



RECREATION
BY-LAWS



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Purpose

The purpose of the St. Mary's Soccer (SMS) Recreation By-Laws are to provide amplifying guidance related to the Constitution of St. Mary's Soccer and the Laws of the Game as modified to fit the needs of the St. Mary's Soccer Recreation Program.

Goal and Mission

Our Goal is to provide every youth player an opportunity to play soccer, regardless of skill level, and to help them find the right level of play.

Our Mission is to develop players and impact lives through positive, fun and challenging soccer. Our focus is on the players and their families and helping them reach their goals. Every day, every practice and every game, we will ask ourselves; are we challenging our players proportionately? Are we inspiring and developing them not just as talented athletes but also as young adults? Most importantly, are we doing it in a way that they are having fun and still love the game? We will meet our players where they are and help them grow to the level they want to grow. Our interest is more in the number of players we develop than the number of games we win. By focusing on development first, the wins will come on their own, both on and off the pitch. This is how we measure success.

Programs

St. Mary's Soccer offers four recreation (or recreation based) programs.

Kiddie-Kick Program (U04/U05)

This is a COED program that introduces our youngest players to the game of soccer. This program meets 1 day per week. Players are paired up with a team and a coach and each session is run in an academy style format with all teams participating concurrently. Each session will run players through various games and activities that will teach them the fundamentals of ball control, passing, receiving, and teamwork. Each session will end with small-sided games against another team in a 4v4 format. Coaches are provided a training curriculum that is player-centered and developmentally appropriate. A site coordinator assists the coaches as needed. Players are required to wear shin guards covered by socks, sneakers (or cleats if you have them), their uniform jersey, a #3 soccer ball and water. Parental supervision is required for all participants.

Academy Program (U06 - U08)

The Academy program was established for the purpose of not only developing our youngest players but to also develop our newest coaches. The Academy program currently offers the option for either an all-girls or coed team. Players will meet with their coaches on their respective Academy nights to run through practice sessions provided by SMS. Mentors will be assigned to the field to assist coaches in learning and demonstrating activities. Weekend games will be played in a 4v4 format with the coach



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on the field and no referees. Academy sessions will run for one hour during six to eight weeks of the regular SMS season. The U08 division will have an additional night on their own with their respective coach. Parental supervision is required for all participants.

Recreation Program (U10 - U18)

Rec soccer is an open program for players of all skill levels. Players do not try out for teams; they are placed on teams by Division Managers. While requests can be made during registration, St. Mary's Soccer does not guarantee the placement of a player to any specific team, coach, or practice location. Beginning Fall 2019, U10 Rec will offer both an all-girls and coed teams. U12, U14, and U18 currently only offer coed teams. Coaches are all volunteers. In general, there are two practice sessions and one game per week. Games are played exclusively in St. Mary's County, usually on Friday evenings and Saturdays. Roster size is limited to allow players to be on the field for approximately 50% of each game. Teams are formed for one season only (Fall or Spring).

Recreation Plus (RecPlus or Rec+)

RecPlus is a more competitive program for players with higher skill levels, or a desire to play at a more competitive level. Rec Plus currently offers both all-girls and coed teams for U08, U10 and U12 age divisions. Players participate in a player evaluation session between June and July each year. Following evaluations, teams are formed for one year, and will play as a team in both the Fall and Spring seasons. Coaches are volunteers who typically have several seasons of coaching experience as well as a USSF Grassroots course, a USSF "E" License or higher. RecPlus players may not concurrently play on Recreation Teams, or on any St. Mary's Travel Teams (or other select teams where players are carded). In general, there are two practices per week, and at least one game per week. Games are played in Southern Maryland, either in St. Mary's, Charles, or Calvert Counties, against RecPlus teams from Southern Maryland.

Seasons

Fall Recreation soccer generally runs from September to November for an 8 game season, weather permitting. Spring Recreation soccer generally runs from April to June for an 8 game season, weather permitting. One additional weekend is built into each Fall and Spring season to schedule any makeup games due to weather cancellations.

