

# League Rules

## **General:**

The purpose of the Merced Youth Soccer Adult Leagues is to promote and support adult soccer play in a friendly and family environment in the Merced area. FIFA and USSF rules govern play, except as amended by the modifications below.

It is the intent of Merced United Adult Leagues to:

- Promote the game of soccer in a spirit of teamwork, fair play and sportsmanship.
- Provide coherent competition among area players and soccer teams.
- Develop and foster interest in soccer in the greater Merced area.
- Support youth soccer via donations of any and all extra monies.

## **MODIFICATIONS TO FIFA / IFAB LAWS OF THE GAME**

Law 1: The Field of Play - Games will be played on a standard USSF u12 field; however, Local conditions may mandate use of non-standard or sub-optimal fields.

Law 3: The Players - There will be 8 players on the field, including goalie. Minimum of 5 players to start a game. Carry a minimum of 10 players with no maximum. Unlimited substitutions with previous referee approval.

Law 5: The Referee - A dual referee system will be used.

Law 7: The Duration of the Match - Matches consist of two 30 minute halves, with a five minute halftime. If weather or field conditions mandate, and with the concurrence of both involved teams, matches may be shortened from the normal 30.

### *Co-Ed Modification:*

There is a maximum of 5 males on the field at any time, along with a minimum of 1 male on the field to start the game.

There is a maximum of 5 females on the field at any time, along with a minimum of 1 male on the field to start the game.

Females can dribble up to the opposing penalty box without an opposing male attacking or obstructing/shadowing.

Female goals will count as two goals.

## **ADDITIONAL MODIFICATIONS:**

\* Any sliding is PROHIBITED, except by the goalie in the box. Note that this is not '*slide tackle*', but rather all sliding.

\* From the penalty area: no punts, kicks or throws are allowed past midfield without first touching another player or the ground. Not complying with this rule results in an indirect free kick from the center spot at the half line.

\* Penalty Kicks: PKs will be taken from:

- The penalty mark in coed divisions
- From the top of the penalty in any other divisions

## **FEES:**

Fees shall be 65.00 per player and can be paid in increments of 25-20-20. After week four, any new player is to pay \$40.00 upon signing up.. be it on the fifth game or on the last game of the season. Depending on number of teams that sign up, teams will get six to eight games.

A team shall have at least ten players paid as of week five. If ten players are not paid fully as of week five, then on week six the difference shall be paid before any wristbands are distributed to any player on that team.

**ROSTER:**

The league will keep an active roster on the fields. All players are required to fill out a Adult Player Registration Form once, and show a valid government issued i.d. as proof of age to the league before every game. Unregistered players on a team will be the cause of a forfeit to the team in question and result in a \$50.00 donation to Merced Youth Soccer Association and a penalty of -1 pt. from their standings.

**CROSSOVERS:**

Players are not allowed to play on two teams in the same division/league. Players are allowed to play in different leagues/divisions during the same season as long as they fulfill the age requirements and complete payments for each League. Example: Can play in Mens 8v8 and in Co-Ed 8v8, but not on two teams in Mens 8v8 in the same division.

**YELLOW & RED CARDS:**

A red card issued is expected to carry at least an automatic minimum 1-game suspension. A suspended player may not be reinstated prior to the incident being reviewed by the league's disciplinary review committee (Penalties, Appeals, and Discipline P.A.D)— P.A.D. will confer on any and all red cards on Wednesday nights. Committee decisions are final. A \$25.00 donation to Merced Youth Soccer Association will be levied for all red card violations and transaction must be completed before the player may play again.

Red Card suspension received in any division is also carried over to any other division the player may be concurrently rostered in.

Two red cards in one season may an automatic lifetime disqualifier from playing in Merced Youth Soccer Adult Leagues.

Yellow Cards: Players who receive a yellow card must be immediately substituted. They may be substituted back in after a reasonable cooling-off period and at the referees' discretion.

**SEASONS:**

Adult Leagues will run as many seasons as possible per year with an end of league year playoff the final week of each league season.

**TEAM DIVISION PLACEMENT:**

In the given case that there are 2 divisions in the same age group, the Champion and Finalist of the lower division will be moved up to the upper division and the two teams that end in last place of the upper division will be moved down to the lower division. Adult Leagues reserves the right to change, alter or combine divisions at any time for scheduling or competitive purposes.

**LEAGUES:**

Adult Leagues intends to offer the following leagues: 8v8 for men and/or women and/or coed, 11v11 Co-Ed, 11v11 Men's and/or Women's Open, and 35+ Men's. Other leagues may be established upon verified interest and field availability.

