



**G I R L S  
ACADEMY**

# **REFEREE GUIDELINES**

**2025-2026**

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## I. RULES OF COMPETITION

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### COMPETITION RULES & REGULATIONS

#### A. GENERAL

- a. Unless otherwise provided in these Regulations, all Girls Academy competitions shall be played in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the Game in force at the time of competition as provided by the International Football Association Board.
- b. Member clubs are required to comply with these regulations, and in addition, member clubs are encouraged to report pertinent situations to the league staff, which appear to be in non-compliance with the league requirements. Reporting non-compliance on the part of other clubs should not be viewed as a negative, but rather as a positive attempt to maintain consistent standards that ensure professionalism and fairness, both on and off the field.
- c. All member clubs are required to adhere to the league requirements. The Board of Directors reserve the right to decide how to enforce these requirements. Should a member club be found in violation of any of the requirements outlined in this document, their standing as a member club may be jeopardized. The penalties vary based on the type and frequency of the infraction, and may result in denied participation in specific competitions and programming.

#### B. CONDUCT

- a. Each member club shall be responsible for the conduct of its players, representatives and members attending any home fixture as related to all aspects of the league and agree to abide by the FIFA Code of Conduct.

#### C. EVENT RULES & SPECTATOR BEHAVIOR

- a. Attendees must listen to and follow instructions from Girls Academy staff members.
  - i. Non-compliance will result in their club potentially being fined.
  - ii. Non-compliant individuals may not be allowed to return to the facility.
  - iii. Example: Individuals must return to their cars or designated shelters for lightning or other when instructed by GA event staff.
- b. The GA will not be held liable if an injury results from not following GA instructions.
- c. Home Club must ensure parents/spectators do not enter the team sideline area or the field of play. Spectators/Families should sit directly across from their team bench where practical.
- d. GA spectators/parents must adhere to regulations surrounding the sale or possession of alcohol and/or other substances at GA sanctioned competitions.

#### D. LAWS OF THE GAME, DISCIPLINARY MATTERS, DISPUTES, PROTESTS & APPEALS

- a. Laws of the Game
  - i. General
    1. Unless otherwise provided in these Regulations, all games shall be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game in force at the time of the competition and as laid down by the International Football Association Board. In the case of any discrepancy in the

interpretation of the Laws of the Game, the English version shall be authoritative.

ii. Disciplinary Matters

1. Disciplinary incidents are dealt with by the disciplinary committee.
2. The players and member clubs participating in the Girls Academy agree to comply with the Laws of the Game, the USSF Bylaws and Policies, these Regulations and the Disciplinary Code. The Players, Coaches, Representatives and Clubs agree to comply with all further directives regarding the Girls Academy.
  - a. The Players and Coaches agree notably to:
    - . respect the spirit of fair play
    - i. non-violence
    - ii. behave accordingly
    - iii. refrain from illegal use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco

3. Disputes

- a. Parties shall try to resolve all disputes in connection with the Girls Academy by negotiation. In compliance with USSF Bylaw 707, member clubs, players and other officials may not take disputes to an ordinary court of law. If a decision is subject to appeal, it shall be submitted to the jurisdiction of the league commissioner.

4. Protest & Appeals

a. Overview

- . For the purpose of these regulations, protests are objections of any kind related to events or matters that have a direct effect on games, including, but not limited to, the eligibility of players, the state of the field, accessory game equipment, crowd behavior and stadium installations.

b. Time

- . Unless otherwise stipulated in this article, protests shall be submitted in writing to the league commissioner and board of directors within **12 hours** of the conclusion of the game

in question and followed up immediately with a full written report within **48 hours**, including a copy of the original protest, to be sent in writing to the Girls Academy; otherwise they will be disregarded.

c. Eligibility

- . Protests regarding the eligibility of players for games shall be submitted in writing to the league commissioner no later than **24 hours** after the game.

d. Field Conditions

- . Protests regarding the state of the field, its surroundings, markings or accessory items (e.g. goals, flag posts or soccer balls) shall be made in writing to the referee before the start of the game by the coach or administrator lodging the protest. This shall be noted on the MDP & MS form and the league Competitions Manager notified prior to kick-off.
- i. The league commissioner must also be notified of the protest prior to kick-off. If the field's playing surface becomes unplayable during a game, the referee shall consult the league commissioner and both parties shall have the joint right to determine whether to delay, postpone or cancel the game.

e. Referee's Decisions

- . No protests may be made about the referee's decisions regarding facts connected with play, such decisions are final.

f. Frivolous Protests

- . If an unfounded or irresponsible protest is lodged, the Girls Academy may dismiss the protest.

g. Game Fixing Policy

- . The Girls Academy prohibits game fixing of any kind.
- i. Any member clubs that condone or contemplate game fixing will be subject to

immediate dismissal from the program and may face additional sanctioning.

