

ACSA PLAYING RULES

DEFINITIONS

A listing of terms that are used through out the ACSA Playing Rules.

- An **active team** is a team that is in play for the full season.
- A **deflection** is when a ball is clearly re-directed from its original path.
- The ACSA **Executive Committee** is the senior body of elected officers. Positions include President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- **Force majeure** is a circumstance that is out of the control of either team that would cause a match to be cancelled or terminated during play. A **forfeit** is when a team cancels a scheduled match for any reason.
- A **free-kick** is awarded when a foul is called by the Referee. With a **direct free-kick** it's possible to score a goal by kicking the ball straight into the net. With an **indirect free-kick**, the ball must touch another player before scoring.
- The **goal difference** or **goal differential** is the number of goals scored minus the number of goals conceded with the limitation that no more than plus or minus three (3) goals shall be credited for any one match.
- A **guest player** is a player with a valid ACSA player card who is not listed on the official team roster. Guest players are only allowed during the Summer season.
- A **multiple player** or **multi-player** is a player who is officially registered to play on more than one (1) team in the league.
- An **official team roster** is a roster that is printed from the online registration system.
- A **serious foul play** is a misconduct, often aggressive or violent, which consists of the clearly disproportionate use of physical force against an opponent during a contest for the ball on the field, and while the ball is in play.
- A **sliding tackle** or **slide tackle** is a tackle in which a player deliberately leaves his/her feet to slide along the ground and take the ball away from the opposing player.
- **Violent conduct** consists of any violent act of a physical or verbal nature against any person at a match whether the ball is in play or not.

I. COMPETITIONS AND DIVISIONS

A. SEASON(S)

ACSA will have three (3) seasons that will run between early Fall of one year until the late Summer of the next. These seasons will be Fall, Spring and Summer. In the Summer season, teams will play in the highest division for which they qualify based on the previous season's standings. All teams and players must be registered with USSSA to play. The exact schedule will be set each season by the Executive Committee in conjunction with the government or private entities from whom we rent the playing fields.

Note: The ACSA fiscal year runs from September 1 – August 31.

B. COMPETITIONS

ACSA is a recreational sports league. Any team of players meeting the general requirements of ACSA may enter, participate, and compete.

C. CLASSIFICATION

Teams will be classified into divisions according to the following principles:

1. Divisions will be organized to reflect various levels of competition.
2. When possible, ACSA will adhere to the following promotion/relegation guidelines:
 - a. promote the top two (2) teams in the lowest division to the next higher division for the next season of play,
 - b. relegate the bottom two (2) teams from the second to lowest division to the lowest division for the next season of play,
 - c. for all other divisions, promote the top team to the next highest division for the next season of play and relegate the lowest ranked team to the next lower division for the next season of play.
 - d. There will be no promotions or relegations after the Summer season of play.
 - e. Promotions and relegations will occur immediately upon conclusion of the season.

3. A newly-formed team will be placed in the division of its choice, or nearest to its choice, to the extent a vacancy exists after promotions/relegations have been accomplished.
4. A team requesting a promotion or relegation must make it to the Executive Committee no later than ten (10) days after the last day of play for that season.

STANDINGS AND CHAMPIONS

1. The standings for each division will only include active teams in that division during a season. Standings will be based on all matches played in the division since the beginning of the season. The teams will be ordered using the following formula:
 - a. Three (3) points for a win, one (1) point for a tie, zero (0) points for a loss.
2. In the event of a tie, the following measures may be used to determine the champion (in order until the tie is broken):
 - a. Goal difference.
 - b. Number of wins.
 - c. Goals scored.
 - d. Coin toss.
3. Each measure will be divided by the number of matches in which it was accumulated. Forfeits will count as wins or losses with the team awarded the forfeit winning by two (2) goals. In addition, should any team drop out or be suspended from further play by ACSA, all match statistics for that team will be null and void.
4. Division champions will be awarded a \$50 credit towards team registration fees or a soccer ball.

