South Jersey Recreational Soccer League
RULES

South Jersey Recreation Soccer League "SJRSL" consists of several local recreational clubs from the area. Clubs who have partnered to form SJRSL include:

Cherry Hill Soccer Club – CHSC
Cherry Hill Football Club - CHFC
Marlton Recreation Council – MRC
Medford Lakes Athletic Association – MLAA
Medford Youth Athletic Association - MSC
Voorhees Soccer Association - VSA
Tabernacle Athletic Association – TAA
Southampton Township Recreation Association - STRA

If player registrations permit, these teams shall be granted the ability to participate in the SJRSL.

U10 (U9/U10):

- Preferred 7v7 format with build-out line
- Will give coaches flexibility to play 8v8 based upon roster size
- Game length 2 x 25-minute halves
- Size 4 game ball

U12 (U11/U12):

- Preferred 9v9 on short-sided field
- Will give the coaches flexibility to play 8v8 based upon roster size
- Game length 2 x 30-minute halves
- Size 4 game ball

U14 (U13/U14):

- Must play 11v11 format on full-sided field
- Game length 2 x 35-minute halves
- Size 5 game ball

The SJRSL REQUIRES each participant to try to register and play in the Township of the player's primary residence, if their town offers a program and a team they are able to play on. If one is not available, they can play for any other town of their choosing. (i.e.: Medford Lakes residents MUST register and play for Medford Lakes, not in/for Medford, Tabernacle, etc.)

If a Township is short player(s) to make up a team at any division, the SJRSL will allow Townships to "combine" players to create a team. Approval from SJRSL will be needed to do so.
The SJRSL is NOT a member of the US Soccer Federation, United States Youth Soccer Association, New Jersey State Youth Soccer Association or any other federation or association. The SJRSL is an independent, non-sanctioned, non-profit league. Rules may vary from travel and/or club leagues.

Each Township/Club listed above is required to provide their own insurance coverage for all their registered players.

No youth athlete shall train or play in an official match without being registered with their appropriate Township or Club. To maintain the integrity of the league, SJRSL does not allow travel players to play at this recreational level. Participating Clubs that do not have this rule **must** get approval from SJRSL to participate.

LEAGUE RULES

IFAB/FIFA 2026-2027 Laws of the Game – Download
shall apply with the following modifications, clarifications and additions.

Law 1 – The Field

1. U10 – Goals shall be no larger than 6'x18' and play on a short-sided field with build-out line.
2. U12 – Goals shall be no larger than 7'x21' and play on a short-sided field
3. U14 – Goals shall be 8'x24' and play on a full-sided field.
4. Players/Coaches will be on one side of the field. Coaches will not cross over the center line or sideline. All spectators shall be on the opposite side of the field, and no person shall be behind the goals or the goal line.
5. Fields must be properly lined.

