

NORTH METRO SOCCER ASSOCIATION
RECREATIONAL PROGRAM MANUAL



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THE RECRETIONAL PROGRAM:

1. The recreation program is an in-house league emphasizing participation over competition and strives to achieve well-balanced teams. The program seeks to teach youth participant's basic soccer skills, the rules of the game and good sportsmanship.
2. Age groups consist of U6, U8, U10, U12, and co-ed rec. is for ages U13-U18. The recreation league ages U-10 and U-12 continues the basics of the youth league while incorporating advanced ball techniques and tactical skills. The co-ed recreational league is for older youth choosing to participate in a non-competitive league.
3. Teams are reformed each year by integrating the experienced players with the less experienced. The recreation league is governed by its own Recreation Program Committee which consists of the Program Director, Assistant Director, Age Group Coordinators and others needed.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. **Program Director:** The program director is head of the recreation league. The director is empowered to take prudent and reasonable action in cases not covered by the policy and procedures of NMSA, and such authority is implicit in the office. All such actions are subject to subsequent approval of the board of directors.

Upon assuming the position after election or by appointment by the board of directors, the director will:

- Automatically become a member of the NMSA Board of Directors.
 - Appoint such committees deemed necessary to carry out the functions of the recreation league.
 - The director shall, with the assistance of the vice director and through the age level coordinators, manage the recreation League.
2. **Asst. Director:** The asst. director will assist the program director and will preside in the absence of the director.

3. **Secretary:** The secretary is responsible for recording the minutes of all committee meetings and all membership meetings in accordance with the policy and procedures of NMSA.

The secretary shall maintain a file of the minutes for all meetings and shall act as historian for the recreation league. It is also the responsibility of the secretary to establish committee meetings, notifying committee members and establishes the meeting agenda.

4. **Age Group Coordinators:** The age group coordinators have several key roles which include:

- Establishing the number of teams based on the guidelines of team size and to recruit qualified and interested coaches to head those teams.
- The responsibility for assigning registered players, as specified by the registrar, to appropriate teams and to provide each coach with a current roster.
- Coordinating the league schedule, playing fields and other logistics for the league with the help of the scheduler, referee director and field director.
- Intervening and reconciling any and all problems, concerns or complaints arising within their respective league.
- Acting as the contact for all coaches and players/parents in their designated age group

5. **Coaches' and Player Development Coordinator:** The coaches' and player training coordinator maintains a database of existing coaches and their training levels and assists the age group coordinators with the identification of coaches.

The coaches' and player development coordinator, holds this position for NMSA club wide and develops a positive coaching environment. This is accomplished through a series of training and licensing activities as follows:

- Develop and conduct training for the new coach specific to the NMSA program.
- Schedule National Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSCA) training. This training is provided by a qualified training organization to be decided by NMSA Board of Directors.

- Identify and schedule licensing clinics. These clinics are held under the auspices of the United States Soccer Federation (USSF).

PLAYING SEASONS:

1. **Fall Season:** Officially opens no earlier than mid August and will close no later than the end of October.
2. **Summer Season:** Officially opens no earlier than mid April and will close no later than early July.
3. These seasons may be extended if deemed necessary by the Recreation Program Committee.

ELIGIBILITY:

1. The recreation program is open to children 4 to 18, who meet the age guidelines, who have completed the appropriate registration form and submitted the appropriate fee for the current soccer season.
2. Players not on a current roster will NOT be allowed on the field.

REGISTRATION:

1. Applicants can register for the recreation league through the NMSA on-line registration website at www.northmetrosoccer.org or a paper form approved by NMSA.

NMSA would prefer registrations be completed on-line however, paper forms and fees can be mailed to: North Metro Soccer Association, PO Box 250 Cedar MN 55011.

2. Registration forms are only valid during the current soccer season. A new registration form will be required each soccer season. No player shall be allowed to participate in competition under the jurisdiction of NMSA without a current registration form.
3. Registering by mail: The postmark date of the completed form when accompanied by appropriate fees shall be accepted as the date of registration for a player.
4. Registering in person: The date of receipt shall be the date of registration of players whose applications are submitted directly to the Association.