## II. TECHNICAL FRAMEWORK

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### A. Game Length

1. All U13, U14 and U15 games will be two (2) 40-minute halves with 10-minute halftime
2. U16, U17 and U19 games will be two (2) 45-minute halves with a 10-minute halftime

### B. Player Eligibility & Registration

1. Registration: All registration will be completed via GotSoccer . The league Director of Member Services will distribute instructions to each member annually.
  - a) Proof of age for a player in the form of a passport or birth certificate uploaded to the club depository in GotSport under player profile.
  - b) Signed GA waiver and USSSA waiver for each player in GotSport.
  - c) GA Photo and Video Consent Form in GotSport.
  - d) Registration fee via credit card for pre-billing.
  - e) ITC's are required due to US Soccer membership for foreign players.
    - (1) Must complete the clearance process outlined in section VI. B. 1 of the U.S. Soccer Federation Bylaws and Policies
  - f) Soccer photo headshot uploaded in GotSport under the player profile.
  - g) Jersey number must be included.
  - h) SafeSport is required for all players who turn 18 during the calendar year. Must be uploaded to the player profile.
  - i) Player(s) must be registered/approved to the roster and listed on the match card in advance of the game.

(1) **There are no write in's.**

**Note:** League staff shall have the authority to establish additional procedures, including deadlines, for registration of players.

2. All coaches and managers must be registered and approved to the roster at the start of the season or as soon as they are hired or begin working in the GA in GotSport including US Soccer Safe Soccer Phases 1, 2, and 3.
  - a) GA waiver
  - b) Coaching license
  - c) Paid Membership

3. Athletic Trainers Certified (ATCs) who work with your teams, whether employed by or contracted out by your club, should have proof of background checks and SafeSport Certification. This is the responsibility of each club.

#### C. Rosters

##### 1. General

- a) Each member is required to submit an initial roster by August 1 of each seasonal year. **All players on any GA Roster must be GA or Aspire registered players.**
- b) Rosters will remain open until June 6, 2025, 5pm CT in which rosters will freeze for any team that has qualified for playoffs.
- c) Up to two age eligible current college players who were members of your Girls Academy team the previous season may be added to your roster for the playoffs ONLY. If they are added and approved prior to playoffs, they may train with your team, but may not play in league matches.
  - (1) If a player attends college but does not play college soccer, they are eligible to play GA conference league games and events if they fall into the birth year age groups for U19.
  - (2) If a player has graduated high school, but is not entering college yet, i.e. taking a GAP year, they are eligible to play GA conference league games and events if they fall into the birth year age groups for U19.

##### 2. Player status

###### a) Primary/P:

- (1) A minimum of 14 Primary (P) players submitted by the initial roster deadline of August 1.

###### b) Club Pass/CP:

- (1) Any player registered in your club for another GA or Aspire team – if they are age eligible. They may only play in one game per fixture. **MUST BE REGISTERED WITH GIRLS ACADEMY.**
- (2) For a player to show up in your CP player pool, they must be approved as Primary/P on an existing GA or Aspire roster within your club already. CP players are automatically



approved. THIS IS A GOTSPORT FUNCTION WE CANNOT CHANGE.

- (3) Roster rules, such as age and roster size will still apply to the addition of CP players.
  - (4) NO WRITE-INS ALLOWED (a jersey number may be written in if necessary, but not a player)
  - (5) Aspire is permitted (2) Girls Academy CP players per league game or event. The CP player is fixture tied per the rules above and only (1) game per day.
  - (6) Girls Academy permits unlimited CP players from Aspire teams to Girls Academy teams per league game or event. The CP player is fixture tied per the rules above and one game per day.
3. Identification Player/ID
- a) Non-GA or Aspire players
    - (1) Must be approved by the league prior to being added to the roster U13-U17 -max 3 ID, U19 -max 5 ID
    - (2) Once you hit your max, clubs cannot release/remove additional ID players.
    - (3) No training required
    - (4) If violated there will be a \$500 fine, match forfeiture and loss of playoff eligibility.
    - (5) ID players may not COP to other teams; they are tied to the age group they register with.
4. Guest/G:
- a) U15-U17: Only available for summer showcase events when approved by the Director of Member Services. Max of 2 when approved.
  - b) U-19: Available for all showcases, age group eligible, (*this does not include Champions Cup and Summer Playoffs*) when approved by league, Director of Member Services. Max of 2 when approved
  - c) GK Guest Player Amendment for Playoffs:
    - (1) The amendment allows for an age eligible GK to be a guest player if any injury occurs.
    - (2) Requests must be made in advance of first match being played in playoffs.
    - (3) Must be approved by sending the medical report to the Director of Member Services.
5. Player Registration P, CP, ID, or G:
- All players on a GA Roster must be GA registered Primary (P) players or Club player pass (CP) or Identification play (ID) or Guest (G) with the league approval and registered with the Girls Academy.
6. Trapped Player Expectations
- a) U19 Age Group
    - (1) A Girls Academy player that is in 11th grade, but who is age appropriate for the U19 age group is defined as a Trapped Player.

(2) A maximum of three U19 Trapped Players are eligible to participate in games at U17 GA National Events.

