



# Soccer Code of Conduct



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## TEAM FORMATION POLICY

All rostered team members must be eligible players as defined below.

Players may double roster in different age divisions. Double rostering within the same age division is not allowed.

### Age Divisions

The following age (as of 12/31/2025) divisions participate in the San Diego Senior Games Soccer Tournament:

- 50+ - born in or before 1975,
  - maximum three (3) gifts, born in 1976 -1978 (age 47- 49)
- 60+ - born in or before 1965
  - No gifts
- 65+ - born in or before 1960
  - maximum two (2) gifts, born in 1961 - 1962 (age 63- 64)
- 70+ - born in or before 1955
  - One (1) gift born 1956-1957 (age 68-69) -**Goalkeeper Only**

### Team Roster Sizes and Player Numbers on the Field

| Division   | Maximum Roster Size | Format |
|------------|---------------------|--------|
| <b>50+</b> | 18                  | 11v11  |
| <b>60+</b> | 18                  | 11v11  |
| <b>65+</b> | 13                  | 8v8    |
| <b>70+</b> | 13                  | 8v8    |

## TEAM/PLAYER CHECK-IN

Team/Player check-ins will be conducted on Saturday at least 1 hour, prior to each teams first game.

Players must bring the following to check-in:

- Prior to their first game, each team member must check-in.
- Each individual must check-in personally with a valid photo ID showing date of birth.
  - At check-in you will receive a wristband and your Official Games Shirt.
    - If double rostering, you will receive two (2) wristbands

## SPORTSMANSHIP

SDSG and POLWSL strive to create a positive environment based on mutual respect rather than a win-at-all-cost attitude. Practice good sportsmanship.

Sportsmanship is how we play the game – how we follow the Laws and show respect for teammates, opponents, and officials. This is evidenced in applauding opponents' good performances, encouraging teammates and courtesy toward the referees.

We expect players and spectators to be our Stewards of the Game by modeling good sportsmanship, and fair play.

## GAME FORMAT

### Rules of Play

FIFA rules will govern play

Offside will be enforced

Absolutely no slide tackles will be allowed, not from back, front or side.

All players must wear shin guards during play

### Pre-game check-in

Teams shall report to their assigned field at least ten (10) minutes prior to the scheduled game start time. The referees will check uniforms and equipment before each game.

Pre-printed game cards will be provided to the referees by the tournament volunteers. Adding players (handwritten) to the pre-printed game card is not allowed unless authorized by the Tournament Registrar.

Teams will occupy opposite sidelines. The Home Team will occupy the North or East sideline and the Away Team the South or West Side.

The team listed first on the schedule is the HOME team. Players must remain in their designated technical areas throughout the match.

Spectators will occupy the same sideline as their respective team. Spectators must remain between the penalty areas. Players nor spectators are allowed behind the goals.

Home team will choose starting side to defend. Away team will start the game with kick-off.

The HOME team will be required to wear their alternate jersey/overlay in case of a color conflict with the VISITOR team.

### Forfeits

There will be a five-minute grace period at the start of each game. The grace period may be extended if circumstances warrant. The game will be declared a forfeit only after the referee and Field Monitors have confirmed with the Venue Chair or designee that the circumstances warrant a forfeiture. A 0 - 1 forfeit loss will be assigned to the forfeiting team. If a referee must suspend or terminate a game, the Tournament Committee will

determine the outcome of the game.

No game shall start or continue if either team has fewer than five players in 65/70+ and seven players in 50/60+ present and ready to play.

## Game Duration

All games will consist of two (2) twenty-five (25) minute halves with a 5-minute half-time, unless the Tournament Committee reduces the length of the halves due to playing conditions.

## Substitutions

- Substitutions “on the fly” from center field or at the discretion of the referee.
- Player off the field before new player comes on.
- Unlimited substitutions.
- Players may re-enter the field

## Pool Play & Elimination Games

- 1) The structure of the pool, semifinal and finals games will be determined by the number of teams entered in each division.
- 2) Teams will play between three and five games at the tournament.
  - a) Games may include a combination of pool play, semifinal and finals games, depending on the number of teams in the respective division.
  - b) Teams may play up to three (3) games per day.

## Pool Play Points

### Points Per Game

Points during pool play will be awarded using the following criteria per game:

- a. Six points for a win
- b. Three points for a tie (to each team)
- c. Zero points for a loss
- d. One point for a shutout
- e. One point to each team for each goal scored (up to 3)
- f. Minus three points deducted for each player, substitute or spectator sent off.
  - a. In the event a team receives no points for a game in which a sendoff has occurred, a negative point total shall be posted for that team for that game.
- g. Three points deducted from the winning team for any match with a goal differential of six (6) goals or more (i.e., 7-1 score = 3 point deduction)
- h. In the event of a forfeit, the winning score shall be 1-0, with the winner awarded eight points.

