



# Grand Valley Soccer Association Rules, Regulations and Policies March 2023

## Table of Contents

Section A: Purpose and General Structure	3
1. Establishment	3
2. Affiliation	3
3. Constitution and Bylaws	3
4. Team Criteria	4
5. Tryouts	4
6. Premier Sponsorship	4
7. Age Groups/Divisions	5
8. Games	5
9. Game Locations	5
10. Referee Assigner	5
Section B: Coaches, Referees and Managers	5
1. Coach Certification Requirements	5
2. Coach Pass Card	5,9
3. Coach Selection	6
4. Coach Conduct	6
5. Coach Transfer	6
Section C: Players, Registration, Travel	6
1. Player Registration and Team Fees	6
2. Required Player Documentation	6
3. Player Age Determination	7
4. Player Pass Cards	7
5. Ineligible Players	7
6. Player's Roster	7
7. "Playing Up" Age Groups	7
8. Player Pass Carding	7
9. Dual Roster	8
10. Release and Transfer	8
Section D: Team & Roster Limits	8
1. Roster Limits	8
2. U13 and up Game day Roster limits	9
3. Tournament Only Teams/Players	9
Section E: Rules, Game Procedures	9
1. Game Rules	9
2. Game Day Procedures	9
3. Referee Pay Schedule	9
4. Play Time	9

5. Game Length/Ball Size	10
6. Number of Players	10
7. Teams and Spectators	10
8. Behavior	10
Section F: Discipline (Cautions And Send-Offs)	11
1. Red Card Suspensions	11
2. Threatening Behavior	11
3. Violent Behavior	11
4. Fan Behavior	11
5. Roster Falsification	11
6. Cautions	11
7. Yellow/Red Card Accumulations	11
8. Use of Suspended Player	12
Section G: Game Protests	12
Section H: Uniforms	12
1. Uniform Kit	12
2. Uniform Colors	12
Section I: Home Team Responsibilities	12
1. Playing Fields	12
2. Ball Requirements	13
3. Score Reporting	13
4. First Aid Kit	13
Section J: Schedules, Cancellations & Forfeits	13
1. Rescheduling Games	13
2. Inclement Weather	13/14
3. Game Forfeit	14
4. Forfeit Fees	14
5. No Referees Present	14
Section K: Practice and Scrimmage Frequencies	14
Section L: Standings and Championships	15
1. Point System	15
2. Division Championship Determination	15
3. Awards	15
Section M: Due Process	15

## **SECTION A                    PURPOSE AND GENERAL STRUCTURE**

The Association intends to provide a competitive experience for those players whose skills, playing abilities and interests qualify them to participate. The Association is viewed as an experience for continuing the development of highly skilled players. Secondly, the Association hopes to provide a framework for competitive soccer in the Grand Rapids and Northwestern region of the Lower Peninsula.

1. The Board of Directors is the primary governing body of the Soccer Association of West Michigan (hereafter referred to as **GVSA**). The Board consists of eight (8) elected directors, and one (1) appointed director, who are the voting members. The Board may also appoint nonvoting members who will function as the coordinators of coaching, officiating and the League's Premier Teams. The GVSA shall sponsor fall and spring seasons.
2. The GVSA is affiliated with the Michigan State Youth Soccer Association (**MSYSA**) and complies with all rules and regulations of the United States Youth Soccer Association (**USYSA**) and the United States Soccer Federation (**USSF**). The GVSA, through its affiliation with the MSYSA, shall provide insurance as part of player registration. The GVSA shall also sponsor teams for play in the Michigan State Premier Soccer program (MSPSP), as defined below.
3. The GVSA, upon request, will provide copies of the Association's Constitutions and Bylaws to all first time participants.
4. Clubs may enter teams in the GVSA according to the following criteria:
  - a. Any participating club that submits registrations for four (4) or more select teams in a season, in any age groups, will automatically have all such teams entered, provided:
    - i. The club is good standing with the GVSA.
    - ii. All players and coaches are in good standing with the GVSA, and meet all league requirements for the group into which they are entered (age, sex, licensing requirements for coaches)
    - iii. All such teams are deemed to be competitive by the Board
    - iv. In the event that there are insufficient teams at a given age group to form a division, the Board may, at their discretion, return any such registrations, or register the team(s) involved in the next older available age group.
    - v. GVSA sponsored teams playing in MSPSP or other leagues do not count toward the four (4) team minimum.
  - b. Clubs submitting registrations for less than four (4) select teams in a season may apply to the Board for entry of such teams.
  - c. New clubs may apply for admission to GVSA subject to the following procedures
    - i. A letter of application must be submitted stating the club's name, how it is organized, goals and purpose. All applications shall include the Club's Bylaws and/or Articles of Incorporation, Rules and a list of, at minimum three (3) Officers, including contact information.
    - ii. All applications must be received 90 days prior to the Club holding tryouts for any team.
    - iii. The Board of Directors must approve all applications. Approval may not be withheld on the grounds that there are existing clubs in the same area as the applicant's club.
    - iv. All new clubs will automatically be subject to the same procedures as other clubs, as listed in Sections A.4.a and A.4.b above.
    - v. Clubs must have a Club Representative that lives within the GVSA geographical boundaries, as defined in the Bylaws, who can make official representation on behalf of the club.
  - d. GVSA recognizes a class of teams designated as Associated Teams. Associated Teams may be entered into the league, but are subject to additional conditions, as enumerated below. An Associated Team is any team whose home area falls outside of the GVSA geographical

boundaries as defined in the Bylaws. Any club participating in GVSA that is composed entirely of Associated Teams shall have no voting rights within GVSA, nor any other rights of GVSA member clubs. Such teams are subject to the following additional conditions, in addition to all other conditions required of all GVSA teams:

