

Monmouth and Ocean Counties Middle School Soccer League (MOCMSSL)

2026 MOCMSSL Bylaws **(Includes Appendices A and B)**

Member Schools/Teams:

St. Joseph Grade School, Saint Peter School,
St. Rose Grammar School, Saint Mary School,
St. Benedict School, Our Lady of Mount Carmel School, St. Dominic School,
Ambassador Christian Academy, St. Rose of Lima School,
St. Thomas the Apostle School, and St. Jerome School

1. **Executive Board Members:** The Board members will be responsible for the operation of the league and have the authority to decide on emergency, disciplinary, and rule violation matters that occur over the course of the season.

Executive Board Members (3)

President – Ernie Bayha (embayha@gmail.com)

Treasurer – Donna Kisiel (d2sneakers@aol.com)

Board Member/League Roster Coordinator – Jeff Harness (77harne@gmail.com)

2. **Pre-Season Practices:** The MOCMSSL pre-season starts on August 1, 2026. No more than 8 pre-season practices (including tryouts) are allowed prior to the start of the regular season. See Rule 3.
3. **Team Submits and the Duration of the MOCMSSL Regular Season:** The deadline for team submits (i.e., the last day to enter a team in the MOCMSSL) and any constraints/dates that teams cannot play on during the regular season is August 31, 2026. This deadline is in place to allow adequate time for the scheduling of regular season games and referee assignments to be made in advance of the start of the 2026 MOCMSSL regular season, which is September 16, 2026. The MOCMSSL regular season will end on October 30, 2026. Every school should make a strong attempt to play their games as scheduled as rescheduled games can become problematic to complete due to the weather and lack of available daylight towards the end of the season.
4. **League Entrance Fees:** Fees are \$350.00 per team. Leagues entrance fees are to be sent to the League Treasurer by the 20th of September. The league fees invoice can be found on the league website. Once a school has submitted team(s) by August 28 of the current soccer year, league fees are required to be paid for the team(s). Dropping a team from the league

after August 28 does not relieve the school's responsibility to pay league fees for the dropped team.

5. **Field Permits:** Each member school is responsible for securing a field for its home games and must submit a written copy of the field permit to the League President prior to any MOCMSSL games being played on that field. No MOCMSSL games shall be played on a field without a permit. The only exception is for fields that are owned/operated by the school/parish.
6. **Postponements:** All home teams/schools must call the opposing team and the assigned referee(s) in the case of a game postponement no later than 2 hours before the start of the scheduled game on game day. The only acceptable reasons for a game postponement on game day are as follows:
 - inclement weather or field conditions¹
 - Health and safety precautions (e.g., COVID-19) declaration by the administration of an affected member school, including student contact tracing, school moving to online learning for a period of time, etc.

Further, any requests to postpone a game within 72 hours of game time will be denied by the MOCMSSL Executive Board unless it is an emergency situation.

Schools must notify their opponents, League President, and official if any students/coaches/spectators tested positive for COVID-19 within four (4) days after the game.

The visiting team must honor the COVID-19 protocols/rules of the home team (e.g., mask wearing) on the sidelines. Referee must also honor the home team COVID-19 protocols/rules for checking in the teams. Students are not required to wear masks during games unless required by their school. Referees are not required to wear masks during games.

For any postponement, if the referee(s) is (are) not contacted and the referee(s) show(s)-up for the game, the home team/school is responsible for paying the referee(s) in full.

It is both teams' responsibility to reschedule the game and it should be rescheduled as soon as possible. Both schools will have a maximum of one (1) week to agree to a new date and time for the postponed game. If the postponement occurs during the last two weeks of the MOCMSSL regular season, there is a maximum, 72-hour window to agree on a new date

¹ Games cannot be postponed for any other reasons without permission of the League President.

and time. If the two schools cannot reach agreement within this time frame, the MOCMSSL Executive Board will reschedule the game on behalf of both teams and the teams will be obligated to play the game as prescribed by the MOCMSSL Executive Board. Failure to do so will result in a forfeit.

It is strongly advised not to leave make-up games to the end of the season. All unplayed games at the end of the regular season, including games affected by COVID-19, will not count in the final standings.

Note that when rescheduling games, the scheduling of double-headers (i.e., two games on one day for a given team) is not permitted within the MOCMSSL. The primary reason is player safety. Players need time to recover after playing one game. For example, during travel tournaments, there is usually a one-hour or more break between the two games played on the same day. Since there is not enough available daylight to play two games with a suitable break, there will be no doubleheaders conducted in this league.

7. **Start Times:** All games should start within 15 minutes of the scheduled, start time. The only exception is if a team arrives late, but within the 15-minute window, some additional time must be allotted for the team to warm up so there is less risk of injury.
8. **Home Team Responsibilities on Game Day:** The home team must provide at least one, number 5 game ball, emergency ice, a medical kit, and an Automated External Defibrillator (AED). See Rule 40.
9. **Referee Information and Procedures:** The referee does not have to start the match unless he/she is paid upfront or there is a written agreement (e.g., voucher) for the home school to mail a check after the game. See Appendix A for complete referee-related information.
10. **Player Equipment:** It is mandatory that each player wear shin guards, plastic cleats or sneakers (no metal cleats are allowed), and no jewelry, with the exception of medical alert jewelry which should be taped to the body. Soccer socks must be worn. Every rostered player must wear the same color soccer socks. During Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October, players may wear pink soccer socks during games as long as EVERY player on the same team wears pink socks.
11. **IFAB Rules:** International Football Association Board (IFAB) rules will govern play, unless otherwise noted in these MOCMSSL Bylaws. Each MOCMSSL game will consist of (2) 30-minute halves separated by a minimum, five (5)-minute halftime period. Regular season games can end in a tie. There are no overtime periods in MOCMSSL regular season games.

Optionally, one (1) 15-minute 3rd quarter may be played after each MOCMSSL regular season game. The 3rd quarter is for non-starters and younger grade players. If there are an insufficient number of 3rd quarter players available on one or both teams, then a 3rd quarter does not need to be played. The 3rd quarter results have no impact on the outcome of the regularly scheduled game. There are no 3rd quarters during the playoffs.

12. **Field of Play:** The field of play shall be full-sided, rectangular, and 100 to 120 yards long and 55 to 80 yards wide. The minimum dimensions of the field of play shall be 100 yards long by 55 yards wide. The goal size is 24' wide by 8' high.
13. **Number of Players:** Games will be 11 on 11 (11 players per team on the field) and will be played on full-sided fields. The minimum number of players required for play is seven (7). Should a team have fewer than 7 players available, a forfeit will result. Games cannot be postponed or rescheduled for a date later than the date posted on the league website due to not having sufficient players. Any request to post-play a game due to insufficient players will be denied and the team with insufficient players will forfeit that game. A 1-0 score will be posted on the league website in favor of the opposing team.