(a) Note: A U19 Trapped Player is not eligible to compete in Champions Cup and the GA Summer Playoffs.

b) U15 Age Group

(1) A Girls Academy Player that is in the 8th grade, but who is age appropriate for the U15 age group is defined as a Trapped Player.

(2) A U15 Trapped Player is eligible to participate in games at one (1) U14 GA Regional Event while her teammates compete in high school. **There will be a maximum of 3 trapped players per event.**

c) Clubs holding two spots within the Girls Academy between 2 teams for league play.

(1) Clubs may designate up to two (2) players per age group from their second GA team roster as eligible as a CP player for the temporary call-up to their GA first team roster. These players must be registered on the second team to be eligible prior to participation. This controlled exception is designed to support short-term roster relief without compromising the independent competitive integrity of each team.

(2) The understanding of clubs provided with two spots in the league is that the top-level players in the club are required to be rostered with the first team. This includes YNT, IDC, and any players in youth national team pools. Outside the USYNT, player roster placement will be reviewed by the league for approval.

7. Roster Size

a) The maximum roster size for the U13-U17 age groups is 30 on the team roster at one time with 18 designated on gameday.

b) The maximum roster size for the U19 age group is 40 on the team roster at one time with 18 designated on gameday.

c) Once a player is added to a GA teams' roster, the player will count against roster max even if released.

8. Game Roster Size

a) For U13 through U19 games, only 18 players from the roster will be eligible to participate in each game, and these players must be placed on the game day roster/match card (showing players that will start and players eligible for substitution). **NO WRITE INS ALLOWED**

b) The bench and technical area is reserved for players and a maximum of four (4) registered club staff members, not including an Athletic Trainer Certified (ATC).

#### D. Substitutions

1. The Girls Academy [Substitution Sheet](#) must be used for substitutions during all Girls Academy and Aspire games and submitted with the match card.
2. Home team must provide the [Substitution Sheet](#) to the match officials. Substitutions must be tracked by match officials, not club officials.
3. All games have five (5) moments per game with no more than three (3) moments per half. There is a re-entry in the second half. All players that have been substituted out are eligible to re-enter the match within the remaining moments allotted. If any player is substituted again, they are not permitted to re-enter the match.
4. Halftime does not count as a moment.
5. Substitutions are allowed at any stoppage.
6. Overtime (Playoff and Champions Cup U13-U19 Advancement Games)
  - a) Once a player is substituted in any period of overtime of any GA Advancement Game, then such player may not re-enter the game.
  - b) Advancement Games shall permit a maximum of three (3) moments across both halves of overtime with a maximum of two (2) moments per half.
    - (1) The stoppage between each period of overtime does not count as a moment.
  - c) The overtime periods shall permit a maximum of seven (7) substitutes total.
7. Games shall follow Rules of Competition Framework provided for at the beginning of each season.
8. Substitution Violations
  - a) If a team exceeds the allowed number of substitutions during a match, regardless of intent, the match may be subject to disciplinary review.
  - b) Violations will be reviewed by league staff, and consequences may include:
    - (1) Formal warning (for first-time, non-impactful violations).
    - (2) Match forfeiture (if the violation is deemed to have affected competitive fairness).
    - (3) Fines or other sanctions, particularly in cases of repeated or intentional abuse.
9. Head Injury Substitution (Concussion Substitution)
  - a) A player who suffers a potential head Injury may be temporarily substituted for to be evaluated by an ATC.
  - b) The Temporary Substitute may be any player who has not previously been substituted for in that half. If all players have been substituted for in that half, then a player may re-enter the match as the Temporary Substitute.
  - c) This process will utilize a traffic light system.

- (1) **Green Light:** If the injured player is cleared to return, and returns to the match, she must replace the Temporary Substitute. The team will NOT be charged a Substitution or Moment.
- (2) **Red Light:** If the injured player is not cleared to return, or is cleared, and opts not to return for her safety, the Temporary Substitution shall become permanent. Only a Substitution shall be charged. No moment shall be charged for a temporary substitution.

#### 10. No Remaining Substitutions

- a) If the team does not have any remaining Substitutions, the Temporary Substitute will be permitted to remain in the match.

#### 11. Delays in Evaluation

- a) If the injured player is delayed a clearance beyond the half/match, or the half / match ends during evaluation, the Temporary Substitute shall remain in the match, and shall be a recorded Substitution for that half.

#### 12. Case Examples (All cases relate to presumed head injuries. All circumstances are independent of each other. Presume all occur in different matches.)

- a) Team A #1 is removed to be evaluated in the 8th minute of the match. She is cleared to return in the 15'.
  - (1) A Temporary Substitution may occur in the 8th. Upon her clearance, she returns to the match, so there is no substitution charged.
- b) Team A #2 is removed in 19' to be evaluated. #3 enters the match as a Temporary Substitution. She is not cleared pending further evaluation later in the day.
  - (1) #3 becomes a permanent Substitution in the first half, a Substitution is charged.
- c) Team B #1 is removed in the 38' minute to be evaluated. #2 enters as a Temporary Substitution. At halftime, #1 is cleared. / Not cleared.
  - (1) In both circumstances, Team B is charged the first half Substitution as #2 ended the period in #1's absence.
- d) Team A #4 is removed in the 30'. Team A has utilized all of its 7 Substitutions in this half. #5 enters as a Temporary Substitution. 5' later, #4 is not cleared to return.
  - (1) #5 may remain in the match.