- i. Acceptance of Associated Teams is strictly at the discretion of the Board of Directors on a year-to-year basis.
- ii. GVSA may, at its discretion, require such teams to play all of their home games at a field within the GVSA geographical boundaries.
- iii. Associated Teams will not be offered sponsorship as Premier teams into the MSPSP under any circumstances.
- iv. Associated Teams do not count towards team totals for voting purposes within GVSA.
- v. Any other conditions that the GVSA Board wishes to impose.

5. The GVSA requires that open tryouts be held to select all member teams every year; all players must have an opportunity to try out for a team:
  - a. Players are urged to try out for clubs with which they have a natural affiliation (community or school related). Clubs may place restrictions (e.g. geographic area served) on who may try out for their teams, provided these are consistent with the purposes stated by the club when applying for admission into the GVSA. No player meeting a club's try out criteria may be excluded from trying out for that club's teams.
  - b. Clubs may not actively solicit participation at their tryouts from players who played the previous season on a GVSA team, or a GVSA sponsored MSPSP team belonging to a different GVSA club, unless at least one of the following conditions is true:
    - i. The club in question has ceased to function, or no longer belongs to the GVSA.
    - ii. The player has moved, or no longer meets the criteria for membership in his club.
    - iii. The player's club has scheduled no tryouts for the player's age group.
    - iv. The player's club has never fielded a team in the player's age group.
    - v. The player has a signed waiver from his club. Such waivers may not limit a player's ability to try out for another club in any way, including his/her present club.
    - vi. The player was not chosen at his/her club's tryouts for his/her age group. Note that any player may try out for any club, of his/her own volition. Publicly advertising a tryout is not "active solicitation".
    - vii. Clubs may actively solicit players who played or are playing in all other leagues. If the other league is affiliated with the MSYSA such solicitation is subject to the rules of the MSYSA and/or the MSPSP.
  - c. Age group tryouts are to be performed in a fair and equitable manner.
  - d. Players who are not chosen should be informed of the reasons for their not being selected. Clubs must notify players promptly as to whether they have been accepted for a team or not. In the event that such notification is not made within fourteen (14) days from the end of the club's tryouts for an age group, the player may consider that he/she has not been selected.
  - e. GVSA will set tryout dates for GVSA club teams and set a date annually on which players may be signed on GVSA teams. No fall tryout shall be held before the MHSAA (Michigan High School Athletic Association) Boys State Finals. All tryouts are subject to MSYSA rules, which do not allow tryouts prior to the third Saturday in June. GVSA may choose to use a later date, at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Tryouts may not be held during the GVSA Fall or Spring season.
  - f. Tryouts should include assessments of individual skills and performance in game simulations.
  - g. Clubs may add individual players to existing teams after tryouts have been held. Such players may be added to teams by invitation or an informal tryout process (e.g. participation as a guest player, participation at a practice or indoor soccer game).
  - h. No club shall charge a fee of any sort for players to tryout. This is an MSYSA Rule.
6. The GVSA will sponsor Premier teams affiliated with GVSA member clubs, subject to the following criteria:
  - i. Any such team must be sponsored by a GVSA member club, who shall be

- responsible for any fees and fines set by the MSPSP.
  - ii. All Head Coaches must have a USSF "D" Coaching License. To prevent abuses a coach may not be listed as a Head or Assistant Coach for more than two teams.
  - iii. Any Premier Teams must be in good standing with the MSPSP and is responsible for following their Rules and Procedures. The Sponsoring Club shall be responsible for registering the team with the MSPSP, and providing GVSA with a copy of the team's roster, a copy of all individual player registrations and proof of identity/birth for all players
  - iv. No player or team official in bad standing with GVSA may participate.
  - v. All Premier Teams shall respect GVSA's rules regarding player solicitation, even for teams that are playing in other USSF leagues (e.g. NLC and SYL).
  - vi. The GVSA Board of Directors may revoke a Premier Team's status, place it on a probationary status, or set conditions to be met for violation of these rules and standards. A Premier Team may apply for an extension or waiver of any of these standards provided it shows a plan for remediation of the shortcoming(s).
  
- 7. The GVSA will organize the League into appropriate age and gender groups. In as much as possible, they will follow USSF age groupings whenever possible. However, the GVSA may chose to organize the age divisions differently in order to group them more efficiently for league play. In particular, one year age groupings (e.g. Under 10, Under 11, Under 12, etc.) will be utilized whenever it is feasible to do so.  
 When there are more than 8 teams in an age group, the League may divide the teams into two or more different divisions. Teams may apply for any division. The League will assign each team to a division based upon: The team's previous year's record, the team's player roster, and the club's performance history.  
 Teams will be moved between seasons based upon promotion and relegation of the top and bottom one or two teams in a division as determined by the GVSA Administrator. Teams may only jump age groups between the Fall and Spring season with prior approval of the GVSA Administrator. U7 and U8 teams will play within their and group utilizing the 4v4 format and may not play up an age group without prior approval from GVSA.
  
