowing that, each and every player in this league – striving for and deserving “better” automatically deserves respect. Every match official and referee – regardless of whether they get the play “right” or “wrong” in your eyes deserves your respect. They are doing the best they can to keep the game safe, so respect them and respect the game. Also keep in mind, only the team captain and coach should address the referee during play.

Without your fellow players and our officials, we have… well, we have what we’ve had for the past several years in this area and quite frankly, that is not nearly good enough. So please, when you come to an Erie Soccer League match – whether as a player, spectator, or match official – respect one another. Respect the facility, respect the play, respect the vision, respect the game, respect the vision, and respect yourself.

With that in mind, the Erie Soccer League staff will not hesitate to take action on those who do not adhere to what we deem as acceptable and appropriate behavior. For in-game situations, the various ESL Disciplinary Boards meets to address situations that arise. Our disciplinary board may meet to go over a referee report, a captain’s report, identify situations that need to improve by way of additional training, to address player feedback, and we meet to make rulings on red cards.

**Red Cards & How the Process Works**

When a player is sent off, his (or her) name appears in the referee report and his player card is placed under suspension. The player must leave the facility before the match will be permitted to resume. Failure to leave after being asked to leave by an Erie Soccer League staff member can result in additional sanctions, fines, or a telephone call being placed to assist the staff in ensuring that the ejected player complies with the request to leave the grounds.

When the official referee report is filed, the team captain will be notified of the official charge against the player (via the “suspension list”). The team captain and the player will have 72 hours from the completion of the game to respond to the charges and/or ask for an appeal. Any appeal and/or response must be submitted via email to mike@eriesoccer.com. If an appeal is received in the proper timeline, the disciplinary board will convene to hear the appeal and render a decision.

The decision of the disciplinary board will be communicated via email or text message to the team captain. The decision of the disciplinary committee is final and binding. Should you wish to appeal the committee’s ruling, you may do so in writing to the PAWest Adult President along with a non-refundable $150 fee (payable to PAWest Adult).

All fines issued will go into the league prize fund. (Added 21 July 2016 – not a policy change but a policy clarification) All fines must be “approved” or endorsed by the league disciplinary committee. (End 21 July 2016 addition).

Player offences will be tracked across all leagues in the Adult Association and sanctions/fines may accumulate from offences in different leagues. The suggested punishments and fines may be altered by the Executive Board as circumstances warrant.

Any red card involving specifically violent conduct and/or referee abuse as well as anything administrative in nature shall go before the division disciplinary committee.
If a player or team is brought up on charges, the player shall be officially notified in writing by the League Administrator of the charges as well as the possible consequences. The player has 72 hours from date of notification to respond to the charges. Upon response to the charges or 72 hours, the disciplinary board will convene. Two thirds majority must be reached in order to overturn a charge.

A player is cautioned and shown the yellow card if he commits any of the following offences:

• unsporting behavior
• dissent by word or action
• persistent infringement of the Laws of the Game
• delaying the restart of play
• failure to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick, free kick or throw-in
• entering or re-entering the field of play without the referee’s permission
• deliberately leaving the field of play without the referee’s permission

FIGHTING / VIOLENCE WILL NOT BE TOLERATED AT ANY ADULT ASSOCIATION MATCH. THE ADULT ASSOCIATION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO BAR ANY PLAYER OR COACH FROM PARTICIPATING IN ANY OR ALL LEAGUE MATCHES.
PLAYERS SHALL BE SHOWN THE RED CARD AND EJECTED FROM ADULT ASSOCIATION MATCHES FOR THE FOLLOWING (per FIFA law):

• serious foul play
• violent conduct
• spitting at an opponent or any other person
• denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball (this does not apply to a goalkeeper within his own penalty area)
• denying an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player’s goal by an offence punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick
• using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures
• receiving a second caution in the same match
• persistent protests against decisions by the referee and assistant referees
• leaving the field of play without notifying the referee
• extremely unethical (ungentlemanly) conduct
• repeated gamesmanship
• insulting players, team officials or any other person present at the match
• other serious acts of unsporting behavior

PLAYERS EJECTED FOR THE ABOVE REASONS (except violent conduct and spitting) SHALL BE SUSPENDED FOR ONE (1) SUBSEQUENT GAME WEEK (in that division) IN ADDITION TO MISSING ANY REMAINING PORTION OF THEIR MATCH DAY (on the day that the red card offense occurred).

