

## WESL, Rules and Regulations of Play, Revised 2026

West End Soccer League

Rules and Regulations of Play

### **W.E.S.L. OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the W.E.S.L. include:

1. Encourage the children to have fun.
2. Teach the children good sportsmanship.
3. Teach the game of soccer and soccer skills.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS**

We take the responsibility and privilege of working with youth very seriously. There will be no exceptions to the risk management requirements mandated by Pennsylvania State Laws, and our sanctioning body, Eastern Pennsylvania Youth Soccer Association, (EPYSA).

We encourage all Coaches, Volunteers and Referees to begin the Clearance process as soon as possible as it can be time-consuming.

Concussion Training must be done annually, and background checks are good for 5years. Links for the Training and background checks can be found on the League's web page: [leagues.bluesombrero.com/westendsoccer](http://leagues.bluesombrero.com/westendsoccer)

#### **Coaches and Volunteers:**

Concussion Training

PA State Police background check- (Free) West End Soccer League

PA Child Abuse History

FBI Fingerprint background-(Only if you haven't been a resident of PA for 10 years of more).

In Lieu of FBI fingerprint letter signed- (only if you've been a resident of PA for 10 years or more). Note- There is a witness line on this form that cannot be signed by a family member.

#### **Referees, and Anyone else paid by WESL for a job that involves our Youth:**

Concussion Training

PA State Police Background check- (Fee applied)

PA Child Abuse History- Fee Applied

FBI Fingerprint Background- Fee Applied, and no 10-year resident form option!

## **INSURANCE CLAUSE**

- Insurance Verification: All players (or their parents/guardians) are required to provide valid medical insurance information during the registration process. Personal medical insurance is the primary insurance coverage.
- Uninsured Players: If primary insurance is not available, the player or parent/guardian must:
  1. Notify the League President immediately.
  2. Sign a formal Medical Waiver to finalize eligibility.
- Medical Waiver Terms: By signing the waiver, the player and parent/guardian acknowledge that the player is solely responsible for any medical injuries or expenses incurred while participating in WESL activities.
- Documentation Responsibility & Deadline: All information must be submitted by the registration closing date. Parents/guardians and players are responsible for providing accurate information. WESL will not follow up on missing, incomplete, or inaccurate insurance documentation. Failure to meet the deadline may result in registration being delayed or denied.
- Liability Disclaimer: WESL is not responsible for any medical expenses or injuries if inaccurate or misleading information is provided by the player or parent/guardian during registration.

## **GENERAL RULES**

The rules shall be in accordance with the laws of the game prepared by FIFA, except as modified by WESL. It is strongly recommended that all board members, coaches, referees, parents and players read these rules and regulations as they apply to everyone involved in WESL.

1. Players may register for Travel or Intramural, but not both in the same season.
2. All goals shall have secured nets with anchors or weights on back bar.
3. The fans, players and coaches shall remain at least 3 yards from the sidelines. Nobody is permitted to stand behind the goals. The referee shall stop the game to remove anyone from behind the goals that is distracting players.
4. When applicable the home coach will inspect and secure nets if needed, provide corner cones/flags, and have 2 soccer balls available for the game if needed.
5. Ball size 3 for ages 5, 6, 7, and 8; Ball size 4 for ages 9, through 11; Ball size 5 ages 12-15.

6. If any team cannot field the established number of players for their age group required, the coach of the opposing team should decrease his/her number of players to equalize play during the game.

7. Only players rostered on participating teams may play for their team. Rosters shall be established by the designated Division Representatives at the June meeting. The method to establish team rosters will be the responsibility of the division representative and will consider the number of experienced players, number of players by age, siblings, and number of players by gender. The children of coaches, one assistant coach, and sponsors will be assigned to their respective and designated teams. Assignment based upon location of residence, transportation problems and other reasons will not determine team assignment. Any violation of the placement of players on a specific team for reasons not permitted by the league will be reviewed by the board and could result in suspension of the team managers involved.

8. Transfer of players to other teams is only done by the Division Representatives.

9. Note that the number of core players (coach and sponsor children) should not exceed three (3). Circumstances that increase the number of core players beyond three (3) should be reviewed by the league board. WESL, Rules and Regulations of Play.

## **COACHES**

1. Coaches of WESL are responsible for knowing and upholding the rules and regulations of the league, and are required to acknowledge by signing forms to this effect.

2. Anyone coaching is required to attend a coach's clinic. If coach has grassroots training, or an E or D license they may provide a copy to the League secretary and will be exempt from attending a coach's clinic.

3. **All** coaches must also attend either the June or the July coaches meeting.

4. It is the coach's responsibility to complete all required paperwork for the team and submit completed forms back to the league. Final scores are to be reported back to the Division Representatives within 24 hours of the match for age groups 9 yrs. old and older.