II. TEAMS REGISTRATION

- A. All teams will be registered with ACSA and USSSA. Teams will be responsible for registering on or before such deadlines as are set by ACSA.
- B. Team registration fees must be paid in full by the third match of the season, unless prior arrangements have been made with the Treasurer and approved by the President. Failure to do so will result in a forfeiture of your team bond, your deposit and all your remaining matches.
- C. Team fees may be paid by check, money order or through the official online registration system. Team captains are responsible for paying the correct amount of fees.
 1. No more than three (3) checks or money orders can be used by any one (1) team to pay their team fee for a season. Individual player checks will not be accepted as a collective amount towards team registration fees.
 2. Cash will only be accepted at an official Board of Captains meeting by the Treasurer or President.

III. PLAYERS

A. PLAYER REGISTRATION

1. Every player must be registered and obtain a valid ACSA/USSF player registration card from ACSA. Players may only play with one (1) team within a division.
2. Player(s) are not considered to be registered until all the following requirements have been completed.
 - a. Registration must be submitted using the online registration system no less than 48 hours before a scheduled match in which the player in question would like to play.
 - b. Registrations will not be processed if they are incomplete including but not limited to incomplete or missing information, wrong forms, missing forms, missing player cards and/or pictures, no payment, cash in lieu of acceptable payment method. ACSA will not be responsible for cash left in the drop boxes.
 - c. Checks and money orders or any approved online payment should have the name of the league, the name of the team and the name of the player(s) written on them for identification purposes.

B. YOUTH PLAYERS

No one under the age of 16 may play with ACSA. Players ages 16 and 17 must have signed parental/legal guardian consent.

C. PLAYER RELEASE RULES (TRANSFERS)

A player may transfer from one team to another using the online registration system. There is a \$10 administrative fee for each transfer.

D. MULTI-TEAM PLAYERS

Players may play on as many teams as they wish as long as they do not play on more than one team in a division. There is a \$10 fee per year for playing on more than one (1) team.

IV. PLAYING RULES

A. MATCH ROSTER

Before each match, each team captain will present the Referee with an official team roster listing the names and jersey numbers of all players registered with the team. There is no limit to the number of registered players who may play in any one (1) match. An official team roster will be issued by the Registrar through the online team player registration site. Failure to submit the official team roster will result in disciplinary action to team. It is the responsibility of the team captain to insure that all players listed are registered and eligible to play at the time of the match. An ineligible player on the roster either checked in by the Referee or written in will be assumed to have played and so will be grounds for a forfeit and possible further disciplinary action by the Rules/Judiciary Committee.

B. PLAYER CARDS

Each player should present a properly laminated player registration card with current team and season information, signed by the Registrar. If the Referee finds the player to not have been properly registered with the team or ACSA, the match will be a forfeit and subject to possible further disciplinary action by the Rules/Judiciary Committee.

C. UNIFORMS

1. For all competitions each team member must have a similar color shirt with an eight (8) inch number on the back that corresponds with the numbers on the roster given to the Referee.
2. The goalie must wear a distinctive color from the teams and Referee. The goalie is not required to have a number on his/her shirt. In the event of a conflict, the Referee is required to change colors.
3. For all competitions no two (2) players on the same team may have the same number.
4. If both teams have the same color shirts, the designated home team will change shirts or forfeit the match.
5. Teams must use their designated primary colors that were given on the registration form and listed on the ACSA website.

