



Iowa Soccer League State League RULES

SECTION 1 Introduction

- 1.0 Name
- 1.1 Purpose
- 1.2 League's Association with Iowa Soccer
- 1.3 Goals
- 1.4 Management and Operations
- 1.5 Authority
- 1.6 Club Leader / Advisory Panel
- 1.7 Website
- 1.8 Rules changes

SECTION 2 Entry and Eligibility Criteria

- 2.0 Eligibility
- 2.1 Registration procedure
- 2.2 Selection of team's "playing age group"
- 2.3 Age groups offered
- 2.4 Roster sizes, minimum number needed to play (update 8/20/2025)
- 2.5 Team Formation & Levels of Play
- 2.6 Multiple rostering
- 2.7 Entry fee, collection of
- 2.8 Additional Fees
- 2.9 Withdrawal of team entry

SECTION 3 League Standards and Expectations

- 3.0 Programming Guided by Iowa Soccer's Player Pathway
- 3.1 Practice Better Sportsmanship 4ALL
- 3.2 Education: Coaches and Parents
- 3.3 Club Standards
- 3.4 League Committee
- 3.5 Meetings

SECTION 4 Scheduling

- 4.0 Seasons
- 4.1 Number of games



- 4.2 Play dates & times
- 4.3 Group Formation
- 4.4 Travel distances
- 4.5 Scheduling Blocks

- 4.6 Rescheduling allowance and notification of cancellations

SECTION 5 Specifications and Requirements

- 5.0 Comprehensive Chart of Standards and Requirements
- 5.1 Field inventory
- 5.2 Team benches and spectator sideline

SECTION 6 Referees

- 6.0 System for assigning
- 6.1 Certified referees required, Number of referees assigned to a match
- 6.2 Pay scale
- 6.3 Method of payment
- 6.4 No-shows
- 6.5 Participant obligation to referees
- 6.6 Referee obligation to participants
- 6.7 A Referee's reporting requirements

SECTION 7 Required Game Credentials

- 7.0 Team roster, player and coach passes, guest player credentials

SECTION 8 Playing Rules

- 8.0 FIFA Laws of the Game except as noted
- 8.1 Game length
- 8.2 Overtime
- 8.3 Small-sided forms of the game
- 8.4 Forfeits
- 8.5 Completed game
- 8.6 Substitutions (update 8/20/2025)
- 8.7 Game ball
- 8.8 Game credentials
- 8.9 Team uniforms and player equipment
- 8.10 Heading restrictions and limitations
- 8.11 Concussions, possible head injury and return to play
- 8.12 Cautions, send-offs



8.13 Referee authority at the game

SECTION 9 Scores and standings

9.0 Reporting

9.1 League points, standings

08/01/2023 | State League

SECTION 10 Conduct and Discipline

10.0 Sportsmanship expectations

10.1 Send-offs

10.2 Disciplinary Committee

10.3 Disciplinary Committee procedures

SECTION 11 Protests and Appeals

11.0 Investigation

11.1 Decision

11.2 Filing a protest



SECTION 1 Introduction

1.0 Name

The name of the League is the Iowa Soccer League State League hereafter referred to as “ISL State League” or “State League.”

1.1 Purpose

Iowa Soccer is the sanctioned governing body of US Youth Soccer and US Soccer and is dedicated to serving the development of players while being supportive of and in compliance with our national organizations’ requirements and programming.

The Iowa Soccer League State League is the highest level of competition for domestic League play in our competitions pathway and is integral to player development. The ISL State League is guided by one focus – player development -- and is therefore evolving to be in full alignment with US Soccer’s Player Development Initiatives (PDI’s). Additionally, in delivering US Youth Soccer programming, such as the National Championship Series and the Presidents Cup, Iowa Soccer must ensure teams, players and coaches are in compliance with US Youth Soccer rules and policies.

1.2 League’s Association with Iowa Soccer

The League is an Iowa Soccer property, open exclusively to Iowa Soccer member teams.

1.3 Goals

The League will:

- Be developmentally appropriate□
- Provide meaningful competition□
- Provide improved competition formats for players to enjoy and develop□
- Provide coaching education standards and resources□
- Take a common-sense approach to matters so as to best support a fun and developmentally appropriate playing environment□

1.4 League Management and Guiding Principles

The League is managed and operated by Iowa Soccer staff with a designated League Director. The Iowa Soccer staff will collaborate with the staff and club leaders to assure maximum collaboration, teamwork and input from membership and participating clubs.