**SCHEDULE CHANGES:**

Once a season schedule is published, no changes will be made unless an unexpected logistical problem arises, or Acts of God. If this is the case, all managers will be notified of the change(s). Weather and field availability permitting, all teams will play their full season of games, plus playoffs.

**START TIMES, MAKEUP GAMES AND CANCELLATIONS:**

Players must be present 30 minutes before the official start of a game for check-in. Referees will allow a ten minute period from the posted start time to field a team. If a match starts late because of player tardiness, time will be removed from each half to trim the game. A match is considered official once the 1st half has been completed. If play must be halted after the start of play, but before the half is complete, the scheduler will make every attempt to reschedule the shortened game. However, if field, weather or other situations preclude timely rescheduling, the game may not be replayed. If this occurs, the score standing will be used as the final score of the game.

**FORFEIT:**

Will result in a \$50 donation to Merced Youth Soccer Association, and loss of 1 point in the league standings.

Failure to have a minimum amount of players show-up will result in a forfeit for that team. The team that wins by default will get the win and the points, with a 3-0 score. If the forfeit was deliberate to affect the score/outcome of standings, the PAD will deal with the situation for a common sense decision.

**PLAYER CONDUCT:**

Players are responsible for fair, sportsmanlike and polite behavior at all times. No fighting will be tolerated. Foul, vile or vulgar language will not be used on the field either toward other players, referees, or in general. Referees are instructed to card offenders. Any fight will result in an immediate Red Card, suspension, fine, and loss of team point(s) to whoever throws the first punch. All other individuals who get involved in a mass confrontation will be also suspended and/or penalized and fined. Games will be called if any non-team members enter the field at any time, with the team the non-team member is part of losing the game.

Referee abuse will not be tolerated. Assault includes the following acts committed upon a referee: hitting, kicking, punching, choking, spitting at, or on, grabbing, stepping on, or running into a referee; the act of kicking or throwing any object at a referee, damaging the referee's uniform or personal property. Referee abuse is also defined as a verbal attack or physical approach that implies or threatens physical harm to a referee or the referee's property or equipment. Verbal threats are remarks that carry the implied or direct threat of physical harm. Threats such as: "I'll get you after the game" or "You won't get out of here in one piece" shall be deemed referee abuse. Commission of any of the preceding acts will carry a 6 month to lifetime banning determined by the Adult Leagues committee—all committee decisions are final.

**REFEREES:**

All decisions made by the referees assigned to matches are final. USSF referees are contracted to referee league games. No appeals will be accepted pertaining to decisions by the referee. No one shall enter the field of play without the referee's express permission except during substitutions.

**REFUNDS:**

There shall be no refunds once paid. The exception to refunds shall be if a league does not start and dissolves.

**CHECK-IN PROCEDURE:**

All players are to check in 30 minutes before their game and provide picture government i.d. before every game. Adult Leagues will verify every player before every game and provide colored bracelet to every player. Teams will have different colored bracelet. Players cannot play without having on assigned colored bracelet.

**UNDERAGE PLAYERS:**

In 35+: players must turn 35 anytime during the current calendar year.

All other divisions:

1. Teams are permitted a maximum of two underage male players on their roster, but the players must:
  - a. Be 17 at the time of play.
  - b. Have parent sign waiver on the registration form in the presence of a league representative.
2. Coed teams are permitted a maximum of five underage female players on their roster, but the players must meet the standards above 1 a. & b.

**UNIFORMS:**

All teams are required to wear matching and numbered uniforms in order to play. Shorts and socks do not necessarily need to be of the same brand name or style but have to be of the same color (or very similar). Clashing colors will not be allowed, such as wearing green instead of red, or orange instead of royal blue. Matching and numbered pinnies are acceptable. A referee shall disallow a player from the field of play until the player is wearing team matching colors. If player refuses to change then that player shall not be allowed to play.

**SCORING/ POINT CALCULATIONS:**

Games played will be awarded points based on the following system:

- Win- 3 points for winning team
- Tie- 1 point for both teams
- Loss- 0 points to the losing team

**SEASON POINT TIE-BREAKERS:**

In case of point ties at the end of the season, the tie will be broken in this order:

1. Goal Differential
2. Head to Head winner
3. Most Goals For
4. Least Goals Against
5. Least amount of red-cards received during the season
6. Coin toss

During semi-finals, teams will go straight to PK's in case of a tie.

During final games, the teams will play (1) ten-minute "golden-goal" overtime half. If there is no winner, teams will go to penalty kicks.

\* If there is any disagreement with regards to the above rules, it will be the Adult Leagues representatives that shall have the final word and responsibility to interpret such rules to the parties affected. The decision is final.