

SUFFOLK MEN'S SOCCER LEAGUE

OVER 30 AND STILL KICKING

ESTABLISHED 1978



BYLAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS

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1.0 NAME

The name of the Organization shall be as set forth in the Articles of Organization, as they may be amended from time to time. As of the most recent amendment of these bylaws, the name is "Suffolk Men's Soccer League, Inc." herein referred to as "SMSL".

2.0 MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of SMSL shall be to provide an organized league for the purpose of setting up competitive matches between its member teams while fostering a spirit of fair play. To provide an environment that will promote friendship and cooperation between all its members.

3.0 THE LEAGUE

3.1 Committee

The committee shall consist of one representative from each member team in good standing with the league. Each member team has one vote. Any member team that is under suspension is not considered to be in good standing and loses its right to vote. Each member team is responsible for its internal affairs.

3.2 Officers

3.1.1 The Officers of the league shall be the following:

- President
- Immediate Past President
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Registrar
- Chairman of Arbitration Committee
- Chairman of Appeals Committee
- Referee Coordinator

3.2.3 All officers, except for the immediate past president, shall be elected for a term of one year.

3.2.4 All elected officers will be elected by a majority vote by the committee.

3.2.5 The election is to be held at the last meeting of the season.

3.2.6 The new term will begin upon completion of the election.

3.2.7 The immediate past president shall be the last serving president prior to the current president regardless of the number of terms the current president has served.

3.2.8 If the immediate past president is unable or unwilling to serve, the position shall remain vacant.

3.2.9 Officers are not allowed to vote unless they a member of the committee, represent the vote for their team and are in good standing with the league.

3.3 Meetings.

3.2.1 Meetings shall be held monthly during each season at a place to be designated. There are no meetings in the months of January, February and July.

3.2.2 All meetings will start at the designated time.

3.2.3 Any member arriving after a 15-minute grace period will be fined. See section 11 for fine amount.

3.2.4 The President of the league can call an emergency meeting at any time.

- 3.2.5 Any member team without representation at any meetings, who has not been granted dispensation by either the President or Vice President, shall be fined for each missed meeting. The fine shall be paid at or before the following meeting. The fine is waived for the first time a team misses a meeting in the current season.
- 3.2.6 All Officers, committee members and visitors are required to treat each other with respect and conduct themselves in a gentlemanly manner at all times. Any member not conducting themselves in the proper manner may be fined or suspended from attending future meetings. The president or vice president may levy fines and suspensions for meeting misconduct.
- 3.2.7 All fines and suspensions for meeting misconduct may be overturned by a majority vote of the committee.

3.4 Powers

- 3.4.1 A quorum of two thirds of the committee members must be present before a legal vote can be taken.
- 3.4.2 A majority vote by the committee members present shall be required to define and enforce all decisions, provided a quorum is present.
- 3.4.3 The League Committee at any meeting may make changes to these rules with a quorum and a majority vote. All changes to these rules become effective at the start of the next season.

3.5 Visitors

- 3.5.1 A maximum of two visitors per team, accompanied by the team's representative shall be allowed at any meeting.
- 3.5.2 Only the team representative is allowed to take the floor unless a majority vote by the committee grants permission for the visitor to address the committee.
- 3.5.3 The team representative is the only one permitted to vote.

3.6 Fees

- 3.6.1 All member teams are required to pay a registration fee before the start of every season. The fee should be paid before the August meeting.
- 3.6.2 All member teams are required to pay a fee for liability insurance coverage. Liability insurance is typically required to get field permits. The insurance fee will be determined by the treasure based on the cost quoted by the insurance company.
- 3.6.3 There is a charge for new registration and transfers. The fee must be paid to the treasurer along with any prorated liability insurance fee, if applicable, at the next league meeting.
- 3.6.4 All fines that are charged to a team must be paid in full before the start of the next half season/new season or the team will be suspended and forfeit any matches missed until the fines are paid in full.

3.7 Application (New Team)

- 3.7.1 Team applications for league membership must be made to the league prior to the first meeting of the new season.
- 3.7.2 An applicant team's representative must come to a league meeting for approval by a majority vote of the committee members.
- 3.7.3 A league member team in good standing must sponsor an applicant team.
- 3.7.4 Applicant teams are required to have a normal F.I.F.A. regulation field, reserved and available to them for regular league play.