## E. Game Disciplinary

### 1. Red Cards - Players

#### a) Regular Season

- (1) Any player receiving a red card in a Non-Event GA Competition will be suspended for the remainder of that match. The player will also be suspended for the next day on which a Non-Event GA match is played by their club for their specific age group and/or any other age group.

(a) Note: Additional suspensions or sanctions may be imposed by the disciplinary committee.

- (2) Players with an accumulation of two (2) or more red cards during the GA season will be subject to review by the league.

#### b) Events (National and Regional)

- (1) Any player receiving a red card in a GA Event Competition (Regional, Champions Cup, Showcase, Playoffs) will be suspended for the remainder of that match. The player will also be suspended for the next match day played by their club for both their specific age group and any other age group in a GA Event Competition. **If the red card was received in the last game of the GA Event the player will serve that suspension in their next scheduled GA match day.**

(a) Note: Additional suspensions or sanctions may be imposed by the Disciplinary Committee.

### 2. Red Cards - Coaches

#### a) Regular Season

- (1) Any approved GA coach receiving a red card in a Conference GA Competition will be suspended for the remainder of that match, as well as all other age groups competing that day. The coach will also be suspended for the next day on which that specific age group plays a Non-Event GA Competition.

(a) Note: Additional suspensions or sanctions may be imposed by the Disciplinary Committee.

- (2) Any coach receiving multiple red cards within the same season shall be reviewed for additional suspension or sanction by the Disciplinary Committee.

b) Events (National and Regional)

(1) Any approved GA coach receiving a red card in a GA Event Competition (Regional, Champions Cup, Showcase, Playoffs) will be suspended for the remainder of that match, as well as all other age groups competing that day. The coach will also be suspended for the next day on which that specific age group plays a GA Event Competition.

(a) Note: Additional suspensions or sanctions may be imposed by the Disciplinary Committee. .

(2) Any coach receiving multiple red cards within the same event shall be reviewed for additional suspension or sanction by the Disciplinary Committee. .

c) Yellow Card Accumulation

(1) There shall be no yellow card accumulation policy for players or coaches in the GA.

3. Red Card Carryover

a) Red card suspensions, for the player and/or coach, carry over into the first league game of next GA season, if the red card is received on the final league game of the current season.

b) Red card suspensions, for the player and/or coach, carry over into the first event game of the next GA season, if the red card is received on the final game of the team's last event in the current season.

c) If a player and/or coach transfers to a different GA club, the red card will stay with the player and/or coach and carry over to the next season's first league game or next season's first event game.

d) If the player and/or coach is no longer in the GA then the red card is wiped clean as there is no way to enforce.

4. Reporting

a) Referees will complete the [SEND OFF RED CARD REPORT](#) at the end of a game in which any dismissal has taken place. Dismissals include:

(1) Player and/or coach red cards.

(2) Any non-coaching staff member told to leave the technical area and/or field.

(3) Any spectator told to leave the field.

- b) The member club director must notify the Girls Academy Commissioner **immediately** in writing in the event of a significant disciplinary incident.  
([Patricia.Hughes@girlsacademyleague.com](mailto:Patricia.Hughes@girlsacademyleague.com)) This is including but not limited to:
  - (1) Player and/or coach red card send-off for violent conduct, abusive language, and/or abusive behavior.
  - (2) Non-coaching staff member send-off for violent conduct, abusive language, and/or abusive behavior.
  - (3) Spectator send-off for violent conduct, abusive language, and/or abusive behavior.
  - (4) Violent conduct, abusive language, and/or abusive behavior by any of the above parties prior to or after the match.

#### F. Game Limits

- 1. Any GA Registered Player may only play on one (1) GA or Aspire Team per day, and may only play in one (1) GA/Aspire Competition per day or scheduled GA/Aspire match.

#### G. Fixture Ties

- 1. Once players play in a scheduled club fixture, they are unable to play in a rescheduled fixture in any other age group.
- 2. A fixture includes the games from U13-U19 when one club plays another club. When the fixture is on different days (whether split on purpose or rescheduled), the fixture is still considered to be "one fixture".

#### H. Game Roster Size

- 1. For U13 through U19 games, only 18 players from the roster will be eligible to participate in each game, and these players must be placed on the game day roster/match card (showing players that will start and players eligible for substitution).
- 2. The bench and technical area is reserved for players and a maximum of five (5) registered club staff members, not including a registered Health Care Professional (HCP) or Athletic Trainer Certified (ATC).
- 3. The minimum number of registered club staff (see above) is ONE. A game will be recorded as a forfeit if no club staff members are available.

#### I. Match Cards

- 1. The official game day roster must be provided on the non-photo standard match cards and shall be presented to the referee by both teams prior to the game and should also include team staff. All teams are responsible for verifying the accuracy of rosters provided on all match cards and signing a completed copy from the referee crew after the game.



