



HOLY CITY SOCCER LEAGUE (HCSL)

(Men's Over 25 Adult Soccer League - 2025 Spring Season)

RULES:

The 8v8 Division of the Holy City Men's Adult Soccer League will be played using two 30-minute halves and the FIFA Laws of the Game shall apply to all matches unless otherwise stipulated here.

1. FIELD OF PLAY:

**Moultrie Middle School
645 Coleman Blvd.
Mount Pleasant, SC 29464**

2. NUMBER OF PLAYERS: Eight-a-side. Minimum number of players on the field of play is 6.

3. All players must be 25 years of age or if 24, turning 25 before the end of the season.
Exception: Each team may have one (1) joker / player who is between the ages of 21-24.

4. Each team must have at least 5 players 35 years of age or older on the roster. If players are 34, they must be turning 35 before the end of the season. Each team must have 2 players over 35 playing on the field at all times. Players over 35 on both teams will wear armbands to help identify players over 35 and ensure both teams are adhering to the rules.

We suggest teams having 6 or 7 players over 35 on their rosters to accommodate this rule. If teams don't have 2 players over 35 present and playing on match days, they must play a player down.

If a team forgets to play 2(two) 35+ year olds and is called out by the opposing team captain then possession is handed to the opposing team at the kickoff spot / halfway line. Captains must notify the referee.

If a team scores with less than 2(two) 35+ year olds on the field, the opposing team captain is responsible for notifying the referee before kickoff and the goal will be disallowed and the opposing team will regain possession at the kickoff spot / halfway line.

If a team is found guilty of intentionally breaking the rule by allowing players under 35 to wear armbands then the guilty team will be handed a forfeit.

This is a gentlemen's league and we play by the honour system. Referees will not enforce these rules unless confronted by a captain.

5. SUBSTITUTIONS: Either team may have unlimited substitutions; There must be a stoppage in play in order for substitutions to occur. (Throw-Ins, Corner Kicks, Goals Kicks, Free Kicks, After Goals are scored etc., however, subs must enter at the halfway line and be waved in by the referee.

6. PLAYERS EQUIPMENT: No non-soccer related equipment or jewelry are authorized. SHINGUARDS ARE MANDATORY!

7. UNIFORMS: All players must play with matching jerseys. Goalkeepers must wear distinct colors (Red, Green or Yellow goalie jerseys should be ordered from the league)
Home Teams (1st Team) wear **BLACK** jerseys, Away Teams (2nd Team) wear **WHITE** jerseys.

8. REFEREES: One referee will be assigned to each match.

9. DURATION OF THE GAME: The game is two 30 minute halves with a 5 minute half-time.

10. GRACE PERIOD: There is a 10 (ten) minute grace period.

11. COMPLETION OF GAME: If a game is abandoned by the referee due to weather conditions the following shall apply:

- If abandonment occurs after the completion of the first half, the score at the time of abandonment shall stand as the final score.

- If abandonment occurs during the first half, the balance of the game shall be rescheduled and remaining time played. The rescheduled game shall commence at the time when the game was abandoned (e.g. the 16th minute) with the score as it stood at the time of abandonment (e.g. 3-1). If a game cannot be rescheduled then the score at the time of abandonment shall stand as the final score.

12. INCLEMENT WEATHER: HCSL's website / Face Book Page and group emails will inform league participants whether games are cancelled due to field conditions.

13. OFFSIDE: There will be no offside violations.

14. START OF PLAY: Opposing players must be a minimum of **6 yards** away prior to all kickoffs. A goal may NOT BE scored directly from a kick off.

15. GOALKEEPER RESTRICTION / PRIVILEGES: The FIFA Laws of the Game that pertain to regular 11v11 games also apply in 8v8 games (including, the back pass, the 6-second time period to release the ball after possession; and double possession).

16. GOAL KICKS: Taken no further than 4 yards of the goal line within the penalty kick area.

17. FREE KICKS: Opposing players must remain at least **8 yards** from the ball. Once the ball is stationary, the kicker will have FIVE seconds to play the ball after being signaled by the referee to do so. Infractions will result in an indirect free kick!

18. PENALTY KICKS: A penalty kick shall be taken from the penalty mark. **(10 yards from the goal line)**. All players except the kicker and the opposing goalkeeper must be outside the penalty area and at least 5 yards from the ball.