- 8. When feasible, a minimum of eight (8) games will be scheduled for teams in the spring and fall Leagues
  
- 9. All member clubs are responsible for the identification of playing sites in their communities where GVSA games will be played. Addresses and the names of the field(s)' owners for these sites, as well as other sites used for practices, shall be forwarded to the Association's Administrator. This is required for insurance provided through the MSYSA to be in effect at these fields. All decisions regarding insurance coverage shall be made by the MSYSA. The Association will then prepare a master list of all playing fields and publish this on the league's website.
  
- 10. Member clubs must have procured the services of a USSF certified Referee Assignor with approval from the Grand Valley Soccer Officials Association. The GVSA may appoint a Referee Assignor to assign officials for any new club joining GVSA.

**SECTION B COACHES, REFEREES AND MANAGERS**

- 1. Member clubs will be responsible for selecting coaches for their own teams. All head coaches are required to posses a minimum of a USSF "E" or a NSCAA Level 6 license or have completed any 2 of the US Soccer Grassroots Courses (4v4, 7v7, 9v9, 11v11). The GVSA prefers that the Coach take one of the courses in which he plans to coach. Coaches who have not yet received one of these requirements are expected to complete their certification by the end of the first seasonal year in which they coach. Any coach failing to meet this requirement will not be allowed to continue to participate as head coach for GVSA teams. Exceptions to this must be approved by the GVSA

Board.

2. Coaches must possess a GVSA issued pass card as described in Section E RULES, GAME PROCEDURES 2
3. The GVSA asks its member clubs, when selecting a coach, to give attention to four broad areas of coaching qualifications. These are: soccer background; formal soccer coach training; suitability to work with the age group; and communications/teaching ability. All clubs should annually evaluate their coaches.
4. Coaches are responsible for their team's conduct at practices and games. Coaches who do not adhere to the GVSA Code of Conduct may be suspended by the Board after investigation by the Disciplinary Committee. Coaches dismissed by the Association may not serve in any official capacity with any team in the Association or in any other capacity with the Association until the term of the suspension is completed. If the dismissal is permanent, the individual is permanently banned from participation in the Association. Coaches are also expected to help the referees discipline unruly fans: Parents and others are not allowed to coach or make derogatory remarks to players or referees.
5. In those instances in which a coach moves from one club to another separate and distinct club at the end of the seasonal year, the coach may not coach any rostered players from teams of the former club he/she was identified as a primary or assistant coach (excluding the coach's son or daughter) in the following seasonal year. This rule does not apply under the following:
  - i. The coach's club dissolves.
  - ii. The coach moves 100 miles making the commute to the coach's existing club impractical.
  - iii. The GVSA Club President or Club Representative as listed on the GVSA website agrees in writing to the coach's move to a different club.

### **SECTION C PLAYERS, REGISTRATION, TRAVEL**

1. All Association players must register with the MSYSA (USYSA). Registration information must be submitted to the GVSA registrar. The deadlines for registration are dictated by the Association and the MSYSA. Players are registered on teams for the entire seasonal year. Fall commitments and registrations are due in July. Spring commitments and registrations are due in January. Due Dates are posted on the GVSA Calendar.
  - a. The deadline for the commitment fee is important for a timely game schedule. Beginning in the Fall 2022 season the Commitment Fee shall be:

U7-U8	\$125
U9-U10	\$300
U11-U12	\$365
U13-U19	\$455
  - b. The fee shall be the same regardless of whether a team plays in the Fall or Spring seasons. **Teams playing both seasons shall pay an additional \$25 for U7-U8 and \$40 for teams U9 and above for the Spring season**, due by the Spring commitment date. The fee includes the cost of registering all players with the MSYSA and is non-refundable. The fee is determined by the Age Group level at which the team plays.
  - c. The league may also charge additional fees for late player/coach/manager registrations, player transfers, dropping players and lost pass cards.
2. All players, upon registering for the first time with the GVSA, must furnish the Association with a legal proof of identity and age (e.g. birth certificate copy) to be retained by the Association Registrar. *All players born outside of the United States, regardless of citizenship or ability, must provide approved International Clearance when registering with a Club with a **professional affiliation**.* All players must also fill out a GVSA registration form, every year they play. All players

will get a USYSA identification card that belongs to the player, but it must be made available to the coach or team manager prior to all GVSA games. Additionally, Clubs are responsible for collecting and maintaining Concussion Awareness, Medical Release, GVSA Respect Player/Coach Code of Conduct Forms.