The League is guided by the following:

- ☐ US Soccer Player Development Initiatives: These initiatives include:
 - 1. Calendar alignment (i.e., set play dates)
 - 2. Consistent schedules (i.e., 5-9 games based upon request)
 - 3. Developmentally appropriate match-ups



4. Appropriate practice-to-game ratios
 5. Appropriate number of games per day and per season
- Player Development: The League is player-centered and focuses on what is in the best interest of long-term player development. □
 - Club Development: Clubs are critical to the player development process. Therefore, Iowa Soccer is working to support club development and to help clubs create environments that facilitate the player development process. □
 - State, Regional and National Competition Pathways/Compliance: ISL State League serves as a qualifying entry point into the US Youth Soccer competition pathways, which include League play (the Midwest Conference and the National League) and tournament play (the National Championship Series Iowa State Cup and the Iowa Soccer Presidents Cup.) □
 - Tournament Participation: The League calendar includes blackout weekends on which teams may choose to participate in other events/playing opportunities. □
 - Club Leader / Advisory Panel: an advisory panel consisting of identified leaders of member clubs engages with League leadership and the State Technical Leader and/or Director of Player Development to provide guidance and support. □

1.5 Authority

Participating clubs will be responsible for teams entering the League and ultimately will be responsible for team (player, coach, and parent/supporter) actions.

The League is under the authority of the Iowa Soccer Association and its Board of Directors. Direct authority for management and operations of the League rests solely with the Iowa Soccer staff.

Iowa Soccer reserves the right to make certain decisions regarding the League, as it deems necessary, for the good of the game, in order to improve the game and/or to protect the participants. Such decisions shall include but are not limited to: postponement or cancellation of games; rescheduling of games; changing of fields; changing of sites; fair play and unsporting behavior.

All teams submitting an entry to compete in the League thereby agree to abide by and accept the jurisdiction of the bylaws, policies, rules and regulations of the Iowa Soccer Association, the Iowa Soccer League, US Youth Soccer, US Soccer and FIFA. No official, coach, club, referee, player, team or their representatives may invoke the aid of the Courts without first exhausting all available remedies within the appropriate affiliated soccer organizations noted above.

1.6 Club Leader / Advisory Panel

The Iowa Soccer staff will utilize an Advisory Panel for collaboration. The panel is advisory in nature and may make recommendations but is not a decision-making body. The panelists serve to bring their perspectives to the Iowa Soccer staff and League Director and serve as ambassadors and advocates of and for league participants.



1.6.1 Eligibility to serve

- Current club staff members and/or technical leaders

1.6.2 Volunteering to serve

Iowa Soccer staff will seek volunteers in advance of the terms of service. General Service terms are 12-24 months beginning August 1 – July 31. This panel will be revisited each year to consider make-up as discussed in 1.6.3.

1.6.3 Panel make-up

- As possible, will seek to have an even distribution of club leader's representative of all geographical regions.
- As possible in making selections in those categories, will seek to rotate and select so as to have a variety across clubs with teams participating in the League.

1.7 Website

The League website will serve as the informational and promotional hub for participants and fans alike. It can be found on www.iowasoccer.org.

1.8 Rules changes

Rules may be updated/revised at any time. Please make it a point to review the rules prior to the opening weekend of competition for your team, and to review them regularly. A plea of ignorance to all rules and regulations governing this competition is not sufficient grounds for not following them, or to serve as the basis for a protest.

SECTION 2 Entry and eligibility criteria

2.0 Eligibility

Entry is accepted on a team basis and teams and players must be currently registered with Iowa Soccer in 11U-19U age groups.

2.0.1 Each team and participant must be a current member of and in good standing with Iowa Soccer.

2.1 Team entry procedure – Team's "Actual Age Group" Designation



Clubs should only enter a team into the League knowing it will be able to field that team and field it in the age group selected at the time of team entry. All team entries must be completed using the League's online entry tool.

2.1.1 During team entry into the League, teams are required to enter the age group that corresponds with the age group based on the team's oldest player, also the age group identified by the team formation/registration platform.

2.2 Determination of team's "Playing Age Group"

The goal of the ISL State League is to create an environment that is player development centered. During the team entry process, a team enters a division based on its age group designation (see 2.1.1). Organizing teams by their corresponding age groups helps to serve the developmental process for the majority of teams. However, there is occasion to consider a team may need to be placed differently in order to better facilitate player development. Final determination of a team's "playing age group", also known as "divisional placement", is based upon two factors: age and ability

{We know clubs sometimes must place an "older" player or two on the only team available in the age group, and which happens to be a "younger" team, in order for the older kid(s) to have a place to play. By way of doing that, the team then must be designated as an "older" team - for example, you have a true 13U team but must place one or two true 14U players on the "younger" team's roster. This results in the team's official designation as a 14U team. (see 2.1)}

- Age: the first criteria in creating divisions is by age group (i.e. birth year). In 11U-14U there will likely be single year divisions. In the older age groups, 15U-19U, ages at which players are becoming more physically mature, the League will consider the number of teams within an age group and the playing level of teams within an age group and from there decide whether to have single birth year divisions or to combine multiple birth years.
- Ability: If a team has demonstrated that it's at a higher or lower level of development than it's age group peers, the League will consider allowing the team to play up or down as outlined below.