5. The player registration fee shall be established by the board of directors and must be paid to the NMSA at the time of registration. Player registration is not valid until the form is filled out and the registration fee is paid and submitted to the Association.
6. Any applications received after the published registration date will be subject to a non-refundable \$20 late fee.
7. Any application received after the published registration date shall be placed on a waiting list. A waiting list is maintained in order to fill any team vacancies, which may exist after the initial teams have been formed.
8. One registration must accompany each applicant and be completed in its entirety, signed by a parent or legal guardian, and must contain all fees paid in full before the applicant will be considered registered with NMSA.
9. Registration fees paid by check that are not honored by the bank are subject a \$25 NSF fee.
10. Registration fliers will be distributed to all of last year's players, to all schools and city halls within the north metro area. An e-mail notification will be used as available.
11. The recreation league will also conduct at least two (2) in person registrations with time, date and location to be announced on the NMSA website, in the Anoka County Union, the Andover Times and the Courier Newspaper for ISD 15. One registration will be held in north service area, and one in the south service area.
12. The age group coordinator maintains the waiting list and assigns new players.
13. Coach registration must be completed and submitted to the registrar prior to assignments of teams. All coaches and assistant coaches must complete the on-line background check as required by MYSA.

AGE REQUIREMENTS:

1. The recreation league assigns soccer players according to age and gender, not necessarily by school. Age level coordinators will try to honor requests for placement with friends. Every attempt will be made to keep clusters of players within their appropriate school when the final number of registered applicants permits.

2. A player can play up in an older league than their designated age if the parent or legal guardian is their head coach and both the league director and the age level coordinator approve of the move. A review of the player's skills may need to be evaluated / reviewed in order to make sure placement is in the child's best interest. This is not encouraged and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis only.
3. A player may play in a younger league if the parent or legal guardian gets permission from the recreation league director. This is only allowed when it is in the child's best interest due to mental or physical limitations.

PLAYER TRANSFER OR RELEASE:

1. Under no circumstances may a player play on more than one team within NMSA. Any registered player assigned to a team is bound to that team for the entire season unless:
 2. There is a case of extreme hardship and by mutual agreement of the parent (s) and with the approval of the Recreation League Committee and the age level coordinator that there is just cause for transferring or releasing an applicant.
 3. All requests for transfers shall be in writing to the league director stating the reason for the request of transfer.
 4. Any player assigned to a team who elects not to play shall be dropped from the roster with loss of registration fee unless said player/parent notifies the registrar prior to the refund deadline.

REFUNDS:

1. Players who decide not to play recreational soccer after team placement may receive a 50% refund of the registration fee only. No refunds one week prior to the seasons start date. The refund excludes any late fees.
2. All requests for refunds must be in writing and submitted to the recreational director for approval. The request must state the child's name, age and reason for refund.
3. If NMSA is unable to accept a registration and/or place a player on a team, that player will receive a full refund. The refund excludes any late fees.

EXPULSION FROM THE RECREATION LEAGUE:

1. Any member may be expelled or have their membership forfeited for a serious violation of the NMSA rules, policies and regulations or for conduct prejudicial to the best interests of NMSA. A two-thirds majority vote of the board of directors is necessary for expulsion.

TEAM SIZE & GENERAL PLAYING INFORMATION:

1. See Blue NMSA Sheet for general rules of play.

SHORTAGES:

1. The recreation league does not acknowledge "forfeits". If a team is short for a game, then the other team is asked to reduce players to the same number present, or transfer, temporarily, to the short team. The object is to have fun and play the game.

LENGTH OF GAME AND BALL SPECIFICATIONS:

1. There will be a 5-minute break between halves. For inclement weather or impending darkness, the length of each quarter may be shortened by mutual agreement of the referee(s) and the coaches.