Registration

Registration for all Rec and Rec plus can be accomplished using our online registration process through our webpage (<http://www.stmaryssoccer.org>).

1. Registration for Recreation Soccer is open to all.
2. Registration takes place semi-annually beginning in June for the Fall season, and January for the Spring season.
3. Players who register prior to the closing date for registration will be assigned to teams.
4. Players who register during the late registration period (after regular registration has closed) will be charged a late fee, and will be added to a waiting list. Players will be assigned on a space available basis.



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5. Players who request to “Play-Up” an age group will be evaluated on a space available basis. Play-Up requests are not guaranteed to be approved. See also General Program Rules and Procedures section of this document.
6. Players will be assigned to a division based on their date of birth as shown in Table 1 below.
7. St. Mary's Soccer does not guarantee assignment with any coach, team, practice location, date ,or time.
8. Players who withdraw prior to the end of the regular registration period will be eligible to receive a full refund.
9. Any player who withdraws after the regular registration closing date will not be eligible for a refund. However, players may be eligible for credit toward a future season if the withdrawal was due to a medical or other similar extenuating circumstance.
10. Players selected to play RecPlus will follow the same registration process. Division managers and the VP of RecPlus will place those players according to the teams for which they were selected.

Table 1: Birth Year Registration Table

	KK*	U6	U7	U8	U10	U12	U14	U18
2019-2020 Season	2015/ 2016 (Jan1, 2015 – June 30, 2016)	2014	2013	2012	2011 2010	2009 2008	2007 2006	2005 2004 2003 2002 (2001 Born after Aug 1 provided they are still enrolled in HS)



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General Program Rules & Procedures

Recreation Plus

For additional rules & procedures or deviations specific to Rec Plus beyond those described below, refer to *St. Mary's Soccer RecPlus Bylaws*.

Recreation (KK – U18)

1. Failure to adhere to the rules and procedures established by St. Mary's Soccer can result in sanctions against a player/parent/coach/team. Coaches and parent volunteers are expected to be familiar with the rules and procedures of St. Mary's Soccer.
2. No player carded by St. Mary's Travel Program (or other select teams where players are carded) may play on a Rec or RecPlus team during the same season without a waiver from the President of St. Mary's Soccer.
3. No player on a St. Mary's Soccer RecPlus team of any club participating in the RecPlus Program may play concurrently on a St. Mary's Soccer Recreation Team.
4. Coaches may not add or remove players from their team. Players are assigned only by the Division Manager, Program Vice President, or the President of St. Mary's Soccer.
5. A player may not be added to a team after registration has closed and team rosters are final without a waiver from the Program Vice President.
6. No child may participate in a team practice or game if the player is not officially registered and shown on the team roster. Doing so presents serious insurance risks to St. Mary's Soccer and the adult in charge.
7. Players are NOT guaranteed placement with specific teams, coaches, practice locations, days or times.
8. Players will be allowed to request to "Play-Up" one age group, provided the players date of birth is within 12 months of the beginning of that age group. Play-Up requests are not guaranteed to be approved. Playing up in academy ages (KK-U08) is not recommended and will generally not be accepted, however may be considered on a case by case basis by the Academy VP.
9. Players are NOT permitted to "Play-Down" an age group. In the case of developmental or physical limitations, the Program Vice President may grant a waiver to this rule.
10. Teams will be held to stated roster sizes.
11. Players, parents, and coaches are expected to abide by the applicable Code of Conduct found in the Code of Ethics section of this document (page 12).
12. All games will be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game as modified for St. Mary's Soccer. See Modified Laws of the Game Attachment 4 through 7.
13. Scores and Standings are not recorded for Recreation, KK or Academy games.



