



The Arlington Soccer Association

Recreational Soccer League Administration

March, 2010

RECREATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE ADMINISTRATION

GENERAL:

- The Arlington Soccer Association (ASA) is affiliated with the Virginia Youth Soccer Association (VYSA); the United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA) and the United States Soccer Federation (USSF).
- Lack of knowledge of the Arlington Soccer Association (ASA) rules will not relieve any club, coach, team official, parent or player of a team participating in the ASA from the responsibilities and possible penalties herein. All clubs, team officials, coaches, parents, and players, by participating in ASA play, are bound by these rules.
- The soccer year shall be comprised of two (2) separate seasons of play; Fall (Sept – Nov) and Spring (April – June).
- The ASA utilizes the US Youth Soccer age group definition, with some exceptions, to determine placement of players on to teams; and teams into age groups.
- In response to ASA decisions, no individual may employ the aid of any lawyer or the courts of any State or of the United States without first exhausting all available administrative remedies within the body of organized soccer to include the ASA, the VYSA, the USYS, and the USSF.

RISK MANAGEMENT:

The ASA regularly participates in risk-management programs, including performing background checks on the coaches/adults that work with the children of the ASA.

GAME FORMATS:

The ASA utilizes the following game formats for the age groups listed

- Under 6, Under 7 & Under 8 age groups – 4 vs. 4; no Goalkeepers; dual games
- Under 9 & Under 10 age groups – 6 vs. 6 (5 + GK)
- Under 11 & Under 12 age groups – 8 vs. 8 (7 + GK)
- Under 13 and older age groups – 11 vs. 11 (10 + GK)

REGISTRATION:

- Each player must register with the ASA and be assigned to a member club or team of the Association. In no instance shall a player participate in official ASA games or practices or other programs without having completed the applicable registration process. Only players who are on a team's official game roster may participate in an official ASA game or practice.
- A player may only be placed on a team's official game roster if the player's registration and financial obligation have been completed prior to all established deadlines.
- Team coaches must never allow any unregistered players to participate on their teams, or make promises to parents regarding player placements. All players must go through the ASA registration process and be placed on the appropriate team by ASA/Club personnel. If a Club Manager, team coach or representative accepts registration forms or payments, that person must promptly forward such to the ASA Registrar.

FEES:

- Each player who registers with the Arlington Soccer Association shall pay a "Player Registration Fee" as recommended by the Recreational Committee and approved by the ASA Board of Directors.
- The Player Registration Fee will not be prorated or reduced for registrations received once the season has begun.
- Players may receive financial assistance from the ASA if the player's family meets the eligibility requirements and complete the required paperwork.
- The ASA Player Registration Fee covers:
 - ASA administration, staff and operation expenses
 - Financial aid program
 - Referee fees
 - VYSA player registration and insurance coverage
 - Field preparation, equipment & maintenance
 - Team coach background checks

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

- Financial assistance to play in the ASA is available to those who qualify by completing established procedures.
- Players may receive an established amount of financial assistance from the ASA if the player's family meets the eligibility requirements and completes the required paperwork.
- Any child currently enrolled in the free or reduced lunch program at his or her school is automatically eligible to pay the established Reduced Player Registration Fee to register with the ASA. Documentation of participation in the lunch program, or other approved programs, may be required with the submission of the Financial Assistance Form.
- Additional financial assistance may also be awarded to families in need at the request of a Club Manager based on exhibited need and facts/circumstances.

REFUNDS

- If a player completes the registration process, but is never placed on a team or contacted by a team representative, that player may receive a full refund of the fee paid.
- If a player completes the registration process, is placed on a team and contacted by a team representative, that player may not be eligible for a refund of the fee paid after the 1st game of the season. Exceptions to the refund policy will include:
 - If a player suffers a season ending injury
 - If the family moves out of the area
- All requests for refunds should be submitted to the ASA Registrar or the player's Club Manager. The Recreational Committee will decide on all exceptions to the refund policy and the amount of any refund; based on facts and circumstances.

PLAYER ASSIGNMENTS TO ASA CLUBS:

- Players registering with the ASA, in the Under 6 – Under 14 age groups, are typically assigned to a member club in accordance with the player's residence in established public elementary school districts or attendance at an Arlington school.
- Players previously registered with the ASA may remain with their assigned club even if their residence changes.
- If a player selects a club outside of the district where the player lives or attends school, the player should be informed of the proper club residential district and encouraged to be assigned to the club having the responsibility for the appropriate district. If a player, after being so informed, still desires to be assigned outside their proper district, the ASA may allow the assignment.
- Permission to roster a player from outside the club's assigned area may only be done with the permission of the Club Manager from the player's assigned district. Clubs may not recruit players from outside their assigned areas.
- Players who register after established deadlines are not guaranteed to be placed with the club or team of their choosing. Placement will be made based on available openings on association-wide teams.