- U-6 (2) 20 minute halves #3 Ball
- U-8 (2) 20 minute halves #3 Ball
- U-10 (2) 20 minute halves #4 Ball
- U-12 (2) 25 minute halves #4 Ball
- U13- U18 (2) 30 minute halves #5 Ball

UNIFORMS:

1. The uniform coordinator is in charge of choosing, ordering, and distributing uniforms to all rostered teams. The uniform coordinator will bring a number of uniform options to the recreational committee for approval.
2. As soon as the uniforms are in, the uniform coordinator will contact the age group coordinators and make arrangements to have the uniforms distributed to the coaches at a preseason meeting.
3. Uniforms are not to be turned in at the end of the season; they become the property of the player wearing the uniform. Fall uniforms will be ordered similarly to the summer uniforms, however only t-shirts are supplied for fall recreational teams.

FIELD OF PLAY:

1. The following leagues will play on a downsized field as decided by the Recreation Program Committee.
 - U-6
 - U-8
 - U-10
 - U-12
2. Other field dimensions will be scaled accordingly by following MYSA minimum field guidelines.

PLAYING TIME:

1. All players should play at least one-half of each game. Possible exceptions include injury, illness or discipline.

FOUL WEATHER:

1. The recreation league director or designated representative has the authority to postpone games because of weather conditions, such as lightning, severe thunderstorm warnings, snow, etc.
2. The age level coordinators will then notify the coaches, who in turn, will notify the players.
3. Teams must report to the playing field ready to play unless officially notified of postponement by the age level coordinator. The assumption that a game is cancelled must never be made.
4. The referee will notify the referee coordinator of all games suspended in play. The referee has the authority to postpone a game after its start because of weather conditions. Players should wait in their cars at least 15 minutes to see if the weather clears. DO NOT LEAVE right away. MYSA weather rules will be followed.

PLAYER EQUIPMENT:

1. Player equipment will consist of a shirt/jersey, shorts, socks, shin guards, and shoes. Each player is recommended to have an appropriate size soccer ball and water bottle. It is recommended to have a stitched ball rather than a molded type soccer ball.

2. Shoes must be either soft sole gym shoes or soft rubber molded soccer cleats. Cleated baseball or football shoes with toe cleats are NOT permitted. Shin guards are **MANDATORY** equipment for participating in NMSA soccer. Socks must cover the shin guard at all times and must not have any exposed hard edges.

JEWELRY MALE OR FEMALE:

1. Players may NOT wear any jewelry including but not limited to: watches, earrings, necklaces, bracelets, rings, leather bands, rubber bands, plastic or metal hair clips during actual games. Earrings may NOT be taped; they must be removed in order to play.

PLAYER DISCIPLINE:

1. Each coach in the NMSA is instructed to make all players aware and knowledgeable of unsportsmanlike behavior. Exhibiting the following unsportsmanlike behavior **will not be tolerated**. Players will be immediately expelled from the game and additional disciplinary actions may be imposed after review of the incident with the age level coordinator and the approval of the league director.
 - Abusive or foul language, threatening actions or words toward a coach, parent, referee, or other player.
 - Aggressive physical contact / striking a referee or another player with deliberate intent to harm.
 - Refusing to leave the playing area after an ejection.
2. Post-game both teams are to line up in an orderly fashion and shake hands. Verbal comments directed to the losing team will not be tolerated.

COACHES:

1. The coach is one of the most important individuals in NMSA. In keeping with the NMSA philosophy and by undertaking the role as coach, your duties are to:
 - Instruct and train players to develop and improve their abilities in the game of soccer.
 - Build a positive environment.
 - Promote camaraderie and teamwork.

- Develop and practice the principles of fair play and good sportsmanship.
- Allow all players to participate equally, no matter what their mental or physical abilities.
- Build good character.
- Improve physical fitness.
- Help children experience the fun and excitement of competition in an organized sport.

COACHES TRAINING:

1. Coaches should strive for a working knowledge of the game or be aggressively pursuing an understanding of the game in order to effectively coach. NMSA is committed to providing training and licensing opportunities for volunteer coaches.
2. Through these classes, coaches will receive instruction on basic skills, knowledge of the game, basic care & prevention of injuries and other relevant information.