Law 2 - The Ball – Conforms with FIFA laws with the following exceptions

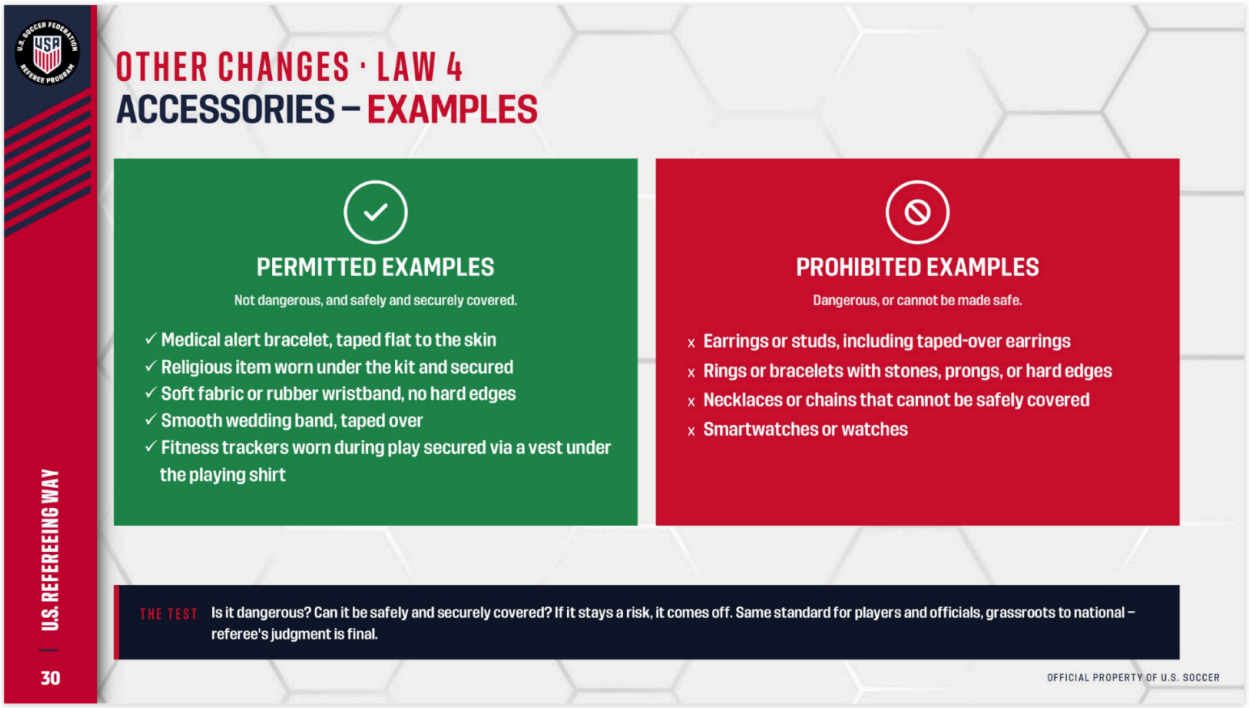
U10 and U12 – Size 4 Ball
U14 – Size 5 Ball

Law 3 – Number of Players

1. Coaches shall ensure that each team member present plays at least half of the match. If a player is being disciplined and will not play at least half of the match, the opposing coach and the referee must be notified before the start of the match. Each Township's In-House Rules and Regulations on Discipline shall prevail.
2. Players may never be disciplined for playing errors or lack of playing skills.
3. Players on the roster must play a minimum 50% of scheduled league matches to participate in end-of-season league tournaments. This will be monitored by each Township/Club individually
4. Players are not eligible to play for other teams or in other divisions.
5. Number of players
    1. U10 teams can start with a minimum of 6 players
    2. U12 teams can start with a minimum of 7 players
    3. U14 teams can start with a minimum of 9 players
    4. If available players arrive after the start, they can be put into the game at the first stoppage of play. Teams will be required to play the match if the above minimum player requirements are met. Mercy Rules are to be strictly adhered to.
6. Roster Sizes (Recommended)
    1. U10 (7v7 format with 10-14 players)
    2. U12 (9v9 format with 12-16 players)
    3. U14 (11v11 format with 14-20 players)
7. Substitutions (all divisions) – **Unlimited** substitutions are permitted, with the referee's permission, at **any stoppage**, provided the substitutes are at the halfway line prepared to enter. The 10 second countdown for substitutions will only be enforced if deliberate time wasting is suspected by the referee. Substitutes are encouraged to enter and exit the field as quickly as possible.
8. Number of Coaches – No more than three (3) coaches are authorized for each team and must be listed on the team roster. Only coaches listed may be with the team during a match.

Law 4 - Player's Equipment

1. Players shall wear a matching team uniform jersey for all matches. The goalkeeper's jersey must be distinctly different in color from all field players from both teams.
2. Each player other than the goalkeeper must have an identification number on their team shirt.
3. If a uniform color conflict occurs, the HOME team must change color, or wear pinnies etc. Goalkeepers must wear a contrasting color to stand out from the other players.
4. Soccer shoes are recommended, and shin guards are required to be worn and covered by the sock.
5. Sweatpants are permitted. No hooded sweatshirts or jackets are permitted to be outside the uniform. No hooded sweatshirts are permitted to be worn under the player jersey.
6. Soft hats and gloves are allowed during cold weather.
7. Some accessories are now permitted under certain conditions. See below.