Good sportsmanship will be employed such that if a team has fewer than 11 players, each team should field the same number of players, e.g., 10 on 10, 9 on 9. If there are no substitutes available, the game will consist of four, 15-minute quarters to give players time to rest and rehydrate. Under no circumstances should goalposts, goal anchors, sand bags, and corner flags be moved for any reason on a full-sided field, for example, to accommodate teams that have fewer than 11 players, nor should MOCMSSL games be played on small-sided fields.

14. **Substitution Rules:** Teams are allowed to substitute players between halves, after a goal is scored, and on either team's throw-in or goal kick. Teams are also allowed to substitute players on either team's corner kicks, indirect free kicks, and direct free kicks.

Note: At the time of the substitution request, the substitute(s) must be positioned at midfield near the touchline, not in the team bench area, and ready to be beckoned onto the field by the referee. This allows the referee the discretion to deny substitutions that would otherwise stop an attack, for example.

In the event of an injury to a player on either team, unlimited substitutions are allowed by both teams.

The clock shall be stopped by the referee when a substitute by the team in the lead is beckoned onto the field in the final five minutes of the second period only.

- 15. Goal Kicks, Free Kicks, and Throw-Ins:** In 2019, the IFAB instituted a number of new rules. Two of these rule changes pertain to goal kicks and free kicks. The IFAB considers a goal kick to be in play when it is touched and moved, whether the ball is kicked a distance of one foot, ten feet, or 19 yards. Same for free kicks originating by a team within their defensive penalty area; the ball is in play when it is kicked and moved.

While not an IFAB rule change, the MOCMSSL desires to clarify that for throw-ins, a re-throw is awarded for a throw-in that does not enter the field of play, but no re-throw is awarded for a foul throw.

- 16. League Eligibility Policy.** This league is intended to consist of students that are in the fifth grade through the eighth grade. It is not recommended for any students that are in the fourth grade and below to compete in this league, however, the decision to allow students below 5th grade to compete is left to the discretion of the individual school. No one registered above 8th grade may participate in the MOCMSSL.

Further, players, who reach the age of 15 before September 1st, are ineligible to play. All players on school teams must be a student at the school they represent. In the event of a Cooperative Sports Program agreement (see Rule 48), each player must be a student of one of the member schools that comprise the Cooperative Sports Program. The use of an ineligible player will result in a forfeit for any game he/she played in and may result in further disciplinary action as determined by the MOCMSSL Board.

- 17. Contact Information for All Head Coaches, ADs, and School Principals:** Prior to the start of the MOCMSSL season, each member school must provide the League President the name, an email address, and a cell phone number for the head soccer coach, each assistant soccer coach, the Athletic Director (AD), and the school principal.
- 18. MOCMSSL Official Team Roster:** The official roster for each team must be sent to and approved by the League Roster Coordinator by the start of the MOCMSSL regular season (see Rule 3). Failure to submit a MOCMSSL Official Team Roster form and have it approved by the start of the MOCMSSL regular season will result in game forfeits until the team roster is submitted and approved. Each head coach, AD, and school principal must sign the MOCMSSL Official Team Roster form. When the head coach, AD, and school principal sign the MOCMSSL Official Team Roster form, they are certifying that their team adheres to the League Eligibility Policy in Rule 16. The team roster form template can be found on the league website.

The last day to add (or remove players) from the MOCMSSL official team roster is September 30. These roster changes also require the three signatures of the head coach, AD, and school principal on the MOCMSSL Official Roster Change form. Players to be added to

a team's roster cannot compete in a MOCMSSL game until the MOCMSSL Official Roster Change form with the three required signatures has been approved by the League Roster Coordinator. The official team roster change form can also be found in the "Handouts" tab on the Main Menu on the league website (www.leaguelineup.com/mocmssl).

19. **Game Day Roster:** Each team shall submit a team roster, containing the first and last names, and number of all players, and substitutes, all bench personnel and all coaches, to the officials at least five minutes prior to the start of the contest. The game shall not begin until this is complete. Players, substitutes, numbers, bench personnel, and coaches may be added to the roster after the start of play. Goalkeepers may have two numbers listed on the roster - a goalkeeper's number and a field player's number.

The game day roster shall only include players and substitutes from the official team roster. In other words, a Varsity Boys (VB) Game Day Roster from a particular school shall only include players that appear on that VB team's Official Team Roster (see Rule 18). If that school has a Varsity Girls team, no players listed on the VG team's official team roster shall appear on a VB game day roster. The converse is also true. A VG Game Day Roster from a particular school shall only include players that appear on that VG team's Official Team Roster. If that school has a VB team, no players listed on the VB team's Official Team Roster shall appear on a VG Game Day Roster.

20. **League Roster Size:** It is recommended by the league that each roster does not exceed 18 players and teams that do exceed this number of players try to give sufficient game time to all players. However, rosters with greater than 18 players are allowed.
21. **Co-Ed Team:** For a school that can only roster a single team, the team can be co-ed, consisting of both boys and girls. In this case, the co-ed team will play in the Varsity Boys Division. If a school can only roster a girls' team, that team can only consist of female players and will play in the Varsity Girls Division.
22. **Yellow and Red Cards:** Any player receiving a yellow card must be removed from the game. He/she may return on the first available substitution occurrence for that player's team based strictly on Rule 14 (Substitution Rules).

Any player receiving two yellow cards or a red card must be removed from the game immediately and his/her team must play the remainder of the game short one player. The removed player remains ineligible to participate as a player during her/his team's next two (2) regular season games, playoff (including Play-in) games, and/or All-Star game (if selected to the team). Players that receive a red card suspension are also ineligible to participate in her/his team's games in any capacity (i.e., she/he cannot be on the field or watch from the team's sideline or parent's sideline for the first of the two-game suspension).

In other words, the player is ineligible to be at the field during the first game of the suspension. The player can sit on the team's bench and watch her/his team play during the second of the two-game suspension, but she/he cannot be in uniform or participate in the team's pre-game warm-ups.

For a coach that receives a red card, the coach is removed from the game immediately (just like a player) and remains ineligible to coach her/his next two (2) games, which may consist of regular season games, playoff (including Play-in) games, and/or the All-Star game (as per Rule 33c). Coaches that receive a red card suspension are also ineligible to participate in her/his team's games in any capacity for the first of the two-game suspension. The coach cannot be on the field, sit on the spectator's side of the field, or workout or coach her/his team in any capacity before, during halftime, or after games during the first game one of the two game suspension (i.e., the coach can watch this game from the parking lot). During the second game of the suspension, the coach may sit on the spectator's sideline and can only cheer on her/his team. No coaching is allowed by the suspended coach at any point before, during, or after the second of the two-game suspension.

It is the responsibility of the team/school to find another representative of the school, such as an assistant coach or the AD to take over the coaching of the team during a red card suspension. If no school representative is available, the game(s) will be forfeited. This includes the game that the coach received the red card. Under no circumstance can a parent without the necessary certifications listed in Rules 34 and 35 replace a coach that has been suspended for a red card incident.

Red card suspensions carry over from one season to the next for both players and coaches, as long as they are still participating in the MOCMSSL.

Here are some examples how this rule is applied.

