

NorCal Guidance: Team Participants Verification

Applicability: NPL, League, State Cup, Super Rec

Updated August 15, 2024

This document clarifies NorCal guidelines on rosters, game cards, and player/ coach pass requirements within NorCal competitions for all stakeholders participating in NorCal matches.

The Golden Rule: Play The Game!

NorCal encourages all stakeholders, coaches, managers, and referees to do everything possible to ensure the match is played. Children have traveled to play and enjoy the beautiful game, and we want to do everything possible to make that happen for them.

Each of us should do our part to ensure that soccer can occur in a safe and compliant environment. Referees should not be administrators but rather officials of the match and thus should not make decisions regarding the eligibility of players, coaches, or outcomes associated with any of these decisions. Besides being a neutral arbitrator of the laws of the game, the referee should determine only if a match can proceed and/ or if the match should be played under protest based on the guidelines below.

The Gold Standard

For a match to proceed without protest, each of the following items must be present:

- Each team must have a Credentialed Adult with a valid US Club Soccer pass
- Each player present must have a valid US Club Soccer pass
- A game card for that specific NorCal match
- All players present must be printed (ie: not written in) on the game card

Please note that electronic and non-laminated physical passes are accepted.

Play The Game Under Protests

If any of the above items are not present for check-in before the match, the referee should inform both coaches that the game will proceed under protest. The opposing coach (whose team has their roster/ player passes in order) should submit a [PAD Match Report](#) so NorCal can rule on the match. The referee should note the protest on the game card.

Not An Official Match

The only case in which an official match can not proceed under protest, other than for safety reasons or insufficient players, is if one or both teams do not have a Credentialed Adult with a valid US Club pass. In this case, the opposing coach should submit a competition committee report to NorCal to report the match as a forfeit. In the very unlikely case where both coaches do not have a valid pass, the home team should submit a report to NorCal.

Credentialed Adults

A **Credentialed Adult** is an adult with a valid (i.e. not expired) US Club Soccer Coach or Manager pass. Physical (both laminated and non-laminated) and electronic passes are allowed.

Only **Credentialed Adults** may be present in the technical area, up to a maximum of three.

If a team has its only/last Credentialed Adult sent off, if the match is in progress, it must be abandoned, and the referee should submit a [Referee Incident Report](#) in addition to the required send-off report.

Credentialed Adults do not have to be printed on the game card. However, if a credentialed adult is not listed they should be written on the game card and verified by the referee. Additionally, **credentialed adults** who are on the game card and not present should be crossed out. A **credentialed adult** may be present in the technical area (up to a maximum of three) for any team of the club that is stated on their US Club Soccer pass.

Player Passes

A **Player Pass** is a valid US Club Soccer pass. Physical (both laminated and non-laminated) and electronic passes are allowed.

All players should have valid US Club credentials (player passes).

Players without a player pass, as defined above, may not play in a NorCal match.

Game Card

A **Game Card** is an official GotSport printed document with the official match and team information, including both team's official rosters.

Both teams are required to bring a game card for the scheduled match. The game card should list all players present at the match.

If no game card is brought by either team, the coaches are responsible for writing the players playing information (name, ID#, and shirt number) for each team on a single sheet of paper (now the "game card") from the information on their player passes. The game should be played under protest, and the visiting team should file a PAD Match Report.

If a player is present who is not listed on the game card, the referee can write them in if they have a valid Player Pass. The game should be played under protest, with the opposing team submitting a PAD Match Report.

Players with a red line through their names on the game card are NOT allowed to play. Players with highlighted names (orange/gray background) on the game card are allowed to play.

While the game card may list coaches and managers for the team, those listed do not need to be present, and other coaches/managers from the same club may be present instead – but at least one **credentialed adult** from the club must be present and any **credentialed adults** not printed on the game card should be written on the game card and verified by the referee.

Super Rec Modifications

Teams must have ONE of the following on game day:

- Printed US Club Soccer Roster with player/staff photos
- Printed player passes for coaches and players
- Virtual passes for coaches and players

Region 2 (South Bay): These matches do not require Player Passes or an official NorCal Game Card. Teams must provide a printed roster for each match only.