AGE GROUP PLACEMENT OF PLAYERS:

- All players, once registered and assigned to a club, should be placed on a team in their appropriate age group (USYS definition) according to the player's date of birth; unless the player meets one of the following criteria. If a player meets either of the criteria listed below, there is no permission needed to place that player on a team outside his/her correct age group. All other requests for placing a player on a team outside his/her correct age group must be submitted to the ASA's Technical Director (see below).
 - 1) The player is in the same school grade as the age group they wish to play.
 - 2) The player is placed on a team that is playing in an age group only one (1) group above the USYS age group of the player being placed.
- Requests for exemptions to the player placement policy must be submitted, by the player's family, in writing (email is accepted) to the ASA's Technical Director. This must be done after the completion of the entire registration process and before the player can be placed on a team. The Technical Director must respond to the family and the appropriate Club within three

days of receiving the request. Typically, the decision on a request will be based on whether the player's developmental needs are not being met by playing in his/her correct age group.

TEAM FORMATION:

- Each season, Club Managers will be responsible for forming their teams in each age group and submitting these teams to the Assistant Recreational Director (ARD) prior to the established Team Formation Date.
- A player may only be placed on a team's official game roster if the player's registration and financial obligation have been completed prior to all established deadlines.
- A player may only be placed on the roster of one (1) ASA Recreational team. A player may be registered and rostered with a travel team and a Recreational team; in accordance with ASA rules. *(see travel player rule)*
- Before a team can be submitted to the ARD to be placed in the schedule, the team must meet established criteria. These criteria are:
 - 1) Each team must contain a minimum number of properly registered and rostered players. The chart below lists the minimum number for each age group.

AND

- 2) Each team must contain a contact person (usually the coach) and an email address for that contact person.
- The following chart shows the minimum number of players required to form a team, the minimum number of players needed on the field to start or play a game and the recommended team roster size for each age group:

Age Group	# of Players on the Field	Minimum Number of Players to Form a Team	Minimum Number of Players to Start/Play a Game	Recommended Roster Size
under 6, 7 & 8	4 v 4 <i>(no GK)</i>	8	3 per field	12-14
under 9 & 10	6 v 6	6	4	10-12
under 11 & 12	8 v 8	8	5	12-14
under 13 & 14	11 v 11	9	7	16-18
under 15 - 19	11 v 11	8	7	16

- For all teams, after the sixth league game has been played, no additional players may be rostered to that team.

DATE OF ELIGIBILITY:

- A player is eligible to participate in an official ASA game or practice only when that player's name appears on the official team roster as generated from the ASA registration system.
- Two business days must be allowed between the receipt of a player's complete registration and that player being placed on a team's roster. Typically, complete registrations must be into the ASA office before Wednesday at 5:00pm for a player to be eligible to participate in games that weekend.

TEAM ROSTERS:

- Coaches or persons acting as coaches are required to have in their possession at the field of play, as of the first game of the season and all games thereafter, an official ASA Team Roster.
- For age groups U13/14 and above, each team's roster will be reviewed by the referee(s) assigned to each match. Only players who are on the team's official roster will be allowed to play in that game. Players deemed ineligible to play due to the referee's review must sit out of that game.
- All players who are rostered with a travel team must be identified as such on the ASA team roster. (*see travel player rule*)
- If a team does not have a roster at a game, the game may continue with the following actions taken:
 - The referee will mention in the game report the team(s) that did not have a roster.
 - The coaches involved in the game, in addition to reporting the game score, will report in an email or phone call to the ARD, that a team did not have a roster.
 - The ASA, upon receipt of a report that a team did not have a roster, will contact the team and the appropriate Club Manager to inform them of the rule and stress compliance.
 - Upon further review, the game may be declared a forfeit by the Rules and Discipline Committee for non-compliance, with the results of the game reflecting the forfeit.
- Prior to its start, if a game is declared a forfeit, regardless of reason, it may only be played as an unofficial scrimmage. In a scrimmage, the following conditions will be in effect:
 - The referee(s) are not required to stay.
 - The ASA does not sanction the game and relinquishes all liability.
 - Any ASA registered player allowed by the coaches may participate.
 - Players who are not registered with the ASA may not participate.
 - The game must finish in the originally allotted time.
 - The score of the game will not be recorded or counted in the divisional standings.