- a. A player received two yellow cards or a red card during the third game of the regular season. The player is removed from this game and cannot play during her/his team's next two, regular season games. The player is ineligible to be at the field during the first game of the suspension. The player can sit on the team's bench and watch her/his team play during the second of the two-game suspension, however, she/he cannot be in uniform or participate in the team's pre-game warm-ups.
- b. A player receives two yellow cards or a red card during the ninth game of the regular season. The player is removed from this game and sits out the team's last regular season game and the first game of the MOCMSSL playoffs. The suspended player is ineligible to participate in any fashion during the first game of the

suspension (i.e., she/he cannot be at the field), though he/she can watch the team's first game of the MOCMSSL playoffs (i.e., the second game of the suspension) from the team's sideline. If the last game of the regular season is not played (e.g., due to inclement weather), the suspension will be applied to one of the following (whichever is applicable):

- i. The first two games of the MOCMSSL playoffs
 - ii. The first game of the MOCMSSL playoffs and the All-Star game (if the player was selected), assuming that the suspended player's team was eliminated during the first game of the playoffs.
 - iii. The first game of the MOCMSSL playoffs and the first game of the regular season next year, assuming that the suspended player's team was eliminated during the first game of the playoffs and the player was not selected to the All-Star team.
- c. A coach receives a red card during the 8th game of the regular season. The coach is removed from that game and is ineligible to coach the last two regular season games. She/he is ineligible to participate in any fashion during the first game of the suspension (i.e., can only watch the game from the parking lot). She/he can watch the team's last game of the regular season (i.e., the second game of the suspension) from the parent's sideline. If one or more of these regular season games is not played (e.g., due to inclement weather), the suspension carries over to the post-season (similar to Rule 22.b for a player, except that it would apply to coaching, such as the All-Star game).
- d. A coach receives a red card during her/his last playoff game of the season and that coach was eligible to coach the All-Star game based on Rule 33c. The coach will no longer be eligible to coach the All-Star game or be a spectator at the field and she/he will also be ineligible to coach the first game of the next MOCMSSL season. If the coach was not slated to coach the All-Star game due to her/his team's regular season order of finish, the coach will be ineligible to coach the first two games of the next MOCMSSL season. She/he will not be allowed to be a spectator for the first game of the next regular season (i.e., she/he is allowed to be in the parking lot, not on the field) and can watch the team's second game of the next regular season from the parent's sideline.
- e. A player receives a yellow card during the first game of the regular season and again during the 5th game of the regular season. This is not an infringement of Rule 22. The two yellow cards must occur in the same game for Rule 22 to apply.

23. Report All Red Cards and Incidences of Bullying to the League President: The name of the red carded player or coach or player/substitute that commits an act of bullying (see Rule 44) must be reported to the League President within 24 hours of the incident by the player's coach, the coach himself, or the school's AD. For example, if the incident occurs on a Friday at 5:00 pm, the report must be made by Saturday at 5 pm. There are no exceptions on this 24-hour reporting rule. Failure to do so will result in the following penalties:

- a. A two-point assessment deduction against the team's accumulated point total (See Rule 24) for a player.
- b. A two-point assessment deduction against the team's accumulated point total (See Rule 24) for a coach.
- c. Second infraction - the team placed on probation for one year and is ineligible for any playoffs that year and the next year. This rule applies to the remaining games in the current year as well.

Further, a report must be made by the referee that awarded the red card to the League President (embayha@gmail.com) with the following information.

1. Date of game
2. Full name of teams competing in the contest
3. Player's first and last name
4. Player number
5. Infraction/incident resulting in the red card
6. Supporting material/explanation leading up to the incident
7. Time of the game when the incident occurred (e.g., 38th minute or at 7:30 into the second half)

Repeat red card offenders must be reviewed by the Board for eligibility for the rest of the regular season and playoff games.

The name of any player receiving a single yellow card in a game need not be reported to the League President.

24. Division Standings and Order of Finish: Division standings during the regular season will be kept on an accumulated point system: 2 points for a win, 1 point for a tie, 0 points for a loss. If two or more teams are tied in total points at the end of the season, the following format will be used.

- a. Head-to-head competition (record against each other; not goals for or against)
- b. Goals against versus all opponents
- c. Goal differential, (goals for minus goals against positive variance).
 1. NOTE: maximum goals counted for any win that applies to above criteria will be five (5).

25. **Maximum Goal Differential:** Teams must not win by more than 6 goals. In fact, at no point during any MOCMSSL game should the goal differential be more than 6 goals. Coaches need to counsel their players on good sportsmanship and have a plan in place in case the score of a game becomes one-sided. Every effort must be made not to run up the score. Violators of this “Maximum Goal Differential” policy will be disciplined by the League.
26. **Reporting Scores:** Each team should have an assigned coach who is responsible for reporting the results of all league games, which count in the league standings. The results must be emailed to the League President within 24 hours of the end of the game. The winning team is responsible for reporting the score. Both teams are responsible for reporting the game results in the event of a tie. The results of all MOCMSSL games will be posted on the league website <http://www.leaguelineup.com/welcome.asp?url=mocmssl>.
27. **Dropped Teams:** For any team that drops from the league once the regular season has started, all remaining, unplayed games for that team will be recorded as forfeit wins for the opposing teams. If a team drops after August 28 but prior to the start of the regular season, the league will make every effort to rework the regular season schedule to help ensure the remaining teams can play a full schedule (see Rule 30). As per Rule 4, league fees are due for each dropped team.
28. **void**
29. **Eyeglasses:** Any child who wears corrective eyeglasses is required by law to wear protective eyewear that meets the standards of the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM). It is also suggested that any child who is wearing braces should have a mouthpiece for their protection.

30. League Structure and Playoffs

A. Varsity Boys Division

The Varsity Boys Division consists of ten (10) teams. All boys’ teams will be scheduled to play 10 games during the regular season. The schedule is posted on the league website. The regular season and playoffs must be completed by November 15th.

Each boys’ team will qualify for the playoffs based on regular season finish, with the following caveats. A team must play a minimum of seven (7) regular season games to be eligible to compete in a playoff game. If a team has not played the minimum number of games during the regular season, the playoff game will not be played and their opponent will be awarded a forfeit win. There are no 3rd quarters during the playoff.

The following playoff format will be used. Note team X below means that the team finished in Xth place during the regular season (e.g., Team 1 finished in 1st place, Team 2 finished in 2nd place). The home team in any playoff match-up/pairing is the one that finished better in the regular season standings (e.g., Team 4 is the home team versus Team 5 during Round 1).