- 3.7.5 Applicant teams must submit all normal league fees at time of approval by the committee members.
- 3.7.6 All new teams must pay a non-refundable registration fee. The registration fee entitles the team to 15 player registrations at no additional cost. Any additional player registrations incur the normal player registration fee.
- 3.7.7 All new teams must pay a bond. The bond will be held for 3 years. After 3 years if the team is still in good standing with the league the bond will be returned to the team.

4.0 TEAMS

4.1 Rosters

- 4.1.1 Each member team may have an unlimited roster of players.
- 4.1.2 The rosters will be closed at the end of the day on April 15th of each season.
- 4.1.3 If the roster close date is extended, new players who are registered after the original close date cannot be used in any remaining cup matches that season.
- 4.1.4 Rosters must be printed from the official roster maintained by the registrar and available online. Managers should print both team's rosters no earlier than a day before the match. The only handwritten modification are the jersey numbers, which can be added at the time of the check-in by the referee.
- 4.1.5 Rosters must have each player's name, registration number and uniform number.
- 4.1.6 The failure of a team to submit the opposing team's rosters at the time of the match results in a fine. Repeated infractions may result in additional sanctions as determined by the Arbitration Committee.
- 4.1.7 Each team must have one manager and one representative designated on the rosters. The manager and representative will be highlight in black on the official League Roster. The representative will take the place of the manager if the manager is not present at the match. If both the manager and representative will not be present at the match, the manager must notify the opposing team and referee. The manager must designate a player who will be the acting team representative for that match.
- 4.1.8 Each member teams manager must be listed on the official League Roster regardless if they are a playing or non-playing member of the team.

4.2 Fields

- 4.2.1 All member teams are required to have a normal F.I.F.A. regulation field, reserved and available to them for regular league play. Written permits from the field's landlord issued specifically to the team must be submitted to the league secretary at or before the first meeting of a new season.
- 4.2.2 The minimum size of the field should be no less than 50 X 100 yards.
- 4.2.3 All fields must have regulation goal posts, proper nets, corner flags, and all lines must be visible.

4.3 Player Qualifications

- 4.3.1 With the exception of goalkeepers, no player shall be allowed to participate in an official league match unless he has attained the age of 30 years. Goalkeepers must be at least 18 years old.
- 4.3.2 Each player must be listed on the official roster maintained by the registrar and available online. To register, the league requires one (1) I.D.'s with proof of age (Ex. Driver's License, Passport, etc.), one (1) recent passport quality pictures and a signed Assumption of Risk Agreement. All registrations are completed on-line using the link provided by the registrar.

- 4.3.3 All players are free to transfer to any team at the end of the season. After the first match of the season and before the player registration cut-off date (April 15). If a player is on a team roster, but never played during the present season, that player can transfer to any team. A player who did play at least one match may be transferred to another team within the league as long as the manager of the original team approves the transfer by notifying the registrar. For any transfer a new registration form and player registration fee must be submitted.
- 4.3.4 The league will not be responsible for injuries incurred by a player during any league activities. Player participation is totally voluntary, and the player assumes all risk involved with his participation. Each player must sign an assumption of risk agreement which will be kept on file by the registrar.
- 4.3.5 Any player/manager highlighted in red on the official league roster is currently suspended and are not eligible to play. Managers that are currently suspended may not be on the sideline and/or take any role in managing the team during a match.
- 4.3.6 Any player highlighted in yellow on the official league roster is an under age player and must comply with Section 5.3 Special Rules for Under Age Keepers.

5.0 MATCH

5.1 Violations

- 5.1.1 All red card violations will be adjudicated by the arbitration committee. All penalties are assessed by the Arbitration Committee and are at the discretion of that committee. There is no minimum or maximum limit to fines and/or match suspensions. No suspended player will be reinstated unless fines pertaining to that suspension have been paid; regardless of how many matches that player has missed.
- 5.1.2 A red card for a handball penalty will be adjudicated as time served.
- 5.1.3 Subsequent red card violations for violent play or actions, fighting or disrespectful actions toward the referee by the same person within a 3 year period shall be punished by a suspension not less than double the previous suspension served by that person.
- 5.1.4 A red card for two yellow card infractions will be reviewed by the arbitration committee to determine the length of suspension.
- 5.1.5 No player may be selected to represent his team in an "All Star Match" while under suspension.
- 5.1.6 Any member team caught violating age rules and/or registration rules will be suspended for balance of season and fined. Suspended teams must reapply to the league for reinstatement.
- 5.1.7 The referee is the only authority on the field. He is the only person to call the match. Any team harassing, screaming, touching, pushing, spitting, punching, or molesting in any way will be heavily penalized with a suspension from the league, plus a team fine. (As per F.I.F.A. rules, nobody talks to the referee. Only the captain or coach may approach the referee. The referee determines the rules of those conversations).

