



Hagerstown Field House: Adult Soccer League Rules and Policies

1. HFH Check-In Procedures

a. Entrance to Building

- All teams will enter through the main entrance and then proceed to the field.
- Roster checks will be completed on the field, so please have your ID ready.

b. Entrance to Playing Area

- Teams may enter the playing field through the spectator side of the field.
- This allows players leaving the field through the player's area to do so unimpeded.

2. Pre-Season

- a. HFH Policies and Procedures
 - It is the responsibility of every player to know and follow the rules.
 - As rules are adjusted to improve the experience, all players should familiarize themselves with the posted rules at the beginning of each season.
- b. Double Rostering
 - Players may be double rostered on teams in different divisions, but cannot play on another team within the same division.
 - Players are not allowed to sub or guest play for a team in a division that the player is already rostered on.
- b. Levels of Competition
 - i. Eligible Players: Any player 18 years or older and out of high school is eligible to play in our adult leagues.
 - ii. Coed Leagues:
 - Coed teams must always have at least 2 females on the field of play.
 - A co-ed team can field no more than 5 male players, regardless of position.
 - A co-ed team cannot begin play with an all-male team.
- d. Rosters

- A team must have 7 rostered players to remain on the schedule.
- A team must have at least 5 players on the field to begin/continue play (including at least one female for coed leagues).
- Players are required to show ID before being checked in.
- Players with no ID must go to the front desk to verify their account. Once verified, they may be required to have a picture taken and attached to the account.

3. Pre-Game

- **a. Game Balls**
 - The Field House will provide the game ball.
 - If a substitute ball is desired, it must have approval from the referee.
- **c. Equipment**
 - **i. Uniforms**
 - Teams are required to have matching uniforms. A uniform is defined as matching colored shirts with different numbers on each shirt.
 - Goalkeepers must wear a jersey that differs in color from both their team and the opposition.
 - The goalkeeper is not required to wear a number.
 - **ii. Similar Uniforms**
 - If both teams are wearing uniforms that do not conflict (as determined by the referee), no changes are necessary.
 - If the uniforms conflict, the home team will be required to change uniforms or wear pinnies provided by the HFH.
 - If one team has all players in uniform and the other does not, the team without full uniforms will be required to change or wear pinnies, regardless of home or away status.
 - Home teams must wear light-colored jerseys, and away teams must wear dark-colored jerseys.
 - **iii. Shoes**
 - Rubber molded cleats, turf shoes, and tennis shoes are allowed.
 - Metal spikes are not permitted.
 - **iv. Shin Guards**
 - Shin guards are required for all leagues.
 - A player not wearing shin guards will be subject to a yellow card.
 - **v. Jewelry**
 - Any jewelry determined by the referee to be unsafe must be removed or altered/covered to be made safe.
- **d. Guest Players**
 - **i. Guest Players**
 - Guest players are allowed for any regular season league game.
 - **ii. Player Waiver**
 - All guest players must have an active HFH account and an up-to-date waiver to play.
 - **iii. Paid Slip**

- Before playing, a guest player must present a paid guest player slip to HFH field staff.
- **iv. Guest Player Limit**
 - A team can have no more than three (3) guest players in one game.
- **v. Guest Player Skill Level**
 - Players rostered on a team in a higher league cannot guest play in a lower league.
 - Example: A player rostered on an “A” league team can only guest play within the “A” leagues. A player rostered on a “B” League team is allowed to guest within both “A” and “B” leagues.
 - It is the responsibility of the player and team to understand and adhere to this rule.

4. IN-GAME

Competition Format & Rules

Official FIFA Rules and Regulations as stated under the Laws of The Game will be enforced. Exceptions are noted below under the Field House Rules.