Play-in Games

Play-in Game 1: Team 8 vs. Team 9

Play-in Game 2: Team 7 vs. Team 10

Round 1 (Quarterfinals)

Upper Bracket: Team 1 vs. Winner of Play-in Game 1 Team 4 vs. Team 5

Lower Bracket: Team 2 vs. Winner of Play-in Game 2 Team 3 vs. Team 6

Round 2 (Semi-Finals)

Winner of each game in Upper Bracket play

Winner of each game in Lower Bracket play

Rule 6 applies to the Play-in, Round 1, and Round 2 playoff games as it pertains to health and safety (e.g., Covid-19). Every effort should be made to conduct these playoff games with the health and safety of the players being of paramount importance (e.g., COVID-19). If the Round 2 playoff game cannot be rescheduled safely within two days of the date of the League Championship Game, then the game will not be played. The team affected by health and safety precautions (e.g., COVID-19) will forfeit the game to their opponent. If both teams are affected by health and safety precautions (e.g., COVID-19), then the team with the most points based on regular season record and tie-breakers is declared the winner. The MOCMSSL Executive Board will make the final determination, including possible cancellation of the playoffs based on Rule 34.

League Championship Game (Finals)

The two Round 2 winners (i.e., the Upper Bracket and Lower bracket winners) play each other in the Varsity Boys League Championship Game.

If the League Championship Game cannot be played for any reason including weather or health and safety precautions (e.g., COVID-19), Rule 34 applies with the following exception. The team affected by health and safety precautions (e.g., COVID-19) will forfeit the game to their opponent. If both teams are affected by health and safety precautions (e.g., COVID-19), the team with the most points based on regular season record and tie-breakers is declared the league champion. The MOCMSSL Executive Board will make the final determination on this game.

Finally, the playoff competition rules for the Varsity Boys division will be distributed at the end of the MOCMSSL regular season. These playoff competition rules will provide the playoff seedings based on the final regular season standings, the dates when each round of the playoffs must be completed, the location of the Championship and All-Star games (see Rule 33), and the procedures and constraints pertaining to the rescheduling of games in the playoffs. The playoff competition rules are considered part of the 2026 MOCMSSL Bylaws.

B. Varsity Girls Division

The Varsity Girls Division consists of eight (8) teams. All girls' teams will be scheduled to play 10 games during the regular season. The schedule is posted on the league website. The regular season and playoffs must be completed by November 15th.

Each girls' team will qualify for the playoffs based on regular season finish, with the following caveats. A team must play a minimum of seven (7) regular season games to be eligible to compete in a playoff game. If a team has not played the minimum number of games during the regular season, the playoff game will not be played and their opponent will be awarded a forfeit win. There are no 3rd quarters during the playoffs and there are no play-in games this year.

The following playoff format will be used. Note Team X below means that the team finished in Xth place during the regular season (e.g., Team 1 finished in 1st place, Team 2 finished in 2nd place). The home team in any playoff match-up/pairing is the one that finished better in the regular season standings (e.g., Team 4 is the home team versus Team 5 during Round 1).

Round 1 (Quarterfinals)

Upper Bracket: Team 1 vs. Team 8

Team 4 vs. Team 5

Lower Bracket: Team 2 vs. Team 7

Team 3 vs. Team 6

Round 2 (Semi-Finals)

Winner of each game in Upper Bracket play

Winner of each game in Lower Bracket play

Rule 6 applies to Round 1 and Round 2 playoff games as it pertains to health and safety (e.g., Covid-19). Every effort should be made to conduct these playoff games with the health and safety of the players being of paramount importance (e.g., COVID-19). If the Round 2 playoff game cannot be rescheduled safely within two days of the date of the League Championship Game, then the game will not be played. The team affected by health and safety precautions (e.g., COVID-19) will forfeit the game to their opponent. If both teams are affected by health and safety precautions (e.g., COVID-19), then the team with the most points based on regular season record and tie-breakers is declared the

league champion. The MOCMSSL Executive Board will make the final determination, including possible cancellation of the playoffs based on Rule 34.

League Championship Game (Finals)

The two Round 2 winners (i.e., the Upper Bracket and Lower bracket winners) play each other in the Varsity Girls League Championship Game

If the League Championship Game cannot be played for any reason including weather or health and safety precautions (e.g., COVID-19), Rule 34 applies with the following exception. The team affected by health and safety precautions (e.g., COVID-19) will forfeit the game to their opponent. If both teams are affected by health and safety precautions (e.g., COVID-19), the team with the most points based on regular season record and tie-breakers will be declared the winner. The MOCMSSL Executive Board will make the final determination on this game.

Finally, the playoff competition rules for the Varsity Girls division will be distributed at the end of the MOCMSSL regular season. These playoff competition rules will provide the playoff seedings based on the final regular season standings, the dates when each round of the playoffs must be completed, the location of the Championship and All-Star games (see Rule 33), and the procedures and constraints pertaining to the rescheduling of games in the playoffs. The playoff competition rules are considered part of the 2026 MOCMSSL Bylaws.

31. **Playoff Games Cannot End in a Tie:** With the exception of consolation games, all MOCMSSL playoff games, including play-in games, if any, and the League Championship Games, must have a winner. Consolation games are played for a maximum of 60 minutes and can end in a tie score at the end of regulation. There are no overtime periods and penalty kick (PK) shootouts in consolation games.

The following text applies to all playoff games except consolation games. If the score is tied at the end of regulation play (i.e., after 60 minutes of play), there will be two, 10-minute, overtime periods played in their entirety (like a whole new match). There is no "golden goal", so even if a team scores in one overtime period, both 10-minute overtimes must be played in full. There will be a coin toss conducted before the first overtime period just like at the start of the regulation game. Teams will have 2 minutes between overtime periods to rehydrate and switch sides.

If the score is still tied at the end of the two, 10-minute, overtime periods, then a penalty kick (PK) shootout will be conducted. A coin toss will be conducted to determine who shoots first. Each team's head coach selects its "first" five players to participate and the order in which they will take the PKs. The team's GK can be one of the players to take a PK. Each team gets 5 shots (shots alternate between teams) until one team has more goals than

the other. If after 5 shooters the score is still tied, it goes to “sudden death” shots. During “sudden death”, each team selects a sixth player to participate (not one of the “first” five to participate during the penalty kick shootout). If the game is still tied after kick 6, then both teams select a seventh player (who hasn't participated as one of the “first” five or in “sudden death”). This process continues during sudden death until one team scores and the other team misses. If play continues through kick 11 and all players on the field at the end of the second overtime have participated in the penalty kick shootout and the score remains tied, both teams can select a new PK kicking order for “sudden death” kick 12 and beyond. It is not necessary for the first of the “first” five players that participated in the PK shootout to participate in “sudden death” kick 12.

Only players (that were on the playing field) at the end of the second overtime period can participate in the penalty kick shootout (and sudden death shots). A player may not take a second PK during “sudden death” until all players (including the GK) that were on the field at the end of the second overtime period have had one turn to take a PK. Players on the bench (i.e., substitutes) at the end of 80 minutes (i.e., at the end of the second 10-minute overtime period) are not allowed to participate in the penalty kick shootout (and sudden death shots).