8. No Player may play with a hard cast on any part of the body, unless the cast is properly padded or is legal sports cast, and is not dangerous in the opinion of the referee.
9. Glasses: No eyeglasses are to be worn, without protective eyewear, as per NJ Law Chapter 306; effective July 1, 2006. This applies to matches and training sessions:

Law 5 & 6 - Referees/Asst Referees

1. The home team shall provide at least one referee for all matches. Preferably 2 referees per match.
2. The home team shall provide a referee(s) at a minimum of 2 years older than the teams playing. (i.e.: U10 matches should have officials at least 13 years of age or older).
3. The Referee shall wear an approved official uniform.

4. A referee may not officiate a match in which any member of his or her immediate family is a team member or a coach, unless both coaches agree to the referee prior to the match.
5. Coaching from the touchline opposite the team bench is NOT permitted. The referee may prohibit coaching from either touch line if a coach is not coaching in a positive constructive manner.
6. It is recommended that U10 matches have referees clarify all calls/fouls, so that players understand the call/foul.
7. If the referee(s) are a no show, the coaches will mutually determine if they will play or not and who will referee the match. If the match is played, the outcome counts and no change shall be made after the match is played.
8. Coaches AND parents do NOT have the right to speak with, or debate calls with the referee(s). Any issues with referees shall be directed to the Township/Club coordinator or commissioner.

Law 7 - Duration of the Match

1. U10 – two (25 minute) halves
2. U12 – two (30 minute) halves
3. U14 – two (35 minutes) halves
    1. Every match shall have a 5-minute break at half-time. Each half shall begin with a kickoff, alternating teams. At half-time, teams shall switch goals.
4. Cancelled matches due to weather conditions/field conditions must be rescheduled as soon as possible. Coaches must notify their respective commissioners of the cancellation and seek help to reschedule, if necessary. All games must be rescheduled prior to the last week of the regular season. Each Township shall reschedule their own cancelled matches.
5. The Township Soccer Commissioner/Coordinator is responsible for calling off a match due to weather and/or field conditions. The visiting coach and assigned referees should be notified at least 1 hour prior to the match start time. After the match has begun, the referee shall have the authority to terminate the match.
6. Lightning/Thunder Policy – Under no circumstances may a game be permitted to resume for thirty (30) minutes after the last observed event.
7. Forfeits - If either team fails to field a team within 15 minutes after the scheduled match time that team forfeits the match and a score of 1-0 by reason of forfeit shall be reported. If neither team is able to field a legal team, a double forfeit shall be declared with a 0-0 tie.
8. Regular season matches will end in a tie/draw. No extra time, sudden death, golden goal, penalty kicks will be authorized during a regular season match.

Law 8 - Start and Restart of Play – Conform to FIFA with the following exception

A. U10 & U12 – opposing players must be eight (8) yards away on Kick-offs and any free kicks.

Law 9 – Ball in and Out of Play – Conform to FIFA

Law 10 – Method of Scoring – Conform to FIFA

Law 11 – Offside – Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions

A. U10 only - The build-out line will be used to start where the offside position may begin.
    1. Attacking players cannot be penalized for an offside offense between the halfway line and the build-out line.
    2. Attacking players can only be penalized for an offside offense between the build-out line and goal line.

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct – Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions

A. Punting:

1. There is NO punting by the GK in U10 games. When the GK has possession, the opposing team must move out beyond the build-out line and may not cross that line until the GK puts the ball in play. "In play" occurs when the ball leaves the GK's possession.

i. If a goalkeeper punts the ball, an indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense.

ii. If the punt occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick will be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infringement occurred.

B. Heading – U10 and U12 players may not **intentionally** head the ball in games. Intentionally heading a ball during a game will result in an indirect kick being awarded to the opposing team from the point of the infraction unless the ball goes directly out of play.