3. Age is defined by a player's birth year as set forth by US Soccer. The age group for a season will be defined by the year the competition ends. (e.g. a player with born in 2010 will be a U13 player for the 2022-23 season)
4. Pass Cards shall be checked by the referee before every League game. Cards must be presented to the referee complete, with picture and be permanently laminated. Unregistered players shall not play. Dual roster players may not pass card.  
**Players with a missing Pass Card shall not play.** However, if the following conditions are met, they will be allowed to play:
  - a. The Coach playing the player(s) with the missing Pass Card(s) must concede the Game as a Forfeit.
  - b. The Coach must provide a photo of the missing Player(s) Pass Cards *and* the team roster showing the player(s) is(are) registered to the team. *If both items are not provided the player/team may not participate in the match and teams may not scrimmage.*
  - c. The Player(s) with the missing Pass Cards(s) will sign the back of the Game Report including their printed name and number. If the Player(s) is/are discovered not to be registered to that Team, the Coach will serve a minimum 3 Game suspension with the same team immediately following the league ruling.
  - d. The opposing team must play this game as a normal league game.
  - e. The referee crew will officiate this as a normal league game and be paid the normal game fee.
5. Ineligible players:
  - a. If an ineligible player plays/participates in a GVSA sanctioned game with the coaches knowledge; the player will receive an automatic suspension of (2) games and the coach will be suspended (3) games. The coach may be required to meet with the GVSA Discipline Chairman to discuss the situation and the chairman will determine if any additional penalties need to be added. If mandatory, this mandatory meeting must be done before they can be reinstated. Players are ineligible if they are serving a suspension; if they are not registered; or if they are illegally registered (age or gender violation)
  - b. If an ineligible player plays/participates in a GVSA sanctioned game and it can be determined that the coach unknowingly allowed the player to participate/play; it will be at the Disciplinary Chairman's Discretion if the player will receive an automatic suspension of (2) games and the coach will be suspended (1) game. The coach will be required to meet with the GVSA Discipline Chairman to discuss the situation and the Chairman will determine if any additional penalties need to be added. This mandatory meeting must be done before they can be reinstated. Players are ineligible if they are serving a suspension; if they are not registered; or if they are illegally registered (age or gender violation)
6. Players may only be registered on one GVSA roster; but players are permitted and encouraged to play in other developmental soccer programs and teams in their communities.
7. Players who are selected due to their ability and skills may "Play-up" no more than 2 years with a team in an older age group in U8-U14. Players in the U6 and younger age groups may not register for any team in GVSA. Players in the U7 age group may only play on a U8 Age Group Team. Players U15 and older may play up in any age group through U19. Players may not under any circumstances, play for teams in younger age groups.
8. Club Pass Carding may be used as a developmental tool for players within a club to play up on an Elite team within their club or on a U15 Boys team in the Fall and Girls Team in the Spring based on the following terms:
  - a. Players must play up from a lower division or age group team up to two age groups. Players

U15 and older may pass card up in any age group through U19.

- b. Only 3 Club Pass Card Players are allowed to play on an Elite Division Team, a U15 boys Fall or U15 Girls Spring.
- c. Roster limits must be met for each game.
- d. Players with dual registration may not pass card.
- e. Pass card players must use their player card from their primary team in order to play. They will not be issued a second card.
- f. Pass card players must be written in on the game sheet.
- g. If a Club has 2 teams in the same Elite or U15 division, players may not pass card between teams.

9. Players who wish to play for both a GVSA team and a MSPSP or Director’s Academy team must submit the GVSA form requesting dual participation *when the teams are with 2 different clubs*. NLC players or players from other leagues may not dual roster. The form must be signed by both coaches/clubs. Players must name the MSPSP or Director’s Academy team as their team of first priority. Players may pass card from within their Club **to** MSPSP or Director’s Academy via the rules set forth by each league. No dual participation is required for players utilizing this pass card option within the same club *and* playing “up” to these leagues. Players registered with MSPSP or Director’s Academy and then wanting to be added to a GVSA team must submit a dual registration form to play on a GVSA team. All players within GVSA must have a GVSA issued pass card.

The minimum roster size is exclusive of any players registered for Dual Participation: they do not count towards the minimum roster size. Additionally, no GVSA team may have more than three (3) players on their roster at any time that are registered for Dual Participation. Dual participation players may not utilize the Player Pass Card system to GVSA Elite teams (see Pass Card Rules).

10. Players who wish to transfer to a different GVSA team during the Seasonal Year may do so with the approval of both clubs during the November 15- February 15 transfer window. Late fees apply after the GVSA registration deadline. However, if the transfer involves an entire team, it must have GVSA Board approval. In the event that the original club objects to the transfer for any reason, a Player Transfer may be initiated and granted only with GVSA Board approval.

**The player must follow the MSYSA Player Drop and Transfer procedures when changing Clubs.**

**SECTION D TEAM & ROSTER LIMITS**

1. Team rosters will consist of the following:

Age Group	Minimum	Maximum
U7 - U8	6	8
U9 - U10	9	12
U11 - U12	11	16
U13 - U19	13	22
U15 Boys Fall/Girls Spring	11	22



If the permanent roster size of a team falls below the player minimum, the team will be required to bring the roster size up to the minimum by adding qualified players. Any team losing a player for the season for any reason must notify the League Registrar as soon as possible. The minimum roster size is exclusive of any players registered for Dual Participation: they do not count towards the minimum roster size. Additionally, no GVSA team may have more than three (3) players on their roster at any time that are registered for Dual Participation. Dual participation players may not utilize the Player Pass Card system to GVSA Elite teams (see Pass Card Rules).

