

MORGAN COUNTY SOCCER LEAGUE

Revised June 2026

Rules and Regulations

This document provides an overview of soccer regulations and interpretations used by The Morgan County Soccer League. These rules have been adapted from The National Federation of State High School Association's (NFHS) Soccer Rule Book. This document does not address all rules and regulations. For further clarification of the rules and regulations, please refer to the NFHS rulebook.

General Soccer Rules

1. Requirements for a player to be eligible to play in the Morgan County Soccer League:
 - a. Players must play with the local Morgan County School Community in which they live or attend school, unless released in writing.
 - b. This release must first be signed by the representative from the community in which the player lives followed by the representative from the community in which the player is going to play. Finally, the current year's Morgan Co. Soccer President or Vice President must sign release. The release will be held on file for one year at the county office.
 - c. If a community does not offer a team in a specific age group, then those players may go to another community to play.
 - d. Out of district players will be allowed on a team if needed to complete a team roster.
2. Any player, coach, parent, umpire or fan removed from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for a minimum of one game. This person will not be allowed anywhere on the premises of the next game. If this person persists in attending the above game, then the game will be a forfeit. After the second ejection, the person will not be allowed to attend any more games for the season or tournament and banned from park. If offence warrants, suspension will begin immediately.
3. If a coach knowingly plays an ineligible player, he will be suspended from coaching for the remainder of the season.
4. No player will be allowed to play on more than one team. If a player is moved up to an older division team, they must remain on that team for the entire season.
5. Complete rosters must be turned in by the due date before each season. No players will be added after this date unless a team drops below the maximum number of players on field plus 3 substitutes.

6. MCPR can require age verification of a child at any time. If a birth certificate is not on file at the MCPR office, the child in question must present a birth certificate for proof of age.
7. If the heat index is 100 degrees or above, the President or Vice President will determine if matches will be played, cancelled, or have adjusted start times. MCPR will be notified of the decisions.
8. MCPR will reschedule games for school function and life events. Game rescheduling shall be handled only by the MCPR with input by the reps and not by the coaches.
9. A complete roster must be given to MCPR no later than July 6th.
10. Players' age determined as of August 1st.
11. Corner Flags for 10u and 13u.

Teams:

Team sizes and age divisions will be determined after final sign-up date and are subject to change from the examples listed, based on guidance from the Morgan County Soccer Board Members.

Teams will compete as Coed (Boys and Girls combined).

Teams are encouraged but not required to match the number of opposing players available to play on the field.

Players:

All players must play in their correct age division unless needed to form a team. A player may play up an age division, but not down a division.

All players must play an equivalence of 25% of each game **during the regular season only.** Exceptions are made by coaches in accordance with a player's injury, illness and excessive misconduct in practice and games.

Players' uniform must match as a team. Each player must wear a jersey with a number on the back. The goalie's jersey must be a color that distinguishes him/her from other players and the referee.

An athlete who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on his/her uniform, or has blood on his/her person, shall be directed to leave the activity until the bleeding has stopped. The wound is covered, the uniform and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and or the uniform is changed before returning to competition. That player shall leave the field but may be replaced. If the removed player is being replaced during a penalty kick situation, the substitute may not take the penalty kick.

Protective Equipment:

Any hard/unyielding item on the hand (including thumb/fingers), wrist, forearm, elbow, upper arm or shoulder must be covered and padded with a closed cell, slow recovery foam no less than 1/2" thick.

Knee and ankle braces that contain metal must be worn under the sock or covered by foam listed above. All players must wear shin guards at practice and games. Shin Guards must be worn under the socks and completely covered.

Soccer cleats or equivalent must be worn. No football or baseball cleats (shoe cannot have the front toe cleat).

Coaches:

Fair play and sportsmanship will be stressed throughout all practices and games. Coaches and assistants are responsible for the conduct of all players and supporting spectators. All are expected to behave in an appropriate manner, abide by the rules and convey good sportsmanship.

During games, all coaches are allowed in designated team areas only. These areas should always be separated from spectator's area. Spectators are not allowed to locate within the team areas.

Coaches, players and spectators are not allowed to locate with the end lines or behind the goals during a game. Coaches or other team members shall not enter the playing field unless requested by the referee.

Three coaches allowed on the same side of the field. One coach must remain at the player bench area. Only 1-Head coach and 1-Assistant coach may represent each team during a game.

Coaches Behavior:

The coach shall respect and support contest officials. The coach shall not indulge in conduct which would incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical. "A player, coach or bench personnel shall be cautioned (yellow card) for: objecting by word of mouth or action to any decision given by an official (dissent)."

