

Operations Manual



Where soccer is about learning and having fun!

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Purpose of the SCSL Operations Manual

This operational manual is to provide procedures for functions necessary to carry out the mission of the Shenandoah County Soccer League. The intent is that it can be changed easily as the need arises. Procedures outlined in this manual may be changed as outlined in section 9.10 of the League's By-Laws. However, it is stressed that changes not be made on a whim, but are made when they are really needed to facilitate functions of the League. Historically, the Shenandoah County Soccer League Board of Directors has had a high turnover of personnel and little continuity; hence, reinvention of the wheel is quite common as one looks back over minutes from years past. This "reinvention" is counter productive to moving the League forward, since it is difficult to reach the destination when you begin the journey again and again. Before changing this manual, first investigate the problem. Try to understand why this manual is written the way it is. If after doing that it is determined that change truly is needed, then necessary changes should be made to facilitate this League moving forward. While possible, changes to this operations manual should be infrequent.

Internationally soccer is governed by the Federation Internationale de Football Association (F.I.F.A.). Modifications to these laws are made by the United States Youth Soccer Association (U.S.Y.S.A.), and in Virginia, by the Virginia Youth Soccer Association (V.Y.S.A.). The Shenandoah County Soccer League shall follow all F.I.F.A. rules as modified either by the national or state organizations, or by our own Board of Directors.

And remember... *Soccer is about learning and having fun!*

Shenandoah County Soccer League Registration Procedures

- A. Every player must be registered through the completion of a registration form signed by either parent or guardian prior to the player's participation in practices or games. A player must have obtained the age of four (4) by August 1st of that year to register. Each child registering for the first time with the Shenandoah County Soccer League must supply a copy of his or her birth certificate (to be kept on file with the League) at the time of registration. Players will not be placed on a team until the registration form has been received by the registrar, the fee has been paid, and the birth certificate has been received. No applicant will be refused due to financial hardship. Determination of financial hardship and granting full or partial scholarships will be determined by the League Treasurer upon referral by the League Registrar.
- B. Because of a cap on the number of players on each team, all applications shall be dated in the order received for each age division. Vacancies on teams will be filled on a first come, first served basis.
- C. Registration for the fall season will run May 1 – June 15. Registrations will be accepted postmarked June 16 – June 30 with a \$20 late fee assessed for each registrant. Registration for the spring season will run December 1 – January 15. Registrations will be accepted postmarked January 16 – January 31 with a \$20 late fee assessed for each registrant. The registrations will be publicly announced at least two (2) weeks prior to the start of registration. Announcements will be made in printed media serving each area of the county (Northern Virginia Daily, Shenandoah Valley-Herald, Daily News Record, and Shenandoah County Parks and Recreation newsletter for example). Additionally, limited paid advertisements may be used. Announcements will also be put on local radio and television stations and posted on signs and flyers throughout the county. The League's website will also be used to announce registration.
- D. Registration forms received after the deadline will not be accepted. Exceptions will be made for new county residents only. Refunds will not be given after the second practice, except for a medical problem diagnosed before the first game, or at the discretion of the Board of Directors.
- E. Players failing to make travel teams and school soccer teams will be allowed to register late.
- F. Parents may not request a specific coach, but they do have the right to request to NOT have one specific coach if there is a conflict. Likewise, coaches may request NOT to have a specific player if there has been a conflict. These requests, with reasons stated, must be put in writing and given to the registrar before team formation. Such requests will not be honored after the second practice. No other special requests will be honored.
- G. The League will try to place players on teams according to their school district, but some players may be placed on teams outside of this area because of the limit on the number of players on a team. Such determinations will be based on the date that registration materials are received.
- H. Siblings in the same age division will be placed on the same team unless otherwise requested.
- I. All players must be properly registered. No team may use an unregistered player in any game

- J. Shenandoah County residents will be given priority in our League. Residents outside of our county may play in our League as long as they have not been suspended from any other League.
- K. Refunds will not be given after the second practice. Players withdrawing after registration ends, but before teams have been formed, will be charged a \$10 administrative fee. Players withdrawing after teams have been formed, but before the second practice, will be charged an administrative fee equal to 50 percent of the registration fee. Late fees will not be refunded.
- L. A \$25 return check fee will be charged for any check returned to the SCSL for insufficient funds.

Team Formation

I. League Year definition

The Shenandoah County Soccer year begins with the Fall season and ends after completion of the Spring season.

- II. In order to develop a more team oriented program, teams shall be kept together from one year to the next. Players will only be assigned to other teams at the request of their coach or when an imbalance in team strength occurs, or as otherwise allowed in Part G under registration procedures.

III. Team Formation Committee

The League Commissioner shall have oversight of Team and Schedule formation (see Sec. 4.12 (4)) and shall chair the committee which shall be composed of the Recreational Commissioner and two age level Commissioners from the Recreational league (as provided in Sec. 6.6).

IV. Formation Process

Teams shall be formed prior to the fall season and shall remain intact through the end of the spring season. New players shall be added in the spring season as needed. New teams shall be formed as necessary at the discretion of the Committee.

The basis for the team formation will be the Player Evaluation form. This form will be distributed to each coach at the coaches meeting preceding each season. Along with this form will be a sample form for the coach to follow. This evaluation form shall be completed after each season.