32. **MOCMSSL Awards:** Awards will be distributed to the first-place (i.e., Champions) and second-place teams (i.e., Finalists) in both the Varsity Boys and Varsity Girls divisions resulting from the competition of the playoffs.
33. **All-Star Games:** When the playoffs are conducted, every effort will be made to hold a late season, All-Star contest in each division (Varsity Boys and Varsity Girls). Each school will be allowed to send a designated number of players to compete. There should be 32 all-stars selected per division, consisting of two teams of ~16 players each. Each player will be provided with a MOCMSSL All-Star game t-shirt. Players selected by their coaches should be advised that it is an honor and an obligation to play in this game. All Star games consist of two, 30-minute halves and can end in a tie.
 - a. Varsity Boys’ Division (10 teams): The following rules apply to teams sending players to the All-Star game based on regular season finish.
 - 1st and second place finishers will send five (5) players to the Varsity Boys All-Star game,
 - 3rd place finisher will send four (4) players ...,
 - 4th through 7th place finishers will send three (3) players ...,
 - 8th and 10th place finishers will send two (2) players
 - b. Varsity Girls’ Division (8 teams): The following rules apply to teams sending players to the All-Star game based on regular season finish.

- 1st and second place finishers will send five (5) players to the Varsity Girls All-Star game,
- 3rd through 6th place finishers will send four (4) players ...,
- 7th and 8th place finishers will send three (3) players ...

- c. The Varsity Boys' All-Stars will be coached by the HEAD coaches only of the first and second place boys' teams based on regular season finish. Similarly, the Varsity Girls' All-Stars will be coached by the HEAD coaches only of the first and second place girls' teams based on regular season finish.
- d. Girls participating on a co-ed team in the Varsity Boys division during the regular season (as per Rule 21) that are selected as an all-star will play in the Varsity Boys All-Star game/contest.
- e. The MOCMSSL Executive Board reserves the right to grant additional all-stars, if necessary, for reasons including player safety. For example, consider a roster of all-stars that does not consist of a goalkeeper. The MOCMSSL Executive Board would rather grant an additional all-star to a team to play the goalkeeper position rather than a field player being asked to play as a goalkeeper during an all-star game.

34. Cancellation of Playoffs and Determination of Awards: In the event of a natural disaster (e.g., Hurricane Sandy) or other significant event that is beyond the control of the MOCMSSL and its member teams, the post-season (including playoffs and All-Star games) can be cancelled by a majority vote of all schools in the league. If the playoffs are cancelled in their entirety, trophies will be awarded to the first- and second-place teams in both the Varsity Boys and Varsity Girls divisions based on the final, regular season standings. If the playoffs are cancelled after a subset of the playoff games are played, then co-champions will be declared in both the Varsity Boys and Varsity Girls divisions based on the final, regular season standings with each team receiving first place trophies.

35. Training and Responsibility of Coaches: All coaches **18 years of age and older** must meet the following requirements.

- a. Rutgers S.A.F.E.T.Y. certified,
- b. Electronically fingerprinted with background checks on record in the school, and
- c. Sign a Code of Conduct form.

No team can participate in a MOCMSSL game led by a person other than one that has met the Rutgers S.A.F.E.T.Y, fingerprinting requirements, and signed a Code of Conduct form. In other words, a parent without having met the aforementioned requirements cannot stand

in for a head coach or AD in the event that the head coach is unavailable or late for a game. No one under the age of 18 can coach the team unless an adult coach meeting the above requirements is present at the game.

Note that coaches **under the age of 18 years of age** must be Rutgers S.A.F.E.T.Y. certified. It is left to the discretion of the member school about whether to require their coaches whom are minors to meet all other requirements for adult coaches, as detailed in this rule (Rule 35).

36. **Concussion Symptom Protocol Certification:** All coaches, regardless of age, must be certified every year in understanding the symptoms of concussion, including protocol when student athletes can return to the team after a concussion is experienced. Certification will require all coaches (head and assistant coaches) and ADs to participate in an online training class and submit a certificate of course completion to the Concussion Certificate Coordinator prior to the start of the regular season. The online concussion symptom protocol training class can be found at <https://www.train.org/cdctrain/course/1089818/details>. The certificate must be dated during the month of June or later of the current year. No exceptions. Game forfeiture will result if there is no coach (or AD) that is certified in concussion symptom protocol available to lead a team in a MOCMSSL contest.
37. **MOCMSSL Lightning and Thunder Policy:** The MOCMSSL Lightning and Thunder Policy is applicable to all MOCMSSL games during the regular season and playoffs. The number one priority is safety at all MOCMSSL games. If you see lightning or hear thunder during any MOCMSSL game, THE GAME MUST BE STOPPED IMMEDIATELY. The MOCMSSL Lightning and Thunder Policy, contained in full in Appendix B, includes provisions for restarting a game after a minimum 30-minute stoppage period (as long as there are no recurring lightning or thunder events). The MOCMSSL Lightning and Thunder Policy pertains to all lightning and thunder events, whether perceived to be an immediate threat or one that appears to be far off (e.g., miles away). This MOCMSSL Lightning and Thunder Policy applies regardless of the score or time left in the game, applies to lightning and thunder events that occur prior to the start of a MOCMSSL game, as well as multiple occurrences of lightning and/or thunder. There will be NO EXCEPTIONS to the MOCMSSL Lightning and Thunder Policy described in Appendix B.

Once lightning has been recognized or thunder heard, by an official, a coach, the host site management personnel, or a lightning detection system, the game must be stopped immediately (regardless of the state of play) with all players, coaches, spectators, and officials directed to appropriate shelters.

The MOCMSSL is reminding all officials, coaches and host site management, that once the game begins, the officials on the field have the authority to stop the event. However, it is everyone's responsibility to immediately notify the closest referee as soon as lightning has

been recognized or thunder has been heard. Coaches and host site management must do everything in their power to communicate with the closest referee to stop the game immediately, which may include walking onto the field of play. The game is considered stopped as soon as a whistle is blown by the referee.

While the MOCMSSL policy places responsibility on referees, coaches, and host site management personnel to communicate, it is critical that a pre-game meeting take place among those present when there are possible weather issues predicted. This meeting should include (a) whether there is a functioning lightning detection/warning system at the site and (b) what the chain of command is for the communication of the stoppage of the event.

Finally, while it is the responsibility of the host site management personnel to decide if a game is going to be delayed or terminated prior to the event; once the event begins, it is the responsibility of the official(s) on the field to make the decision to stop the event.

38. **Uniform Numbering:** All uniform jerseys, including goalkeeper jerseys, shall be numbered on the back with a different Arabic number at least six inches in height and on the front (jerseys or shorts) with the same number, which shall be at least four inches in height. Numbers shall be in contrasting color to the jersey (or shorts) and clearly visible.
39. **Uniform Color Conflict:** If both teams prior to a contest have the same or similar jersey color, it is the responsibility of the home team to change into jerseys of a different color or wear pinnies of a different color over their jerseys.
40. **Automated External Defibrillators:** Effective with the 2014 season, the MOCMSSL has adopted the following policy regarding Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs).

"The league must establish the practice of the home team being responsible for providing an AED to each game and practice, that will reduce the number each school will need. However, if a school has two teams in the same season practicing at two different locations on the same day, and at the same time, then they (the school) will need multiple AEDs."

The interpretation of this recommendation is that the head coach of the home team needs to bring an AED to each game and be trained in the use of the device. The recommendation also requires the head coach to bring an AED to each practice.