2.2.1 Playing "Up"

11U & 12U Divisions: Teams will be asked to play within their division unless team formation requires an exception to be made. Any exceptions for consideration otherwise will be documented during the team entry process.



13U Division: Due to not having State Cup or Presidents Cup results, requests to play up will be reviewed by the league director. The coach and/or technical director will have an opportunity to present their case to the league but will not be involved in the final decision-making process.

14U – 19U Divisions: If a team has demonstrated that they are at a higher level of development than their age group peers (i.e., #1 or #2 team in the state) the League director, will consider the opportunity for those teams to play up or across age groups.

2.2.2 Playing “Down”

11U & 12U Divisions: Teams will be asked to play within their division unless team formation requires an exception to be made. Any exceptions for consideration otherwise will be documented during the team entry process. Exceptions will be highlighted on final divisional placement release.

13U – 19U Divisions: Requests can be made during registration process. Teams will be asked to play within their division unless team formation requires an exception to be made. Exceptions will be highlighted on final divisional placement release.

2.2.3 Unacceptable use of this selection allowance

It is not acceptable for a team to intentionally select “play down” when the team’s developmental level supports playing in its own (or higher) playing age group. The League will monitor and track scores and address any questions or issues if they arise. Abuse of this commonsense approach will not be tolerated.

2.2.4 Form of the game

It is not allowable to place a team in a division with a different form of the game (6v6, 9v9, 11v11, etc.) i.e., A 13U team may NOT play in the 12U division.

2.3 Age Groups Offered

The ISL State League offers the following age groups.

- FALL SEASON: 11U, 12U, 13U, 14U, 15U, 16U, 17U, 18U, & 19U
- SPRING SEASON: 11U, 12U, 13U, 14U & 15U

Should there not be enough teams to form a single age group division, age divisions will be combined. As necessary, small-sided divisions (7v7) will also be offered and supported in 13U-19U age groups.



2.4 Roster Sizes

Maximum Roster Sizes

- | | | |
|------------------|------------|--|
| • 11U, 12U (9v9) | maximum 18 | maximum 18 / recommended 14-16 |
| • 13U – 19U | maximum 25 | maximum 22 “game active” / recommend 16-18 |

UPDATE Fall 2025 – ISA Member Rules Change – SECTION 9

Minimum number of players needed to play

- 11U, 12U playing 9v9 minimum of 7
- 13U-19U playing 11v11 minimum of 9
- 13U-19U playing 7v7 minimum of 6

2.5 Team Formation & Levels of Play

All “Select teams” are formed by a selection process. Refer to the Iowa Soccer Association Member Rules Section 1.

- Select - Level 1: Highest level of play available in the state
 - o Further defined by these competition opportunities:
 1. US Youth Soccer National League
 2. Midwest Conference, Premier I, Premier II, or 1st Division (MWC)
 3. ISL State League (Cup Division)
 4. ISCS National Championship Series (State Cup)
 5. ISCS Presidents Cup Series
- Select -Level 2: More competitive than level 3, but not strong enough to be level 1 o Further defined by these competition opportunities:
 1. Midwest Regional League, Qualifying Division (MRL)
 2. ISL State League (2nd/3rd Division)
 3. ISCS Presidents Cup Series

2.6 Multiple rostering

Players may only play for one club in the ISL State League. Starting at the 11U age group, players may be registered to two Iowa Soccer sanctioned teams at any given time during the seasonal year; this is considered multiple rostering. One team must be designated as the primary team and the other team will be designated as the secondary team.

- Each team is limited to three secondary rostered players.



- Players multiple rostered to a Level 3 team and a Level 1 or 2 must have the Level 1 or 2 team designated as their primary team

2.7 Entry Fee, Collection of

The team entry fee is per team, per season. Team entry fee is not due at the time of entry; Iowa Soccer will invoice clubs for their total team entries in a playing season.

2.8 Additional Fees

- Assignor Fee
- Referee Fee
- Field Rental Fee (Only applied in the case the League/Club must rent playing fields)

2.9 Withdrawal of team entry

Clubs should only enter a team into the League knowing it will be able to field that team and field it in the age group selected at the time of team entry.

2.9.1 Team entry checkpoints

There will be a minimum of three checkpoints prior to the release of the final schedule that a designated club official(s) will be asked to verify its club's entries.