All player evaluation forms must be filed with the appropriate age level commissioner by two weeks preceding the last scheduled game of the season.

V. Team formation procedure

Teams shall ultimately be as balanced as possible using:

1. The evaluation of the individual players from the previous seasons along with the team's won / loss record, shall be used as a guideline as to whether or not any individual team is too strong or too weak.
2. Players moving up to the next age division shall have their individual evaluation scores reduced by 25%.
3. The evaluation of players not returning due to age group move or non-registration shall also be considered in determining remaining team strength.

4. A player may play out of his or her age group only with permission of the team formation committee. Only playing up to a higher age division will be considered by the committee. Playing down shall never be allowed.
5. New players shall be added to bring the teams up to the desired number of players.
6. A team strength mean shall be established for each age division so that all teams fall within a range above or below that mean. This range will be established by the committee.

VI. End of Season Player Evaluation Form

The form shall contain the following information:

- a. Coaches' name and phone number
- b. Indication whether coach will be returning
- c. Indicate players moving to next age group
- d. Age group players are in at time of evaluation
- e. Team jersey color
- f. Full names of players

VII. Form Review

Age group commissioners shall be charged with collecting completed player evaluation forms and checking for completeness. The commissioner shall then forward all forms to the League Registrar. The registrar shall enter the information into the database and forward forms to the League Commissioner.

SCSL House Rules

- A. Teams U-10 and above will practice one (1) night a week for no more than one and one-half hours once the season begins. Teams in these age divisions may also have a second (optional) practice. U-8 teams shall have only one practice per week, not to exceed one hour in length. All teams U-8 and above may have six (6) practices before the season begins. It is recommended that each team have a minimum of three (3) practices prior to the first game. U-6 players will meet for one hour per week, with one half hour devoted to teaching skills and the remaining time spent playing soccer. U-6 teams may practice for up to one additional hour during the week.
- B. A team may not have coaches on both sides of the field.
- C. In age divisions where small sided play does not use a goal keeper, players shall not stay in front of the goal serving as goal keepers. Rather, defensive players should move down field with the flow of the game, and drop back to protect the goal as needed.
- D. Players U-12 and above, when given a red card, shall be out for the remainder of that game.
- E. Actions that affect the play of the game such as:
 - 1. abusive or excessive coaching
 - 2. misconduct or unsportsmanlike behavior by parents, coaches or spectators shall be handled through the referee. The referee shall have overall authority during the game, using a caution or ejection of the offending party if necessary. If the problem persists, the referee shall have the authority to temporarily stop and/or terminate the game declaring no winner.

The game referee shall report all such incidents to the Referee Commissioner. The Referee Commissioner shall gather pertinent information and forward this information to the League Commissioner for consideration as authorized in section 7.4 of the League's By-Laws.

FIFA Rules Modified for SCSL Use

There are 17 Laws of Soccer as specified by the Federation Internationale de Football (FIFA). The following Laws have been amended by the Shenandoah County Soccer League. Any Laws not mentioned in this section are unchanged.

Law I: The Field of Play

- a. A field less than regulation size may be permitted for games following the guidelines for small sided soccer and as approved by the League Board.
- b. No one will be permitted behind the goal lines during the game.
- c. All spectators must stay back 10 feet from the touch (side) line.
- d. During the game, coaches and players will be on one side of the field and spectators will remain on the opposite side (except in the U-6 division).

Law II: The Ball

- a. The ball size will be determined as follows:
 - (1) U-6 and U-8 will use size 3
 - (2) U-10 and U-12 will use size 4
 - (3) U-13 and above will use size 5

Law III: Number of Players

- a. In each division, optimum team size and number playing will generally be limited as follows:
 - (1) U-6: 8 players with 4 on the field
 - (2) U-8: 8 players with 4 on the field
 - (3) U-10: 10 players with 6 on the field
 - (4) U-12: 11 players with 8 on the field;

or

 - (5) U-12 and up: 16 players with 11 on the field.
- b. There shall be an equal number of players participating for each team on the field at the start of each game. If one team does not have enough players to field a full team, the opposing team may elect to either loan players to the short team, or to play with only as many players as the short team is able to field at the start of the game.
There are no forfeits in the recreational league!
- c. Where 11 v 11 is played, games must be started with a minimum of 7 players per side.
- d. During a season, all players shall play only for the team to which they have been assigned by the League.
 - (1) Exception being, if the opposing team is short-handed, the coaches, in mutual agreement, may opt to lend bench players to the short-handed team as noted above.

- e. For U-10 and above, substitutions are allowed at the referee's discretion under the following conditions:
 - (1) Throw-ins by the team in possession of the ball
 - (2) Kick offs and goal kicks by either team
 - (3) Injury – a substitution may be made only for the injured player. The opposing team may make a one-for-one substitution at this time as well.
- Substitutions at U-6 and U-8 levels can be made at any stoppage in play.

Law IV: Player's Equipment

- a. Shin guards are required to be worn by all players during practices and games with ***no exceptions***.
- b. Uniforms issued by the League are to be worn during games.
- c. Hard casts and braces are permitted if properly padded and if accompanied by written permission from a doctor and the referee agrees that the cast or brace is properly padded. In age divisions where a referee is not used, the coaches, by mutual consent, will approve proper padding.
- d. No jewelry shall be worn during a game. However, 'Medical Alert' jewelry may be worn but must be taped down.
- e. No baseball or football cleats will be allowed. Exception permitted if the front cleat is removed and subject to the referee's approval.