2. While U13 and older age groups may roster 22 players, only dress 18 players for the game. Players not participating must be crossed off of the game sheet. If a name is not crossed out, we can only assume the Player participated in the game.
3. Players may be registered for tournament play after the spring season (see Section C). These players can only play in tournaments. The GVSA may also register Tournament Only teams that do not play in GVSA, at the league's sole discretion and subject to any rules of the MSYSA.

## **SECTION E                    RULES, GAME PROCEDURES**

1. All GVSA games will be played according to the FIFA "Laws of the Game", as modified by the USSF for youth players. USSF referees and (to all but the youngest divisions) linesmen will be assigned, using the diagonal system of control. The dual system is not permitted – there is only one Referee and only the Referee shall use a whistle
2. Before every game:
  - The coach or team manager will provide the referee with a *GVSA Official Game Report*, laminated ID cards for all players and coaches and coach risk management cards. Names of players and coaches not present must be crossed out!
  - Referees will return the cards to the coach or team manager after check-in and prior to the start of the game; they will send the game report to the league statistician within 48 hours of the finish of the game.
  - A maximum of three (3) coaches and assistant coaches may be on the team side of the field during a game. *All must possess valid pass cards and risk management card.* There must be at least one registered adult coach or manager present during the game. If not, the game shall not be played, the Refs will be paid and the absence of a Coach reported to GVSA. GVSA will rule the game as a forfeit. The use of just a risk management card without a valid pass card is not allowed. A photo saved on a cell phone of a coach's pass card and current risk management card will be considered valid as long as the referee can view it clearly, identify the coach and the pass card as marked with CDC and SafeSport stamps.
  - Players **must have** a pass card present. If not and the player participates, the game will result in a forfeit. The player may only participate IF the coach can provide a photo of the player pass card AND the player's name is listed on the official roster. The game will still result in a forfeit but the player teams must scrimmage as listed in the Section C 4 rule.
3. Referees and linesmen must be paid by the home team, before the start of the game, according to the fee schedule set by the Association. If an official does not show up do not pay the remaining officials anything extra.

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Referee</b>	<b>Assistant Referees (Each)</b>	<b>Total per Game</b>
<b>U7-U8</b>	<b>TBD by Home Club</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>TBD by Home Club</b>
<b>U9-U10</b>	<b>\$35</b>	<b>\$25</b>	<b>\$85</b>

<b>U11-U12</b>	<b>\$40</b>	<b>\$30</b>	<b>\$100</b>
<b>U13-U14</b>	<b>\$55</b>	<b>\$40</b>	<b>\$135</b>
<b>U15-U16</b>	<b>\$65</b>	<b>\$45</b>	<b>\$155</b>
<b>U17-U19</b>	<b>\$75</b>	<b>\$50</b>	<b>\$175</b>

4. All players are entitled to a minimum amount of playing time for each regularly scheduled GVSA, as follows:
- U10 and younger aged players are entitled to play a minimum of one-half (1/2) of each game.
  - U11 and U12 players are entitled to play one-third (1/3) of each game.
  - The only exceptions to this rule are for players serving league suspensions, injuries and players subject to reasonable team discipline, which the coach shall note on the game report prior to the start of the game. Reasonable team discipline includes missed practices.
  - Coaches may not shorten a player's playing time in one game and make it up in another.
  - This policy applies to all players, including goalkeepers.
  - It is not the job of the Referee or GVSA to enforce this rule. Breaches of the rule shall be addressed initially to the player's club. Trifling breaches of the rules are not cause for complaint, unless they occur on a regular basis.

5. Length of Game and Size of the Ball is determined by the age group of the Division:

U7, U8,	20 Minute Halves	#4 Ball
U9, U10	25 Minute Halves	#4 Ball
U11, U12	30 Minute Halves	#4 Ball
U13, U14	35 Minute Halves	#5 Ball
U15, U16	40 Minute Halves	#5 Ball
U17, U18, U19	45 Minute Halves	#5 Ball

The referee may add on time totally at his/her discretion for injuries, wasting of time or any other reason. He/she may temporarily suspend a game (e.g. inclement weather). The length of the halves may only be shortened by mutual consent of both teams and the Referee prior to the start of the game. The length of the second half may not be changed at halftime.

6. Number of Players:

U7, U8	4 on a side (4v4)
U9, U10	7 on a side (7v7)
U11, U12	9 on a side (9v9)
All others	11 on a side (11v11)

- If either team does not have seven (7) players available within fifteen minutes of the stated game time, the game will be forfeited to the other team, as long as they have seven (7) players available.
  - In U11 and U12 games the minimum number of players needed is five (5)
  - In U9 and U10 games the minimum number of players needed is four (4)
  - In U7 and U8 games the minimum number of players needed is three (3)

7. Teams and Spectators:

- Both teams will occupy opposite ends of the same side of the field. No player or coach may stand within ten yards of the center line, except for players preparing to enter the games as substitutes. All players, coaches and spectators should remain at least two yards from the touch line, or further, if instructed by the referee and/or assistant referee(s). Coaches may not leave their end of the field, nor may spectators mingle with the substitutes and coaches.