2. It is the responsibility of the home clubs to report scores and any disciplinary actions for each fixture. This must be submitted within 36 hours of the completion of the match or be subject to a fine and/or penalties.
3. The GA Staff will update the rosters weekly on the website to reflect any suspensions, additions or drops, or other eligibility issues.

J. Eligible Player

1. Players listed on the roster must meet the age requirement for their team, have paid the registration fee and have supplied proof of their age to the club staff in the form of a birth certificate or passport, waiver and must be properly registered and not be subject to suspension.
2. All players must be registered to the club in the league system and approved in GotSport.

K. Ineligible Player

1. Players not listed on the roster or any player listed on the roster but not eligible to play, due to reasons such as missing registration forms, awaiting international clearance, serving a league suspension or not on the official game day roster/match card shall be considered an ineligible player. **A written in player is considered an ineligible player.**
2. Any member club using an ineligible player during any competition may be subject to a \$500 fine per infraction as determined Director of League Competitions and/or a forfeit (by a 0-3 margin) of any game(s) in which the ineligible player participated.
3. **An ineligible player can also be considered a player that has played multiple games in one day without league approval.**

L. GK Amendment to the Loan Player Rule

1. The Amendment allows for an age-eligible GK to be loaned to another team within the same member club, in the event of illness/injury (only with documentation from a medical professional) OR in the event of a USYNT call-up (only with documentation from U.S. Soccer)
2. A loaned GK can play in two games in a day and would need pre-approval from the league when the injury/illness to the other goalkeeper occurs by email to the Director of Member Services.
3. Otherwise, all requests due to injury or callup must be approved via email to the Director of Operations in advance of the game.
4. Once approved, clubs must inform their opponent of the approval via email.



### III. RISK MANAGEMENT

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#### A. Overview

1. The Girls Academy is committed to providing a safe environment for its members and participants, and to preventing abusive conduct in any form. Every member club and its personnel are responsible for protecting participants and ensuring their safety and well-being while involved in sponsored activities. The following guidelines of behavior and procedures have been adopted for member clubs, staff, volunteers and participants. All clubs, as well as parents, spectators and other invitees, are expected to observe and adhere to these guidelines. Violation of these guidelines may be used as a basis for a club or its staff's suspension or other disciplinary action, or a staff's disqualification from registration.
  - a) Abuse of any kind is not permitted within the Girls Academy. Physical, sexual, emotional or verbal abuse or misconduct from players, coaches, officials, volunteers, parents or spectators shall not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to such forms of abuse as: insulting, threatening, mocking, demeaning behavior or making abusive statements in regard to a person's race, gender, religion, physical or mental disability, nationality/ethnicity, sex or age.
  - b) Physical and/or sexual abuse, including, but not limited to: striking, hitting, kicking, biting, indecent or wanton gesturing, lewd remarks, indecent exposure and any form of sexual contact or inappropriate touching, are strictly prohibited within the Girls Academy.
  - c) In addition, every member is responsible for reporting any cases of questionable conduct or alleged mistreatment toward our members by any coach, official, volunteer, player, parent, sibling or spectator.
  - d) The Girls Academy will respond quickly to any and all allegations of abuse within this organization. The alleged offender will be notified of such allegations promptly.

#### B. Conduct

1. The Girls Academy promotes respect and good sportsmanship throughout the league and encourages qualities of mutual respect, courtesy and tolerance in all participants, coaches, officials and volunteers.
2. To protect youth participants, as well as coaches, officials and volunteers, it is strongly recommended that no adult person allow themselves to be alone with an individual child (unless their own child) or with any group of children during sponsored activities. In particular, it is recommended that coaches or other adult members of the club:

- a) Do not drive alone with an individual child participant in the car
- b) Do not take an individual child alone to the locker room, bathrooms or any other private room
- c) Private conversations with youth participants should occur within the view of others, in the gym or on the field, instead of a private office or hotel room.
- d) Coaches and other adults of member clubs should not socialize individually with participants outside of sponsored activities [in the absence of participant's parents]

### 3. Supervision/Chaperone Ratio

- a) It is recommended that for any sponsored activity, the ratio of adults to youth participants be at least 1:9 (1 adult for every 9 children) with a minimum of 2 adults for every activity
- b) When traveling overnight with youth participants, children should be paired up with other children of the same gender and similar age group, and with chaperones in separate, but nearby rooms
- c) No child should be left alone at a training session or at any other time until they are picked up by their parent, older sibling or other designated adult. It is recommended that the last adult in addition to the coach or trainer wait at the site until the child is picked up.
- d) We want to empower our children to trust their feelings and let them know that their concerns, fears and hopes are important by listening to them. Open communication between children and parents, or between children and other adults in the organization may help early warning signs of abuse to surface.

### 4. Risk Management

- a) All coaches and administrators who are required to register with the Girls Academy must complete US Soccer Safe Soccer Phase 1, 2, and 3.
- b) Players 18 years of age or older must complete Safesport.
- c) Failure to complete or falsification of the application can result in immediate disqualification or suspension.