5.2 Match Rules and Procedures

- 5.2.1 The referee shall call all matches according to the F.I.F.A. rules. (Unless differences are clearly noted in these Rules.)
- 5.2.2 Both teams shall split evenly the cost for the referee and pay the referee after both rosters are checked by the referee, unless rules 5.2.4 and 5.2.9 (below) are invoked.
- 5.2.3 The referee is required to check-in each player by confirming they are listed on the roster and the correct uniform number is shown. However, this does not relieve any coach of the responsibility of checking the rosters.

- 5.2.4 If a match is called off by the referee due to weather conditions, darkness, or misconduct, the Arbitration Committee will determine if the match is replayed, partially or entirely, or if the score at the time of abandonment is recorded as final.
- 5.2.5 Home teams shall carry alternate color shirts in case of conflicting colors.
- 5.2.6 For all scheduled matches the home coach shall be responsible for communicating with the “away” coach by Wednesday before the match to confirm field and scheduled time.
- 5.2.7 All matches will be played at the time designated by the league. The home team can set a later starting time, if the field is not available at the league stipulated time.
- 5.2.8 No team shall be allowed to field less than seven (7) players. (Less than seven (7) is a forfeit.)
- 5.2.9 Any team failing to show up with sufficient number of players (see 5.2.8) for a match within the fifteen-minute grace time shall forfeit the match and pay the entire referee fee, if the designated referee is present.
- 5.2.10 If the assigned referee is absent from the match, the match may be played if both coaches agree on an alternate referee. If the referee is agreed upon and the match started, it counts as an official match and cannot be contested based on disagreement with the referee.
- 5.2.11 All make-up spring matches must be played before the Cup Finals/All Star Matches.
- 5.2.12 Both teams must submit the team match report by 9:00 am the following day. Failure to do so is a fine, payable at the next regular meeting.
- 5.2.13 The “Tie Breaker” sequence to determine standings is as follows:
 - Goal differential in league matches played between the two tied teams
 - Goals against during the season (Lowest amount wins)
 - Goals for during the season (Highest amount wins)
 - Flip of the coin.
- 5.2.14 If a match needs to be postponed for legitimate reason, the two teams have 10 days from the originally scheduled match time to pick a make-up date, otherwise the league will set a date. The schedule includes a few potential make-up dates, typically Easter, Mother’s Day, Memorial Day, and Father’s Day. The mutually agreed on/or league assigned make-up date is binding like any regularly scheduled match.
- 5.2.15 If a match is postponed, for any reason other than weather or field availability, after the referee has been assigned and the referee cannot be reassigned, the referee shall be paid by the team requesting the postponement unless both teams mutually agree to split the cost. If there are additional fees associated with the postponed match those fees shall be paid in the same manner.
- 5.2.16 Substitutions (Unlimited). Substitutions may be made with the consent of the referee at any stoppage in play at the referee's discretion.

5.3 Special Rules for Under Age Keepers

Goalkeepers may be under 30 years old but must be at least 18 years old (rule 4.3.1). The following additional rules apply only to these under-age goalkeepers.

- 5.3.1 They cannot cross midfield during the normal course of play during a match. Violation of this rule results in an indirect free kick at the point of receiving the ball or at the point of crossing midfield with the ball.
- 5.3.2 They cannot shoot penalty kicks. Violation of this rule results in a forfeit.

6.0 ARBITRATION

6.1 Arbitration Committee

- 6.1.1 An Arbitration committee will be formed consisting of a chairman (appointed by the League Committee Officers), and two additional members of the league committee, appointed by the committee chairman, also two alternates to be selected by the committee chairman. All appointments need the approval of the League Committee (a majority vote).
- 6.1.2 The Arbitration Committee will be required to hold a meeting no later than 6 days after a violation has occurred. All arbitration decisions will be issued prior to the next league match.
- 6.1.3 Special arbitration meetings can be called by the arbitration chairman.
- 6.1.4 All cases requiring arbitration will come before this committee, which will make a required ruling, based on interpretation of the rules, referee reports, both manager's match reports and the best interests of the league. If necessary, the committee can seek clarification and/or additional information from the referee.
- 6.1.5 Cases to be handled by the Arbitration Committee will be:
 - Red Card Violations.
 - Registration/Player Violations.
 - Match Protests.
 - Terminated Matches.
 - Re-scheduling of matches where teams cannot agree on time.