- b. An adult from a different team within your club, in possession of a valid pass card and risk management, are allowed to coach, but there is a limit of three (3) adults that may be present along a team's sideline. No other persons are permitted on the team half of the field.
- c. All spectators will sit or stand on the other side of the field. They may not stand directly behind either penalty area, or within two yards of the touch line or either goal line. The referee may, at his/her discretion, ask spectators to move.

8. Behavior:

- a. The referee will not tolerate any foul or abusive language from players, coaches or spectators. The referee may ask the coach to have any spectator, who is interfering with the game, to leave the premises, suspend the game until such person(s) leave, and if necessary, abandon it if such person(s) refuse. Any coach or player who is sent off will leave the field of play and may not stay at the field.
- b. GVSA is a youth league. While competitive in nature, it is oriented toward development and is firmly of the belief in "Fair Play". Any inappropriate actions by coaches or spectators, including berating your own or opposing players will not be tolerated.
- c. Team Officials, players, and spectators are expected to understand and follow the current rules, policies, and procedures of the GVSA program as well as MSYSA rules & Policies. Ignorance of these rules does not present a case for defense should any rules be violated. If behavior or actions are considered serious enough by the GVSA Disciplinary Committee, a team/Club may face additional sanctions for irresponsible behavior or misconduct, offenses are determined by the GVSA Disciplinary Committee.

Examples of irresponsible behavior & misconduct include but are not limited to

- Verbally or physically abusing/harassing any opponents, officials, team staff, spectators, or any participants of the match.
- Persistently and flagrantly protesting decisions by the official, interfering with the performance of the center referee or assistant referee duties.
- Interfering with the match in any way, such as throwing object, entering the field of play.

## **SECTION F DISCIPLINE (CAUTIONS AND SEND-OFFS)**

The GVSA expects its players and coaches to conduct themselves within the rules of the Association, the principles of fair play, and good sportsmanship. In accordance with the MSYSA Rules and Regulations:

1. Players, coaches or managers being sent off (red card) in a GVSA sanctioned game will be suspended for his/her team's next scheduled game, if the red card was for two cautions or denying an obvious scoring opportunity by handling the ball. For serious foul play, violent conduct or abusive/foul language, the suspension shall be for two games. Violent conduct before or after the game (no red card shown) will also result in a two game suspension. In the event that a team official is sent off (red card) a \$100 sendoff fine will be assessed to the Club.
2. Players threatening, by word or sign, another player, coach, spectator, referee, team or league official shall be suspended for one game. The penalty for coaches is a two game suspension; repeat offenders are suspended for at least four games and must appear before the GVSA Disciplinary Committee.
3. Players pushing or striking a coach or manager shall be suspended a minimum of one year. The penalty for coaches, managers and other team officials is a minimum suspension of one year and an appearance before the GVSA Disciplinary Committee. All abuse and assault of referees shall be referred to the Michigan Referee Committee for disciplinary action.
4. Fans and others, who may reasonably be construed to be associated with a team, shall also be subject to the jurisdiction of the GVSA. Coaches and team officials are responsible for those who,

in the opinion of the disciplinary authority, are team supporters.

5. Players, coaches, managers or team officials who alter a roster, falsify a birth date or affix a wrong photo to an ID card shall receive a seven year suspension.
6. Players, coaches, managers or team officials receiving three cautions during a playing season shall be suspended for one game. Anyone sent off twice during a season must appear before the GVSA Disciplinary Committee before he/she can play again. The hearing must be requested by the offender.
7. The coach of any U7-U16 team receiving three 3 red cards in one game, or 5 red cards in a season, or 5 cards (red or yellow) in one game, or 10 cards (red or yellow) in a season will receive an automatic suspension of 2 games. If the team card count reaches 15 cards (red or yellow) the team will be suspended for a minimum of 2 games and possibly longer depending upon the findings of the GVSA Discipline Committee. The coach of any U17 or older team receiving three 3 red cards in one game, or 6 red cards in a season, or 6 cards (red or yellow) in one game, or 15 cards (red or yellow) in a season will receive an automatic suspension of 2 games. If a U17 or older team receives a combination of 18 or more cards in a season the team will be suspended. Before they will be reinstated, they must appear before the GVSA Disciplinary Committee along with their Club official. If they are reinstated they will be put on a 1 year probation and a Club official will be required to attend all remaining games that this coach/team has to help control behavior. An automatic fine of \$500 will be levied against the Club.
8. Any coach allowing a suspended player to play, shall be suspended for two games. The team using the suspended player shall forfeit the game.
9. A team/club may be fined, as a result, of irresponsible /unacceptable behavior or misconduct within GVSA league matches as determined by the disciplinary process on behalf of a team's coach, players, or spectators:
  - First offence \$250
  - Second offence \$500 as well as evaluation of team/club participation by the GVSA Disciplinary Committee
  - Third offense for all participating teams within the club will result in a \$1000 fine. In addition, the club's participation within the league will be evaluated by the GVSA Disciplinary Committee.
  - If a match is abandoned because of a team/spectator's behavior, the team(s) club determined to be at fault will be issued a \$500 fine and the game will be listed as a forfeit.

## **SECTION G GAME PROTESTS**

Protests must be submitted to the Vice President within 24 hours of the conclusion of a game and must be submitted by the team's Club. Only factual errors may be protested, not judgment calls.