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General Conduct of the Game

1. Slide tackling is **NOT** allowed.
2. Unlimited substitutions are allowed and at any stoppage of play after being signaled by the center referee for players to enter the field.
3. All players are required to play at least half the game, unless in the event of an injury or disciplinary action.
4. The Referee shall penalize foul or abusive language, or inappropriate gestures directed at players, referees, parents/guardians, or coaches by other players. The referee may issue a Yellow or Red Card to the offending player or coach engaged in using inappropriate tone, language, or gestures. Spectators may be ejected from the facility
5. Harassment of any player or referee will not be tolerated by St. Mary's Soccer.
6. Coaching from the sidelines during the games will be limited to verbal communications, without the use of aids. Goal lines (end line) will be kept clear of all spectators and coaches. Coaches are not allowed on the field during games unless called on by the Referee. This rule does not apply to KK and Academy age divisions.
7. Spectators are to sit on the sideline opposite the teams. Both teams and their coaches will remain in the designated area during play. One team will take the left half and the opposing team will take the right half.
8. Table 2 summarizes the game format for U06 – U18. The Modified Laws of the Game found in attachments 4 through 7 located adjacent to this document on the website provide further details on game format and conduct for each age division.

Table 2 Game Format Summary Table

	U06-U08 (Academy)	U10	U12	U14-U18
Field Size Range (yards)	Length 25-35 Width 15-25	Length 55-65 Width 35-45	Length 70-80 Width 45-55	Length 110-120 Width 70-80
Ball Size	3	4	4	5
Players	4v4 No GK	7v7 GK	9v9 GK	11v11 GK
Roster Size	Min: 7 Max: 9	Min: 10 Max: 12	Min: 12 Max: 16	Min: 15 Max: 18
Game Time	4x10 5 min between	2x25 10 min Half	2x30 10 min Half	2x35 10 min Half
Build out line	N/A	Yes	No	No
Offside	No	Yes	Yes	Yes



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Heading	No	No	No	Yes
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4v4 Standards

1. Everyone should participate a minimum of 50% of the time
2. Roster Size:
 - a. Min 7
 - b. Max 9
3. Heading is not allowed
 - a. If a player heads the ball in a game, whether deliberately or accidentally, an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense
4. Game time is 4 quarters of 10 min duration with 5 min breaks between
5. Kickoffs, free kicks (all indirect), throw-ins, goal kicks and corner kicks are used to start or restart play
 - a. Opponents should be >10 feet away on all restarts
 - b. No Penalty kicks
6. No Offside
7. No Goal Keepers
8. No Referees
9. Parents and coaches are expected to create and promote a positive, fun and safe environment for players

7v7 Standards

1. Everyone should participate a minimum of 50% of the time
2. Roster Size:
 - a. Min 10
 - b. Max 12
3. Heading is not allowed
4. Game time is 2, 25 min Halves with 10 min Halftime
 - a. Players
 - b. 7v7; 6 field players and 1 GK
 - c. Minimum of 5 players per team must be on the field to start or continue play
 - d. Substitutions are unlimited and can occur at any stoppage
5. Goal Keepers are introduced
 - a. Build out Line is in effect
 - b. The build out line promotes playing the ball out of the back in a less pressured setting
 - c. A detailed presentation of the build out line is available in Attachment 8.
6. Start, Restart and Stoppage of the game fall under the Standard Laws of the Game and can be found at <https://www.fifa.com/development/education-and-technical/referees/laws-of-the-game.html>
7. Offside rule is in effect
 - a. An animated explanation of the offside rule can be found at <http://www.dynamic-thought.com/OffsideClicketteLo.html>



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9v9 Standards

1. Everyone should participate a minimum of 50% of the time
2. Roster Size:
 - a. Min 12
 - b. Max 16
3. Heading is not allowed
4. Game time is 2, 30 min Halves with 10 min Halftime
5. Players
 - a. 9v9; 8 field players and 1 GK
 - b. Minimum of 6 players per team must be on the field to start or continue play
 - c. Substitutions are unlimited and can occur at any stoppage
6. Start, Restart and Stoppage of the game fall under the Standard Laws of the Game and can be found at <https://www.fifa.com/development/education-and-technical/referees/laws-of-the-game.html>
7. Offside rule is in effect
 - a. An animated explanation of the offside rule can be found at <http://www.dynamic-thought.com/OffsideClicketteLo.html>