D. MATCH

1. A match will consist of two 45 minute halves with a halftime not to exceed 5 minutes. Water breaks may be given in each half if both captains agree before the start of the match. Water breaks should not exceed 1 – 2 minutes. The game clock will not stop during water breaks.
2. Matches should begin on schedule. In the case that a team does not have the required minimum number of players 15 minutes after the scheduled start time the team must forfeit.
3. All matches must end at least ten minutes before the next match scheduled on the same field. If necessary, the Referee will reduce halftime and shorten both halves equally in order to end on time. If there is no following match, the match should be played full length.
4. The goalie may be male or female. The ten (10) field players may consist of more than five (5) women, but no more than five (5) men. A team must have six (6) field players to be eligible to play plus a goalie.
5. Each player must have a valid ACSA player card and be listed on the official team roster.
6. Teams are allowed to field up to 3 guest players per match in the Fall & Spring seasons with the following conditions:
 - guest player MUST have a valid ACSA player card and present it at match time to play
 - any guest player used 3 times in a season, must register as a multi-player for that team
 - referees will document all guest players on the match report
 - guest players are responsible for any fines incurred during the match
7. If a team fields an illegal player, the team must forfeit the match.
8. The point system for the standings will be as follows:
 - a. Three (3) points for a win
 - b. One (1) point for a tie
 - c. Zero (0) points for a loss
9. In case of force majeure, the following will decide if the match is completed: if the situation occurs in the first half of the match, the match is not complete, but should the situation occur after the second half begins, the score at that time will be the final score. Matches will not be rescheduled, but if force majeure causes any teams to play less than the minimum number of matches guaranteed for that season, registration credits will be issued.

E. RULES OF PLAY

The ACSA complies with [FIFA's Laws of the Game](#) with the following exceptions.

1. Matches may be played on fields that do not meet FIFA rules regarding size, markings, and equipment such as corner flags.
2. There will be free substitution and a player may be substituted several times.
3. Players may be substituted during the following times: goal kicks, throw-ins on possession, kick-off, or for injured players. Substitutions are made with the permission of the Referee
4. Scoring goals:
 - a. Men = one (1) point

- b. Women = two (2) points
 - c. Own Goal = one (1) point
5. NO SLIDE TACKLES BY FIELD PLAYERS. Slide tackles are prohibited by field players. In the event of a slide tackle, the match will be restarted with a direct-free kick by the opposing team from the site of the infraction.
 6. All drop balls must be taken by two (2) opposing women.
 7. Penalty kicks may be taken by any male or female player on the field. If a female scores it will count as two (2) points, if a male scores it will count as one (1) point.
 8. No player may score more than three (3) goals in any one (1) match.

V. DISCIPLINE

ACSA has the right to discipline teams, captains and players for violations of the ACSA Playing Rules or other misconduct. If any disciplinary action is taken, captains will be notified via email.

A. PENALTIES

ACSA may impose any or all the following penalties on either team, captains, and players:

1. Suspend teams, captains and players from play in any or all ACSA-sponsored competitions for any period of time. Such suspensions will be reported as required.
2. Require a cash bond against future misconduct. Any use of team bond to pay fines or penalties will require a bond replenishment no later than five (5) business days from the time the bond funds are used. If team bonds are used, captains will be notified and invoiced for replenishment via email.
3. Require that monetary fines be paid before a team or player can participate again.
4. Forfeiture of one or more matches, past or future.
5. Automatic relegation at the end of the season.

B. MINIMUM PENALTIES AND FINES

The following are MINIMUM penalties for the offenses specified:

1. Two (2) YELLOW CARDS in one (1) match = RED CARD, one (1) match suspension and a \$25 fine.
2. Foul and Abusive Language Against Another Player = RED CARD, one (1) match suspension and a \$25 fine.
3. Foul and Abusive Language Against Referee = RED CARD, one (1) match suspension and a \$50 fine.
4. Serious Foul Play by Preventing a Goal by Use of the Hands = Red Card, one (1) match suspension and \$25 fine.
5. Serious Foul Play by a Field Player Preventing a Goal by Use of a Slide Tackle = RED CARD, one (1) match suspension and \$25 fine.
6. Serious Foul Play by Goalie Preventing a Goal by Handling the Ball Outside of the Penalty Area = RED CARD, one (1) match suspension and a \$25 fine.
7. Serious Foul Play Against an Opponent = RED CARD, three (3) match suspension and a \$50 fine.
8. Violent Conduct Directed at Anyone = RED CARD, three (3) match suspension and a \$75 fine.
9. Physical Violence Against an ACSA Officer or Referee, one (1) year suspension and a \$150 fine.
10. Three (3) YELLOW CARDS by an individual player over a full season, one (1) match suspension and a \$25 fine. Additional three (3) YELLOW CARDS in a season will result in a doubling of the fine and suspension.
11. A team that accumulates 12 points where a YELLOW CARD counts as one (1) point and a RED CARD counts as two (2) points will result in a team fine of \$50. If the team accumulates an additional 12 points in a season, then the fine will be \$100. Any team with an accumulation of more than 24 points in a season will be subject to further disciplinary action by the Rules/Judiciary Committee.
12. Causing a Referee to terminate a match due to Violence or repeated infractions of the laws of the match, three (3) match suspension and a \$75 fine.
13. Failure to produce an official team roster as supplied by the Registrar, will result in a \$10 team fine. In this case only, teams will write players on the reverse of the opposing team's roster. Repeated offenses will result in a doubling of the fine, and are subject to further disciplinary action by the Rules/Judiciary Committee.
14. The Rules/Judiciary Committee will review the actions of any team that has an accumulation of RED CARDS to determine if the team will continue as a member of ACSA or be subject to a fine, probation or have to present a bond, or any combination of above.