1. In the days immediately following the close of team entry
2. In the days immediately following the divisional placement process
3. In the days immediately following the import of data by our scheduling partner TeamsCompete

2.9.2 Penalty for late withdraw from the League (effective Fall 2023)

If the League Director and scheduling partner TeamsCompete have completed the process of confirming team entries with the designated club official via the checkpoints per Section 2.9.1 and a club subsequently requests to withdraw a team, the club will be charged for the League entry fee and also be subject to a fine up to \$250, and further consideration may be made as to the eligibility of that team and/or club to compete in the League in the next playing season.

Section 3 League Standards and Expectations

3.0 Programming Guided by Iowa Soccer's Player Pathway



3.0.1 Focus, by Age Group

- 11U & 12U: Performance Pathway - Soccer for Life, Active for Life.
The primary focus for this stage of development is to train to train. From a soccer perspective, the focus should be on technical development and basic understanding of tactical principles in the 9v9 game format.
- 13U & 14U: Performance Pathway – Soccer for life, Active for Life.
The primary focus for this stage of development is to begin transition for train to compete. Introduction of a competitive playing environment where players may continue to develop, refine, and apply their technique as well as begin to understand tactical principles in the 11v11 game format.
- 15U thru 19U: Performance Pathway - Soccer for Life, Active for Life
The primary focus during this stage of development is to maintain a competitive playing environment where players can continue to develop, refine, and apply their technique as well as further develop their tactical understanding of the game. In the Performance Pathway, the goal is to train to compete.

- 3.1 Practice Better Sportsmanship 4ALL: All ISL Teams must practice better sportsmanship throughout the year. Iowa Soccer along with our partners at the Iowa Referee Committee will develop and promote better sportsmanship initiatives that we expect all clubs/teams to participate in as we work



to improve sideline behavior and a better environment 4ALL participants. (Players, Coaches, Referees, & Parents)!

It is the position of Iowa Soccer that the pursuits of competing and of practicing good sportsmanship are not mutually exclusive. Club officials and their technical leaders are expected to take the lead in directing their players, coaches, referees & parents “practice better sportsmanship” as part of participation in an Iowa Soccer League competition.

3.2 Education: Coaches, Parents

Iowa Soccer is committed to creating a better environment by building its foundation on education. Coach and parent education are critical components of player development and enjoyment of the game and contribute to player retention. Through education, coaches and parents are better equipped to support players, while also creating more enjoyable experiences for themselves.

3.2.1 Coach Education Minimum Standards

Coaches in the ISL State League are expected to familiarize and conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with Iowa Soccer’s Long-term Player development philosophy. Coaches play a critical role in player development and staying with the sport. In an effort to support player development, coaches are encouraged to complete one of the Iowa Soccer coach education courses. Iowa Soccer will also utilize the League structure to deliver a range of coach education materials and opportunities.

- 11U & 12U Coaches: Required DCC Profile + Online Intro Module and/or USSF “E” License
- 13U & 14U Coaches: Required DCC Profile + Online Intro Module and/or USSF “E” License
- 15U – 19U Coaches: Required DCC Profile + Online Intro Module and/or USSF “E” License

>Beginning 2020/2021 All 11/12U Coaches must have 9v9 (in-person) License or E License

>Beginning 2021/2022 All 13/19U Coaches must have 11v11 (in-person) License or E License

3.2.2 Parent Education

Expectations of parent behavior begin with the foundation laid by the “Practice Better Sportsmanship” program. Iowa Soccer will roll out additional parent education materials and resources during each season.

3.3 Club Standards

Club administration – to be eligible to participate in ISL State League, clubs/teams must have standardized administrative procedures in place at the club.



- Club must be up to date on all League fees and invoices based on ISA collections policy
- Club must provide a League rep to communicate with League director
- If hosting home games at the club's facility, must provide one field coordinator to communicate with the League on all issues regarding fields

3.4 League Committee

All clubs who have 4 or more teams registered for the League will have 1 representative on the League committee. This membership will be updated yearly based on fall registrations.

3.5 Meetings

The League committee will meet once a year.

- This meeting will review the fall season and set dates for the spring season.
- At any time deemed necessary by the League director to resolve issues. A minimum one-week notice by confirmed communication is required. This meeting may take place by webinar.

SECTION 4 Scheduling

4.0 Seasons

The ISL State League will offer a fall and a spring playing season for 11U, 12U, 13U, 14U, 15U and a fall playing season for 16U, 17U, 18U, & 19U divisions.

4.1 Number of games

The average number of League games will be 6-7 games, (minimum of 6 unless noted otherwise), played over an 8-9 week season determined by the calendar. Club officials may request a light or heavy schedule, although these requests can't be guaranteed.

4.1.1 Light Schedule (3-5 Matches)

4.1.2 Heavy Schedule (8-9 Matches)

4.1.3 Teams who request a heavy schedule & receive 8 or more matches will pay an additional admin fee of \$30 per match.

4.2 Play dates & times

League games will be scheduled on Saturdays and Sundays with games starting at 11:00am, 1:00pm, 3:00pm or 5:00pm. Times may vary slightly based on daylight.