Law VII: Duration of the Game

Age Division	Length of Period	Break between Halves
U-6	total of one hour for practice and play	suggested that at least a 3 minute break be given every 15 minutes
U-8	10 minute quarters	5 minutes at half 2 minutes at quarters
U-10	12 minute quarters	5 minutes at half 2 minutes at quarters
U-12	30 minute halves	8 minutes at half (Quarters may be used if both coaches and referee agree.)
U-13 and up	30 minute halves	8 minutes at half

Law VIII: The Start of Play

- a. Incorrect kick-off (for example the ball is touched a second time by the player taking the kick-off before being touched by another player) may be replayed again at the U-8 age division.
- b. U-10 and lower, the kick-off is an indirect kick, i.e. the ball must touch two players before it can enter a goal.

Law XI: Offside

- a. Offside will not be called at the U-8 or lower age divisions unless the team attempts to circumvent the spirit of the game by having players waiting in an offside position.

Law XV: Throw-ins

- a. A second attempt will be given any player at the U-8 age division if the ball is improperly thrown.

SCSL Inclement Weather Policy

All scheduled games must be played at the time and location listed on the schedule. Games may be rescheduled only due to weather conditions or the field being made unplayable as described here-in. Personal reasons, lack of “my best player(s)”, etc. are not valid reasons to cancel scheduled games.

Threat of rain, light rain or drizzle, wet fields, or cool temperatures are not valid reasons to cancel games. Valid reasons for cancellations are: lightning, heavy rain or unplayable field conditions. The policy of the League is that **no game may be played within 30 minutes of visible lightning.**

Up to 10 minutes before the game, the coaches can decide whether a game should be canceled. From 10 minutes before the game and through the end of the game, it is the referee’s call whether the game is to be canceled or stopped. Before making the call, at least one of the coaches should visit the field. ***Do not assume that the weather at the field is the same as the weather at your home!***

When a game is canceled, it is the responsibility of the coaches to make sure that all game officials are notified as well as the parents of all players involved. Coaches should call each official scheduled for that game.

A game that is canceled can be played at a later time by the mutual consent of each coach, provided it does not conflict with other League games or practices, and all players and parents are advised of the change. Fields for make-up games must be scheduled with the League’s Field Coordinator. The **coaches must arrange** for the necessary officials to be present at the rescheduled game. Obtaining officials for rescheduled games is not the responsibility of the Referee Commissioner.

For games that are stopped, the score can stand as is at the point of stoppage, or the game may be replayed in its entirety. There will be no continuations.

Comments: (Please write anything that may help the league on the back.)

Please check one of the following: _____ I will coach next season _____

_____ I will not coach next season _____

Coach's Signature

Date:

PARENT’S CODE OF CONDUCT

I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for my child participating in youth sports by following this code of conduct:

*****I will encourage good sportsmanship by supporting all players, coaches and referees during practices, games, or other sport events. I will remember that my role as a parent-spectator is to positively encourage my child, his/her team and the opposing team.**

*****I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my child ahead of any personal desire to win, remembering that children have more need of example than of criticism, and that the game is for children, not adults.**

*****I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment. I will refrain from the use of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs at all youth sports events.**

***** I will refrain from the use of foul & profane language while present at youth sporting events.
***I will treat players, coaches, fans, and referees with respect, regardless of race, sex, creed or ability. I will remember that opponents are necessary; without them there is no game.**

*****I will assure that any guest spectators or children I bring to any practice, game, or sporting event will abide by this code of ethics.**

*****I will do my very best to remember and help my child to understand our league motto:
“SOCCER IS ABOUT LEARNING AND HAVING FUN!”**

Parent/Guardian signature

Parent/Guardian signature

PLEASE NOTE: Violation of the above *Code of Conduct* can result in denial of the offender from attending his/her child’s games and practices; or denial of the offender and his/her children from participating in Shenandoah County Soccer League activities.

**Shenandoah County Soccer League
Coaches' Code of Conduct**

I hereby pledge to live up to my commitment as a Shenandoah County Soccer League Coach by following this code of conduct:

- I will place the emotional and physical well being of my players ahead of any personal desire to win. I will remember that I am a youth coach, and the game is for children and not adults.
- I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all my players.
- I will remember to treat each player as an individual, knowing the large spread of emotional and physical development which exists for any given age group.
- I will do my very best to provide a safe playing situation for my players. I will refrain from the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco at all youth sports events.
- I will review and practice the necessary first aid principles needed not only to treat injuries of my players, but to prevent injuries.
- I will insure that I am knowledgeable in the rules of soccer, and I will teach these rules to my players.
- I will use those coaching techniques appropriate for each of the skills that I teach.
- I will not use inappropriate language, nor will I tolerate the use of such language on the part of my team's players, parents or coaches.
- I will demonstrate, by example, fair play and sportsmanship to all players, opponents, officials, and referees. The Shenandoah County Soccer League has a zero-tolerance policy toward physical or verbal abuse of referees or any other participants in SCSL activities.
- I will become familiar with and will abide by the rules of the Shenandoah County Soccer League.
- I will make every effort to educate and inform my team's players and supporters, including parents and assistant/substitute coaches, about proper standards of conduct while they are at any SCSL game, practice or other activity.
- * I will take the necessary actions to stop and/or correct inappropriate behavior by my team's players and supporters when it is brought to my attention.
- I understand that if I fail to maintain the level of conduct as specified by this code of conduct and the rules of the Shenandoah County Soccer League, my coaching privilege can be suspended or revoked as specified in the League's bylaws. I will remember that coaching our children is a privilege and not a right.