15. A player or team with an accumulation of YELLOW and RED CARDS is subject to additional penalties/fines or other disciplinary action from the Rules/Judiciary Committee or Executive Committee.

16. NOTE: To serve a match suspension, the game must have been played or forfeited. If a player is on multiple teams and suspended for any reason, they are suspended from all matches during their suspension period. If a player is ejected from the match, they are suspended from play for the rest of that day and the following weekend at minimum.

C. MATCH REPORT BY REFEREE

The Referee is responsible for submitting a detailed report in writing and any/all confiscated player cards within four (4) days to the President concerning any violation subject to penalties under these rules. The report should identify the persons involved, describe the offensive conduct in clear concise language, and indicate if the conduct manifested intent to injure.

D. ADMINISTRATIVE IMPOSITION OF PENALTIES

The Division Commissioner will make an administrative imposition of minimum penalties. He/she will review the match report for each match filed by the Referee. When it can be determined from the match report, or from further conversation with the Referee if necessary, that an offense was committed for which there is a specified minimum penalty, then he/she will impose the specified minimum penalty. In the event that there is no specified minimum penalty, or in the event that the matter is of a serious nature, the matter will be turned over to the Rules/Judiciary Committee. For all matters covered by administrative penalties, the Division Commissioner will promptly notify the captain of the affected team(s) of the penalty imposed. The Division Commissioner is responsible for notifying the Rules/Judiciary Chair of all incidents. In the case that a team or player would like to appeal a penalty, the Rules/Judiciary Committee Chair is responsible for determining the course of action – whether the matter can be settled with or without a hearing. The Rules/Judiciary Committee Chair is responsible for all hearings, and the management of Rules/Judiciary Committee. Committee members are appointed by the Rules/Judiciary Committee Chair with the approval of the President.

E. RULES/JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

1. PURPOSE: A Rules/Judiciary Committee is established at the discretion and direction of the Rules/Judiciary Committee Chair for the purpose of hearing appeals from an imposed administrative penalty or by actions taken by a Referee, players or other team members not covered by Minimum Penalties and Fines (5.B.).
2. MEMBERSHIP: The Rules/Judiciary Committee should consist of at least two (2) active members of ACSA and a Committee Chair appointed by the President. No member sitting on the Rules/Judiciary Committee may participate in a decision involving teams from any division which he/she represents.
3. NOTICE OF HEARING: In any appeal brought before the Rules/Judiciary Committee, the affected player(s) and the captain(s) of the affected team(s) are entitled to notice and hearing. The Rules/Judiciary Committee Chair will give notice in writing at least seven (7) days in advance of the hearing. If the affected player(s) or captain(s) cannot attend the hearing, he/she may request a postponement from the Rules/Judiciary Committee, which will not be unreasonably refused. The affected player(s) or captain(s) has the right to present evidence and make a statement at the hearing. If the affected player(s) or captain(s) fails to attend the hearing after due notice, the Rules/Judiciary Committee may proceed to decide the matter. The Rules/Judiciary Committee Chair will establish reasonable procedures for the hearing designed to insure a full and fair development of facts and applicable rules.
4. DECISIONS: All cases will be decided by majority vote. The Rules/Judiciary Committee Chair will promptly notify the President, Registrar, the affected player(s) and captain(s).