4.2.1 Play dates will be highlighted prior to opening League registration. Teams must be available to play on all play dates.



4.2.2 The League provides teams with “opt-in” or “opt-out” weekends in the case they would like to participate in other events such as tournaments.

4.3 Divisional Placement/Group Formation

Teams will be placed/assembled in “playing age groups” (as per Section 2.5) and by division. The Premier division in each age group shall be made up of Select - Level 1 teams. Additional tiers may be formed to support lower-level teams.

4.3.1 Immediately after Groups have been formed there will be a short time period of review by a designated club official to confirm or request a change to their team’s group placement.

4.4 Travel distances

Amount of travel will vary based on group makeup. As mentioned in 4.3.1 the first division will be geared towards creating the most competitive matches for our Select - Level 1 teams therefore may need to travel a bit more.

4.4.1 The use of neutral sites will be considered in the event that a game match-up involves a significant travel distance.

4.5 Scheduling Blocked Teams

4.5.1 Teams sharing coaches – The League will coordinate schedules for a head coach of (two teams) to the best of our ability, beyond that we cannot guarantee game coordination.

4.5.2 Teams sharing players – The League will coordinate schedules for two teams sharing players to the best of our ability, beyond that we cannot guarantee game coordination.

4.5.3 Player blocks will be given priority over coach’s blocks

4.6 Published Schedule

Once the schedule is published all matches must be played as scheduled. Teams not playing a scheduled match are subject to a \$400 forfeit fine and possible suspension from the ISL State League. Failure to adhere to this policy will render the offending team responsible for all referee fees and match expenses for the game.

4.6.1 In the event of weather and /or field closures, the League Director will work with clubs and verify the dates, locations, and matches that will be cancelled.

4.6.2 Only matches cancelled due to weather and/or field closures may be rescheduled with no additional penalties at the League and Club officials’ discretion as per the following procedure.



- o Team Coaches or Coordinators must contact each other and agree upon a date and time
- o The agreed-upon date and time must be presented to the League Director via our League reschedule form (available on League website)
 - ☐ Required 5 day minimum notice on all reschedule requests
- o The League Director will confirm if fields and referees are available for the agreed-upon time and if so, the rescheduled match will be entered into the ISL schedule
- o In the event matches cannot be rescheduled, those matches will be posted as not played

- 4.6.3 Mutual Agreed Reschedule Requests after final schedule has been published**
- o Mutual agreed upon reschedule with less than a 5 day notice will result in a \$15 Admin Fee to the team requesting the schedule change.
 - o Reschedule requests that are not mutually approved will not be entertained
 - o Please understand all schedule changes impact assignor/referee schedules, any request may increase the difficulty to get your match assigned with a full crew.



SECTION 5 Specifications & Requirements: rosters, games, fields/equipment, offside

5.0 Comprehensive Chart of Standards and Requirements

	11 & Under	12 & Under	13-14 & Under	15-16 & Under	17-19 & Under
Field: Length Range	70-80	70-80	100-120	100-120	100-120
Field: Width Range	45-55	45-55	55-80	55-80	55-80
Number of Players	9v9	9v9	11v11	11v11	11v11
Maximum Roster Size	18	18	22 max 22 "game active"	22 max 22 "game active"	22 max 22 "game active"
GK	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Playing Time (Minutes)	2x30	2x30	2x35	2x40	2x45
Break Time (Minutes)	10	10	10	10	10
Ball Size	4	4	5	5	5
Goal Size (Feet)	6.5x18.5	6.5x18.5	8x24	8x24	8x24
Offside	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes



5.1 Field inventory

In order to provide requisite numbers of fields for League play, each club will submit one available field for every up to four of its team entries in an age group. For each age group in which the club has a team entered, it must provide a field of the corresponding size. If a club enters more than four teams in a single age group, it must provide a second field for League play.

5.1.1 Field inventory submission requirements, timeline

Club officials will be asked to complete a field inventory form as provided by the League Director. The deadline for field inventory collection will coincide with the deadline date for team entry confirmation.

5.2 Team benches and spectator sideline

Players and team officials will be positioned on one sideline that is opposite the spectator sideline. It is not permissible for spectators to be positioned behind the team benches.

SECTION 6 Referees

6.0 System for assigning

The League Head Referee Assignor will ensure that all referees assigned for ISL State League are certified as required by the IRC and USSF.

6.1 Certified referees required

Only certified referees will be assigned by registered League assignors and will use the diagonal system of control (3 person crew).

- A two-person system is not allowed.
- If there is a referee no-show at the game, non-certified volunteers may be used so the game may be played.
- Referees will officiate all matches in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the game unless noted otherwise.