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

This form shall be maintained by the Recreation or Travel Commissioner as appropriate

Shenandoah County Soccer League Coaches Training Program and Requirements

I. Purpose

- A. To provide specific training and the minimum requirements that will adequately prepare coaches to manage a youth soccer team. Ethics, sports injury management, laws of the game, and pertinent soccer related subjects are to be emphasized.

II. General

- A. All coaches of the Shenandoah County Soccer League must meet the minimum training requirements outlined below.
- B. All coaches shall be granted a grace period of one year (fall/spring or spring/fall) to pursue the required training.
- C. It is incumbent upon the League to provide sufficient opportunities for training coaches.
- D. Coaches not meeting the minimum requirements within the specified time frame may not be assigned a team.
- E. Although the training sessions outlined herein are intended mainly for active and prospective coaches; attendance and participation is open and recommended for all assistant coaches, parents, referees, or other interested members of the League.

III. Requirements

- A. Coaches shall be required to undergo training in each of the following subjects:
 - 1. **Ethics and conduct:**
 - Ethics and conduct training shall be the NYSCA program as offered and administered by the Shenandoah County Parks and Recreation Department plus a basic introductory session given by the League.
 - a. Since this is a three-(3) session per year program, only the first unit needs to be completed to satisfy initial requirements of the League.
 - b. However, completion of the second and third sessions in succeeding seasons is required in order for individuals to maintain their eligibility to coach.
 - c. Coaches shall be required to sign and keep on file with the Recreation or Travel Commissioner a copy of the coaches' ethics agreement. A new form must be signed each year.
 - d. The League introductory session will be one (1) hour and shall emphasize the League philosophy and ethics as they relate to our motto, *Soccer is about learning and having fun!*

2. Sports injury management and first aid:

The first aid/sports injury training shall consist of one (1) session lasting one (1) hour given by trained medical personnel.

3. Basic knowledge of the laws of the game of soccer as set by FIFA and USSF modified in accordance with the SCSL:

Training in the laws of the game shall be one (1) session lasting two (2) hours given by the League Referee Commissioner or his/her designee. Satisfactory completion of a brief written test is a part of this requirement.

B. Coaches shall also be required to undergo training in a minimum of one (1) of the following soccer related subjects:

1. How to structure a practice
2. Teaching soccer skills and soccer mechanics
3. What to do on game day
4. Useful team drills
5. Goalkeeping
6. Advanced techniques for practices
7. Advanced theory: attacking
8. Advanced theory: defense
9. Ball control

Training in soccer related subjects shall be performed by current members in good standing of the League governing Board, or other qualified individuals. Each session shall last a minimum of two (2) hours.

C. It is anticipated that pertinent subjects will be added to the above list as the training program grows and the League's coaching staff gains experience.

IV. Alternatives

A. Coaches who are licensed by the VYSA Joint Coaching Program at levels F, E, or D, or by the USSF National Program at levels C, B, or A, shall be considered as having met the requirements of this training program for laws of the game, first aid/sports injuries, and soccer related subjects. The only additional training needed by such individuals in order to be eligible to coach with the League would be the ethics/conduct program as listed in paragraph III.A.1 above.

B. Coaches who have become USSF certified Grade 8 or lower are considered to have fulfilled the training requirement for the laws of the game. After the initial certification at Grade 8 a status of "current" is not required to fulfill the coaching training requirement.

C. Coaches who can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the League governing board that they have participated in the sport of soccer at a sufficiently high level may have credit given for training in some of the soccer related subjects and/or laws of the game as listed above.

However, the other training requirements will still apply. Exceptions made under this paragraph shall be made at the sole discretion of the League governing Board and are not subject to appeal.

V. Implementation

- A. All coaches who join the League coaching staff after adoption of this section must meet all requirements outlined herein.
- B. It will be incumbent upon the League Board of Directors to see that the required training is offered each season.

Recreational All Star Teams

The Travel Commissioner will serve as the All Star Coordinator per section 4.13 of the By-Laws.

The All Star Coordinator will:

inform the Board of which tournaments All Star teams will be participating; Board approval is not necessary unless participation in an All Star tournament will cause the League to incur expenses; however, the Board reserves the right to deny any team's participation in All Star Tournaments

ensure age level commissioners notify their respective coaches of upcoming tournaments; interested coaches make their interest known to the All Star Commissioner who selects the coach for each All Star team; assistant coaches will be selected by the All Star Coach

will have a mandatory meeting with all All Star Coaches

Team Selection:

- will be formed only from players in the recreational league
- entrance/registration fees will be paid by the individual teams; individuals unable to pay the associated fees may be granted a full or partial waiver of fees under the same policy that the League uses for players in its recreational league
- players for All Star teams will be selected, with each team having at least one position; maximum team size will be based on the rules of each tournament
- the "coaches pick" method will be used to select players for All Star teams; the tournament coach shall, after conferring with the individual coaches, observe and select the players for his/her team
- coaches may select players from the age level immediately below the level of their team when additional players are needed for their team; however, the players cannot already be on another All Star Team

