

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

School NEPL Membership

Registration with the New England Premier League (NEPL) enrolls the men's or women's college club soccer team for the Spring 2025 season. Membership is adjusted on a yearly basis and teams must re-register season by season. Any college club soccer team in the greater New England area and from a sanctioned NCAA, NAIA, or NJCAA school is eligible for NEPL membership. Schools may submit more than one team per gender. All teams are expected to

abide by all league policies. Any team that consistently violates such policies will be subject to immediate removal or probation.

Registration Deadline

Initial deadline for teams to register is no later than January 7, 2025. A late fee will apply to any registrations after such date and ability to join after said date will be determined based on league availability. Upon close of registration, if not before, teams will be invoiced solely for league entry fee. This must be confirmed to be in process with the school by the start of the season. Referee payments will be due by the end of the season as discussed further below.

Player Eligibility

Any player who is currently on a varsity roster will be INELIGIBLE to play in the NEPL Spring 2025 season. Former varsity players, transgender and graduate athletes will be permitted per non-affiliated NIRSA & NCAA guidelines; recent club team alumni who were previously registered with NEPL are allowed with pre-approval and waiver signature/addition to roster only in emergency situations. There is no limit to roster size. Roster sheet should include all eligible players and coaches and staff.

League Organization

NEPL Men's & Women's League will consist of teams from Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island and potentially New York. The Men's league will be split into a TBD number of divisions with TBD teams. Divisions will be determined based on geography, rivalries and always in the best interest of teams and the league. The Women's league will consist of 1-2 divisions and scheduling will be based on geography, but also competitive level to accommodate all registered teams.

Playoffs

Eight to ten teams will qualify for the men's playoffs. Four to six teams will qualify for the women's playoffs.

Division winners will automatically qualify for playoffs. Any team that forfeits a game that is not rescheduled during the course of the season will be ineligible for playoffs. Playoffs are tentatively scheduled for the May 3rd-4th weekend in the greater Boston area. All playoff details are subject to change before the start of the season and will be announced in more detail ASAP. Teams are eligible to offer a bid if their facilities can accommodate hosting, this is not guaranteed, however.

League schedule

The Men's season will consist of 6 league games, of which, TBD amount will be divisional games. League games will take precedence to any friendly or other game NOT previously scheduled and mentioned in team registration form (i.e IVY tourney is approved to take precedence that designated weekend). The Women's season will consist of 5 league games. All teams may potentially host OR travel for all of their league games. The league will take great care to abide by team specific requests whenever possible. Teams that do not specifically decline may have week day night games or multiple games in the same day (shorter halves) or same weekend if schedule and field space dictates. This will be a rarity and will not apply if teams request against it. Great care will be taken to alleviate stress on players in such situations. Regular season games may be played no earlier than February 21, 2025 and no later than April 30, 2025.

Creating the schedule

The league will match up all teams after registration is closed and create a league and team by team schedule of opponents. This will take place roughly by February 1, 2025. Then the league will take all information provided in registration forms along with the date, time, and field specifics gathered by clubs from their Athletic Departments upon return in spring semester and create a team specific schedule matrix. This will be done on a rolling basis and will be completed on a team by team basis as Athletic Departments sort out their field schedule. No captain needs to schedule their opponents or game dates for league games.

Prior to play

1. All players of league teams MUST read and sign NEPL Spring 2025 waiver in order to be eligible to play. Every waiver MUST be submitted to the league prior to their first game. Waivers will be offered in digital format this year via email before the start of the season. All players are recommended to have their own personal medical insurance. Each team MUST provide the league a full roster of any potential player. All captains MUST provide both a copy of their roster to ref at captain's meeting at kickoff. This roster should have the player's FIRST and LAST name and appropriate number for that day. Therefore, captains should have 5 or 6 PHYSICAL copies of the roster for each head ref. Furthermore, they should have a folder of all printed player waivers that they keep with them and show (and keep) OR a .pdf doc file of all the waivers on their phone to show refs. Captains are responsible that all players sign respective waiver before start of season.
2. Once the schedule is complete and confirmed by the league, it is the responsibility of EACH captain to reach out via text, and/or email until a response has been received to confirm with their opponent 1) at the beginning of the season AND then again 2) NO LATER than 96 hours (4 days) prior to the match. There should be zero reason you are not in communication with each of your opponents throughout the season as the league website will offer 3 different methods of communication. If any issue arises, it is the responsibility of BOTH teams to convey any change ASAP. Prior to the match, it is the home team's responsibility to provide information regarding parking directions, parking passes, whether there will be medical personnel present, school and field specific rules and which jersey color they will be using.
3. If players' jerseys don't have numbers or they switch per game, it is the duty of the coach and/or captains (in absence of a coach) to properly identify players from the roster to the referee if needed for any reason including injury/cards.