41. **Heading the Ball:** Consistent with the US Soccer mandates on heading the ball, heading is banned within the MOCMSSL for all players in both practices and games. While the US Soccer rule applies to U-11 and below, restrictions are imposed on U-14 and below players in terms of the number of headers and time spent practicing heading each week. The MOCMSSL cannot enforce these restrictions. Further, this league allows players at U-11 and

below to participate, making it difficult for referees, coaches, and spectators to determine who is allowed to head the ball and who is not.

An indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team if a player **deliberately** touches the ball with his/her head during a game.

- a. The indirect free kick is to be taken from the place where the player touched the ball with his/her head.
- b. An indirect free kick awarded to the attacking team inside the opposing team's penalty area, must be taken on the penalty area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the player touched the ball with his/her head.
- c. Neither cautions nor send offs shall be issued for persistent infringement or denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity related to the heading infraction.

42. **Injury Reports:** The home team coach/AD is responsible for reporting injuries to:

- Ernie Bayha, MOCMSSL League President, embayha@gmail.com.

Injuries include, but are not limited to suspected injuries to the head and face, including concussion symptoms, and limbs. Common sense prevails here. In any event, a report is required when medical attention from emergency personnel/first responders is dispatched to the field.

The report must include the following:

1. First and last name of the injured player
2. The school that the player attends
3. Date and time of the injury,
4. Location where the injury occurred (e.g., field name and town)
5. Type of injury, and
6. Relevant circumstances about the injury, including those leading up to and after the injury occurred.

43. **Termination of Games:** If a regular season or playoff game is terminated by the referee(s) before the first half has been completed, the game does not count in the standings and it can be rescheduled and replayed in its entirety. The referee of the terminated game is paid in full². If a regular season game is terminated at any point after the completion of the first half,

² Once the referee arrives at the field, he/she must be paid by the home team school, even if the game is not played for any reason.

the game will not be replayed and will count as a complete game for league purposes. For playoff games (excluding the All-Star games) that are terminated at any point after the completion of the first half with the score tied, the game can be rescheduled and replayed in its entirety. The determination of whether the game qualifies as a complete game will be decided by the MOCMSSL Executive Board. All-Star games that are terminated for any reason will not be rescheduled.

44. **Bullying:** Bullying will not be tolerated in the MOCMSSL. According to stopbullying.gov, bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose. There are three types of bullying.

- Verbal bullying is saying or writing mean things. Verbal bullying includes:
 - Teasing
 - Name-calling
 - Inappropriate sexual comments
 - Threatening to cause harm
- Social bullying, sometimes referred to as relational bullying, involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships. Social bullying includes:
 - Leaving someone out on purpose
 - Telling other children not to be friends with someone
 - Spreading rumors about someone
 - Embarrassing someone in public
- Physical bullying involved hurting a person's body or possessions. Physical bullying includes:
 - Hitting/kicking/pinching
 - Spitting

- Taking or breaking someone's things
- Making mean or rude hand gestures.

It is possible that a player (or substitute) may not receive a red card for bullying if the referee did not hear or observe the bullying. However, a report of bullying that occurred immediately before, during, or after the game that is substantiated will result in a two-game suspension for the offending player or substitute, based on MOCMSSL Executive Board Actions in Rule 47. In other words, a player or substitute that has been found to have bullied another person on the soccer field (including walking to/from the parking lot onto or off the field) shall be subject to a two-game suspension from the MOCMSSL, and MOCMSSL rules 21 and 22 for red cards will apply for the bullying infraction.

45. **Demonstration of Respect for the Referees:** The league recognizes that the job being performed by the referees is a difficult one. During many contests, there is only one referee assigned. Since one referee cannot possibly see all angles of a play from a single vantage point, it is likely that the referee(s) will miss a call from time to time. Coaches and spectators need to understand that the referees intend to call the best game that they can. Missing a call from the perspective of coaches and spectators is not a reason for disrespecting/yelling at the referee(s). The MOCMSSL does not tolerate disrespecting/yelling at the referees.

The referee(s) has(have) a tool to control the game using their cards for coaches (including parents that scream at the referees, as the coaches are responsible for the behaviors of their team's parents). The referees are strongly encouraged to use cards when other mechanisms like verbal or non-verbal means of communications with the coaches are not effective. Depending on the circumstances of the game, it may be possible that the official does not issue a red card (or two yellows) for repeated dissent of the referee(s). A report of coaches or parents yelling at the referees that occurred immediately before, during, or after the game - that is substantiated - will result in a minimum, one-game suspension for the offending coach, based on MOCMSSL Executive Board Actions in Rule 47. In other words, coaches that have been found to have screamed/yelled at the referee(s) on the soccer field (including walking to/from the parking lot onto or off the field) shall be subject to a one-game suspension from the MOCMSSL. The head coach can also be served a one-game suspension if it is determined that parents of her/his team verbally abused/yelled/screamed at the referee(s) and the head coach made little effort to resolve the problem promptly on the spectator's sideline. By serving the one-game suspension, the head coach will not be able to participate in the team's next game in any capacity and can only watch the team's next game from the parking lot, consistent with Rule 22 for the first game of a two-game suspension for a red card.

46. **Approach for Approving Changes to the Bylaws:** Any changes to the MOCMSSL Bylaws must be approved by the ADs by majority rule based on the number of schools that cast a vote. Every effort will be made by the MOCMSSL Executive Board to provide in writing the proposed, marked-up changes to the Bylaws and allow the ADs (or AD delegates) at least seven (7) days to review the changes and cast a vote. Votes must be sent to the League President by the voting deadline to count towards a decision. Only the member schools listed on page 1 of these Bylaws can participate in a vote. Only one vote per school.
47. **MOCMSSL Executive Board Actions:** The Board members will be responsible for the operation of the league and have the authority to decide on emergency, disciplinary, and rule violation matters that occur over the course of the season. The MOCMSSL will monitor any and all events/occurrences that lack good sportsmanship and fair play. The MOCMSSL has the authority to impose and enforce penalties, suspensions, and banning from games at its discretion to enhance the spirit of fairness, good sportsmanship, and values that the league promotes.
48. **Cooperative Sports Programs:** The MOCMSSL Executive Board shall be authorized to approve Cooperative Sports Programs between two cooperating member schools where one or both of those schools has an insufficient number of students to participate in the sport of soccer.

Such Cooperative Sports Programs will be based upon an agreement between the cooperating schools whereby one of the two schools shall have the complete responsibility for the conduct of the specific sport of soccer, which will be available to the students at both schools.

The duration of any such approved Cooperating Sports Program shall be one year. Application for a Cooperating Sports Program must be made every year, if renewal of a Cooperating Sports Program agreement between two member schools is desired.

The MOCMSSL Executive Board shall not approve any Cooperative Sports Programs unless all of the following conditions are met by the cooperating schools.