11v11 Standards

1. Everyone should participate a minimum of 50% of the time
2. Roster Size:
 - a. Min 15
 - b. Max 18
3. Heading **IS** allowed
4. Slide Tackling **IS NOT** allowed
5. Game time is 2, 35 min Halves with 10 min halftime
6. Players
 - a. 11v11; 10 field players and 1 GK
 - b. Minimum of 9 players per team must be on the field to start or continue play
 - c. Substitutions are unlimited and can occur at any stoppage
7. Start, Restart and Stoppage of the game fall under the Standard Laws of the Game and can be found at <https://www.fifa.com/development/education-and-technical/referees/laws-of-the-game.html>
8. Offside rule is in effect
 - a. An animated explanation of the offside rule can be found at <http://www.dynamic-thought.com/OffsideClicketteLo.html>



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Uniforms

1. Recreation: A St. Mary's Soccer uniform of 1 pair of socks and a game jersey are included as a part of registration fees and are provided to each rec player at the start of the season.
2. Rec Plus: Uniforms for RecPlus will be ordered individually by each family via dedicated website for their player. The uniform kit will come with 2 pairs of socks, a pair of shorts, and 2 Jerseys (one for home games and one for away games)
3. Uniforms are to be worn as the outermost garment during all games. Jerseys must be tucked in at the start of play.
4. All players will wear sneakers or cleats with rubber or plastics studs. Metal cleats of any type are not allowed. Coaches and referees will check player's footwear before each game.
5. Shin guards are mandatory for all games and practices. Socks must completely cover the shin guards during all official games. Shin guards that are constructed to be part of a sock and have sufficient padding covering the shin guard, are allowed.
6. All players shall wear soccer, or athletic shorts. In colder weather, sweat pants (without zippers, snaps, buttons, etc.), sweatshirts (without hoods, strings, zippers, snaps, button etc.), and knit caps/gloves will be permitted.
7. No jewelry or chewing gum is allowed.
8. Any clothing deemed by the referee to present a risk of injury to any player on the field, will not be allowed.
9. Referee will check player uniforms for safety before each game.
10. Failure of a player to come prepared may result in the referee not allowing that child to play.

Medical

1. Any player wearing a cast SHALL be inspected by the referee to ensure the cast is properly padded to ensure it does not present a hazard to other players.
2. A player who is bleeding or has an open wound must leave the field for treatment. If a substitute is available, the player's coach may substitute. The injured player may return to the game at the earliest substitution opportunity, provided the referee is satisfied with the player's condition.

Referees

1. Concern for player safety is of the highest priority in youth soccer; therefore, referees will be protective of players at all times. To ensure the protection of the goalkeeper, the referee will assume the goalkeeper has possession of the ball when the ball is on or under his/her hand, even if he/she is only touching the ball. This protects the goalkeeper from injury.
2. The Referee shall penalize foul or abusive language, or inappropriate gestures directed at players, referees, parents, spectators, or coaches by other players, coaches, parents, or spectators. He, or she, may issue a Yellow or Red Card to the offending player, or coach, or eject the spectator(s) engaged in using inappropriate tone, language, or gestures. Coaches and parents/guardians are responsible for the conduct of their teams and their fans. Harassment of any player or referee will not be tolerated by the league.



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3. For instructional purposes, referee calls should be made verbally as well as by signal to the player. If, in the referee's judgment, explaining the call would prompt dissent from a player or coach, the referee may simply call "Play-on".
4. Referees will attempt to signal and verbally call "Play-on" decisions.
5. Protests of any type are not allowed. All referee decisions are final. Concerns should be submitted in writing, or voiced to the appropriate Division Manager or/and any league official as soon as possible.
6. A Referee Mentor will be present at both Hollywood Soccer Complex and Chancellors Run Regional Park fields during St. Mary's Soccer sponsored games. Additional information on the Referee Mentor Program can be found in Attachment 12.