- The score of a forfeited game will be reported as 4 – 0, in favor of the team that is in compliance. If both teams are in noncompliance, the game will be declared a forfeit, with the score reported as 0 – 0, but with neither team receiving the points.

TRAVEL PLAYERS ON ASA RECREATIONAL TEAMS:

- The maximum number of travel players (by VYSA definition; regardless of gender, age or location) that a Recreational team in an age group may have on its roster is listed below:
 - under 8 and younger age groups – no travel players may be rostered
 - under 9 & under 10 age groups – no more than three (3) travel players
 - under 11 & under 12 age groups – no more than four (4) travel players
 - under 13 & under 14 age groups – no more than five (5) travel players
 - Teen Soccer Program – no more than five (5) travel players

GAME PROCEDURES:

Before each game:

- Coaches should introduce themselves to the referee and confirm that the players on their team comply with ASA policies.
- Coaches should discuss with the referee any ASA playing rule that may be different from a rule of another league.
- In the u13/14 and older age groups, provide an official team roster for the referee to review.

After each game:

- Coaches should thank the referee and give any praise deserved.
- Communicate by email or telephone to the ASA's Technical Director any comments or complaints concerning issues with the behavior of the opposing coach or team players.

PLAYING TIME:

- For the purpose of fostering the good of soccer and the development of all ASA players; any player who meets the established and communicated team rules and practice attendance policies will play a roughly equal amount as all other players in every scheduled game.
- It is also recommended that players be rotated through and allowed to play all the positions on the field during the course of the season.

USE OF INELIGIBLE PLAYER:

- If a team is found to have used an ineligible player, as determined by ASA staff, Recreational Committee or their representatives, the penalty will be forfeiture of all points the offending team had been awarded in which the ineligible player participated. Additional penalties, including sanctions against the player, coach and or member club may be imposed by the ASA Recreational Committee, ASA Board of Directors and/or their established subgroups.
- The ASA Recreational Committee, on its own motion in the absence of a proper protest, may find a team to have used an ineligible player and may assess such penalty as it deems appropriate.

AGE GROUP PLACEMENT OF TEAMS:

- Once formed, all teams must be placed in their appropriate age group (USYS definition); according to the age of the oldest player on the team; unless it meets the criteria listed below. If a team meets the criteria, there is no permission needed to place that team outside its correct age group. All other requests for placing a team outside its correct age group must be submitted to the ASA' Technical Director (see below).
 - 1) The oldest player on the team has been approved for playing on that team and therefore does not impact the team's placement in the appropriate age group.
- Requests for exemptions to the team placement policy must be submitted, by the Club Manager, in writing (email is accepted) to the ASA's Technical Director at least three (3) days prior to the Team Formation Date. The Technical Director must respond to the Club Manager before the Team Formation Date. Typically, the decision on a request will be based on whether the team's developmental needs are not being met by playing in its correct age group and how each player on the team will be affected.
- Permission for a team to participate in an age group outside the team's appropriate age group is for one (1) season and, if desired, must be re-submitted for approval at the beginning each season.

DIVISIONAL MAKEUP:

- The purpose of placing teams into divisions is to:
 - In the u6 – u8 age groups; to group teams together to make game schedules. Divisions will be given color names (ex: blue, red, etc.) rather than numbers and will be formed at random by the ARD.

- In the u9 and older age groups; to schedule teams with similar skills to compete against each other. Divisions will be numbered as 1, 2, etc.
- Prior to each season, for each age group, divisions will be formed by the ARD. The teams and number of teams in a division may change from season to season. The total number of teams in an age group, and the appropriate grouping of those teams, will determine the total number of divisions needed in each age group.
- Prior to each season, teams will be placed in the appropriate division. In the u9 and older age groups, the results from the previous season will be used to assist with the team placement for the coming season.
- In the u8 age group, during the spring season only, game scores will be reported (but not published), using the established score reporting procedures, for the sole purpose of properly placing teams for the fall u9 season.
- The ARD and the Club Managers will ultimately determine the placement of all teams.
- Teams who have more than 50% of the players from last season's roster will be considered a returning team and should be held to that team's results from the previous season.
- Teams who have less than 50% of the players from the last season's roster will be considered a new team and should not be held to that team's results from the previous team.
- All new teams will be placed in the appropriate division based on input from the team's Club Manager and the team's coach.
- No division will consist of less than four (4) teams.
- Ideally, divisions will consist of eight (8) teams. This will allow:
 - Each team, in the u8 and older age groups, to play all the other teams once during the season; plus one 'matchup' game.
 - Each team, in the u6 – u7 age groups, to receive seven (7) games per season, scheduled randomly, with no matchup games.