SCSL Travel Soccer Program

1. Travel teams will be created when a person with interest in doing so approaches the Travel Commissioner, and subsequent approval of the new team is granted by the League's Board of Directors.
2. Players may be selected by either of the following two methods: (1) Open tryouts, where at least two unbiased judges, along with the coach, are used to evaluate those trying out, or (2) The coaches pick method. Travel teams will be formed in the fall. Team size is limited to the maximum number allowed on the roster for that age division in the league with which the team is affiliated. In the spring, new players may be added to the team by one of the above two methods, in order to fill vacancies. Any player may try out as per VYSA age rules; however, it must be realized that travel soccer is much more competitive than recreational soccer.
3. Travel teams may remain together without having tryouts for the entire team at the start of each season. It is permissible to fill only open slots at the start of each season.
4. New travel teams must be approved by the League Board. Consideration will be given to the impact of removing those players from the recreational league.
5. Travel teams **must** have both a coach and a second individual serving in the capacity of team manager. Having at least one assistant coach is strongly recommended.
6. Coaches for travel teams will be approved by the Travel Commissioner and the League Commissioner.
7. By the third practice, the coach, assistant coach and manager shall meet with the Travel Commissioner.
8. The Travel Commissioner will provide the Referee Commissioner a schedule for each team as soon as the travel schedules are available.
9. Practice times will be decided using the coach's discretion. Travel teams may practice two times per week with fields assigned as follows: Prior to the recreational coaches' seasonal meeting, the travel coach may contact the League's Field Coordinator to obtain the location and time for one practice. After the above referenced coaches meeting, the travel coach may contact the Fields Coordinator to obtain the second practice time and location. All practice times must be scheduled through the League's Field Coordinator. It is the responsibility of the travel coaches to obtain their practice field assignments. When possible, at least one of the practice times will allow for whole field usage.

10. Travel teams are bound by the By-Laws of the SCSL and the rules of the travel league with whom they are affiliated.
11. Playing time will be allotted according to the coach's discretion based on the game situation, player attendance, and discipline problems. However, all players should play at least 25% of every game.
12. The League will allocate money to each new travel team for the purchase of uniforms. Money spent over that allocated will be at the expense of the travel team. Regardless of how much the travel team spends for uniforms, they remain the property of the League. The League will only allocate money once every three years for a team's uniforms. Managers are responsible for collection of the uniforms at the end of each season. Parents are responsible to see that uniforms remain in good condition, except for normal wear and tear.
13. Each team is to have their own treasurer and separate bank account requiring two (2) signatures on all checks written. This will be done as per the wishes of the League's treasurer. Biannual reports are to be presented to the SCSL Treasurer at the end of each season. A yearly audit will be completed by the League's Treasurer in coordination with the team manager at the end of the spring season.
14. Travel teams may not loan players to recreational teams under any circumstance.
15. A roster of all players will be submitted to the Travel Commissioner not later than one week prior to the team's first game.
16. Travel teams may take "guest" players to tournaments; however, they must first notify the Travel Commissioner of the tournament(s) in which they will be playing, and must provide the Travel Commissioner with a list of "guest" players participating.
17. Upon dissolution of a travel team, any debt owed to the Shenandoah County Soccer League must first be repaid. Any remaining money can be donated to the SCSL or another travel team sanctioned by the SCSL.

Techniques for Successful Communication

The communications director ensures good communication between the league board and the player's families as well as between committees and individuals of the board, coaches, commissioners and the community. The Volunteer Coordinator can provide names of individuals willing to help with communications as indicated on registration forms. The full responsibilities of the communications director are:

1. **Maintaining and updating the website:** www.shentel.net/shenandoah-soccer .

- The website is maintained on MS Publisher 2000. Current information is uploaded: game schedule, current coaches and refs, yearly calendar, board of directors list, current events, coach's and ref's classes, tournament information, registration forms, etc. Pictures are put on the website when available. **Always include the website address on any and all communications like emails, newsletters, ads, etc.**

2. **Creating mass emails**

- A master email list for each area of the county, coaches and board members is kept and updated every season. It is used to notify people of important events and information such as upcoming registration deadlines, coaching/refereeing classes, fundraisers, as well as other soccer-related information.

3. **Coordinate advertising when there is a budget for it.**

- Paid ads are typically run in the Northern Virginia Daily and Shenandoah Valley Herald for registration and Day of Fun activities as funding permits. Copies of previous ads have been kept on file as well as contact names and numbers for the papers. Ad copy is created based on information from the Registrar, President, Travel Commissioner, Travel Coaches, or soccer camp coordinator.
- PSAs are submitted to the NVD Camps & Clinics section (soccer camp), and the North Fork Journal (DOF/Registration) and a list of local radio stations is maintained and utilized for PSAs. Most radio station PSAs need to be submitted at least 2 weeks prior to the deadline of the event – unless it is a sudden “cancellation-type” PSA.
- Shenandoah.com is another free advertising medium that has been utilized for registration ads on cable channel 3 and the Internet.