During the match

1. Game Time: games will consist of two, 40 minute halves with a 5-10 minute half time unless previously conveyed by the league. There will be no extra time in the event of a draw in the regular season. Added stoppage time is NOT required and NOT encouraged for referees unless

for significant injuries lasting over two minutes, at which point the clock should be stopped, OR excessive time wasting by one team. Teams are respectfully requested to adhere to agreed upon kickoff time and halftime length. Any excessive delay as a result of either team will result in shortened halves.

2. A team must have at least 8 players eligible to play a game. All measures will be made by the league and opposing team to accommodate, such as shortening the time of the game and/or requesting the opposing team to lessen their players on the field by 1. If a team has 8-9 players, they are expected to play the game as scheduled with these aforementioned accommodations in place if requested.

3. Substitutions

-Substitutes are requested to be waiting at the halfway line prior to the ball going out of bounds. When feasible, they should be wearing pennies while on the sidelines. If any player goes down with an injury and either medical personnel or a coach enters the field, that player MUST come off and may ONLY come back to play at the discretion of both the appropriate personnel AND the referee after they have been medically cleared to do so.

-There is no limit to the amount of substitutions during a game, however, the team requesting a substitution may only do so IF the player was waiting at the halfway line and while in possession of the ball during a throw in, free kick, goal kick, corner kick or injury (one for one). If a team requesting a substitution is NOT in possession, they may only do so if the team in possession is also subbing, or for an injury (one), a goal kick, OR at the discretion of the referee, if doing so will not hinder any advantage for the team with possession (i.e. the team requesting substitution does not have possession of the ball, BUT the ball went so far out of bounds that allowing the sub would not delay any restart or cause a great disadvantage for the team with possession not substituting).

-Substitutes MUST wait to be called onto the field by a referee and may only begin to enter the field after they have called off the player they are replacing and they are reasonably close to the halfway line.

4. Benches

Team benches MUST be on the same side.

5. Goal Differential

Goal differential will be capped at +/- 6 for each game. Any goals above or below this will not count in the official tiebreaking factors calculated at the End of Season only. Full scores will be applied to standings in the meantime.

Shin guards & jewelry

ALL players MUST wear shin guards at all times with normal length socks to maintain shin guards stay on player. Shin guards are required to be standard in length to actually offer protection. Standard laws of US Soccer require all players to wear shin guards which • are covered entirely by the stockings, • are made of a suitable material, and • provide a reasonable degree of protection. The league will NOT be liable for any player using improper shin guards during play. No jewelry or watches will be allowed during game play. Tape may be used to cover up any items. Any initial equipment infraction will result in the player being asked to leave the field until the equipment issue is resolved and the player is beckoned back on by the referee or a substitution replacement is allowed by the referee. Any further equipment infraction may result in a yellow card.

Cards, Fair Play & Suspensions

Cards will be given out for various appropriate offenses based on standard college rules of play, (yellow or red). These will be recorded, monitored, and if accumulated by individuals, lead to suspension. Fair

play will be one aspect of the tiebreaker procedure. Each yellow card equals -1 points, an indirect red card will be -3 points and a direct red card will be -4 points. Remind players their selfish act may be the difference between playoff qualification and not. Any indirect or direct red card MAY result in at minimum a one half-game suspension to at maximum, a full season suspension based on the severity of the act. Spitting, punching, kicking and fighting will NOT be tolerated and severely punished. Any accumulation of THREE yellow cards in the same regular season will result in a one half-game suspension for that player (as in ineligible for the first half of the next game). All cards will reset at the start of playoffs.

Captain's pre game meeting

Referees are expected and requested by the league to be present 20 minutes prior to kickoff, no sooner or later. Some referees will be coming from other games or leagues. Whenever possible, league will alert captains to this situation. Please do not message the league before 15 minutes to kickoff regarding a missing referee. Please note any issues in post game reports. Referees are held accountable. Both captains should report to head referee when requested and provide waivers and rosters for each game as mentioned elsewhere in bylaws and discuss all other game aspects. Captains are expected to be the voice of their team to hold the rest of the roster accountable and to work with referees to control the game.

Captain's Post game reporting

Each captain will be respectfully required to submit a game report which will be provided here via link pre season. It will be a google form link. Within the report, captains are to provide team name, score, and self report the player names who scored a goal, assist, save and card during the match. It will also offer an opportunity to grade the referees and offer any other insight into the match. This is MANDATORY per game.