5. As a volunteer coach/assistant coach for WESL you are expected to uphold, promote, and represent the WESL objectives, Rules and Regulations, and Code of Conduct. All reports of misconduct and/or words or action opposing WESL Objectives, Rules and Regulations, and Code of Conduct will be reviewed by the board and can result in immediate removal of the coach/assistant coach from the team.

6. In accordance with EPYSA policy, all coaches must read EPYSA Policy on Concussion Procedure and Protocol. Coaches must also complete EPYSA on-line Concussion Training and Test. At completion coaches will be able to print a certificate. Coaches must print the certificate and present it to the league prior to receiving their team roster.

**7. COACHES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR BOTH PLAYER AND SPECTATOR SIDELINES. IF NEEDED THE ASSISTANT COACH WILL SIT ON SPECTATOR SIDELINE. IF POOR BEHAVIOR CONTINUES IN THE MATCH, THE COACHES MAY BE CARDED BY THE REF.**

8. In the event that, no referee is present for the game, the league suggests that the game be played. A substitute referee shall be selected using the following procedure:

- a. Coaches should attempt to agree on a substitute.
- b. Each coach should nominate one person to do half a game, flip a coin to see who does first half.
- c. If coaches feel that they are the only ones qualified to be referee, each coach should only do half.

This procedure should begin immediately at the scheduled game time if no referee is present. DO NOT wait 10 or 15 minutes in hope that a referee will show up.

9. In the event that no mutually agreed upon referee is selected, your division rep must be contacted, and the game must be rescheduled.

**PENALTIES FOR OFFENSES AGAINST A REFEREE**

Any of the following offences against a referee will be reviewed in a case-by-case basis. If the referee is a minor, criminal and civil charges may apply as well.

1. Deliberately hitting a referee, or trying to (i.e. hand or foot)
2. Throwing a soccer ball at a referee
3. Throwing other objects at a referee
4. Spitting at a referee
5. Verbally threatening a referee or using flagrant profanity
6. Obscene gestures at a referee

**REFEREES**

1. The referee determines playability of the field, considering equipment, lining and weather conditions. Soccer is not regarded as a fair-weather sport.
2. Games should continue if possible. Blinding rain, hail, large puddles in goal mouth, excessive snow and lightning are examples of good reasons for delaying or rescheduling a game.
3. The referee is encouraged to keep time on the field but may choose to use a volunteer on the sideline. Only the referee may add time to a game for lost time

due to injury, or the ball out of play beyond a reasonable distance, etc. Only the referee may stop a game.

4. Game reports should be submitted within 24 hours of the match. If a player was injured in a match, or a yellow/red card used, a call to the referee assignor should be made as soon after the match as possible.
5. Referees retain authority at any time- before, during, halftime, or after a match. Referees have full control of the match and can issue warnings, yellow cards, or red cards for inappropriate conduct by players or coaches.
6. Our referees are essential to the game, yet they are increasingly the targets of verbal and physical hostility. **This ends now.** To ensure a safe and empowering environment for our players, we are strictly enforcing U.S. Soccer Policy 531-9 regarding Referee Abuse. Players, Coaches, and Parents will adhere to the following:
  7. Zero Verbal Abuse: There will be no shouting at, mocking, or questioning officials' calls from the sidelines or the pitch. Any disparaging comment directed at an official—especially regarding their identity—is automatic abuse.
  8. Immediate Sanctions: Under Policy 531-9 (**respect the call**), non-physical abuse (dissent) and physical threats carry mandatory sanctions. **These are not suggestions; they are required enforcement.**
  9. Focus on the Game: Referees are human and will make mistakes. Players play and coaches coach; Referees officiate. If you cannot maintain composure, you are choosing not to be part of the match and will be removed.
  10. Minor Referees (Green Shirt): In many jurisdictions, sanctions are tripled if the misconduct is directed toward a minor referee.
  11. Spectators- If spectators display inappropriate behavior, such as foul language or disruptions, the referee will pause the match and inform the head coach to address the issue. Referees do not interact directly with spectators. Continued misconduct may result in disciplinary actions against the coach, including yellow or red cards, or the match being terminated if no additional rostered staff is available.



# REFEREE ABUSE PREVENTION

## POLICY 531-9 PENALTY OVERVIEW / YOUTH & AMATEUR

The Penalties Matrix defines consequences associated with physical and non-physical offenses against Referees.