Youth Licensing: Beginning with the 2004-05 season, it is now encouraged that all NMSA coaches attend the Youth certification classes offered by MYSA. Contact the Recreation Program Director or the Coach and Player Training Coordinator for specific dates and times. NMSA pays the fee for the head coach of each team to attend.

NMSA Basic: Beginner's Assistance to Soccer-Introductory Coaching training. This class is for the beginner coach who is joining the NMSA program for the first time. The class will give the novice coach an in depth look at the NMSA program, coaching theories, guidelines and objectives for running your practices and how to manage and organize your team. There is no fee for the class and the date, time and location are published on the website and available from the League Director or Age level coordinators.

3. Training material such as books and tapes are available from our training library. These items may be borrowed throughout the season.

TEAM MANAGEMENT:

1. Before the start of each season, a coach's meeting with the recreation league director and age level coordinator will take place. Attendance at this initial meeting is extremely important.

You will receive your team roster, schedule, equipment and supplies. The age level coordinator will update you on the various activities, which will be occurring throughout the season that deal directly with all players to help you and your team be informed. The age level coordinators will also have a brief meeting at the start of each season to touch base, fill any player vacancies, and update your equipment supplies.

2. After obtaining the roster from your age level coordinator, please call and e-mail your team members and parents and begin to set up the first practice time and work on your parent's orientation meeting.
3. At your team orientation meeting, introduce yourself, your philosophies and your objectives for the season. Pass out the roster, schedule, newsletter, picture info and relay any other information given by your age level coordinator. Discuss parent and player responsibilities for the season and appoint an organized team representative to assist you if so desired.

PRACTICES:

1. Coaches should have a season long plan for player development. Practices are essential learning times for players to learn the basics of the game by creative drills and exercises.
2. Practice sessions should be conducted at least once per week and should be maintained throughout the season as fields and time permits.
 - U-6 60 minutes
 - U-8 60 minutes
 - U-10 60 minutes
 - U-12 60-90 minutes

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES:

1. Before each season begins, each coach will be provided team jerseys, shorts and socks. Goalie shirts, practice/game balls, cones and a first aid kit are distributed in most leagues. Player equipment consists of shirt, shorts, socks, shin guards and shoes.
2. Goalkeepers must wear colors that distinguish them from other players and referees on the field.
3. At the end of each season the practice/game balls, goalie jerseys, cones, first aid kits, training material and other equipment distributed during the season must be returned at the end of season Jamboree.

GAME MANAGEMENT:

- Inspect field, insure nets are safe; bring game ball.
- Make sure players are properly attired.
- Develop Line-up.
- Sign the referee's game card after the game. If there is no referee present at game. Write that on referee card and mail it as directed.

FIELD PREPARTATION:

1. The team listed first in the schedule is home team. The designated home team is responsible for insuring that the field is in playable condition.
2. The home team shall provide a properly inflated and playable game ball to the referee prior to the beginning of the match. In case of team colors conflicting, the home team shall put on pennies.
3. All field sites must be cleaned up prior to both teams leaving the playing field.

RESCHEDULING OF GAMES:

1. League games cancelled due to weather will only be rescheduled if time and space permit.
2. In cases of extreme seasonal weather, the Age Level Coordinator will organize any rescheduled games. The league director will coordinate with the facilities director and referee coordinator and then contact the coaches of the rescheduled game.
3. Under no circumstances do coaches undertake the rescheduling / cancellation of a game by themselves.

PETS:

1. For the safety and sanitation of our players, pets are **NOT** permitted at soccer functions.

DISCIPLINE FOR COACH'S AND PARENTS:

1. Soccer belongs to the players. Adults must understand this and put the welfare of the player and the game ahead of their personal desires. Adults must never place the value of winning over the safety and welfare of the players. Winning should be the result of thorough preparation and team discipline.

2. Each coach is responsible for the conduct of their players, their player's parents and supporters. Coaches and parents have an obligation to teach good sportsmanship by both word and example.
3. Coaches and parents will be immediately expelled from the game and additional disciplinary actions may be imposed after review of the incident with the age level coordinator, referee coordinator and the approval of the NMSA board and recreational program director.