19. CORNER KICKS & THROW IN'S: The FIFA Laws of the Game that pertain to regular 11v11 games also apply in 8v8 games.

20. BALL SIZE: A size 5 ball will be used in all matches.

21. OBSCENE LANGUAGE: Any player guilty of using vulgar language may be issued a straight red card.

22. SLIDE TACKLES: NO SLIDE TACKLES ALLOWED, exception to goalkeepers. Infractions will result in an indirect free kick!

SLIDE TACKLE DEFINITION:

A **sliding tackle**, also called **slide tackle**, is a **tackle** in **association football**. It is completed with one leg extended to push the ball away from the opposing player. Sliding tackles can often be sources of controversy, particularly when players being tackled fall down over the tackler's foot (or the ball stopped by the tackler's foot), and penalties, free kicks and cards are assessed (or are conspicuous by their absence).

As per the term **SLIDE TACKLE**, a **TACKLE** means **TACKLE** which obviously means players are near each other. The **SLIDE TACKLE** rule **DOES NOT APPLY** if a player slides to secure a ball going out of play or anywhere else on the field within a safe distance from any opposing player as this is not a **TACKLE**. Refs will call a free kick against any player who makes a slide tackle anywhere near the player with the ball, regardless of contact or not. This rule applies anywhere on the field and **goals will be called back if players score on a slide tackle with an opposing player or keeper.**

PLAYER ROSTER:

1. Each team must register at least 14 players to begin the season. 16 players are recommended. There are no limits on registrations in a season if deemed necessary due to injuries / players out, but no more than 16 players fitted players can be present at any given match during the season. **Also:** No players can be added / registered to a team's roster after week 12 of the season. (Exceptions can be made on a case by case basis and **ONLY** if approved by the advisory board and league directors)

2. Every player must have a valid picture ID (i.e. Driver's License) or valid SCASA Pass and rosters must be checked in with the referee before game kick-off.

GAME DAY PROCEDURES:

1. Show up at the field at least 15 minutes before scheduled game time and immediately have each captain check in with referee. Prior to kick-off, captains must provide Printed SCASA Rosters to refs.
2. Players who arrive after the start of play must check in with refs prior to entering the match. Printed SCASA Rosters may be used.
3. No player may play without a picture ID / SCASA Card and ROSTERS WILL BE CHECKED at every game.
4. If a player is ejected during the game, the referee will note the player's name and shall report the incident to the League Administrator.
5. If a team uses / plays or attempts (i.e. "attempts to deceive") to use / play a non-registered or non-rostered player / a player without an ID, a player who doesn't meet the age requirements then the game will be awarded as a forfeit to the opposing team, and the Team Captain will be suspended for the remainder of the season. Additional sanctions / fines may be imposed for such actions. The referee or an opposing team player may at any time during or after the game determine if a non-rostered player played or if a player violated the league age rules. This challenge must be made to the Referee and / or The Advisory Board / League Administrator, who will document the case and enforce the above action/s as necessary.

SEASON LENGTH

The league consists of 8 teams. Each team should play a total of 14 matches. 7 home matches and 7 away matches. However, if matches are cancelled / postponed due to weather or any other unforeseen circumstances and cannot be rescheduled before the play-offs then a minimum of 10 matches must be played and a minimum of 10 regular season match results will determine the play-off schedules.

FORMAT, POINTS AND STANDINGS:

Teams will be awarded points according to the following formula:

- 3 points for a win
- 1 point for a tie
- 0 points for a loss

In the event of a forfeit (i.e. a team is a no-show or does not have at least 6 players at kick off) the score shall be recorded as 3-0 and 3 points awarded to the winning team.

During league play, if a match is tied after regulation; the match will end in a tie.

During playoffs, if a match is tied after regulation;

- Two (5 minute) overtime periods will be played. Both 5-minute overtime periods must be completed in their entirety (i.e. no golden goal rule will prevail).
- If the score is still tied after the both 5 minute overtime periods are played then teams will head to penalty kicks per The FIFA Laws of the Game that pertain to regular 11v11 games.

At the conclusion of league play, if two or more teams are tied on points, the tie breaker will be:

1. Head to Head
2. Goal difference
3. Goals Scored
4. Goals Against
5. Coin Flip

PLAY-OFFS

At the end of the regular season (10 games minimum). The top 2 teams in the standings receive a bye and reach the semi-finals automatically. The bottom 2 teams do not qualify for the play-offs and their season ends.

QUARTER-FINALS:

Team ranked 3rd, plays team ranked 6th.

Team ranked 4th, plays team ranked 5th.

SEMI-FINALS:

Team ranked 1st, plays Winner of 4 and 5.