Referees

-The home team is responsible for working with the league to obtain 2 or 3 certified officials (FIFA, NFHS, NISOA, NCAA or USSF). NO player, friend, or campus rec employee that is NOT CERTIFIED shall officiate these games.

Referees will be assigned in advance by the league unless specifically designated and approved otherwise and these referee fees will be invoiced separately and apart from league entry fee near the end of the season. If any game is cancelled for any reason other than inclement weather FOUR days prior to the match, the referees are required to be paid in full by the responsible party. Teams will have more than enough time after schedule release to guarantee they can commit to each game and to plan accordingly. In the event that two teams are playing a regular season game at a neutral site where neither is the host, then those two teams will split the referee fees for that specific game.

-Referees are to be respected at all times. They have many options of games to referee. I have long lasting professional relationships with many of these refs. They thoroughly enjoy working college club games, however, at no time will they or the league tolerate abusive language or behavior by players, coaches, school admin, or fans. Captains are responsible for maintaining good decorum with referees throughout the match and to control themselves, their players, coaches and fans at all costs. All instances of referee abuse will be closely monitored by the league and will be dealt with strictly. This may include individual participants or spectators banned from future NEPL events. There will be no tolerance for referee abuse. Good sportsmanship should be practiced at ALL times.

Cancellations/Postponements/Forfeits

This is a point of emphasis with NEPL. The Spring 2024 season had over 95% of all games actually played. Once the schedule is released and teams confirm their schedule prior to its start, the only potentially valid reasons for a game to be rescheduled, cancelled or postponed are 1) the school or field department has withdrawn the field last minute and no alternative option could be found; 2) the team cannot field a minimum of eight players due to a massive outbreak of illness among the team (in which case written proof will be required for instances 1 and 2); or 3) inclement weather that would jeopardize the health and safety of players and referees in which case the game will result in no contest and the league will attempt to reschedule the game. Only inclement weather pregame will alleviate payment or forfeit penalties. Forfeits will not be encouraged for the benefiting team, but heavily discouraged for the forfeiting team. Forfeit losses will result in a 0-1 loss, requirement to pay for scheduled ref crew

in full even if they are the road team and disqualification from playoff eligibility. Forfeit wins will result in a 1-0 win at the end of the year AND will NOT be applied to any tiebreaker scenario. Therefore, a forfeit win will be removed before any other tiebreaking scenario is applied (i.e. Team A with 10 points and no forfeit wins & Team B with 10 points and one forfeit win, Team A would prevail). **To reiterate, teams will have weeks and weeks to guarantee they have enough players committed for scheduled games. They will be asked to confirm at schedule release and again the week of each scheduled game. At minimum, if a game is cancelled within 96 hours of the scheduled kickoff, the responsible team will be required to pay in full for the ref crew. If the game is cancelled within 30-48 hours, depending on circumstances, prior to kickoff for any reason whatsoever, the refs will be paid in full by the responsible team AND all other forfeit penalties will take effect. If any team confirms at schedule release AND again the week of and then cancels, all penalties will take into effect.** The main reason for all of this is simply to avoid last minute surprises for teams, league and referees. The league recognizes that changes and conflicts occur, but with minimal pre-planning, games can be adjusted with enough advance warning so that teams do not miss out on open field times for potential replacement games, referees do not miss out on payments they have locked their schedule for and reject other opportunities instead.

Weather

Any lightning within a 10 mile radius requires teams to seek shelter and wait thirty minutes. If such a delay lasts more than time available on the field or 60-90 minutes, the game will be paused and resumed if possible at a later date. Games MUST be cancelled due to inclement weather prior to the away team leaving for the field. If not, the home team will be responsible for the full penalty. Any game cancelled 60-90 minutes prior to scheduled kickoff, with a more local opponent, will require refs to be paid, but no other penalty. Any game abandoned due to weather and not able to be rescheduled will result either in a no contest, draw if both teams were tied at the time of stoppage OR completed game IF the second half was initiated. League will have final discretion in all weather related matters.

RULES

When not previously specifically covered or mentioned, NCAA College 2024-2024 rules apply: [NCAA](#)

[RULES](#)

NEPL Notice

In the event of any issue or circumstance of significance that is not previously covered by league policies and rules, the league retains full and ultimate discretion to resolve the matter in the best interest of the teams and players in question and the league as a whole. Furthermore, as stated in all waivers to be signed by eligible players, the league is NOT liable for any injuries sustained in the course of any regular season, postseason or tournament game sponsored by NEPL. This document is meant as a foundation for league rules but it is subject to updates and additions when needed. Refunds will not be permitted upon entry into the league and any future cancellations of scheduled AND confirmed games may result in full invoices being sent to school administration.