Field House Rules

- **Game Time**
 - 22-minute halves, running clock; 2-minute halftime. No time-outs.
 - The referee and field marshal will manage the clock.
- **Added Time**
 - If a foul occurs in the final 30 seconds of a half, the referee will have the discretion to add 10 seconds to the clock.
- **Out of Bounds**
 - The ball is in play throughout the playing area. Any ball touching the side netting, the netting behind the goal, ceiling netting, or entering a team box is considered out of bounds and a kick will be awarded to the team that did not touch the ball last.
 - The ball will be placed directly below or at the spot closest to where the ball touched the netting or went out.
 - If the ball touches the ceiling net inside the goalie box, a goalkeeper restart or corner kick will result.
- **Substitutions**
 - Substitutions are free and unlimited if such substitutions do not interfere with the flow of the game.
 - The subbing player must be within 3 yards of their player box in order to enter the field of play.
 - Teams that violate this rule will be given a warning for having too many players on the field.
 - If a team has been warned but continues to violate this rule, the referee will award a direct kick to the opposing team from the top of the arc.

- Any team that continues to make illegal substitutions after the opposing team is awarded a free kick will be given a team yellow card.
- **Goalkeeper Substitution**
 - Teams may substitute for the goalkeeper during play.
 - The referee should be notified of a change in goalkeeper.
 - Play will stop for goalkeeper substitution at the referee's discretion.
- **Slide Tackling**
 - Slide tackling is not permitted.
 - The referee may award a card, depending on the severity of the infraction.
 - Goalkeepers are permitted to slide tackle when in the keeper's box.
- **Free Kicks**
 - All kicks will be in-direct.
 - Until the ball is in play, all opponents must remain 5 yards (15 feet) away from the ball, unless they are on their own goal line between the goalposts.
- **Five Yards Distance**
 - The 5 yards is automatically afforded to the kicking player and does not need to be asked for.
 - Any delay in a free kick can result in a yellow card from the referee without prior warning.
 - Any kick taken by the kicking team accepts the distance of the opposing team as acceptable.
- **3-Line Rule**
 - A 3-line infraction occurs when the ball, either thrown or kicked, crosses all three lines of the field of play in the air without contact from a player.
 - The restart will be taken at the middle of the centerline.
- **Boarding**
 - Boarding is a penalty when a player makes contact, either from the side or from behind, with a defenseless opposing player into the boards.
 - Defenseless means that the player has their back to the checking player or no longer has a play on the ball.
 - Actions that are considered legal in the middle of the field may be considered boarding when near the walls.
- **Passback Rule**
 - Handling the ball, having been passed deliberately and directly to them from a teammate, is not permitted except when passed to them by the head, chest, or knee without using a wall or foot to flick the ball to a head, chest, or knee before making the pass.
- **Goalkeeper Passback**
 - A goalkeeper shall not be permitted to bring the ball from outside the Penalty Arch to their hand within it.
 - The keeper may not receive the ball again after a Goalkeeper Distribution without the ball having first touched another player (no drop-kicking or bouncing the ball).
- **Goalkeeper Restrictions**
 - A goalkeeper shall not be permitted to field a ball from a teammate inside the penalty area, leave the penalty area with the ball, return to the penalty area with

the ball, and play it with their hands.

- **Penalty Kicks and Kicks from the Mark**

- **Penalty Kicks**

- The ball is placed at the Free Kick Mark nearer the attacking Goal (top of the arc).
 - The Goalkeeper must have at least one foot on the Goal Line and may not move off of it until the referee whistles the Penalty Kick to begin and the ball is in play.
 - Once the referee whistles the Penalty Kick to begin, the player taking the Penalty Kick has five (5) seconds to strike the ball.
 - The player taking the Penalty Kick may not touch the ball again until it has been touched by another player.
 - If the goalkeeper moves early and the kick is missed, the kicker will be awarded another kick.
 - If the kick is scored, the goal will stand.
 - If the player touches the ball more than once, the defense will be awarded an indirect free kick from the spot of the kick.