### 5. Disqualification of Individuals

- a) The Girls Academy may deny registration to and disqualify any individual, or deny membership to or otherwise discipline any club which employs or utilizes any individual who either fails to comply with the registration procedures, falsified information, or as a

result of such procedures is determined by the league commissioner and/or board of directors to be unfit to continue in their current position.

### C. Goal Safety

1. Home clubs are responsible for inspecting the goals and ensuring the safety of the goals.
2. However, should the visiting club become aware of a goal safety issue, they should immediately inform the home club and the game official about the issue.
3. The home Clubs should do the following:
  - a) Pre-Game Suggestions
    - (1) Make sure that the goal is firmly secured to the ground with anchors
    - (2) Make sure that all connecting hardware (nuts, bolts, etc.) is properly attached
    - (3) Make sure that the structural integrity of the goal has not been compromised (cracks in welds or posts, etc.)
    - (4) Make sure that the goal is on a level (flat) surface
    - (5) check the net attachment system to make sure that it is secure and that there are no sharp edges.
  - b) Post-Game Suggestions
    - (1) If goals remain in the up-right position, make sure they are secured with ground anchors
    - (2) If anchored with portable style anchors, goals should be stored by being chained together face-to-face, or placed in a face down position
    - (3) Remove the net when the goal is not in use
    - (4) Make sure that all connecting hardware (nuts, bolts, etc.) are in place and secure
    - (5) Check the structural integrity of the goal
    - (6) Never allow anyone to climb on the goals
    - (7) If goals are moved, exercise extreme caution and allow adequate manpower to move the goals

- (8) Make sure that warning labels are visible and in good condition.

#### D. Field Inspection

1. Home clubs are responsible for inspecting the field and ensuring the safety of the facility. However, should the visiting club become aware of a safety issue at the facility, they should immediately inform the home club and the game official about the issue.
2. The home club should do the following:
  - a) Inspect for foreign objects
  - b) Check for holes, hills or ruts
  - c) Inspect sprinkler heads to make sure that they are seated and properly covered
  - d) Ensure there is a restraining line for spectators at least five (5) feet beyond the touch line and outside of the inspect bleachers and seating areas
  - e) Inspect the field and surrounding areas for any possible "attractive nuisances"

#### E. Referee Responsibility for Safety

1. All determinations as to the safety of the field, the goals, the balls, player equipment are ultimately the responsibility of the referee assigned to the game.
2. Any field, equipment or ball conditions deemed by the referee to be unsafe must be corrected by the home club before play can begin or resume.

#### F. Club Liability

1. To the extent that clubs are not covered by the general liability insurance provided by the league sanctioning body.
2. Member clubs assume all risks, responsibilities and liabilities for loss, damage, injury or death while using property and facilities during games, whether such loss, damage, injury or death be occasioned by the team or by the league, its officers, agents or otherwise.

#### G. Player Liability

1. Players shall assume all risks, responsibilities and liabilities for loss, damage, injury or death to themselves while engaged as a player for a club or as a player on a representative team of the league subject to applicable state laws and regulations.

H. Liability Waiver & Indemnification Form

1. All coaches, administrators and players and their parents or guardians are required to sign a liability waiver when they submit their registration.

## IV. EQUIPMENT

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### A. Uniforms

1. Players, coaches and club officials are not allowed to display political, religious or personal messages in any language or form on their playing or team uniforms, equipment (including bags, beverage containers, medical bags, etc.) or body for the duration of official league games.
2. Member clubs are required to have one light colored uniform and one dark uniform. Jersey and socks should be all dark or all light.
3. Home teams will be required to wear light colored uniforms and away teams will be required to wear dark colored uniforms.
4. Home teams will be responsible for changing in the event of a conflict and will choose their uniforms and visiting teams will be required to wear their contrasting uniforms.
5. Teams are *not required to wear white shorts* as a part of either their dark or light kits.
6. Jerseys and socks should match in their color and/or shade (ie. dark/dark or light/light).
7. On a double fixture weekend, it is required for teams to coordinate uniform colors ahead of time for the entire weekend to avoid conflicts.

### B. Girls Academy Patches

1. Member clubs are required to apply a GA patch on the left sleeve, back collar or under the number of their game uniform.

### C. Goals, Nets, Corner Flags and Benches

1. All goals must be properly anchored.
2. A game will not start without proper equipment, including secured goals, properly lined fields, and corner flags.

## V. MATCH DAY PROTOCOLS & MINIMUM STANDARDS

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As a member of the Girls Academy, all clubs are expected to provide a professional match day environment. In order to ensure all member clubs maintain a consistent, professional environment for the players and spectators, the Match Day Protocols and Minimum Standards for the Girls Academy season are listed below.

Emergency Match Day concerns or questions should be directed to the Director of League Competitions by calling the GA phone line at **317-410-6335**. All other protocols and standards will be submitted post-fixture as outlined below.