- a. The coach must sign the game report. Refusing to sign the game report will result in an automatic one game suspension.
- b. A coach may check the box under their signature to dispute the goals or cards in the game. They then must have their Club submit the protest within 24 hours of the game.

## **SECTION H UNIFORMS**

1. All players must be in full uniform: shirt, shorts, socks, shin guards and shoes. Teams are required to have two different colored jerseys. Each player must have a number on his/her jersey that is at least 5" high. Two players on the same team may not have the same number, nor may a player change numbers during a game without the referee's prior permission.
2. The home team shall wear white or other light colored jersey. The visiting team shall wear dark colored jerseys. Goalkeepers shall wear colors that distinguish them from all other players and

referees. In the event that the colors are too similar (as determined by the referee as a color conflict) the non-conforming team must change jerseys. The home and away jersey colors must be contrasting (e.g., teams may not have colors such as navy blue for their 'light color' and black as their 'dark' uniform). The Referee shall be the sole arbiter of what constitutes a color conflict.

## **SECTION I HOME TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. The home team is responsible for securing the playing field and for assuring that it is playable and meets minimum and maximum playing dimensions (see Field Schedules). Fields CANNOT be smaller than the minimums nor should they be more than the maximum. Teams must provide fields with at least two days of availability for scheduling of games. One of those days must be either Saturdays or Sundays. If a field is not playable, the referee must issue a report to the league administrator, who then has the authority to rule if the game will be forfeited, allowed to stand as played or replayed

<b>Age</b>	<b>Players</b>	<b>Goal Size min/max</b>	<b>Field Width min/max</b>	<b>Field Length min/max</b>
U7-U8	4 vs 4	4' x 6'	25 yd	35 yd
U9-U10	7 vs 7	6' x 12' - 6' x 18'	35 yd - 45 yd	45 yd - 60 yd
U11-U12	9 vs 9	6' x 18' - 7' x 21'	45 yd - 55 yd	70 yd - 80 yd
U13-U19	11 vs 11	8' x 24'	50 yd - 100 yd	100 yd - 130 yd

2. The home team must provide a ball that satisfies the laws of the game and pay the referees before the game commences.
3. The winning team, or the home team in the event of a tie, must report the score to the GVSA statistician via the internet at [www.gvsoccer.org](http://www.gvsoccer.org) within 24 hours of the conclusion of the game.
4. The home team must have a first aid kit, or certified trainer, at the game site.

## **SECTION J SCHEDULES, CANCELLATIONS & FORFEITS**

1. Whenever feasible, the Administrator will schedule eight games each in the fall and spring. Once Final Schedules are posted, rescheduling will only be allowed under extenuating circumstances. This includes State Cup, dangerous or unplayable field conditions, or inclement weather (both to be determined by Referee or the Facility in charge of the Fields. NOT the coaches).
  - A Game Reschedule Request Form must be submitted 7 business days prior to the original game date or proposed new date and approved, as well as the published Fee, before a game may be rescheduled.
  - Both teams must agree on the date and time, and GVSA will obtain permission from the Referee Assignor.
  - Rescheduling games without GVSA approval will result in forfeiture by both teams.
  - Clubs may not cancel games under any circumstance without permission from the GVSA.
  - Teams may only exclude one or two weekends from their availability for tournament play. Teams may not deem their season over before the published date set by GVSA.
2. The GVSA requires that when lightning is observed, or thunder heard, by the referee during any game, the game must be suspended until the danger has passed for 30 minutes. Games shall not

be suspended for longer than a total of 90 minutes and may not cause a succeeding game on the same field to be delayed by more than 30 minutes.

- Consideration must be taken into account if a Referee needs to leave during this suspension period to attend another scheduled game which may not allow the suspended Game to be completed.
- The game may continue with the remaining *qualified* referees present and the use of club provided assistant referee.
- If there is not a *qualified* referee to remain at the center position the game may be cancelled.
- The club-provided assistant is to be appointed by the remaining referee crew.
- Once the game is restarted the outcome of the game may not be contested.
- Coaches are expected to utilize their assistant coach or team manager to cover one of their games should a scheduling conflict occur due to a suspension.

**The decision to suspend a game lies solely with the Referee or the Facility in charge of the Fields.** Teams may not decide to suspend the game and leave prematurely. If a game is terminated because of weather and one half of the game has been completed, the game will be considered complete and the score at the time of the suspension will be recorded as the final result. If one half of the game has not been completed and the game is terminated, the game will be rescheduled and replayed. The home team must notify the Administrator of the new date, time and site via the game change form. No fee will be due.