**REPETITION:** (even if it is not the same type of infringement): suspension for at least two match weeks and FINED $50.00

A PLAYER SHALL BE SHOWN THE RED CARD AND EJECTED FROM AN ADULT ASSOCIATION MATCH FOR INSULTING THE REFEREE AND / OR ASSISTANT REFEREE(S) AND SHALL BE SUSPENDED FOR TWO (2) SUBSEQUENT GAME WEEKS AND FINED $25.00

**REPETITION:** suspension for at least four matches and FINED $50.00

A PLAYER SHALL BE SHOWN THE RED CARD AND EJECTED FROM AN ADULT ASSOCIATION MATCH FOR VIOLENT CONDUCT OR SPITTING AGAINST ANOTHER PLAYER, TEAM OFFICIAL OR ANY OTHER PERSON AT THE MATCH AND SHALL BE SUSPENDED FOR FOUR (4) SUBSEQUENT MATCH WEEKS AND FINED $100.00

**REPETITION:** Disciplinary hearing, suspension for at least four match weeks and FINED $200.00

A PLAYER SHALL BE SHOWN THE RED CARD AND EJECTED FROM AN ADULT ASSOCIATION MATCH FOR SERIOUS VIOLENCE AGAINST THE REFEREE AND / OR ASSISTANT REFEREE(S) AND SHALL BE SUSPENDED FOR FOUR (4) GAMES AND FINED $100.00 WHICH MUST BE PAID BY THE PLAYER DIRECTLY TO THE ADULT ASSOCIATION BEFORE THE PLAYER MAY BE RE-INSTATED. (The player pass will not be returned until the fine is paid.)

**REPETITION:** lifelong ban

Protests will be submitted in writing to Adult Vice President with appropriate fee ($150.00) within 7 days of the suspension (U.S. Postal Service postmark shall determine the timeliness of the protest). A copy of the protest must also be submitted to the League Administrator.

Appeals committee guarantees prompt and impartial hearings within 28 days of the appeal

All disciplinary procedures carry on to consecutive League Seasons

Any player receiving two red cards during a league season (Spring, Summer, Fall or Winter), shall not play again in that season (including playoffs) until reviewed and cleared by the Disciplinary Board.

Team managers and captains should make every effort to controls their players and ensure they comply with the rules and referee instructions. Spectators must not interfere with matches, players or officials and teams and their managers must ensure that their spectators in attendance comply or the Executive Board will impose sanctions against the offending team.

**Appeal Procedure**

Players may file an appeal of the disciplinary board’s findings to the appropriate board. For the EPIC coed Division, the first line of appeal is the EPIC coed Divisional Board. The second line of appeal is the ESL Executive Board. For the Men’s Division, the first line of appeal is the ESL Executive board. All appeals at the local level will be heard within 72 hours of receipt.

Further appeal is done by submitting $150 check payable to PA West along with a written appeal. This appeal must be postmarked within 72 hours of exhausting all other appeals. The League Administrator shall be contacted (by the player filing the appeal) by email when and if this appeal process is pursued.

**Divisional Corrective Action Boards**

**Formation** – Each team will designate one player (it can be a team captain but does not “need” to be) as their team’s representative on their division’s Corrective Action Board. The designated members of the disciplinary committee shall elect a chairman. This chairman shall assist the league administrator in convening the disciplinary committee as it becomes necessary. Anytime a red card is issued that involves a monetary fine or that involves an appeal, the disciplinary shall hear the charges and the response by the player. After hearing from both sides of the argument, the committee members shall vote. A two-thirds majority shall be required to overturn a charge. Likewise, a two-thirds majority shall be required to endorse a fine.