### A. MATCH DAY PROTOCOLS & MINIMUM STANDARDS CHECKLIST

A home club representative is to be at the field an hour prior to game time. When arriving, each club needs to identify a club representative to be the sole point of contact for the fixture. Each club representative is to verify information provided in the match day protocols. Match day protocols and standards feedback must be communicated by the visiting club contact with the Director of League Competitions within 48 hours following the fixture. Responses will be collected by the league and addressed as needed via the Post Game Match Report.

#### 1. MATCH CARDS

- a) Both home and away teams must provide the “standard” non photo match card for each match. Match cards must list all rostered players, coaching staff and club/team managers. Any players not participating in a match, due to injury or suspension or not dressing, must be crossed off the match card. Referees need to check in players on the roster. Any player checked in, regardless if they play, will count as a rostered player and is an ineligible player for any other match in the fixture. Any secondary and/or remote players must be approved by the GA in GotSport. No write-ins allowed except for emergency use only and pre-approved by the league office via phone-call with written confirmation for tracking.
- b) ***The home team must enter the score, red and/or yellow cards as well as upload the game card within 24 hours in GotSport.***

#### 2. POST-GAME REPORTING

- a) Both the home and away club are required to complete the Post-Game Match Day Report within 48 hours of the fixture. This report should include:
  - Any relevant match feedback or incidents
  - Confirmation of minimum standards being met
  - Any concerns related to officiating, field setup, or protocol compliance
  - Failure to submit the Post-Game Match Day report may result in a fine or further review by the Director of League Competitions.

**Note:** Once entered into GotSport, any player who receives a red card will automatically be suspended for the next game in GotSport with a red line through their name on the roster. The Director of League Competitions will confirm red cards with the match card and the referees reporting form.

**B. COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL**

1. The host club is required to provide the visiting club with all match day details at least five (5) days prior to the competition. Match day details would include, but are not limited to the following:
  - a) Facility address, directions, weather forecast, fixture schedule, field numbers, etc...
  - b) No matches shall be scheduled prior to 9:00 AM, unless both clubs agree in writing.
  - c) All matches must be scheduled to end at least 30 minutes prior to sunset, unless lights are provided, and the visiting club agrees to a later start time in writing.
  - d) All clubs are expected to schedule matches with professionalism and goodwill, meaning not to place any club at a competitive advantage or disadvantage.
  - e) All matches played on the same day are expected to be played at the same facility, unless the visiting club agrees to multiple facilities being utilized in writing and approved by the Director of League Competitions.
  - f) If two facilities are being used, both facilities must meet all game day standards.
  - g) Clubs must agree on the fixture time schedule to avoid coaching conflicts.
  - h) The Girl's Academy phone number is **317-410-6335** and should be used if any game day questions or concerns arise.
  - i) [A SAMPLE MATCH DAY DETAILS FORM](#)

**C. MINIMUM STANDARDS**

1. The following are minimum standards expected for all matches. It is the responsibility of the host club to meet the following standards at all matches. If any hosting club is unable to meet any of the minimum standards the club must receive approval from the Director of League Competitions no later than **48-hours** prior to an event or face a financial penalty.
2. Match Field
  - a) The match field provided for matches must be of the highest quality in the geographic area. Turf or natural surface are both acceptable. A minimum match field size of 70 yards (W) x 110 yards (L) is expected. Natural grass surfaces should be mowed to a length that allows for high quality ball movement; 1.5-2.5", depending on grass species, is the typical height range for mowing.

**Note:** If the field quality requirement is not met, there will be one warning and the next incident will result in a fine of \$500 for not meeting minimum match standards.



**Note:** If inclement weather is expected during a match weekend, then it is expected for member clubs to have a turf field back-up.

### 3. Field Setup

- a) Team sideline requires both the home and away team to have (2) benches or (1) bench large enough for team and staff.
- b) Team sideline requires both the home and away team to have matching team tents available for weather (excessive heat/rain) and where space in the technical area permits.
- c) Team sideline requires a minimum of (1) trashcan.
- d) Team sideline requires water for both teams.
- e) All match fields are marked properly in accordance with FIFA rules.
- f) All match fields must have (4) matching corner flags.
- g) Adidas match balls will be provided by the league and 3 adidas balls must be at each match.

### 4. Facility

- a) Each facility must have permanent or portable restrooms on site and available to players and spectators.

### 5. Filming of Matches

- a) All member clubs will be responsible for the filming of all home games in all age groups U13-U19 and uploading matches into the league exchange provider through Veo within **48 hours** of the last match of weekend fixtures. As per the Fine & Penalties (pp. 34 of the Frameworks), clubs with games not uploaded within 48 hours of the last match of the weekend will incur a \$500 fine per missing game.

### 6. Athletic Trainer

- a) An athletic trainer must be provided for all matches, a minimum of 60 minutes prior to the first match and continuing until the end of the final match. If there is not an athletic trainer present, it must be reported to the league office immediately. Failure to provide an ATC will result in a league fine and formal reprimand by the national league office.

### 7. Referees

- a) Each member club is expected to seek the best referees in their geographic area. Regional Referees or higher are preferred when available. All Referees shall be registered with US Soccer and in good standing. It is the responsibility of each host club to collaborate with their local referee assignor for match

assignments. The host club shall be responsible for all referee related payment. Fees schedule is listed in the referee guidelines section of the frameworks.