Exhibiting the following unsportsmanlike behavior **will not be tolerated**.

- Threatening actions or words towards players, referees or other parents.
 - Excessive, abusive language to players, referees or other parents.
 - Aggressive physical or vocal contact with another parent.
 - Refusal to leave the playing field after an ejection.
 - Instructing players to play in a deliberately dangerous or unsportsmanlike manner.
 - Coaches or parents entering the field with the intent to show descent to a player or referee.
4. A panel will convene consisting of the recreational program director, age level coordinator and another committee member to hear and determine any additional action deemed necessary. Continued improper behavior by a coach will result in his expulsion from NMSA. Game decisions by referees may not be questioned and public criticism of referees by coaches, players and parents is not permitted.
 5. It is against the rules of the NMSA & MYSA for a coach, parent or player to harass, threaten or intimidate NMSA referees in any way. This includes before, during and after all games, in sight of or in earshot. Failure to comply will result in immediate expulsion with an additional 1 game suspension.
 6. In keeping with NMSA recreational league philosophy, running up the score against an opposing team is strongly discouraged. Coaches of a dominating team should take the opportunity to adjust player and team positions to equal out the competition. This will enrich the player's experience and exhibit consideration toward the opponents without compromising the team's desire to win.

7. Players not in the game and sideline spectators must remain at least three (3) feet back from the touchlines and within the area from the goal line to the goal line. No one is permitted behind the end lines!
8. Disciplinary action for players concerning missing practices, games etc. is the responsibility of the coach after consultation with the age level coordinator. Prior to taking any action the coach must first discuss it with the parents and player. Difficult situations shall be referred to the recreational program director through the appropriate age level coordinator.

REGISTERING A COMPLAINT:

1. Complaints for a serious violation of the NMSA rules must be reported immediately to the age level coordinator. Forms for registering a complaint are available on the NMSA website at northmetrosoccer.org.

VIOLATION OF THE RULES:

1. It is the age level coordinator's duty to follow up on any reported violations and report them to the recreational program director. The age level coordinator has the authority to investigate and take the necessary action required to enforce these rules, including the power to expel/suspend players, parents and coaches.

LEAGUE SPECIFIC RULES:

1. **Throw-ins:** An exception to the throw-in rule is allowed at the U-6, U-8 Level. In the event of an improper throw-in, the same player is to be given a second throw-in. A second improper throw-in will result in the ball being given to the opposition for a throw-in from the same place.
2. **Slide Tackles:** Slide tackling is not allowed in the NMSA Recreation Program. An indirect free kick will be awarded for an infraction of this rule. The displaying of cleats in a hazardous manner shall be considered a dangerous play.
3. **Timekeeper:** It is the responsibility of the home team coach to provide a timekeeper, if requested by the referee. However, only the referee will signal when time has expired and keeps the official time.
4. **Asst. Referees:** If only one referee is available, each team may provide one qualified linesman who will call the line at the referee's instruction. The linesmen assist the referee by indicating when the ball is out of play, and which team is entitled to a corner kick or a throw-in. They will also assist the referee in controlling the game in accordance with the rules. The referee's decision in all cases, however, is final.

BLOOD AND BLEEDING:

1. The NMSA is concerned that all those in the league take appropriate precautions to prevent the transmission of bloodborne and infectious diseases. A player, coach, or referee who is bleeding, has an open wound or has blood on the uniform or body shall be prohibited from participating until appropriate treatment is administered. Injured player rules shall apply.
2. Precautions for reducing the potential for transmission of infectious agents should include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - A bleeding player will be removed from the field of play for treatment. The player will not be allowed to reenter the field until the wound is cleaned and dressed. If any part of the uniform has blood on it, the part must be changed or covered by another article of clothing.
 - Routine use of gloved or other precautions to prevent skin and mucous membrane exposure when contact with blood or other body fluids is anticipated.
 - Cleansing of hands and other skin surfaces, if contaminated, (in contact) with blood or other body fluids and immediately after removing gloves.
 - Coaches with bleeding or oozing skin conditions should refrain from all athletic care.