Yellow Card:

1. In accordance with FIFA.
2. Not applicable to Kiddie Kick or Academy Divisions.

Red Card:

1. In accordance with FIFA.
2. A player receiving a Red Card will be removed from the game and must leave the field immediately. Player is ejected from current game, without substitution, and suspended from participation in the next league game. The next game is considered to be the next scheduled game actually played. As an example, if the next schedule game is postponed or canceled for any reason, the following game will be the game the suspension is invoked.
3. A coach receiving a Red Card shall leave the playing field immediately and the assistant coach or a team parent/guardian shall assume the coaching duties for the remainder of the game. A coach that has received a Red Card, or a spectator that has been ejected, shall leave the field in such a manner that the offending person is "out of sight and out of sound" of the playing field. If the offending person does not leave the playing area, as previously stated, the game will be terminated by the referee, and the incident will be reported to the Division Manager.
4. A player/coach receiving a Red Card or a spectator that has been ejected may not return to the field at the end of the game, nor be on the sidelines at the following game.
5. NOTE: All Red Cards that are issued by the Referee are final and cannot be rescinded. The incident can be reviewed for additional action as addressed in these by-laws. The automatic game suspension remains intact regardless of the findings of the review process unless reviewed and overturned by the President and two other board members. It is the responsibility of the Referee and the coach to maintain good order and sportsmanship before, during, and immediately after a game.
6. Red Card Reporting
 - a) Referees shall report all Red Card incidents to the Head Referee, the Division Manager and Vice President as soon as possible (no later than 48 hours after the incident). The Head Referee or Vice President may request a written statement with the following information:
 - (1) Date
 - (2) Name of person(s) red carded, or ejected. Indicate if person is a player, coach, parent/guardian, or spectator.



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- (3) Assigned team
- (4) Reason for issuing Red Card
- (5) Any additional supporting information
- b) The Head Referee/Vice President will notify the Division Manager and the coach of the team that was issued the Red Card of the one game suspension. The Head Referee/Vice President will forward the information to the St. Mary's Soccer R&D Committee. Any Board member may recommend to the President or the Secretary any additional actions based on the incident or any other past history of the person involved.
- c) After reviewing the information available, the R&D Chair will make a recommendation to the VP (REC) and President on any further action to be taken. The VP (REC) or President will notify the player, parent, coach or spectator of the decision.

Code of Ethics

Players Code of Conduct

1. I will encourage good sportsmanship from fellow players, coaches, officials and parents at all times.
2. I will remember that soccer is an opportunity to learn and have fun.
3. I deserve to play in an environment that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol; and expect everyone to refrain from their use at all soccer games.
4. I will do the best I can each day, remembering that all players have talents and weaknesses the same as I do.
5. I will treat my coaches, other players and coaches, game officials, other administrators, and fans with respect at all times; regardless of race, sex, creed, or abilities, and I will expect to be treated accordingly.
6. I will concentrate on playing soccer. Always giving my best effort.
7. I will play by the rules at all times.
8. I will at all times control my temper and resist the temptation to retaliate.
9. I will always exercise self-control.
10. My conduct with other players, spectators and all officials of the game shall be in accordance with appropriate behavior, and in accordance with FIFA's Laws of the Game, and in adherence to St. Mary's Soccer By-Laws.



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Parents/Guardians Code of Conduct

1. I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, game officials, and administrators at all times.
2. I will place the emotional and physical well-being of all players ahead of any personal desire to win.
3. I will support the coaches, officials, and administrators working with my child, in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
4. I will remember that the game is for the players, not for the adults.
5. I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, game officials, administrators, and fans with respect.
6. I will always be positive.
7. I will always allow the coach(es) to be the only coach.
8. I will not get into arguments with the opposing team's parents, players, or coaches.
9. I will not come onto the field for any reason during the game and will enjoy the game only from the spectator side of the field.
10. I will not criticize game officials.