- b) It is the expectation for all GA matches to have 3 referees for each match. If an emergency occurs and a 3rd official is rendered unavailable or cannot continue a match, the GA home club must immediately notify the visiting club and GA Director of League Competitions via email ([admin@girlsacademyleague.com](mailto:admin@girlsacademyleague.com)) of the circumstances, and a 'club linesperson' may be utilized for the match. When using a 'club linesperson' they are ONLY responsible for notifying the Center Referee when the ball goes out of bounds. They are not to indicate the direction of a throw-in. They are not to call fouls. They are to stay in line with the last defender but do not signal for offside. An approved certified referee that subs in and is in uniform will be compensated by the home club; a 'club linesperson' does not receive compensation.

## 8. Referee Compensation

- a) All costs of referees are the responsibility of the home club. If a neutral site is used, the designated home club shall pay unless it is pre-approved by the league that costs will be shared. Payment of appointed referees is up to the discretion of the home club. It is suggested that the home team pays the referees prior to the game upon arrival through the arbiter system or direct deposit centrally through US Officials or other avenues. No payment of any type post-game. At Conference/National Events, the referee fees are included in event fees.

### b) **GA Fees:** Age=Center/AR1/AR2/4th Official

(1) U13-U15= \$90/\$60/\$60 + \$45 for a 4th\*\*

(2) U16-U19= \$100/\$70/\$70 + \$45 for a 4th\*\*

(3) **\*\*Note:** 4th Officials are not required for Girls Academy matches.

### c) **Aspire Fees:** Age=Center/AR1/AR2/4th Official

(1) U13-U15= \$85/\$55/\$55 + \$45 for a 4th\*\*

(2) U16-U19= \$95/\$65/\$65 + \$45 for a 4th\*\*

(3) **\*\*Note:** 4th Officials are not required for Girls Academy matches.

## VI. GUIDELINES FOR RESCHEDULES, POSTPONEMENTS AND GAME FORFEITURES

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### A. Rescheduling Considerations

1. U13, U14 and U15 games must reach the 60:00 minute mark to be considered a completed game.
2. U16, U17 and U19 games must reach the 70:00 minute mark to be considered a completed game.
3. Acceptable reasons for reschedule / postponement include:
  - Unsafe field or weather conditions
  - Documented facility closures
  - Major travel disruptions (e.g., flight cancellations)
  - League-approved exceptional circumstances

### B. Following the mutually agreed upon postponement of a league game, the following mandatory items must be included in the communication for the reschedule to be accepted by league commissioner:

1. Documented communication between club directors stating the reason for postponement and mutual agreement to the postponement.
2. Documented agreement on the reschedule date, time, and locations of postponed fixtures/games must be agreed upon by both parties.
3. An email to the Director of League Competitions including members of both clubs involved in a reschedule must be submitted by the host club for the rescheduled fixture and sent to the Competitions Manager within 7 days following the initial postponement.
4. If a rescheduled date is not submitted within 7 days of the initial postponement, the Director of League Competitions will choose a date based on club availability and update the fixture in the official schedule.
5. Once approved by the Competitions Manager, in writing, the host club is required to communicate the new fixture/game times to appropriate game day officials (referees, trainers, cameraman, etc.).
6. Clubs not following the proper protocol for reschedules are subject to fines and loss of points.
7. Same-day weather cancellations (Acts of God, etc.) of league games will be considered postponed and the same expectations will apply.
  - a) **Note:** Same-day cancellations must be communicated to the Competitions Managers via email as soon as the decision has been made in real time.
8. A game will be determined as forfeited when one team does not show up for a mutually agreed upon fixture (date, time, and location) without proper documented notification\* (via email) an agreement with the other club or there is an instance when a team is found to have broken one of the league rules, policies or procedures.
  - a) Notification to the Competitions Manager no later than 48 hours prior to the match. The instances of forfeiture include, but are not limited to:
    - (1) Use of an ineligible player (no card, DOB, etc.)
    - (2) Lack of official roster or game cards at the start of a game

- (3) Re-entry of substituted player in the same half of a game  
(no re-entry in the same half)

C. If a game does not reach the designated threshold, the league shall have the authority to review all of the facts in determining whether and when a game should be rescheduled, whether the game should be forfeited or canceled permanently. The determination by the league shall be final.

**D. Forfeiture of all age groups:**

1. Team forfeiting one (1) regular season game, subject to a \$1,000 fine.
2. Team forfeiting second regular season game in a single season, subject to another \$1,000 fine.
3. Team forfeiting third game in a single season:
  - a) subject to a \$1,000 fine
  - b) Additional \$5,000 fine
  - c) Team is ineligible for playoffs
  - d) Number of Champions Cup points earned for that team is forfeited (Zero points) in that season
  - e) Potential club review
4. Team forfeiting four or more games in a single season will be reviewed by the Competitions Committee and Board of Directors to determine fines and additional consequences.