## Pool Play Tiebreakers

In the event that two or more teams have the same number of points when determining which teams will be advancing beyond pool play, the following tiebreaker rules will be observed (in order):

1. The winner in head-to-head competition.
2. Most total wins
3. Fewest goals against
4. Most shut outs.
5. Fewest Red Cards
6. FIFA Kicks From The Mark

## SEMIFINAL AND FINALS MATCHES ENDING IN A TIE

Matches tied at the end of regulation time will be determined by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark, with only players who remained on the field of play at the end of the match eligible to participate in the shootout.

## DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

### U.S. Soccer Respect the Ref Campaign

Coaches and spectators are reminded that full compliance with U.S. Soccer's *Respect The Call* ([Link to Respect the Call Initiative](#)) initiative is required throughout this tournament. This initiative reinforces the critical importance of treating referees with respect and upholding a positive, sportsmanlike environment. Disrespectful conduct—such as disputing calls, using hostile language, or confronting referees—will be addressed under U.S. Soccer's Referee Abuse and Assault Policy. The *Referee Abuse and Assault Matrix* outlines consequences ranging from immediate ejection and multi-game suspensions for verbal abuse, to longer-term suspensions or bans for physical or threatening behavior. Details on the initiative are available at [ussoccer.com/respect](http://ussoccer.com/respect), and the full abuse matrix can be reviewed at [ussoccer.com/referee-abuse-matrix](http://ussoccer.com/referee-abuse-matrix).

A summary of penalties—found in U.S. Soccer's **Referee Abuse Penalty Overview** ([link to PDF](#))—provides clear guidelines for misconduct consequences. Verbal abuse may result in a minimum two-game suspension, while threats or intimidation toward referees carry a minimum six-month suspension. Physical contact, such as pushing or grabbing, can lead to suspensions of at least one year or more. Players and Spectators must understand that their conduct has direct consequences and that setting a respectful example is essential for protecting the integrity of the game and the well-being of referees. For additional information, consult U.S. Soccer's Referee FAQ at [ussoccer.com/referee-faq](http://ussoccer.com/referee-faq). ([RAP FAQ Final](#))

For additional information, consult U.S. Soccer's Referee Abuse Prevention Policy at [ussoccer.com/rap](http://ussoccer.com/rap).

## Team Members

A player who receives a yellow card must leave the field for 5 minutes and a substitution is permitted. A second yellow card to the same player in the same game will result in a red card.

Any player who is sent off must leave the field of play and the immediate area before play is restarted. The team may not substitute for that player for the remainder of that game.

Any player who is sent off before, during or after a game, will be ineligible to participate in the team's next scheduled game, but their team may play full. Depending on the severity of the action that resulted in the sendoff, the Tournament Rules Committee may review the circumstances and issue greater sanctions against the offending player.

Any team member receiving two send offs during the tournament shall have the offenses reviewed by the Tournament Rules Committee and may be denied further participation.

## Spectators

Spectators or other guests who are asked to leave the field by the referee, assigned field monitor or other tournament official must do so immediately. If a spectator or guest refuses to leave, the referee, may suspend or terminate the game. The Tournament Committee will be responsible for determining the outcome of the match. A forfeit win may be awarded to the opposing team.

## Points Deducted in Standings

Three points will be deducted from the team's standings for each player or spectator sent off.

## Additional Sanctions

All send offs, expulsions and cautions will be reviewed by the Tournament Rules Committee, which may decide to issue additional sanctions.

# DISPOSITION OF ABANDONED OR TERMINATED GAMES

If any pool play games cannot be played due to circumstances beyond the control of the tournament, the final standings of the pool will be determined by applying the following winning percentage (WP) formula.

(Total Pool Play Points) / (Number of Pool Games Played)

The Tournament Rules Committee will decide on accounting for the games which could not start or be rescheduled due to adverse weather conditions or other circumstances. They will endeavor to reschedule or resume games that are incomplete due to weather related reasons. However, due to situations that cannot be predicted in advance, it may not be possible to finish incomplete games. All questions regarding rescheduling, including decisions on forfeits will be at the discretion of the Tournament Rules Committee whose decision shall be final.

## AWARDS

Medals shall be presented to the 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> place teams in all divisions.

## RULES INTERPRETATION & AMENDMENTS

The Tournament Committee will decide any situations or subjects not covered by these Guidelines. Decisions will be made with the spirit and best interests of San Diego Senior Games in mind and will be communicated to participants at the event if not published in a subsequent revision to these Guidelines. Questions about these Rules should be addressed to [sdseniorgames.soccer@gmail.com](mailto:sdseniorgames.soccer@gmail.com)