- Forming divisions with an even number of teams is desirable; as it provides each team with an opponent each weekend.
- Matchup games will be determined by divisional standings, based on established methods, at the end of round-robin play. In eight (8) team divisions, the matchup games will be:
 - Team ranked #1 vs. Team ranked #2
 - Team ranked #3 vs. Team ranked #4
 - Team ranked #5 vs. Team ranked #6
 - Team ranked #7 vs. Team ranked #8
- Matchup games will not determine the division champion. Division standings and champions will be determined as outlined in the next section.
- The number of teams in a division will determine the schedule of play for that division. In the u8 and older age groups, the divisional schedule based on the number of teams is listed below:
 - 4 Teams – each team plays the other teams twice in the season + 2 ‘matchup games’.
 - 5 Teams – each team plays the other teams twice in the season.
 - 6 Teams – each team plays the other teams once in the season + 3 ‘matchup games’.
 - 7 Teams – each team plays the other teams once in the season + 2 ‘matchup games’.
 - 8 Teams – each team plays the other teams once in the season + 1 ‘matchup game’.
 - 9 Teams – each team plays the other teams once in the season.
 - 10 or more Teams – teams are allocated eight 8 regular season games and will not play all the other teams. Game assignments will be done by means established by the ASA Recreational Committee.

DIVISIONAL STANDINGS:

- In all ASA regular season league games, in all age groups, games that are tied at the end of regulation time will remain a tie game. There will be no overtime.
- For the u9 and older age groups, a team’s standing in its division and the division champion will be determined by the number of points it receives based on its win/loss record during the season. Points will be awarded as follows:
 - 3 points for a win
 - 1 point for a tie
 - 0 points for a loss

- In the event teams, who have played an equal number of games, are tied on points, and a separation of those teams is needed, the following tiebreaker system will be used:
 - Best Goal Difference (goals scored – goals against) in all games – with a maximum goal difference of +4 or -4 for each game.
 - Most wins during the season
 - Most goals scored during the season – with a maximum of 4 goals counted for each game.
 - Fewest goals allowed during the season
 - Coin toss
- Upon the conclusion of a season's games, as determined by the ASA, if teams in a division have played an unequal number of games, and a separation of teams is needed, each team's total points will be divided by the number of games played to determine the average points per game. The average points per game will be used to determine the division standings. Teams tied on average points per game will use the tiebreaker procedures listed above.

SCORE REPORTING:

- In the u6 – u7 age groups, as well as the u8 age groups during the fall season, game scores will not be kept at the field, will not be reported, will not be published and will not be used to determine divisional placement.
- In the u8 age group, during the spring season only, game scores will be reported (but not published), using the established score reporting procedures, for the sole purpose of properly placing teams for the fall u9 season.
- In the u9 and older age groups, game scores will be reported and league standings will be published. It will be the responsibility of both teams to report the score of each game; using procedures established by the ASA.
- When reporting scores, the exact score for both teams must be provided. This score will be reflected in the divisional standings and will show on the division schedule. For tie-breaking procedures, a maximum goal difference (goals for – goals against) of +4 or -4 for each game will be used to determine the total goal difference.

- If a game score is not reported, by either coach involved, within two (2) weeks from the completion of the game, the score will be entered as 0-0 and neither team will receive any points for the game.
- In the event of disagreements on the score of the game, the ARD will communicate with the Referee Commissioner, who will communicate with the game referees, to determine the score of the game.

PROMOTION/RELEGATION:

- In the u9 and older age groups, at the close of each season, based on the regular season standings, the two (2) teams at the bottom of a division will drop to a lower division and the two (2) teams at the top of a division will advance to a higher division. Promotion and/or relegation for a team can be amended through consultation between the ASA and a Club Manager.
- Teams who have 50% or more of the players from last season's roster will be considered a returning team and should be held to that team's results from the previous season.
- Teams who have less than 50% of the players from the last season's roster will be considered a new team and should not be held to that team's results from the previous team.

CANCELLATION OF GAMES AND PRACTICES DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER:

- The ASA is assigned playing fields by the Arlington County Department of Parks, Recreational and Cultural Resources (DPRCR) and the City of Falls Church's Department of Parks and Recreation. These groups make the decision on the closure of fields and the cancellation of scheduled games and practices due to inclement weather.
- If the County has closed a field due to weather or wet conditions, no games or practices may be conducted on that field.
- To determine the status of games and practices during periods of inclement weather; please check the Arlington County Inclement Weather Line (703-228-4715). For games and practices scheduled on fields in the City of Falls Church, the Inclement Weather Line is (703)248-5125.