C. U10 Build-Out Line Violations

1. Encroachment – Once GK gains possession of the ball, ball goes out of play over the goal line or there is a foul by the opposing team beyond the build-out line, the opposing team must retreat fully behind the build-out line.

2. When the GK gains possession with their hands, opposing players should retreat immediately. Once opposing players are beyond the build-out line, the GK has 8 seconds to release the ball back into play with a throw, roll or placing the ball at their feet and kicking or dribbling. The opposing team may enter the build out line once the GK releases the ball from their hands.

i. If a player encroaches the build-out line before the GK releases the ball, or goal kick or free kick leaves the penalty area, and intentionally plays the released ball, it is encroachment. Except as noted in the next paragraph, the restart shall be an Indirect free kick from the spot of the encroachment.

ii. If an opposing player encroaches and plays the ball on a goal kick or free kick inside the penalty area, and before the ball leaves the penalty area, or is touched by a player of the same team before it does, an indirect kick will be awarded at the point of the infraction.

iii. GK may play the ball immediately upon possession of the ball. If the GK plays the ball immediately and it hits one of the retreating opposing players, it is treated the same as a quick free kick, play on.

iv. Referees can manage the encroachment situation with misconduct if deemed appropriate.

v. Referees should be flexible when enforcing the 8 second rule and counting the time of possession should only begin when all opponents have moved behind the build out line.

Law 13 – Free Kicks – Conform to FIFA with the following exception

- U10 and U12 - Opponents must be eight (8) yards away, or beyond the build-out line, whichever is further, at the time the kick is taken, unless a team opts to take a "quick kick".

Law 14 – Penalty Kick – Conform to FIFA with the following exception

1, U10 & U12 - Opponents must be eight (8) yards away at the time the kick is taken

Law 15 – Throw-In – Conform to FIFA with the following exception

1. The 5 second countdown rule will only be enforced if deliberate time wasting is suspected by the referee.

Law 16 – Goal Kick – Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions

1. U10 - The opposing team must move behind the build-out line until the ball is put into play. The opposing players cannot cross the build-out line until the ball clears the penalty area or is touched by a second player of the kicking team.

2. U12 - The opposing team must move behind the penalty area until the ball is put into play. The opposing players cannot cross the penalty area until the ball clears the penalty area or is touched by a second player of the kicking team.

3. The 5 second countdown rule will only be enforced if deliberate time wasting is suspected by the referee.

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Coach Contact and Away Team Procedures

1. Coaches must submit their contact information to their commissioners/coordinators to be included on the SJRSL Coach Contact list. This list is to solely be used by coaches to contact their opponents.
   When you are the **AWAY** team, you must reach out to the **HOME** team minimally 2 days prior to game day in order to confirm as details (field address, field # if applicable, game time, jersey color, number of players present, etc.) are subject to change. If you are the home team and you haven't heard from the away team by the day prior to game day, kindly reach out to your opponent and provide them with the details.

Reporting Scores / Protest / Cautions (YC) and Ejections (RC)

1. The Home team must keep a record of the score. Scores will be reported to an online website no later than midnight of the night the match is played. Games scores must be reported, and season standings will be used to seed teams in an end-of-season tournament.
2. Score discrepancies must be reported to the Township/Club coordinator or commissioner within 48 hours.
3. Cautions/Ejections of any parent, spectator, coach, bench personnel or player (YELLOW CARD) or (RED CARD), must be reported in an email to both Township/Club coordinators and commissioners of the teams involved with a description of the incident or misconduct, within 24 hours of the incident. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**
4. A parent, spectator, coach, bench personnel, or player shall be cautioned (YELLOW CARD) for:
    1. Entering or leaving the field of play (except through the normal course of play) without the permission of the official.
    2. Persistent infringement of any of the rules of the match.
    3. Objecting by word of mouth or action to any decision given by an official; (dissent)
    4. Displays unsportsmanlike conduct.
    5. A cautioned YELLOW CARD player MUST be substituted for and may reenter at the next legal substitution.
    6. Two (2) YELLOW CARDS for the same player in a match and the player MUST leave the match and playing area and may not be substituted for but may play in the next match.
    7. Two (2) YELLOW CARDS for the same parent, spectator, coach, or bench personnel in a match, that individual MUST leave the playing area. The coach or bench personnel are allowed to participate in the next match.