### NON-PHYSICAL OFFENSES of gross misconduct, abuse, and / or assault

NON-PHYSICAL*	MIN. GAMES	TIME
Insulting, Belittling, Insinuating or Taunting Behavior Undermining Referee Authority	2	
Harassment, Intimidation, Retaliation, Abusive, or Threatening (Non Physical) Language	4	
Aggression, Attacking, Derogatory, Cyberbullying, Doxing or Threatening (Physical / Violence) Language	6	6 - 24 Months
Offensive or Discriminatory Act	10	12 - 24 Months

### PHYSICAL OFFENSES of gross misconduct, abuse, and / or assault

PHYSICAL*	MIN. GAMES	TIME
Minor or Slight Deliberate Touching	3	1 - 6 Months
Pushing, Grabbing, Pulling, Squeezing, Pinching, Lightly Slapping, Use of Object in Non Striking Manner, or Physical Property Damage	10	6 - 24 Months
Hitting, Punching, Elbowing, Kicking, Biting, Spitting, Choking, Tackling, Throwing or Use of Object or Any Part of Body (Forearm, Knee, Head) in a Striking Manner		12 Months - Lifetime

(\* Disclaimer: These are only a few examples of abuse – other actions or statements may also fall into this category.)

### KEY PENALTY FACTORS

- Single offenses are at **minimum the prescribed game penalty or time penalty** for non red zone offenses
- Penalties can be **both game and time depending on severity** / circumstances
- Second time offenders receive **double punishment**
- Third time offenders receive a **lifetime ban**
- More than one offense at the same time is **at least the punishment for the most serious offense**
- Offenses against minors are automatically subject to a **"minor multiplier" resulting in triple punishment**
- **One offense warning per league** to be managed by states and leagues collaboratively
- Game consequences are **inclusive of 1 game penalty for any red cards given**
- Optionality for **50% penalty for first offense from a minor**

Effective March 2025

For more information, visit: [USSOCCER.COM/RAP](http://USSOCCER.COM/RAP)



## LINESMEN

1. Volunteer linesmen are to be provided by each team and **MUST** be older than the players on the field.
2. Linesman will show no bias by word or action.

## GAME LENGTH

1. Game length, by age group, shall be established each year by the board.
2. If one half (1/2) or more of the game is completed and cannot continue for any reason, the game is considered complete.

## POSTPONEMENTS

1. In the event of severe weather, the Division Rep may cancel all games on his/her field and will contact all coaches in his/her division and the Referee Assignor.
2. Such cancellations shall be made at least 2 hours prior to the scheduled start of the first game of the day. After this time, it is the Referee's decision as to postpone an individual game due to weather or poor field conditions. If no referee is present at the field to start the match, at the scheduled start time, the home team coach may cancel the match due to weather or poor field conditions. In the event the referee declares the field unplayable prior to the beginning of the match, the referee shall be paid half the appropriate fee and will report the incident to the Referee Assignor. The coaches shall then reschedule according to the procedures detailed in item #3. In the event the Division Representative has not canceled the game(s) 2 hours in advance, both teams will report to the field. Any team not showing up will forfeit.

3. If a game is to be postponed / rescheduled by a coach, the following procedure must be followed:

A. Call Division Representative to cancel the game at least two hours prior to game time. Division Rep will contact the referee assignor.

B. Contact the opposing coach and agree upon a date for rescheduling. The game must be rescheduled within 48 hours and played within 3 weeks or prior to the last scheduled game of the season (whichever is earlier). If the Division Rep is not notified within 2 days of the rescheduled date, the game will be considered a forfeit by the home team.

C. Call the Division Rep with the rescheduled date within 48 hours of postponement. The Division Rep will then submit that information to the referee assignor.

D. If a date cannot be agreed upon by the two coaches, the Division Rep will arbitrate the disagreement and will have the final say as to when and where the game will be played.

4. If both teams do not show at the field, and no calls were made to the referee assignor, the referee will be paid the entire match fee. The referee will note a no show by both teams on his/her report, and the Division Rep. will record the match as a loss for both teams. The match will not be rescheduled.

### **LATE ARRIVAL**

1. There will be a maximum of fifteen minutes allowed for lateness, after which the referee may declare a forfeit to the late team.

2. Seven players are required for large-sided games to start play. Five players are required for small-sided games of 8v8. A match must not start nor continue if fewer than the minimum players are available for either team.

### **APPEALS**

1. Judgment decisions made by the referee may not be appealed. An incorrect application of the laws of the game may be appealed only if the misapplication of a law results in, (1) a goal or (2) the disallowance of a goal, which is scored as an immediate, direct result of this misapplication of the law.

2. A written appeal must be made within 72 hours of the completion of the game to the Player Rep and President of the league. All appeals will be accompanied by a \$50 fee, which will be refunded if the appeal is upheld, and forfeited if denied. The board will review protests and render a decision at their earliest convenience.

### **LEAGUE STANDINGS**

1. For players 8-year-old and under no division standings are kept. These ages are regarded as instructional, and teams should be kept as small as possible to increase player touches on the ball and involvement with play.