- Regardless of the weather conditions and field status, to ensure the safety of the players:
 - It is ultimately the referee's decision to suspend or cancel a game.
 - It is ultimately the coach's decision to suspend or cancel a practice.

GAME SCHEDULE CONFLICTS AND SPECIAL REQUESTS:

- *Coaches are encouraged to speak with their team members and plan ahead!*
- Team coaches should communicate all scheduling conflicts to the team's Club Manager at least two (2) days prior to the Team Formation Date.
- Club Managers must communicate all of their team conflicts to the Assistant Recreational Director on or prior to the Team Formation Date.
- Requests for changes to regularly scheduled games will not be accepted after the first game of the season; unless it is for an academically related school function. To request that a game be rescheduled, the Assistant Recreational Director must be notified at least ten (10) days prior to the scheduled game.
- A coach's inability to attend a game is not a reason to request a game be rescheduled.

AUTHORITY TO CANCEL, POSTPONE OR RESCHEDULE GAMES:

- All decisions regarding the cancellation, postponement and/or rescheduling of games are the responsibility of the Assistant Recreational Director. No Coach or Club Representative shall cause a game to be canceled, postponed or rescheduled.

PAID COACHES/TRAINERS:

- ASA Recreational coaches and/or parents shall not hire paid coaches or trainers for recreational teams.
- ASA member clubs may arrange for paid coaches to conduct club sponsored clinics or specialized training programs. These programs should be coordinated with the ASA's ED and TD.

UNIFORMS and EQUIPMENT:

- Each player must wear the official uniform of their club for ASA league games. Older versions of a club's uniform are acceptable. In accordance with FIFA rules and for the safety of the players, all players must wear shinguards, and may not wear anything that may potentially injure themselves or any other player. Socks must fully cover the shinguards. No jewelry, including earrings, may be worn by players.

DECISIONS:

- Any questions or situations not covered by these rules or interpretation thereof shall be referred to the ASA Recreational Committee and the Technical Director. All major rules changes may require approval by the ASA Board of Directors.

OFFICIAL COMPLAINTS AND PROTESTS:

- All complaints concerning behavior must be put in writing and sent to the ASA's Executive Director. The Executive Director may handle the complaint directly or forward the complaint to the appropriate person; including the ARD, the Technical Director, the Referee Coordinator and/or the Recreational Committee.
- No protest will be permitted on game situations involving "Referee Judgment" calls. Only protests involving player eligibility and/or refusal of the referee to follow established ASA Rules are permitted.
- Procedure for filing a protest:
 - Protests must be submitted to the ASA's Executive Director and the Club Manager of the opposing team from the originating Club Manager within forty-eight (48) hours after a game has been completed. An email of the notice to protest is acceptable, however, will not be considered valid until the written documentation is received in the ASA office.
 - The supporting materials for all protests must be submitted in writing, signed by both the protesting coach and the Club Manager and delivered to the ASA Office in order to make the protest valid. An electronic version should be submitted to the opposing Club Manager at the same time.
 - The opposing team's Club Manager shall have an additional forty eight (48) hours upon receipt of the initial protest, to respond to the protest.
 - Once a protest or response has been delivered, no further contact with ASA personnel will be permitted regarding the protest.

- Receipt of the protest documentation will be confirmed to all parties and submitted to the ASA's Rules & Discipline Committee for action. This committee will contain a minimum of three (3) people, will establish necessary administrative policies and will report to the Recreational Committee.
- The procedures set forth in this rule are to be considered jurisdictional and the protest of a game result not complying with these procedures may be rejected.

CONDUCT OF ADULTS (and others in attendance at games or other ASA events):

- The conduct of adults should be examples of good sporting behavior. Their behavior should set an example for all players of the ASA. The ASA will not tolerate conduct that may be interpreted as poor sporting behavior by coaches, parents or other adults. It is the responsibility of the team coach to maintain and enforce appropriate conduct of adults during games and practices. Examples of inappropriate conduct are:
 - Using abusive or degrading language
 - Making physical threats
 - Being under the influence of intoxicating substance
 - Supporting or encouraging poor sporting behavior by players
 - Harassing referees, members of the other team or their supporters
 - Entering the field of play except for injury
 - Disputing or influencing a referee's decision