5 A parent, spectator, coach, bench personnel, or player shall be ejected (RED CARD) for:
    1. Violent conduct or serious foul play.
    2. Abusive or foul language.
    3. Persistent misconduct after being cautioned.
    4. ANY parent, spectator, coach, bench personnel, or player ejected (RED CARD) MUST leave the match, and playing area immediately, and may not be substituted for. The player ejected cannot play in the next match and the coach or bench personnel cannot coach or be on the team sideline in the next match.
6. If the referee stops the match to caution or expel a player, play shall be restarted by an indirect free kick by the opposing team from the position where the infringement occurred.
7. Any player or coach ejected (RED CARD) from two or more matches will be asked to meet with the Township Soccer Commissioners and the Pinelands Soccer Commissioner for each subsequent offense to determine the seriousness of the offense and additional suspensions to be imposed.

“MERCY RULE” - The following rule will be used to manage competitiveness:

1. No team shall be ahead by more than 5 goals at any time during the match. NO EXCUSES! Examples of how to alleviate an unbalanced game. These steps should be taken in this order. The intent of this rule is to not embarrass the other team. Running up the score is just as embarrassing as having the players yelling out on the field not to score. Common sense needs to prevail.

1. Pull your better players off and let the substitutes get some extra playing time.
2. Pull your more offensive minded and skilled players from offensive positions.
3. Assess how the game is going and if you have a 3-goal lead in the first quarter, back off early and play solid defense. Do not allow it to get to 5 goals.

2. Prepare your team ahead of time for such a situation. Have a code word. DO NOT have the players run around on the field talking about not scoring.
3. You can still play offense and work on passing. Just don't score.
4. Don't attack the team in their own zone, let them cross midfield.
5. Play a player off the field. DO NOT make a big deal about it and share the rule with your parent so they are not yelling "you only have 6 players on the field"
6. If it really is an uneven game, shorten the game by a few minutes each half. Talk to the referee and opposing coach.

The discipline below will be enforced. There are too many 10-0, 11-1 games, it will not be tolerated.
1. First Violation - Warning from Township/Club coordinator or commissioner to head coach.
2. Second Violation - 1 match suspension of the head coach.
3. Third Violation - Suspension for remainder of season, including tournament.
Note - The head coach is responsible for results as it pertains to this rule even if he/she is not present at match(s) in question.

Concussion Protocol

1. If a player is suspected of having a head injury, the referee must stop play to allow for treatment and evaluation. A player with a suspected head injury may NOT return to the match unless a medical doctor clears the player following appropriate guidelines. If a coach or parent insists on returning the player to the field of play without such clearance, the referee will signal the end of the game.

End-of-Season Tournaments

The following year-end tournaments will be held be scheduled the weekend following the last regular season match. All teams should be encouraged to participate in the tournament regardless of the season results. Commissioners should notify coaches, and they should communicate the tournament information early in the season accordingly to ensure full participation. Teams are not permitted to combine for any reason. The roster you play with during the season is the roster you must play with for the tournament.
Tournament Host Locations:

- U10 Boys – TBD
- U10 Girls – TBD
- U12 Boys – TBD
- U12 Girls – TBD
- U14 Boys – TBD
- U14 Girls - TBD

Each Township hosting the tournament will be responsible for tournament rules and cost. This tournament should not be considered a fundraiser, and fees should be utilized for the purpose of purchasing awards, schedule referees and appropriate field usage maintenance. Entry fees per team shall not exceed $300 for a double elimination tournament or a single elimination tournament with a 2-game guarantee.