6.2 Appealing Arbitration Decisions

- 6.2.1 All appeals of Arbitration's Decisions will be handled by the Appeals Committee.
- 6.2.2 An appeals committee will be formed consisting of a chairman (appointed by the League Committee Officers), and four (4) additional members of the league committee, appointed by the committee chairman, also two alternates to be selected by the committee chairman.
- 6.2.3 Only Arbitration decisions involving a suspension of 3 or more matches or fine of \$75 or more may be appealed.
- 6.2.4 To appeal a decision of the Arbitration Committee, a bond must be posted before the appeal is presented to the Appeals Committee. A "Notice of" must be sent no later than seven calendar days following the issuance of the Arbitration Decision.
- 6.2.5 An Arbitration Decision can only be appealed based on the following merits:
 - wrong facts,
 - improper procedure,
 - too severe of a penalty.
- 6.2.6 If the appeal is turned down by the Appeals Committee, the bond goes into the Leagues treasury.
- 6.2.7 Should the Appeals Committee up-hold the appeal the bond is returned to the team. Regardless of the nature of the new ruling a change to the Arbitration Ruling warrants return of the Arbitration Bond.
- 6.2.8 There is no set time limit frame for the appeals process, however the appeals committee typically endeavor to reach a decision within two weeks of the notice of appeal.

7.0 FORFEITS

7.1 Forfeit Matches (Reasons for Forfeit)

- 7.1.1 No field available at time of match or field not prepared for match. (This does not apply if field time has been taken by another authority)
- 7.1.2 Less than seven (7) players at match time (After the 15 minute grace time) (see 5.2.8 and 5.2.9).
- 7.1.3 Penalty kick by an underage goalkeeper (see 5.3.2).
- 7.1.4 Non-payment of past due fines (see 3.6.4).

7.2 Forfeit Penalties and Fines

- 7.2.1 All forfeits count as a 2-0 score in the standing in favor of the opposing team.
- 7.2.2 All forfeits result in a fine.
- 7.2.3 If the forfeit becomes known less than 2 hours before match time, i.e. after the referee is already on the way to the match, the forfeiting team will pay the referee fee no matter whether it was a home match or not. If no representative of the forfeiting team is present to pay the referee and the opposing team pays the referee, that team will be reimbursed by the league and the league will collect the fee from the forfeiting team.

7.3 Team Suspension or Withdrawal

- 7.3.1 If a team is suspended or withdraws from the league before completing at least one league match with each team in their division (not including cup matches), all match results involving that team are expunged from the standings. If the team has completed one match against each team in their division the first match with each team will count towards the league standings, all other games will be expunged. Cup results stand as played, and if the suspended or withdrawing team is still in an unfinished cup competition, the next opponent will receive a bye into the next round.
- 7.3.2 A suspended or withdrawn team wishing to rejoin the league in a future season must re-apply as a new team (5.1.3).

8.0 GENERAL

This section describes common practices and procedures used in managing the league which are not bound by formal rules.

8.1 Common Practices

- 8.1.1 League composition - Before the start of a new season, the president will divide the teams into divisions of competitive strengths such that each division has preferably an even number of teams no more than 12 teams, allowing 2 complete round-robin plays in the available time from September through December and March through June. This typically involves rebalancing the divisions by promoting the top team(s) in the lower division and relegating the bottom team(s) from the upper division from the standings at the end of the previous season.
- 8.1.2 Schedule - The schedule is largely constrained by the availability of fields. Regular scheduled matches are on Sundays at 17:00 or in the fall as late as possible to allow completion of the match before sunset. Fall typically starts on the first Sunday after Labor-day and continues until the 2nd Sunday in Dec., the spring half of the season resumes in early March and ends in the beginning of June.
- 8.1.3 Cup competitions - At the first league meeting all teams are randomly drawn into a sequence. For the first round, the odd numbered team is home to the following even-numbered team.

After the first round all the winners are placed into the Geoff Taylor Cup (a.k.a. Presidents Cup or A-cup) and all the losers are placed into the Founders Cup (a.k.a. B-cup). If there are more than 16 teams, an extra round of elimination is added so that 8 teams are left in each cup. And each cup is played single elimination. Tied matches are decided first by two 15 min extra periods, then if the match is still tied by penalty kicks. By default the lower numbered team in a cup pairing has the home field, unless that team had home field in the previous round and the opponent was away in the previous round. The finals for each cup competition are played at the end of the season on the same day in a common location.