2. **Coordinate making of signs**

- Poster size signs are used in the Northern, Middle and Southern areas of the county for advertising registration. A description of previous registration signs is kept on file but the President and/or registrar should be consulted as to what goes on the sign. These signs go in the three wooden A-frame stands.
- Small signs also need to be made for the Tournament Day of Fun festival activities and stapled to wooden stakes. The DOF committee will indicate what type of signs it needs (and provide the stakes), as it changes somewhat from year to year. A volunteer, who donates the materials, has laminated these signs in the past for durability. Signs should be saved from year to year by the Communications Director to cut down on expenses.

3. Help distribute registration forms

- The registrar is involved in getting registration forms copied and delivered to the schools. The newsletter is often attached to the registration form in the spring. Forms are given to the county middle and elementary schools, town offices, and Parks and Recreation office. A distribution representative is needed from each of the three private schools in the county: Community Christian school, Valley Baptist and SVAE.

4. Creating newsletters on an as needed basis.

- When an event dictates additional league wide advertising, a newsletter with pertinent information such as schedule of events will be created to keep the league informed.

U-6 Guidelines

Philosophy

The philosophy of U-6 soccer mirrors the League's philosophy that "soccer is about learning and having fun." This is the first introduction to the game of soccer for children—and, in many cases, their families as well.

The first goal of coaches should be to create a lasting enthusiasm for the game. That means creating practices and games that are, above all, fun.

At this level, we also are introducing basic soccer skills—mostly dribbling and kicking. The goal is to help kids learn these skills without subjecting them to onerous drills or critiquing every kick. In other words, practices should be structured around fun games that help kids learn. Elimination games are discouraged. The best strategy during practice is to "have a ball at everyone's feet" so they get comfortable with dribbling and begin to develop foot skills.

Another goal at this level is to help kids learn to be a team. While it may be expecting too much to get children at this age to do a lot of passing, passing games like monkey in the middle can begin to encourage them to look for other players and develop basic passing skills.

During the game, all players should have equal time on the field. The most important role of the coach during the game, again, is to make sure everyone is having fun. That means accentuating the positive by offering plenty of praise for both teams' efforts and refraining from criticism or negative comments.

Rules

- We play 4 v. 4 with no goalies – *all players need to be encouraged not to block the goal.* This is very important!
- No throw-ins. When a player kicks or dribbles the ball out, the other team gets to kick it in from there. (This is up to the coaches: if a ball goes just inches out, coaches often will let the play continue without stopping.)
- Coaches should be on the field directing the kids and carrying an extra ball or two.
- When a player is hurt, stop play to make sure he/she is all right and get him/her to a parent on the sideline. Coaches should bring ice to games just in case.
- Similarly, when a player falls down in the middle of a scrum for the ball, it is advisable to stop play for a moment to let the player get up.
- We have one hour for practices and games. Generally, we do 30 minutes of practice/skills training and 30 minutes of game but this is up to the coaches. (If you want to play a longer game, that's fine. But be sure to give the kids plenty of breaks. They will get tired.)
- Players need frequent breaks – substitutions can be made at the coaches' discretion whenever there is a break in the action.
- Coaches can split the game into halves or quarters, depending on the number of players and the need for breaks. (For example, on a hot day or if only four or five players are available to play on one side, players will need more breaks.)

- After the half, coaches may want to switch sides because the grade of the North Street fields tends to give the uphill team an advantage.
- Players need to bring their own soccer ball and a water bottle, as well as shin pads. Soccer cleats or sneakers are fine.

About the Weather

- 1 If there is not heavy rain or thunder, and if the fields are playable, parents and coaches should assume that the games are on. Please convey this to the parents on your team (i.e., if they don't hear from you that the game is off, then it's on.)
- It is generally up to the two opposing coaches to make the decision about whether or not to cancel a game, based on the weather and conditions of the field. The League's official policy states that this decision can be made up to 10 minutes before the game. Again, the assumption should be that the game is on unless the two coaches talk and decide otherwise and then notify their teams.
- The coach responsible for setting things up for the first games of the day should still bring goals and lining equipment to the North Street fields, even in the event that his or her game is canceled, in case weather clears and the later games can go on. At the very least, you need to arrange for one of the later coaches to get the goals, etc.

U-8 Guidelines

Philosophy

The philosophy of U-8 soccer mirrors the League's philosophy that "soccer is about learning and having fun." This is still an introduction to the game of soccer for children—and, in many cases, their families as well.

The first goal of coaches should be to create a lasting enthusiasm for the game. That means creating practices and games that are, above all, fun.

At this level, we also are introducing basic soccer skills—mostly dribbling and kicking. The goal is to help kids learn these skills without subjecting them to onerous drills or critiquing every kick. In other words, practices should be structured around fun games that help kids learn. Elimination games are discouraged. The best strategy during practice is to "have a ball at everyone's feet" so they get comfortable with dribbling and begin to develop foot skills. Have your players bring their own ball to each practice.

Another goal at this level is to help kids learn to be a team. While it may be expecting too much to get children at this age to do a lot of passing, passing games like monkey in the middle can begin to encourage them to look for other players and develop basic passing skills.

During the game, all players should have equal time on the field. The most important role of the coach during the game, again, is to make sure everyone is having fun. That means accentuating the positive by offering plenty of praise for both teams' efforts and refraining from criticism or negative comments. Running up the "score" is not the goal here. We want to encourage a lot of scoring – by both teams and all players. MORE SCORES = MORE FUN!