F. APPEALS TO THE BOARD OF CAPTAINS

A decision of the Rules/Judiciary Committee may be appealed to the Board of Captains under the same rules as provided for an appeal to the Rules/Judiciary Committee, except that the President will preside. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the President within five (5) days of the Rules/Judiciary Committee decision, and must be accompanied by a good faith deposit of \$50. In the case of a favorable finding for the Appellant, the deposit will be returned.

G. EFFECT OF APPEAL

The filing of an appeal will suspend the imposition of the penalty appealed from, except in cases of Violent Misconduct or Assault. In all cases the affected player(s) will sit out a mandatory first match following the offense. In the event the appeal is denied, the Rules/Judiciary Committee or the Board of Captain may, if circumstances warrant, forfeit any matches in which a suspended player or team participated during the period a suspension would have been in effect.

H. RESPONSIBILITY FOR FINES AND SUSPENSIONS

Captains are responsible for the proper conduct of the teams' players at all times. If a player fine is not paid, the player will not be permitted to play until the fine is paid. If 30 days pass and the fine is not paid by the individual, the fine becomes the responsibility of the team. After such notification, the team must pay the fine before the next scheduled match. In any case, if a team fine is not paid on time, the team will not be permitted to play and forfeit all matches until the fine is paid. Failure to comply will result in further disciplinary action by the President.

VI. SCHEDULING RULES

A. MINIMUM MATCHES PER SEASON

1. ACSA guarantees a minimum ten (10) matches per season in Fall and Spring, and eight (8) matches in Summer.
2. Forfeits count as matches played.
3. Teams who do not receive the minimum number of matches in a season will be credited a proportional amount per match based on their team fee and as determined by the Treasurer and President.
4. RAINOUTS: ACSA reserves the final two (2) matches of the Fall and Spring seasons for the rescheduling of rainouts. If there are no rainouts, the open slots will be filled using the division's scheduling pattern for that season.

B. FORFEITS

1. Teams with two (2) forfeits in one (1) season, regardless of the circumstances, are subject to disciplinary action by the Rules/Judiciary Committee.
2. If a Referee terminates a match due to extreme misconduct on the part of a team or fans clearly associated with a team, that team will forfeit the match and should expect other disciplinary action as well.
3. Teams that fail to show up for a scheduled match will forfeit the match and will also be responsible in paying both team's Referee fees plus a \$50 administrative fine.
4. Teams that do not have sufficient players at match time or have sufficient players but choose to not play, will forfeit the match and will also be responsible in paying both team's Referee fees plus a \$25 administrative fine.
5. If for any other reason a team cannot make a schedule match, it is the responsibility of the team captain to request a cancellation by contacting the captain of the other team, the President, the Referee Coordinator and the Division Commissioner to alert them to their cancellation. They must get a response from everyone listed that their cancellation message was received and accepted. Cancellation requests must be confirmed prior to 8am on the Thursday before the scheduled match. The cancelled match will count as a forfeit within the standings, but there is no monetary penalty. If the team requesting the cancellation does not follow the above procedures, they will be responsible for paying the both team's Referees fees plus a \$25 administrative fine.
6. Fines will be deducted from the team bond. Any use of team bond to pay fines or penalties will require a bond replenishment no later than five (5) business days from the time the bond funds are used. If team bonds are used, captains will be notified and invoiced for replenishment via email.

VII. SUMMER SEASON

The Summer season is administered with the same ACSA Playing Rules listed above with the following exceptions.

- A. Summer season standings do not affect promotions/relegations.
- B. Team rosters are open to guest players with a valid ACSA player card. All guest players must be listed on the match report.
- C. Players may be substituted during any stoppage time regardless of possession at the discretion of the Referee. It is the captains' responsibility prior to the match to clarify substitutions with the Referee.
- D. Water breaks will be given in each half of a match. Water breaks should not exceed 1 – 2 minutes. The game clock will not stop during water breaks. Water breaks can be removed with the consent of both team captains prior to the start of the match.