- **Kicks From the Mark**

- There will be a 2-minute break between the end of regular time and kicks from the mark.
 - The referee conducts a coin toss with the visiting team's captain calling the coin. The team that wins the toss decides whether to take the first or second kick.
 - The referee shall select the goal at which the kicks shall take place.
 - Any player on the roster who has not been disqualified is eligible to participate.
 - Each captain will select three players, which can include the goalkeeper.
 - Once a player has reported to the official at the center circle, that player may not be replaced unless they are injured, cautioned, or disqualified.
 - The three kicking players from each team must remain in the center circle, except the player taking the kick and the two goalkeepers.

- **Teams**

- A game is played by two registered and rostered teams.
 - No fewer than five (5) or more than seven (7) players from each team shall occupy the field during a game.
 - One of the players must be a Goalkeeper. A team cannot start or continue a match with fewer than the listed requirements.

- **Coed Divisions**

- Coed leagues must always have at least two (2) female players on the field with at least two (2) positions reserved for female players.

- **Minimum Players**

- A team cannot start or continue a match with fewer than five (5) players. These players must consist of 4 field players (one female player if in a coed league) and 1 goalkeeper.

- **Bench Area**

- No other personnel may occupy the team bench, including spectators, minor children of players and coaches, or parents.
- The bench is for rostered players and coaches only.
- Injured players who have not dressed for the game, but are on the roster, are permitted on the bench.

- **Yellow Card Policy**

- Any player that receives a yellow card will be sent off for a three-minute penalty. The team shall play with one fewer field player until the penalty expires.
- A team may not have fewer than the minimum players required under, regardless of the number of players serving time penalties.
- If a player receives a time penalty and there are already players in the penalty area, the team must replace the carded player with a rostered player from the bench. The team will continue to play with the minimum number of players while the carded player joins teammates in the penalty area.
- If a team is unable to field five players or fail to meet the required gender-based roster minimum due to time penalties, the game will be forfeited.
- If a team receives a team yellow card, the manager must pull one player off the field to serve the mandatory three-minute penalty. The referee will track the penalty time and notify the team when the penalty is completed, after which the team will return to full strength.
- If a yellow card results in a power play (one team playing with more players than the other), and the team with the advantage scores, the team that was scored upon may return to full strength immediately.

- **Simultaneous Yellow Cards**

- If players on opposing teams receive simultaneous yellow cards, both players will serve the full three-minute penalty regardless of goals scored.
- If a player receives a yellow card while the previously carded players are still serving their penalty, and the opposing team scores during the resulting power play, that player will be permitted to return to the game.
- The players who received the simultaneous cards will not be allowed to return until their three-minute penalty has expired.

- **Red Card Policy**

- Any player that receives a red card shall be sent off the playing area and is required to leave the facility immediately. The player is expected to gather their gear and leave the area.
- The referee has the discretion to stop the game until the player leaves. The referee may also decide whether to stop or keep the clock running during this time.
- The team will play one player down for the remainder of the match unless the red

card puts the team under the minimum players needed.

- If a player receives a red card while serving a yellow card time penalty on the bench, the team will play a player down for the rest of the game.
- **Exception to Red Card Policy**
 - A player who receives a red card for any of the following infractions will result in the team playing one player down for five (5) minutes:
 - Handling the ball to stop a goal
 - A second yellow card, where neither of the yellow cards was for dissent or unsporting behavior
- **Red Card for Bench Player**
 - A player who is red carded for their conduct on the bench shall be sent completely off the playing area and escorted out of the facility by an HFH staff member.
 - The team will not play down a player if the infraction occurs on the bench.

Red Card Suspension

- A player who receives a red card during or after a game will automatically be suspended from all HFH activities for one week and for the next game of the league in which the red card was issued.
- In the case of a doubleheader (two games played by the same team on the same night), if a player is red carded during their first game, they must sit out the second game of the night and are banned from HFH activities for one week.
- If a player is ejected in the last game of the regular season:
 - If the team fails to qualify for the playoffs, the player will be prohibited from playing in the first game of the next season.
 - If the team qualifies for the playoffs, the player will be banned from the first playoff game. If the team wins the first playoff game, the suspension is served, and the player may participate in subsequent playoff or championship games.
- All red cards will undergo a Red Card Review by HFH staff, and sanctions may be altered based on the review.