Coaches/Volunteers Code of Conduct

1. I will never place the value of winning before the safety and welfare of all players.
2. I will always show respect for players, other coaches, and game officials.
3. I will lead by example, demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship at all times.
4. I will be knowledgeable of the laws of the game, and teach these rules to my players.
5. I will never use abusive or insulting language. I will treat everyone with dignity.
6. I will not tolerate inappropriate behavior, regardless of the situation.
7. I will not allow the use of anabolic agents or stimulants, drugs, tobacco, or alcohol by any of my players.
8. Youth have a greater need for example than criticism. I will be the primary soccer role model.
9. I will at all times conduct myself in a positive manner.
10. Coaching is motivating players to produce their best effort, inspiring players to learn, and encouraging players to hold their heads high win or lose.
11. Coach's actions on sidelines during games shall be in the spirit of "good sportsmanship" at all times. Profanity, profane gestures, arguing, inciting disruptive behavior by spectators and/or players, or any conduct not in the spirit of good sportsmanship, shall require disciplinary action from St. Mary's Soccer.
12. I will complete the Background Check on an annual basis, or as required by St. Mary's County Recreation and Parks.



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Complaints and Appeals of R&D Decisions

1. Complaints about unsporting behavior by a Player, Coach, Volunteer or Referee should be sent to the President St. Mary's Soccer and the associated program Vice President. Concerns specific to a referee should also be sent to the Head Referee. Complaints must be in writing (or via e-mail) and must be specific. Anonymous complaints or concerns will not be considered.
2. Decisions of the R&D committee may be appealed to the St. Mary's Soccer Executive Board. Appeals must be submitted in a timely manner, and must be in writing (or via email). The appeal will not constitute a new hearing on the matter but will solely be concerned with whether the original committee hearing was fair, was based on accurate testimony, and reached a reasonable conclusion.

Weather and Cancellation Policy:

1. Game fields are controlled by St. Mary's Recreation and Parks. While St. Mary's Soccer works closely with Parks and Recreation to aid in their decision, the ultimate decision for field closures is made by Recreation and Parks.
2. In the event of inclement weather or field closure, St. Mary's Soccer will post an announcement on its website (<http://www.stmaryssoccer.org/>) concerning the status of fields and games.
3. A broadcast email will be sent to families who have subscribed to the Broadcast service during registration.
4. A text message will be sent to families who have subscribed to the text message alert found on the St. Mary's Soccer website.
5. Occasionally, there could be field by field closures that will affect some but not all fields used by St. Mary's Soccer teams.
6. Once a game starts, it is up to the referee, or St. Mary's Soccer Board Members present at the fields, to suspend games in dangerous weather conditions. In the event lightning is observed or thunder is heard, the game must be suspended immediately and is not to resume for 30 min following the last occurrence.
7. A game is considered complete if the game has been played through the first half.
8. St. Mary's Soccer will attempt to reschedule cancelled games and factors in one weekend per season to allow for, however we cannot guarantee that games will be rescheduled due to field availability.
9. Should St. Mary's County Recreation and Parks close practice fields due to weather, ALL practice fields, to include privately owned natural grass fields, will be closed for practice.

Updates/Changes/Amendments

1. This manual should be updated annually.
2. Changes and updates shall be approved by the St. Mary's Soccer Executive Board.
3. Amendments shall be proposed at any regular meeting and will be included in the next annual update unless otherwise directed by the Executive Board.



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Table 3: Attachments referenced

These attachments can be found separately and adjacent to this document on the St. Mary's Soccer Website.

Attachment 4	U06 U07 U08 Modified LOTG_2019
Attachment 5	U10 Modified LOTG_2019
Attachment 6	U12 Modified LOTG_2019
Attachment 7	U14 U18 Modified LOTG_2019
Attachment 8	Build out line for 7v7
Attachment 12	Referee mentor program