- a. Demonstrate/provide evidence of a sufficient decline in school enrollment.
- b. One of the schools must demonstrate a decline in interest or participation in the sport, as, for example, through a decline in the number of students on the varsity roster from one year to the next.
- c. A member school may enter into an agreement for a Cooperative Sports Program with more than one other member school; and such an agreement may be for one or more

sports involving the cooperating schools. In other words, member school “A” can enter into a Cooperative Sports Program with member school “B” covering parochial soccer (MOCMSSL) and basketball (MOCPBL). Member school “A” may enter into another Cooperative Sports Program with another school (e.g., member school “C”) for parochial volleyball (MOPVL). On the other hand, member school “A” may not enter into more than one Cooperative Sports Program for the sport of soccer to avoid the division of soccer players from one (1) member school onto two or more member school teams.

- d. A Cooperative Sports Program for soccer will cover the Varsity Girls or the Varsity Boys divisions, or both divisions.
- e. A Cooperative Sports Program for soccer must consist of 5th through 8th graders to be accepted into the league. The rationale for this requirement is to avoid the creation of a "powerhouse" team consisting of only older players (e.g., 7th and 8th graders) at the expense of allowing younger players (5th and 6th graders) to be on the roster and compete.

A Cooperative Sports Program for soccer must be agreed and signed by the principals of the cooperating schools using the Cooperative Sports Program application form. This application must be completed and submitted to the MOCMSSL League President by August 24, 2026 at the latest.

The MOCMSSL Executive Board has final approval authority on every Cooperative Sports Program application. A decision will be made by the MOCMSSL Executive Board by August 28, 2026 – the day that team submits for the current season are due (See Rule 3). An example where an application will be denied is if the teams have sufficient players, in the league’s opinion, to field a team on their own without entering into a Cooperative Sports Program.

49. **MOCMSSL Membership:** Beginning in 2022, membership was expanded to include public schools and non-public schools with comparable school populations as our current member schools so there is competitive balance. Any school desiring to join the MOCMSSL must submit a request in writing and meet with the MOCMSSL Executive Board and one current, member school Athletic Director (AD), to provide supporting details for the application, not limited to the following information:

- Size of their school population by grade level
- The soccer playing experience of their school teams (e.g., records by year and league),
- The home playing field of the school, and
- Coach/AD information

- Indication of school administration support for joining the MOCMSSL

The results of the Executive Board meeting with the candidate school will be shared with and voted on by the ADs representing the current membership of the league within (2) weeks after meeting with the MOCMSSL Executive Board. If admitted, the MOCMSSL Executive Board reserves the right to impose a two-year, probationary period on any new member school to ensure the new member school is a good citizen of the league (e.g., abides by the league bylaws) and there is overall competitive balance. All decisions by the MOCMSSL Executive Board are final.

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2026 MOCMSSL Bylaws

Appendix A

Referee Information and Procedures

1. Scheduling of Referees

The league referee assignor is responsible for assigning referees for all MOCMSSL regular season and playoff games, including Championship games and All-Star games. For liability reasons, NO other assignments of referees are permitted, meaning that coaches, parents, ADs, school administrators, etc. may not ask or assign anyone to officiate a MOCMSSL game. The assignment of referees is the sole responsibility of the league referee assignor. If anyone other than the referee assignor asks a person(s) to work a game and a player is hurt during that game, you and your school can expect to be held legally liable for the injury.

The league referee assignor will distribute a referee schedule to the MOCMSSL prior to the start of the regular season. While the MOCMSSL schedule posted on the league website is the master schedule, schools should assume that the referees work off of the referee schedule instead. Prior to the start of the regular season, all schools are responsible for checking the referee schedule against the master schedule to ensure that there are referees assigned for all games on the correct date and time and at the correct venue.

If there are any discrepancies between the referee schedule and the master schedule, it is the responsibility of the member MOCMSSL schools to identify any issues by contacting the league referee assignor prior to the start of the season. Failure to do so will result in the home team/school being responsible to pay the assigned referee(s) in full should she/he (they) show up at the field on the date and time of the game based on the referee schedule.

2. Number of Referees Assigned Per Game

All schools will be assigned at least one referee per home game. ADs can request more than one referee to be assigned per home game, but fulfillment of these requests are not guaranteed (e.g., due to shortage in the availability of referees).

3. Confirm Referees Before Each Game

The home team/school must confirm the logistics with the assigned referee(s) at least 48 hours prior to each game. This confirmation must be made by telephone or text message. Leave a detailed message for the referee(s) if you don't reach her/him directly and request a return

phone call or text message confirming the game assignment. Each referee is required to respond back to the home team/school to confirm the game assignment.

If the referee(s) is(are) NOT confirmed by the home team/school, the referee(s) will NOT show up to the field. In this event, the game will:

- a. Not be played that day, and
- b. Be declared as postponed (not a forfeit).

Additionally, the home team/school will be responsible for paying the referee(s) 50% of their game fee(s) for the missed opportunity to work another game on that date.

Since the visiting team traveled unnecessarily for a game that was not played, the rescheduled game will be played at the visiting team's home field as a remedy. The home and visiting teams will remain the same, but the venue will be the visiting team's home field.

4. Schedule Changes

If there are any proposed changes to any game on the master schedule, the following procedures must be followed, independent of which team (home or visiting) requested the change(s).

- a. Written agreement between the two schools must be sent to the League President for approval. At least 72 hours' notice is required to approve the request and schedule the game. Requests made within 72 hours of the proposed new game date will be denied.
- b. Once approved, the League President will make the change(s) to the master schedule (on the league website).
- c. Once the League President provides the approval, the home school/team must contact the referee(s) assigned for the postponed game and try to reschedule with the same referee(s). If the originally assigned referee(s) is(are) not available, then the home school/team must contact the league referee assignor directly by email (NOT text message) to request a new referee assignment.³

5. Postponements and Cancellations

All home teams/schools must call the opposing team and the assigned referees in the case of a game postponement due to inclement weather no later than 2:00 pm on game day, or two hours before the start of the game, whichever is earlier. If the referee(s) is (are) not contacted and the

³ The only exception to this rule is that pre-plays do not require approval from the League President. However, written agreement by both teams must still be sent to the League President before the League President will effect the change to the master schedule on the league website.

referee(s) show(s)-up for the game, the home team/school is responsible for paying the referee(s) in full.

6. Regular Season Referee Fees

Here are the standardized MOCMSSL referee fees during the regular season.

- Single referee fee is \$100.00 per game paid by the home team/school
- For schools where two officials are assigned, the referee fee is \$75.00 per official paid by the home team/school.

Referee fees during the regular season must be paid by the home team/school and can be paid either by cash or check. If the referee is paid on the day of the game at the field, the referee must be paid by the home team/school PRIOR to the start of the game. No exceptions. Schools can alternatively mail the referee a check. In this case, the home team/school should have the referee complete a voucher prior to the start of the game.

7. Post-Season Referee Fees

Here are the standardized MOCMSSL referee fees for the first round of the playoffs, including the play-in games.