Doubled Rostered Player

- If a doubled rostered player receives a red card and is scheduled to play for another team on the same night, the player will be disqualified from that game.
- The suspension will not be considered served, and the player will still be banned one game.

Guest Player Red Card

- If a guest player receives a red card, they will be suspended from all HFH activities for one full week.
- A guest player serving a red card suspension may not join the roster of any team during this time.

Exception to Red Card Suspension

- When a player receives a red card for:
 - (a) Handling the ball to stop a goal, or
 - (b) A second yellow card in which neither of the yellows was for dissent or unsporting behavior;
- If the card was issued in the first half of the game, the player will sit out the remainder of the game and may return for the team's next game.
- If the card was issued in the second half of the game, the player will sit out the remainder of the game and the first half of the team's next game.
- In the cases of (a) or (b), the player is not required to leave the facility and may participate in other Field House activities.

Suspension of Game

- Any team that causes a game to be called by the referee before time has expired due to unsportsmanlike conduct or unsafe play shall forfeit that game.
- HFH has a **ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY** toward fighting. Anyone engaging in a fight will be ejected and will serve significant suspensions from the facility.
- Anyone entering the field of play to involve themselves in a fight will also serve significant suspensions.
- Players who are deemed to be de-escalators will be judged differently than those entering the field for purposes other than de-escalation.

Official Games

- A game is considered "official" after one completed half of play.
- If there is an injury or other unforeseen circumstance (such as a power outage), the current score will stand as official once a half has been played.

Forfeited Games

- **Game Results:** A forfeited game will result in a 4-0 victory for the opposing team.
- **Notification:** Team captains must notify the Hagerstown Field House (HFH) at least four (4) hours prior to game time to inform them of the forfeit or request a schedule change.
 - Not all schedule changes can be granted, and a forfeit may still occur.
 - Players cannot cancel a game or request a schedule change—only the team captain can make this request.
 - HFH will work with the other team to reschedule or notify them of the forfeit.
- **Opponent No-show:** If a team shows up to play and the opposing team does not, the team present will win by forfeit.
- **Field Use for Forfeited Games:** Players from teams involved in a forfeit may be allowed to use the field for practice or scrimmage, etc. However, HFH reserves the right to use the field for other activities at the discretion of management.
- **Failure to Field Minimum Players:** Forfeiture will occur if a team fails to field the minimum number of players (5 rostered players) within five (5) minutes from the start of

the game clock. If at any point during the game a team cannot field 5 rostered players, the team will forfeit. This includes situations where teams are playing down due to yellow cards, red cards, or injuries.

- **Consequence of Forfeits:** At the discretion of HFH, teams incurring forfeits during a session may not be allowed to participate in subsequent sessions.

Make-Ups

- If a team is unable to play a scheduled game, the opposing team may choose to accept a 4-0 forfeit.
- If both teams agree to a make-up and the schedule allows, they will be offered possible times from the League Director.
- It will be the team manager's responsibility to:
 - Coordinate and select one of the available times.
 - Confirm the new game time.
- Failure to Coordinate: Failure to coordinate and confirm the new game time will result in the game being forfeited.
- Responsibility for Notification: HFH is not responsible for teams that neglect this rule and fail to notify the opposing team that they will not be attending a scheduled game.
- Rescheduling Requests: HFH does not guarantee that all rescheduling requests will be honored.