Rules

- We play 4 v. 4. Players may be assigned to defense or offense, for example, 2 or 3 players playing up and 1 or 2 players playing back on the field without blocking the goal. You want to encourage them to pass the ball – a basic triangle formation for passing works but most players at this age still may not be inclined to pass.
- No goal keepers – *all players need to be encouraged not to block the goal.* This defeats the purpose of not having goal keepers at the U-8 level and exemplifies poor sportsmanship. Coaches are expected to ensure that players do not block the goal.
- Throw-ins are used. When a player kicks or dribbles the ball out of bounds on the sides of the field, the other team gets to throw it in from there. The player throws the ball over his/her head, keeping both feet firmly planted on the ground. A re-throw may be granted at this level if the player jumps or doesn't otherwise keep both feet on the ground. Coaches should be on the field directing the players.
- Goal kicks are used. When the team that is on offense kicks the ball over the end line (near the goal, but not in it), the team that is defending the goal gets to place the ball on the end line and kick the ball back into play, making sure not to kick it directly into the middle of their own goal area – kick it up field but out to the sides.

- Corner kicks are used. When the team that is defending their own goal kicks the ball across the end line near their goal, the offensive team gets to kick the ball back into play from the corner mark at the flag, trying to get the ball back into the middle of the goal area.
- When a player is hurt, stop play to make sure he/she is all right and get him/her to a parent on the sideline. Coaches should bring ice to games in case of injury.
- We have one hour of practice a week and games take roughly 50 minutes. We play four 10 minute quarters, with 2 minutes between quarters and 5 minutes at the half. Less time may be used based on conditions and if both coaches agree. You should assign a time keeper or have a stopwatch handy. The clock doesn't stop unless there is a serious injury. It runs during throw-ins, goal kicks, and corner kicks. Players need frequent breaks during the games– substitutions can be made at the coaches' discretion whenever there is a break in the action. (For example, on a hot day or if only four or five players are available to play for a team, players will need more breaks.)
- After the half, coaches switch sides and their team moves towards the opposite goal.
- Players need to bring their own soccer ball and a water bottle. Wearing shin guards is mandatory – no exceptions. Soccer cleats or sneakers are fine. Baseball cleats, or other footwear with a cleat on the toe, are not permitted. The risk of injury is greatly increased with a cleat on the toe.
- Parents must remain on the opposite of the field from the teams. This is to ensure that the coaches have their teams' undivided attention.

About the Weather

- l If there is not heavy rain or thunder, and if the fields are playable, parents and coaches should assume that the games are on. Please convey this to the parents on your team (i.e., if they don't hear from you that the game is off, then it's on.)
- It is generally up to the two opposing coaches to make the decision about whether or not to cancel a game, based on the weather and conditions of the field. The League's official policy states that this decision can be made up to 10 minutes before the game. Again, the assumption should be that the game is on unless the two coaches talk and decide otherwise and then notify their teams.
- It is recommended that no game be canceled without a visit being made to the field to physically check on conditions.
- The coach responsible for setting things up for the first games of the day at a particular field needs to bring one set of goals and line the field. You are still in charge of the goals and lining equipment, even if your game is canceled. Remember that the weather may clear and the later games can go on. At the very least, you need to arrange for one of the coaches with a later game to get the goals, etc.

Field Dimensions

- The field size will be approximately 23x40 yards for U-8 players. The fields are lined prior to the first games of the season and should remain fairly easy to re-line throughout the season. Each field should be lined weekly when there is a game.

U-10 Guidelines

Philosophy

The purpose at U-10 is to provide a physical and entertaining challenge to all members of the team. Individual improvement, further development in soccer knowledge, and greater concentration on team-play is the primary goal. While winning constitutes a basic concern for coaches, all involved need to disassociate themselves from a "win-at-all-costs" attitude.

To achieve this, U-10 shall play small-sided games to provide players more touches on the ball, opportunities to make decisions, a more energetic workout playing offense and defense, and improve individual skills. In addition, coaches should attempt to give each player a relatively equal amount of playing time (as limited by the available number of substitutions). Small-sided games in match play for younger players create more involvement and ultimately, more enjoyment. The number of players on the field of play at each age group should promote development, enjoyment of the game and provide a logical progression from year to year and mirror the league's philosophy that "winning is learning and having fun".

Rules

Unless altered below or by Shenandoah County Soccer League policy, FIFA rules apply.

- | **Ball:** Ball size shall be four (4).
- | **Field:** Recommended field size is length of 60 yards and width of 40 yards.
- | **Team:** A team on the field playing a match shall consist of no more than 6 players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. A team must have a minimum of 5 players on the field to start a game unless both coaches and the referee agree to a lesser number. In the case that there are not enough players present for the game to begin, a coach may offer to "lend" a player or two to their opponent.
- | **Game Length:** A game shall consist of four 12 minute quarters, with a half-time of 5 minutes and 2 minute breaks between quarters. Less time may be used if both coaches and the referee agree.
- | **Substitution:** Unlimited player substitutions are allowed during a game. They may occur at any stoppage in play. A substitute can only enter play after the referee is informed and the referee sends an acknowledging signal.
- | **Goalkeeper:** A goalkeeper, from his/her penalty area, may kick the ball up to the entire length of the field. However, if the ball lands in the opponent's penalty area, goal area, or in the goal, an indirect free kick is awarded to the opponent at the center point of the halfway line.
- | **Kick Off:** The kick off is an indirect kick, i.e. the ball must touch two players before it can enter the goal. (Approved addition 3-1-07)
- | **Offside:** Offside will be enforced. (Approved addition 3-1-07)

Coaches

Coaches must adhere to all guidelines laid down by governing bodies.