Number of referees assigned to a match, by age group/form of the game

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11U, 12U (playing 9v9) | three referees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13U, 14U, 16U, 19U (playing 11v11) | three referees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13U, 14U, 16U, 19U (playing 7v7) | one referee |

6.2 Pay scale

Iowa Soccer, in conjunction with the Iowa Referee Committee, will determine the fees to be paid to referees each seasonal year.

6.3 Method of payment



The referees will be paid after the match report has been completed. ISA will process referee payments as per ISA accounting procedures, at the end of each month or as advertised.

6.4 Referee No-shows

The expectation of referees is that they honor their game assignment. If a referee(s) does not show at the game, it will be noted in the match report. Teams will be refunded at the end of the season for missing assignments & referee No-shows.

- If the crew is missing a referee, volunteers may be used so the game may be played.
- If the entire crew does not show, the coaches may discuss and if agreed, play the game as a friendly match.

6.6 Participant obligation to referees

Participants in a match - coaches/team officials, players and parents/spectators - should read and be familiar with the rules governing the League. Following from that, the expectations of being a participant in an Iowa Soccer competition are high and begin with treating the match and the referees with respect, and to “practice better sportsmanship” at all times. While there are many “gamesmanship” actions that are accepted as part of the soccer culture, all participants must keep at the forefront the understanding that this is a youth sport and that the adults in particular should be modeling respectful treatment of referees.

6.7 Referee obligation to participants

Referees should know which rules are to be applied to an ISL State League match. We recognize most referees officiate games outside of this League, many of which are governed by different rules. No matter, the first obligation referees have to ISL State League participants is to ensure he/she has prepared for the match by reviewing these rules. As one of four participants in a match, referees are expected to set the tone of the game by “practicing better sportsmanship”. Manage the match in a calm, confident manner, model good sportsmanship and from there set the expectations for the players, coaches and parents/spectators.

6.8 A Referee’s reporting requirements Send-offs, Forfeit, Abandoned game

- In the event of any of the above, the Referee must submit a game report to the League Director by 10pm on the Sunday of the weekend of the game.

SECTION 7 Required Game Credentials

7.0 Player and Coach Passes OR League Approved Event Roster

All players, coaches, and team personnel MUST be registered/carded as a US Youth Soccer member. Beginning in Fall '22 teams may print and have a league approved event roster which includes photos of



all approved players and coaches. Prior to each match the Referee will conduct the pre-game check in with the players and coaches. Coaches must present the approved roster OR laminated player/coach passes as outlined below to the Referee including all individuals who will be on the sideline with the team including but not limited to coaches, managers, trainers, and players.

7.0.1 Missing Credentials / Paperwork

- In the event the coach cannot provide the required documents at pregame check-in or by the scheduled kick-off time, the Referee should adhere to the following:
 - If the player passes are not produced by the end of the game, the game will be recorded as a forfeit
 - If the coach can produce most, but not all, player passes, the game will be recorded as a forfeit. All passes for the players participating in the game must be produced.
 - The Referee must report the forfeit to the League Director by 10pm on the Sunday of the weekend of the game. The Referee report should include the reason given by the coach that he/she indicated passes would be produced by the end of the game but were not.
- If the coach indicates during the pregame check-in that the player passes cannot be produced the game shall be reported as a forfeit. The referee crew is not obligated at this point to officiate the game. The coaches may discuss and if agreed, play the game as a friendly match. ◦ The Referee must report the forfeit to the League Director by 10pm on the Sunday of the weekend of the game. The Referee report should include the reason given by the coach that the player passes could not be produced.

SECTION 8 Playing Rules

8.0 FIFA Laws of the Game except as noted herein

8.1 Game length (Refer to standards chart in Section 5.0)

8.2 Overtime

Overtime is not played if the game is tied at the end of regulation time, and the result of the game is recorded as a tie.

8.3 Small-sided forms of the game

- 11U and 12U age groups will play 9v9 (8 field players plus a goalkeeper) on a modified- sized field with modified goals. (Refer to standards chart in Section 5.0)



- Small-sided age groups will be supported in 13U, 14U, 16U and 19U as needed and will feature 7v7 (6 field players plus a goalkeeper) on a modified-sized field. (Refer to standards chart in Section 5.0)

8.4 Forfeits

9.4.1 Failure to show

A minimum of number of players constitutes a team (see Section 2.4); a team with the minimum number of players present must start the game at the scheduled time. If the minimum number of players are not available, a 15-minute grace period will be extended beyond the scheduled kick-off time. If at the end of the 15-minute grace period the team does not have the minimum number of players, the Referee will suspend the game and report it as a forfeit to the League Director. For the purposes of score reporting, the match will be recorded as a 1-0 (forfeit). (See 4.6, all forfeited matches will result in a \$400 fine)

8.4.2 Ineligible player, coach or team official

If it is determined that an ineligible player or coach participates in an ISL State League match, the match will be forfeited. Any team, coach and/or team official found guilty of knowingly using an ineligible player or having an ineligible coach on the sideline will be subject to strict disciplinary action that could include additional sanctions for the club.