- 8.1.4 An all-star match is typically scheduled in conjunction with the cup finals, where a selection of players from all the teams that are not involved in the cup-finals play against the highest ranked team not involved in the cup finals. When the highest ranked team not involved in the cup final is not available or able to field a team the next highest rank team may be selected, or 2 teams of all stars can be made. The all-star team captains will mutually agree to the teams prior to the start of the game.

8.2 Communications

- 8.2.1 Primary means of communication is email. The league maintains a web and email domain: suffolkmenssoccer.org. Each team has an email account that the team manager can configure to forward to other email addresses of choice and/or access via a webmail interface or via IMAP from an email client. There are also accounts for each of the following: president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, arbitration, webmaster, referee coordinator, and scores.
- 8.2.2 Secondary means of communication is whatsapp. The league will maintain a whatapps group consisting of the committee members and officers. Only officers will be allowed to post in the group. The purpose of the group will be to post reminders and league information.
- 8.2.3 Minutes - Minutes of the monthly meeting are distributed via email within a week. Corrections should be brought to the secretary's attention right away. The minutes will be read at the following meeting. They are intentionally kept impersonal, identifying participants by their team/officer role rather than by name. They are also not published online.
- 8.2.4 Web Info - The secretary also maintains/updates field directions, team contact information and a pool of players looking to join a team.

9.0 OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

9.1 President

- Act as the facilitator at all League meetings.
- Represent the league to all outside organization.
- Set the Agenda for all league meeting.
- Enforce the meeting conduct rules.
- Set the schedule for the season.
- Set the configuration of the cup match ladder.

9.2 Immediate Past President

- Serve as an advisor to the President.
- Serve as an advisor to the Committee.
- Recommend appropriate policies for consideration by the Committee.

9.3 Vice President

- Fill in for the President whenever needed.

- Enforce the meeting conduct rules.

9.4 Treasurer

- Collect all fees, fines, and money that are owed to the League.
- Pay out all money that the League owes.
- Maintain accurate records of the league finances.
- Give a financial report to the League at each meeting.

9.5 Secretary

- Record and maintain the minutes of all League meetings.
- Record and maintain the attendance record of the League meetings.
- Handle all general correspondence for the League.
- Report the minutes of the previous meeting at each League meeting.

9.6 Registrar

- Process all new registrations and transfers.
- Maintain the records of all player registrations.
- Maintain the official team rosters of registered and insured players in good standing.
- Report to the League any problems found in a registration.

9.7 Arbitration Chairman

- Facilitate all Arbitration Committee meetings.
- Call Arbitration Committee meeting as needed.
- Appoint Arbitration Committee members and alternates.
- Report to the League at each meeting all Arbitration Committee rulings.

9.8 Appeals Chairman

- Facilitate all Appeals Committee meetings.
- Call Appeal Committee meeting as needed.
- Appoint Appeals Committee members and alternates.
- Report to the League at each meeting all Appeal Committee rulings.

9.9 Referee Coordinator

- Assign referees to officiate each league sanctioned match.
- Vet potential referee.
- Act as the coordinator between the League and the Referees.
- Record final match score and update league tables, unless this role has been delegated to an independent third party.

10.0 MEETING AGENDA

- Meeting called to order
- Roll call of committee members
- Secretary reads the minutes of the previous meeting
- Treasurer reads the finance report
- Arbitration report
- Appeals Report
- Referee Coordinator Report
- Registrar's report
- Old business
- New Business

- Meeting Closed

Note: this agenda is only a guide the president of the League sets the agenda for each League meeting, in his absence the Vice President will set the agenda.

11.0 TABLE OF FEES AND FINES

Section	Description	Amount
3.2.3	Late to League Meeting	\$15
3.2.5	Missed League Meeting	\$50
3.2.6	Misconduct at League Meeting	\$5
3.6.1	Annual Team Registration	\$100
3.6.2	Player Insurance (per player) (determined by treasure annually)	\$7.50
3.6.3	New Player Registration	\$5
3.7.1	New Team Application	\$100
3.7.7	New Team Bond	\$300
4.1.6	Failure to print and present roster	\$10
5.1.6	Age / Registration Violation	\$100
5.1.7	Referee harassment	\$100
5.2.12	Failure to submit Match Report	\$15
6.2.4	Appeals Bond	\$75
7.2.2	Forfeit	\$50