- When one referee is assigned based on the venue of the home team/school, both schools must equally split the single referee fee listed in item 6 above (i.e., each school pays \$50.00 each).
- If a game is played at a venue where two referees are generally assigned and the visiting team is a single referee school, then the home team/school will pay a total of \$100.00 (split between the two referees) and the visiting team will pay a total of \$50.00 (split between the two referees). The \$50.00 fee is equivalent to one half of the single referee fee that the visiting team is accustomed to paying.
- If schools that use a two-referee system play each other, then both schools will equally split the referee fees and pay \$75.00 each (\$37.50 per official).

These referee fees can be paid either by cash or check. If the referee(s) is (are) paid at the field, the referee must be paid PRIOR to the start of the game. No exceptions. Schools can alternatively mail the referee(s) a check. In this case, both schools should ask the referee(s) to complete a voucher prior to the start of the game.

8. Championship Games and All-Star Games Referee Fees

The MOCMSSL will pay the following referee fees by check on the day of the Championship (Finals) games and All-Star games as follows.

- Championship Games (one boys and one girls game)
 - 3 referee system/game: Center (\$100.00) and two Assistant Referees (\$50.00 each)
- All-Star Games (one boys and one girls game)
 - Single referee paid at \$100.00/game

9. League Referee Assignor's Fee

The league's referee assignor is Edie Hengeveld (montypaws2@gmail.com). The assignor's fee will be paid the amount equal to one team entrance fee plus \$25.00 for a total of \$375.00.

The league referee assignor fees will be paid by check by the MOCMSSL

10. No Protests

There are no protests in this league. If you believe that a Law of the Game has been violated, please report the incident to the League President.

There should be no email or phone calls to the league about comments or disagreements with referee judgement calls. This includes coaches, parents, ADs, school administrators, et al. These emails and phone calls will not be addressed or acknowledged.

11. Carding

Treat the referees with respect. Referees can card (yellow or red) coaches for dissent and other reasons. This should NEVER happen in this league. If this occurs, it must be reported to the League President (See Rule 23 on page 7).

12. Spectator Behavior

The behavior of spectators is the responsibility of each head coach. If a spectator verbally abuses a referee, the head coach is responsible for immediately addressing this matter during the game. This type of behavior RARELY happens in this league, but just in case, it should be clear that this behavior is not tolerated. The head coach can be carded for the behavior of parents from his/her team.

13. Referees Adherence to MOCMSSL Bylaws

It is the responsibility of the league referee assignor to inform all referees working MOCMSSL games about the 2026 MOCMSSL Bylaws. Referees are expected to adhere to the 2026 MOCMSSL Bylaws.

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2026 MOCMSSL Bylaws
Appendix B

MOCMSSL Lightning and Thunder Policy

The number one priority is safety! If there are forecasts for thunderstorms in your area on the day of your game, the league suggests that you consider postponing your game.

This policy applies for all lightning and thunder events, whether perceived to be an immediate threat or one that appears to be far off (e.g., miles away). If you see lightning or hear thunder, **THE GAME MUST BE STOPPED IMMEDIATELY**. This rule applies regardless of the score or time left in the game. Again, the number one priority is safety.

In the event that lightning or thunder is observed or heard during a MOCMSSL soccer game,

- 1) The MOCMSSL game will be stopped by the assigned referee(s);
- 2) The game clock will be stopped;
- 3) Players, coaches and spectators will be directed by the assigned referee(s) and head coaches of both teams to leave the field and find safe haven for the entire duration that the game is stopped;
- 4) The game will not be permitted to resume for thirty (30) minutes after the last observed lightning or thunder event.

If the assigned referee(s) does (do) not stop the match, the two head coaches are responsible for advising the referee that the match must be stopped as per this MOCMSSL Lightning and Thunder Policy.

If an additional lightning/thunder event is observed during the 30-minute stoppage period, the thirty (30) minute clock will be restarted again. In NO case should a game be restarted less than 30 minutes after the last observed lightning or thunder event.

The maximum stoppage period per game (whether the lightning or thunder events occur before or during the game) cannot exceed forty-five (45) minutes. In the event that the required stoppage period has reached or will reach forty-five (45) minutes, the game will be terminated.

If a game is terminated before the first half has been completed, the game does not count in the standings and it can be rescheduled and replayed in its entirety⁴. The referee of the terminated

⁴ The decision to reschedule the game rests with the two schools involved in the terminated contest. If the game is rescheduled, the home team is again responsible for the referee fees (unless some other mutual agreement is reached between the two schools).

game is paid in full⁵. If a game is terminated at any point after the completion of the first half, the game will not be replayed and will count as a complete game for league purposes. The determination of whether or not the game qualifies as a complete game will be decided by the MOCMSSL Executive Board.

If a lightning or thunder event occurs while at the field prior to the start of a MOCMSSL game:

1. Players, coaches and spectators will be directed to leave the field by the assigned referee(s) and/or head coaches of both teams.
2. If no other lightning or thunder event is observed, the game can start after 30 minutes.
3. The maximum stoppage time per game applies and cannot exceed 45 minutes.

Examples of the Application of the MOCMSSL Lightning and Thunder Policy

Single Lightning or Thunder Event Observed

If lightning or thunder is observed or heard at any time during the first half (or the second half) of a game, the game will be stopped by the referee. The game clock will be stopped at that point. Players, coaches and spectators will be directed to leave the field and find safe haven for the entire duration that the game is stopped. If no other lightning or thunder event is observed, the game will resume after 30 minutes. The game clock will be restarted and play will resume to complete the remaining time period in the half. If the stoppage occurred in the first half, the second half will then be played as originally scheduled after a half-time period.

Multiple Lightning and/or Thunder Events Observed

1. If lightning or thunder is observed in the area of the fields at any time during the first half (or second half) of a game, the game will be stopped by the assigned referee(s) for the required 30-minute period and other required actions (see above) must be taken.
 - If a second lightning or thunder event is observed five minutes into the 30-minute stoppage period, a new 30-minute stoppage period is started. This results in the game being stopped for a total of 35 minutes. Play will resume after that second 30-minute period expires with no recurrence of a lightning or thunder event.
 - If multiple lightning or thunder events are observed during the stoppage period, after each event, the 30-minute stoppage period is restarted. If the cumulative stoppage time reaches 45 minutes, the game will be terminated.

⁵ Once the referee arrives at the field, he/she must be paid by the home team school, even if the game is not played due to lightning or thunder.

2. If at any time a game is stopped (even before it started) for a lightning/thunder event and the entire 30-minute period passes and the game restarts (starts) before a second event is observed (thus triggering another 30-minute stoppage period), the game will be terminated as the total stoppage time would exceed 45 minutes. For example,

- If a game is stopped for 30 minutes for an event that occurred during the first half, and a second event occurs, either in the first or second half, the game will be immediately terminated (as the total stoppage time would exceed 45 minutes).
- If the game is stopped for the first time during the second half and the entire 30-minute stoppage period is observed before a second event is observed later in the second half, the game will be immediately terminated (as the total stoppage time would exceed 45 minutes).

Remember that the number one priority is safety!

-- End of 2026 MOCMSSL Bylaws --