8.5 Completed game

Any game that has started the second half of play is considered a completed game, so if suspended for any reason it will stand as such and not be rescheduled. If the game is suspended prior to the start of the second half, it may be rescheduled (See section 4.6.2)

8.6 Substitutions

Substitutions may occur for either team at any stoppage of play, at the direction of the referee.

8.6.1 11U -19U Divisions: Unlimited substitutions shall be made with consent of referee

- Injured players may re-enter at the discretion of the referee
- In the case of a head injury, a team may sub a player out even if it exceeds four times per half.

8.7 Game ball

Each team should have a properly inflated game ball provided to the Referee prior to the start of the match. The Referee will decide which ball to put into play.

8.8 Game Credentials

During pregame of the match, the Referee will conduct the team check-in at which time the credentials must be presented. (See section 7 regarding game credentials)



8.9 Team Uniforms and Player Equipment

Each player of a team is required to wear “like” uniforms within a team (jerseys and socks especially).

8.9.1 Uniforms

Each uniform should have a visible number that is different from the number of every other player on the team. Goalkeepers must wear colors that distinguish them from any other players and game officials; numbers for GK jerseys are optional. The home team (listed on top of schedule) shall wear their light colored uniform kit and the away team shall wear their dark colored uniform kit. The Referee will be the final authority on uniform colors. Should a change of jerseys be directed, the team failing to adhere to the above policy should change. If an issue still presents itself the home team shall change.

8.9.2 Equipment

Wearing age- and size-appropriate shin guards will be enforced by referees, and goalkeepers are encouraged to wear gloves to help ensure their safety. Casts are allowed if properly padded, keeping in mind the safety not only of the player wearing the cast, but of the other players. Referees will be the final authority of properly-sized guards and properly-padded casts. If a Referee points out non-compliance, the player will be given the opportunity to comply before any final decision is made regarding his/her ineligibility to play in the game.

8.10 Heading Restrictions and Limitations

As per the Iowa Soccer Concussion Management Policy

8.10.1 11U age groups

Heading is not allowed -- at practices or in games

8.10.2 12U, 13U, 14U age groups

Heading is allowed in games. Heading is limited at practices to 15-20 headers per player, per week

8.10.2.1 Younger players “playing up”

If a 10 year old player is playing up in an older age group (i.e. 10 year old playing on a 12U team), the player should not be heading the ball even if playing in an age group that permits heading.

- o Parents are responsible for educating their child that they are not yet old enough to head the ball, and to communicate with the child’s coach that he/she will not be heading the ball in practices or games. Coaches must adhere to the rules restricting 10 year olds from heading the ball, so will need to be aware of who those kids are on their roster, if any.



8.10.3 15U and older age groups

There are no limitations or restrictions at practices or in games.

8.11 Concussions, possible head injuries and returning to play

Refer to the Iowa Soccer Concussion Management Policy for requirements on returning to play

8.12 Cautions, send-offs

Players who are sent off should remain on the team bench under the supervision of the coach. If the player continues to act up or is deemed to be a distraction he/she will be requested to leave the field and the match. He/she must leave it in a timely manner, and must be out of sight and out of sound of the match. He/she may receive additional suspension or sanctioning if he/she does not comply or is found to have returned within sight and/or sound of the match.

Coaches/team officials who are sent off must immediately leave the field and the match. He/she may not remain at the match, must leave it in a timely manner, and must be out of sight and out of sound of the match. He/she may receive additional suspension or sanctioning if he/she does not comply or is found to have returned within sight and/or sound of the match.

A referee's decision regarding a send-off is final and may not be protested.

8.12.1 A team may not substitute for a player who is sent off, and the team will play down a player for the remainder of that match.

8.12.2 As per FIFA Laws of the Game, a team official guilty of misconduct will be shown a yellow card (caution) or a red card (sending-off); if the offender cannot be identified, the senior coach who is in the technical area at the time will receive the card.

8.12.3 Teams and coaches will take one side of the field and parents/spectators will be on the opposite side of the field. Any other individuals who may be reasonably construed as being associated with a team -- such as relatives and spectators -- will also be subject to the jurisdiction and authority of the Iowa Soccer League State League rules, associated Iowa Soccer rules and policies, and to the authority of League officials and game referees. Any coach or team official will be responsible for the actions of any individual(s) at any match that in the opinion of League officials or game referees is a supporter of that team.