2. For 9-year-old players on up, divisional standings are kept. A point system will be used for each game. Win-3 pts. Tie with goal(s) scored -2 pts. Scoreless tie-1 pt. Loss-0 pts. A season and playoff is recommended to determine a divisional champion for a trophy supplied by the league.

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

1. No Heading of the ball in play for any age group with players under 10 years old.

2. Footwear: sneakers can be worn, cleats are recommended. (No metal cleats allowed)

3. Players must wear shin guards covered by socks for all games and practices

4. Substitutions are allowed by either team during stoppage in play, with the referee's permission.

5. If an injury occurs, and the coach enters the field, the player must leave the field and be replaced by a substitute and may not reenter until a legal substitution can be made. Please remember that the health and safety of our children is more important than any soccer game.

6. There shall be no harassing of the other teams' players, coaches or the referee.

7. Players and fans on sidelines shall be under the control of the coach at all times.

8. There are NO PETS and NO TOBACCO PRODUCTS allowed on any of the field areas used by W.E.S.L.

9. PARK IN THE DESIGNATED AREAS at all locations utilized by W.E.S.L. The Pleasant Valley School Board insists that these rules are strictly enforced. Infractions of these rules may result in the loss of use of PVSD fields and facilities.

10. Profanity is strictly prohibited.

11. Players must not hang on the goals as serious injury or even death can occur.

12. Coaches will not leave the players at the field after the games and practices when there is no responsible adult present to provide supervision. Lateness of pick up could lead to suspension.

13. Slide tackling from the side or from behind is prohibited in every game of soccer. It should be regarded as serious foul play, and a red card given by the referee. A front slide tackle is allowed in the higher skilled matches such as in our Travel League. Due to the higher risk of a serious injury, even front slide tackling will not be allowed in our Recreational League. A front slide tackle shall be treated as a trip or an attempted trip. In addition to the awarding of a direct free kick, we recommend that the coach pull the player during a legal substitution and explain

this rule to the offending player. A second offence for front slide tackling shall result in a yellow card. A third offence would be a second yellow/red card. If any front slide tackle is thought by the referee to be a dangerous play, at their discretion, the referee may use a yellow card on a first offence or a red card for first offence if the action was regarded as serious foul play.

14. All children shall play at least half of the game. Coaches not playing all players at least half the game could be suspended. Two acceptable reasons that a player is not involved for half of a game would be, if a player is injured, or if the coach is taking disciplinary action. Disciplinary action, if contemplated prior to the game, must first be discussed and approved by the Division Representative. Disciplinary action taken during a game must be reported to the Division Representative and President within 24 hours of the match.

15. A player wearing a cast will not be allowed to play unless it is a soft cast and the player has a note from both doctor and parent allowing him/her to play.

16. Wearing of any jewelry is not allowed in both game and practice (rings, watches, earrings, necklaces, etc.).

17. Only registered players may participate in practice and games for insurance reasons.

18. All players must wear a team jersey that is visible to the referee. Goalkeepers shall wear a jersey in contrast with his/her own team's colors.

19. Additional assistant coaches, beyond the one assigned initially, may be identified only after team rosters are complete.

20. Coaches and players for both teams will occupy one sideline and spectators will occupy the other. Coaches should stay between their side of the halfway line and the penalty area, 3 ft. behind the touchline.

21. Intramural coaches must be approved each year by the Board. Each Division representative shall present the names of coaches for his/her age division at a board meeting for approval.

## **SPORTSMANSHIP**

1. In the interest of fairness, and good sportsmanship, the league will review any matters reported within 48 hours of an incident, to the president of the league, where players or adults are reported guilty of unsporting behavior by dissent by word or action. Warning for such behavior at a WESL event, or match should be noted in game reports from coaches or referees.

2. At the President's discretion, he/she may appoint a review. This will be done by a panel of at least 3 board members, and they will meet with all parties involved, and at their decision, could result in up to a 2-game suspension. The panel's decision will be reported to the whole board as soon as possible. If the panel feels more severe punishment is warranted the panel will take their findings to a quorum of the board where more severe punishment may be levied.

## **DISCIPLINE**

\*A player who receives three yellow cards over the course of a season shall be suspended for one game. The second accumulation of three yellow cards shall result in a minimum of 2

games suspension.

\*Coaches cited in a game report by the referee, for misconduct will be reviewed by the board

\*Any coach responsible for abandoning a match is subject to a 2-game suspension pending review by the board.

Coaches are responsible for their players' and parents' behavior.

West End Soccer League

RULES and REGULATIONS of PLAY (Revised 2026)

I \_\_\_\_\_ (Print Name) have read and understand the  
Rules and Regulations of the West End Soccer League and agree to abide by them.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Coach's Signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)