### 3. Forfeit Fees

i. **Games forfeited but still played.** Example: Missing Pass Card/Cards; Ineligible Player; etc. In the event that a Game is forfeited for these reasons, the Club Team whose action resulted in the forfeit will be fined \$100 (However, if this is for missing Pass Card/Cards and the Team's first offense, the Fine may be waived at the Disciplinary Chairman's discretion). If that same Team or Coach forfeits again within the same season, the Club will be fined \$250 and both the Coach and Club Representative will be required to meet with the GVSA Disciplinary Chair for discussion and possible other fines and discipline.

ii. **Games forfeited but not played.** Example: Not enough Players; Team doesn't show up; No Coach or Team/Club Representative on sideline; No Person with a Risk Management Card; etc. In the event that a Game is forfeited for these reasons, that Club's Team whose actions resulted in the forfeit will be fined \$250. If that same Team or Coach forfeits again within that same season, the Club will be fined \$500 and both the Coach and Club Representative will be required to meet with the GVSA Board for discussion and possible other fines and discipline

iii. **Games forfeited due to 'Irresponsible/Unacceptable Team Behavior' or 'Misconduct Toward Referees'.** If a match is abandoned because of a team's coach/player(s), or spectator(s) behavior, the team(s) club determined to be at fault will be issued a \$500 fine and the game will be listed as a forfeit.

iv. **Games that are not rescheduled and left unplayed.** Example: Field Conditions; Weather; No Referees; etc. In the event that this situation occurs, each Team will be fined \$200. Either Club can contact the GVSA Board with information and reasoning on why they feel the other Club is totally responsible for this problem. If the Board determines that just one (1) Team is responsible for the unplayed Game, that Club will be responsible for the total fine of \$400.

v. **Games that have been rescheduled without GVSA approval (Section J, Number 1).** In the event that this situation occurs, each Team will receive a forfeit and a fine of \$150. Either Club can contact the GVSA Board with information and reasoning on why they feel the other Club is totally responsible for the problem. If the Board determines that just one (1) Team is responsible for this problem, that Club will be responsible for the total fine of \$300.

vi. GVSA reserves the right to review any and all information to make a final determination of facts and the application of any and all Penalties/Sanctions.

4. Teams should not play without a certified referee. In emergencies, others may referee, if both teams agree and subject to GVSA procedures

### **SECTION K PRACTICE AND SCRIMMAGE FREQUENCIES**

Teams may practice as frequently as they wish. Teams may have as many inter-squad scrimmages as they wish. A scrimmage is defined as a game like situation for which there are no sanctioned referees and where the final score is not recorded.

### **SECTION L STANDINGS AND CHAMPIONSHIPS**

1. A point system will be used to determine the standings of teams in each age division. A win is three (3) points, a tie is one (1) point, a loss zero (0) points. A forfeit shall result in a deduction of one point (-1) from the standings. Points may also be deducted from the Standings at the League's discretion. U7 and U8
2. At the conclusion of each GVSA season, the team which has accumulated the most points in each Division shall be declared the champion of its division. If two or more teams are tied on the basis of points earned the tie breakers will be as follows: head to head teams involved in the tie, goal differential (up a maximum of four goals per game), goals against, then goals for; if the teams are still tied they are co champions.
3. The GVSA does not award commemorative trophies or patches; however, individual teams may purchase awards for their players.

### **SECTION M DUE PROCESS**

When a rule is broken, the GVSA Administrator will send a notice to the club representative. The Chairman of the Disciplinary Committee may request to meet with the club/coach to discuss the violation and repercussions as outlined in the notice sent by the Administrator. If a meeting is required, the Disciplinary Chairman will determine if the issue can be settled there or if it needs to be brought to the Disciplinary Committee for further review. If settled in the meeting with the Chairman, the Administrator will send out a notice confirming the final resolution and any applicable repercussions. Upon receipt of the notice, the club can also request that the Disciplinary Committee meet to review their case.

The Disciplinary Committee will be composed of two ad hoc members and the GVSA VP who serves as Chairman of the Committee. The committee is supported by the Administrator. Each club will submit the name of one individual to be part of the pool from which the committee is formed. The individual can be a coach, administrative employee or board member. The members of the Disciplinary Committee will be chosen at random each time the Committee needs to be formed. Care will be taken to only include members that are impartial to the matter under discussion in each instance the Committee is formed.

As necessary, the Disciplinary Committee will meet with the club/coach to discuss the situation. The Disciplinary Committee will then provide a ruling and any applicable sanctions or refer the matter to the GVSA Board of Directors for further review. These actions will be communicated to the club by the Administrator.

If the club disagrees with the Disciplinary Committee's ruling or sanction, the club can appeal to the full GVSA Board. This appeal must be sent in writing within 7 days to the GVSA Board, PO Box 888680, Kentwood, MI 49588 and be accompanied with a payment of \$100. If this or any other subsequent appeal is upheld, the \$100 payment will be returned.

If the Club disagrees with the GVSA Board's ruling or sanction, the club can appeal to MSYSA per their rules. This appeal must be sent in writing within 10 days to the MSYSA and be accompanied with a payment of \$250. See *MSYSA Section 5.2 rules for the full procedure*.

In case of trouble with another team or club, a club may contact the Administrator in writing and describe the problem at [admin@gvsoccer.org](mailto:admin@gvsoccer.org). The Administrator will determine if the issue should be referred to the Disciplinary Chairman or the Respect Campaign Chairman. If it is sent to the Disciplinary Chairman it will follow the procedure as outlined above. If it is referred to the Respect Chairman they will meet with the parties to help resolve the issue. If it is determined a team may need to be reprimanded the Respect Campaign Chair will refer the matter to the Disciplinary Chair for further review as outlined in the due process above.