Post Game

- **Point System and Tiebreakers**
 - The determination within the group standings is as follows:
 - **3 points** – Win
 - **1 point** – Tie
 - **0 points** – Loss
 - Forfeited games are recorded as a **4-0 loss** for the forfeiting team.
- **Two Team Tiebreakers**
 - Goal Difference
 - Goals Scored
 - Goals Against
 - Head to Head
 - Flip of a Coin
- **Multiple Team Tiebreakers**
 - Goal Difference
 - Goals Scored
 - Goals Against
 - Head to Head
 - Flip of a Coin

- **Referees & Protests**

- **Referees**

- One (1) Referee officiates each game. The Referee may be assisted by a second-floor Referee, an Assistant Referee, and a Timekeeper. So long as a Referee is on the facility compound of an assigned game, he shall execute, or delegate to other game officials the execution of, these Rules.

- **Decisions of Fact and Rule**

- The decisions of the Referee regarding facts connected with play and interpretation of Rules are final. The Referee may change any decision prior to a Restart upon his own reconsideration.

- **Powers**

- The Referee's power to assess penalties, and otherwise assure fair play and maintain control of a game, extends to violations of these Rules committed during play, during stoppages, and as players and other team personnel proceed to and from the field of play. This includes the power to:
 - **Award or Disallow a Goal:** The Referee determines whether or not a goal is scored.
 - **Suspend or Terminate the Game:** The Referee stops, suspends, or terminates the game at his discretion by reason of the elements, interference by spectators, an unsafe condition, or other justifiable cause.
 - **Stop the Clock:** The Referee stops the Game Clock due to an unusual delay (subject to administrative policy).
 - **Prohibit Field Entry:** The Referee ensures that no unauthorized person enters the field of play during a game.
 - **Summon HFH Management:** The Referee asks HFH to prevent any spectator, including team personnel, from interfering with the play of the game for:
 - (1) Violent conduct, including tossing objects onto the field of play;
 - (2) Foul or abusive language or behavior; or
 - (3) Persistent unseemly behavior.

- **Game Report**

- Subject to administrative policy, the Referee files a Game Report, including information on any disciplinary action and other incident (e.g., serious injury) or circumstance occurring before, during, or after the game.

- **Comments on Referees**

- Comments regarding officiating are welcome and encouraged. Please submit any such comments in writing via email to the Sports Director. Please include game time, field number, your team name, the ref's name (if known), and your name.

- **Protests**

- If a team suspects an illegal player or other illegal activity associated with another team, they should inform the staff immediately. If this activity is discovered after the game is completed, the team should file a formal protest to the League Director. Do not discuss officiating or the officials with the facility staff during your game.

Here's a brief summary of the key rules:

1. Team Composition & Minimum Players

- Teams must field at least five (5) rostered players. If a team can't meet this number, the game is forfeited. Yellow and red cards may reduce the number of players, but teams must still meet the minimum number of players.

2. Card System & Penalties

- **Yellow Card:** Results in a 3-minute penalty, reducing the team to one fewer player until expired. If a goal is scored during a power play, the penalized team may return to full strength.
- **Red Card:** Results in ejection and a one-week suspension. In cases of serious infractions, such as a second yellow card or stopping a goal with a hand, the suspension may vary. A player red-carded during the last game of the season is banned from the first playoff game or the first game of the next season.
- **Team Yellow Card:** The team must pull a player off the field to serve a 3-minute penalty.

3. Forfeits

- A game is forfeited if a team doesn't show up or fails to field five players within five minutes of the start time. Forfeited games result in a 4-0 victory for the opposing team.
- A team captain must notify the Field House at least four hours in advance to request a forfeit or schedule change.

4. Official Games & Game Length

- A game is considered official after one completed half. If the game is halted due to injury or other circumstances after a half is completed, the score stands.

5. Post-Game Points & Tiebreakers

- Win: 3 points, Tie: 1 point, Loss: 0 points.
- Tiebreakers: Goal difference, goals scored, goals against, head-to-head, and if necessary, a coin flip.

6. Referees & Protests

- Referees' decisions on game facts and rule interpretations are final. They have the power to stop the game, assess penalties, and manage player conduct.
- Teams can file a protest if they suspect an illegal player or activity but should not discuss officiating with staff during the game.