Coaches must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat each equally within the context of the sport, regardless of gender, place of origin, color, sexual orientation, political belief or economic status.

Coaches must always promote the positive aspects of the sport (e.g. fair play) and never condone violations of the rules or their spirit. The health, safety, and welfare of young people are a first priority.

Coaches must ensure that the activities they institute are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of players. Coaches must direct comments or criticism at performance rather than the athlete.

Referees

A referee is present to monitor the game's action. Throw-ins, goal kicks, corner kicks and penalty kicks are performed at the instruction of the referee. He/she will make the appropriate call in the case of a rule infraction or out of bounds play. In the event of an injury, all players should sit down while the coaches tend to the injured player(s).

General Rules

Shin guards must be worn by the players during all practices and games – no exceptions.

Medical release/insurance forms must be in the coaches' possession at all practices and games.

If you are the home team for the first game of the day, you must line the field and set out the corner flags. Lining supplies are located in the shed closest to the field where you are playing. The teams who play the last game of the day are responsible for returning the corner flags to the shed.

Parents must remain on the opposite side of the field from the teams. This is to ensure that the coaches have their team's undivided attention.

U-12 Guidelines

Philosophy

The purpose at U-12 is to provide a physical and entertaining challenge to all members of the team. Individual improvement, further development in soccer knowledge, and greater concentration on team-play is the primary goal. While winning constitutes a basic concern for coaches, all involved need to disassociate themselves from a "win-at-all-costs" attitude.

To achieve this, U-12 shall play small-sided games to provide players more touches on the ball, opportunities to make decisions, a more energetic workout playing offense and defense, and improve individual skills. In addition, coaches should attempt to give each player a relatively equal amount of playing time (as limited by the available number of substitutions).

Rules

Unless altered below or by Shenandoah County Soccer League policy, FIFA rules apply.

- | **Ball:** Ball size shall be four (4).
- | **Field:** Recommended field size is length of 70-80 yards and width of 45-55 yards.
- | **Team:** A team on the field playing a match shall consist of no more than 8 players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. A team must have a minimum of 8 players on the field to start a game unless both coaches and the referee agree to a lesser number.
- | **Game Length:** A game shall consist of no more than two 25 minute halves, with a half-time of 5 minutes. Quarters and/or less time may be used if both coaches and the referee agree.
- | **Substitution:** Unlimited player substitutions are allowed during a game. They may occur at any stoppage in play. A substitute can only enter play after the referee is informed and the referee sends acknowledging signal.
- | **Goalkeeper:** A goalkeeper, from his/her penalty area, may kick the ball up to the entire length of the field. However, if the ball lands in the opponent's penalty area, goal area, or in the goal, an indirect free kick is awarded to the opponent at the center point of the halfway line.

Coaches

Coaches must adhere to all guidelines laid down by governing bodies.

Coaches must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat each equally within the context of the sport, regardless of gender, place of origin, color, sexual orientation, political belief or economic status.

Coaches must always promote the positive aspects of the sport (e.g. fair play) and never condone violations of the rules or their spirit. The health, safety, and welfare of young people are a first priority.

Coaches must ensure that the activities they institute are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of players. Coaches must direct comments or criticism at performance rather than the athlete.

U-15 Guidelines

Philosophy

The purpose of U-15 is to provide the full-sided soccer experience to the players if registration numbers allow. Otherwise, players will play an 8 v. 8 small sided game. Players will learn the importance of playing as a team and get them ready to participate in other team sports. Individual improvement, further development in soccer knowledge, and greater concentration on team-play is the primary goal. While winning constitutes a basic concern for coaches, all involved need to disassociate themselves from a "win-at-all-costs" attitude.

In addition, coaches should attempt to give each player a relatively equal amount of playing time (as limited by the available number of substitutions).

Rules

Unless altered below or by Shenandoah County Soccer League policy, FIFA rules apply.

- | **Ball:** Ball size shall be five (5).
- | **Field:** Recommended field size is length of 100-110 yards and width of 60-70 yards.
- | **Team:** A team on the field playing a match shall consist of no more than 11 players (if registration numbers allow), one of whom is the goalkeeper. If we are playing small-sided games based on registration numbers, the games will be 8 v. 8, one of whom is the goalkeeper. A team must have a minimum of 11 (or, for small-sided games, 8) players on the field to start a game unless both coaches and the referee agree to a lesser number.
- | **Game Length:** A game shall consist of no more than two 30 minute halves, with a half-time of 5 minutes. Quarters and/or less time may be used if both coaches and the referee agree.
- | **Referee:** All games should have one referee and two line judges. (unless both coaches and the referee agree to a lesser number)

Coaches

Coaches must adhere to all guidelines laid down by governing bodies.

Coaches must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat each equally within the context of the sport, regardless of gender, place of origin, color, sexual orientation, political belief, religion or economic status.

Coaches must always promote the positive aspects of the sport (e.g. fair play) and never condone violations of the rules or their spirit. The health, safety, and welfare of young people are a first priority.

Coaches must ensure that the activities they institute are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of players. Coaches must direct comments or criticism at performance rather than the athlete.