Team ranked 2nd, plays Winner of 3 and 6.

FINALS:

Winners of both semi-finals play for The Champions Cup and for a place on The HCSL Perpetual Champions Cup.

RED CARDS / SUSPENSIONS / FINES:

A player issued a red card (either a straight red or two yellows in the same game) will serve a minimum 1 game suspension. Suspensions (based on degree/nature of the offense) will range from 1 game to 99 years (NOTE: All long-term suspensions are reported to SCASA, the USSF and USASA, and these are enforced by all leagues and states).

1. Anyone ejected from a match must leave the field area, and may be asked to leave the facility. The team must continue the match minus one player. For example, 7 v 8.
2. If a player is ejected during the game, the Referee will keep the ejected players card / info and send it with a game report to the League Administration.
3. The HCSL Disciplinary Committee / Board will assess the infraction and will notify the Team Rep / Captain on the length of the suspension and fine. As always the player receiving the red card has the right to appeal. The appeal must be made in writing and submitted to the HCSL Disciplinary Committee / Board.
4. Suspended player cards will be returned to the Team Rep / Captain after the player has served his suspension and the fine (if applicable) has been received by HCSL. NOTE: that on a "straight red card" a fine may be imposed based on the nature of the offense.

5. Any player receiving two straight red cards will be suspended for the rest of the season.
6. If a straight red or double yellow is given during the last match that a team plays in during the season, thus rendering impossible to serve the suspension, the player will serve out his suspension in the next season.
7. Fighting results in a red card and immediate dismissal from the field. In addition, a minimum suspension for the remainder of the season and a minimum fine of \$50.
8. Any player found guilty of "Referee Abuse" will receive a minimum three game suspension.
9. Any player found guilty of "Referee Assault": will be suspended for 99 years from the HCSL.
10. Any case of referee assault or abuse must be handled by the state association. Such cases are governed by USSF Policy 531-9

For any red cards issued, injuries, or roster irregularities, the referee shall handwrite a report directly following the match and turn it in to the league administrators with the player's pass.

Any player disrespecting a ref will be warned with a yellow card. If the disrespect goes as far as insulting the ref personally or using foul language directly at the ref then the ref can issue a straight red card.

This also includes players on the sidelines shouting out insults at the refs. Depending on the severity, the ref may warn the player first with a yellow card but can also issue a straight red if warranted.

FINES:

Fines will also be implemented if cards are issued due to foul language, disrespecting or insulting referees.

NORMAL MATCH PLAY FOULS RESULTING IN CARDS: \$0

FOUL LANGUAGE DURING PLAY, NOT DIRECTED AT THE REFEREE:

Warning for foul language during play: \$0

Most refs will warn players first for foul language but may and can issue a yellow immediately. It's a gamble and risk we all face.

Yellow card for foul language during play: \$0

Second yellow card resulting in a red card for foul language during play: \$25

FOUL LANGUAGE DURING PLAY, DIRECTED AT THE REFEREE:

Yellow card for foul language directed at the ref: \$0

Straight red card for foul language directed at the ref: \$25

Yellow card for insults directed at the ref: \$25

Straight red card for insults directed at the ref: \$50

Referees can issue a straight red for foul language / insults directed at them depending on the severity.

SUSPENSIONS

The Holy City Advisory Board will also discuss cards, suspensions and fines if necessary. Fines will go towards our end of season champion's cup celebration party.

FIGHTING ON THE FIELD

If a player is issued a straight red for physically fighting, this will result in a discussion with the board & captains and at least a 3 game suspension but possibly a ban from our league, up to 99 years.

RECORDING OF MATCHES AND GOALS IN ARBITER BY THE REFEREES

Refs should record all scores, goals, goal scorers and update the scores, goals and goal scorers in Arbiter Sports and / email these to: Colin@holycitysoccerleague.com immediately after the matches. Scores and goal scorers are updated to our PlayPass App in real time. Payments to refs will be made once refs report all in Arbiter Sports. Please note: Goal scorers do not have to be recorded in Arbiter during the playoffs, only during the 14 regular season matches.

REFEREES AND LEAGUE RULES

Refs **MUST** read the league rules before refereeing Holy City Soccer League matches to avoid any confusion on match days. This will avoid refs asking HCSL admins or directors present on match days about rules. We understand refs are human and make mistakes. If decisions are made by the refs and deemed incorrect by teams and captains they must email complaints to the director of the league (Colin@holycitysoccerleague.com) who will forward complaints to the HCSL advisory board and league referee assigner Bucky Jones for review.