8.12.3.1 Coaches or team officials who are sent off for the action(s) of any such individual(s) at a match are subject to the same penalties as detailed in these rules.



8.12.4 A send-off in a match carries with it the ineligibility for the player or coach/team official to participate in the next immediately-following League match with that team

8.12.4.1 If the send-off occurs in the last game of the League season, the suspension will follow the player or coach/team official to the immediately following season's first League match.

8.12.5 At the discretion of the League Director, the suspension may be increased and a player or coach/team official may receive a more than one game suspension.

8.12.6 The Referee must submit a report, including the name of the player or coach/team official that was sent off, to the League Director by 10pm on the Sunday following the game.

8.13 Referee Authority

From the time the Referee enters the playing field or its vicinity and until such time as the Referee leave the playing field or the next game begins, the Referee will have the authority to caution or send off any player, coach/team official or spectator. This authority extends to before, during and after game play, and the entire vicinity of the game field, including the entire location of the field, the Entire Park, facility or complex, and parking lots. The Referee is further given the authority to order off the field or its entire vicinity and parking areas any player, coach/team official or spectator who, in the Referee's judgment, is acting in a manner that is detrimental to the game.

SECTION 9 Scores and standings

9.0 Reporting

- Team Manager or Coach of first team listed (Home team) will report score after completion of match following the process as outlined by the league director.
- Scores will be collected and posted publicly.

SECTION 10 Conduct and Discipline

10.0 Sportsmanship expectations

Iowa Soccer Programs have high expectations of players, coaches, referees and parents to "practice better sportsmanship" as reflected throughout these rules as developing the culture of good sportsmanship is a vital part of the League.

10.1 Send-offs

Refer to Section 8.12



10.2 Disciplinary Committee

Any player or coach/team official found to violate any League, Iowa Soccer Association, US Youth Soccer, or US Soccer Bylaws, Rules or Policies, or the FIFA Laws of the Game, may be subject to a hearing in front of a disciplinary committee.



If necessary, the League director will convene a disciplinary committee comprised of the following members:

- The League Director will serve as the mediator (will not vote)
- Three members designated by the League Director from the Player Development Advisory Panel and or League committee; designees may not have any affiliation with those brought before the panel.

10.3 Disciplinary Committee procedures

- The committee may call any witness to document the case
- The alleged violator may call any witness to document the case
- After hearing all evidence presented, the disciplinary committee will make a determination of the discipline to be handed out.
- Unless the violated rules have a specific punishment the disciplinary committee will determine the punishment, which may be any of the following: o Verbal/Written Warning o Suspension o Removal from the League

SECTION 11 Protests and Appeals

11.0 Investigation

It is the responsibility of the League Director to investigate a properly-lodged protest within the timetable as laid out herein. Failure of the parties involved to cooperate with such investigation will result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension.

11.1 Decision

All questions relating to the qualifications of competitors, to interpretation of the rules, or any dispute or protest concerning an Iowa Soccer League game will be referred to the League Director. Decisions will be made by the League Director and will be binding on all parties.

11.1.1 A plea of ignorance to all rules and regulations governing this League is not sufficient grounds for a protest.

11.1.2 A referee's judgment will not be a basis for protests and a referee's decision will be final. This includes, but is not limited to, cautions or send-offs for players, coaches/team officials or parents/spectators.

11.1.3 Misapplication of the Laws of the Game (LOTG) may be a valid basis for a protest. Misapplication of the LOTG is different from a referee's judgment call.

11.1.4 To be valid and eligible for consideration



- A protest relating to grounds, goal posts or bars, or other appurtenances of the game will be entertained only if a written objection has been lodged with the Referee and with the opposing coach prior to the start of the game by a coach/team official listed on the team's Iowa Soccer-approved roster from the involved game.
- In any other instances, a protest must be verbally lodged by a coach/team official listed on the team's Iowa Soccer-approved roster from the involved game with the Referee and with the opposing coach at the game site before entering the field of play, or before leaving the game site at the conclusion of the match.

11.2 Filing a protest

- The League Director must be notified, in writing or verbally, of the intent to lodge a protest by 10 pm on the date of the match.
- Protest may be filed only by a coach/team official listed on the team's Iowa Soccer-approved roster
- The protest must be filed with the League Director within 24 hours after the completion of the game being protested and include:
 - A fee in the amount of \$250.00
 - A written protest which must clearly articulate the disputed matter and include the grounds on which the protest is lodged
 - A written copy of any information to be presented by witnesses.
- After having received a properly lodged protest, the League Director will notify the team/party against which such protest is made, who will have the right to defend its case. A copy of the written protest will be provided to the other involved team/party.
- A lawyer will not represent a team/party at a hearing unless he or she is a bona fide member of one of the teams/parties concerned.