Situation: "Near the end of the first half, the visiting coach is cautioned by a referee for unsportsmanlike conduct. The coach continues to indicate, by gestures, dissatisfaction with the referee's decision. **RULING:** The coach shall be disqualified (red card) and removed from the vicinity of the playing area.

Referees:

Recommend number of referees: 6U – 1 Center Referee. 8U – 2 Referees. 10U and 13U – 1 Center Referee and 2 Assistant Referees. Duals (two center referees) are allowed.

Youth referees must be paired with an adult (18 and older) in 10U's and older age divisions.

Referees will be the official time and score keepers of each game. A referee's decision is final, and appeals will not be accepted.

Completed Game:

During the regular season, if conditions make it impossible to finish any game, the head referee shall declare it a completed game if one complete half or more of the game has been played. The score at the time of the suspension of play will be the final score, ties included. Otherwise, it is a suspended game, and its resumption will be determined by MCPR and/or the league President or Vice President.

Mercy Rule:

A 10-goal differential will be used in all matches. A match shall be ended any time after the end of the first half when one team has gained the 10-goal differential.

Teams may play the remainder of the match for practice; however, any goals scored will not be recorded by the referee.

Rest Break:

At an appropriate time, mid-way through each half, the referee will halt the game for a two (2) minute rest break. At halftime, the referee will halt the game for a five (5) minute rest break. During these breaks, coaches may substitute players.

Forfeits:

Teams have a 10-minute grace period from the time the game is scheduled to start. After this time, if a team has an insufficient number of players to play the game, the game will be forfeited to the opposing team.

Players Behavior:

The referee will not issue yellow or red cards in age divisions below 10U. Player issues will be addressed by the referee, with the player's coach included in the discussion. Any player asked to temporarily leave the match may be replaced by a substitute player.

Yellow Carded players must leave the field and can be replaced by a substitute player. The yellow carded player can return to play at the next approved substitution.

A player that receives a Red Card will be ejected from the remaining portion of the current game. The player must also sit out the first half of the next scheduled game.

Season Format:

4U will have No scores, No Points System.

6U, 8U, 10U, and 13U will attempt to play each opponent at least twice.

The number of matches will depend on the number of teams in a division.

The President and/or Vice-President will determine the final schedules.

Season Points:

All points, tie breakers, and scores will utilize RecDesk maintained by MCPR.

Season standings based on the following:

10-Point System

6 Points for Win

3 Points for a Tie 1 Point per Goal, Max 3

1 Point for Shut Out

Maximum 10 Points per Match

Tie Breakers:

Head-to-Head

Average Goals Against

Average Goals For

Shutouts Schedule

Strength Schedule Strength 2

Coin Flip

4U and 6U Divisions:

Roster Size: 7 Players are recommended

Minimum players to start a match: 3 per team

Maximum players on field: 4 per team

Match will be 4 8-minute quarters, 32 Minutes Total.

No score will be kept for the 4U Division.

Size 3 ball.

Field will be 20 yards wide x 35 yards long.

Goal size is 4' x 6'.

One coach from each team is allowed on the field to instruct players during the regular season.

No Goalkeeper position.

The Offside Rule will not be applied.

All players are encouraged to participate in the flow of play.

No player will be used primarily in a defensive position when his/her team is attempting to score. Playing as a Mid-Fielder is allowed; A player who is at the midfield line and his/her teammates are attempting to score is allowed.

Slide tackles are not allowed.

Players are prohibited from intentionally heading the ball in a match.

An indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team if a player intentionally heads the ball.

The defending team must be 10 feet back during throw-ins.

On goal kicks, the defending team must be behind the half line until the ball is in play. The goalkeeper or the player taking the goal kick does not have to wait for the opposing players to move behind the half field line

8U Division:

Roster Size: Maximum Number of Players plus 3 Substitutes are recommended.

Minimum players to start a match: 5 per team

Maximum players on field: 7 per team

Match will be 4 10-minute quarters, 40 Minutes Total

Size 3 ball.

Field will be 35 yards wide x 50 yards long.

Goal size is 6.5' x 12'

The Offside Rule will not be applied.

No offensive player will setup in the penalty area to provide a scoring advantage, excluding throw ins or corner kicks.

Slide tackles are not allowed.

Players are prohibited from intentionally heading the ball in a match.

An indirect free kick to the opposing team will be awarded if a player intentionally heads the ball.

8U Goal Keepers are not allowed to punt the ball.

On Goal Kicks and Saves, the defending team must be behind the half line until the ball is in play. The goalkeeper or the player taking the goal kick does not have to wait for the opposing players to move behind the half field line

10U and 13U Divisions:

Roster Size: Maximum Number of Players plus 3 Substitutes are recommended.

Minimum players to start a match: 6 per team

Maximum players on field: 9 per team

Match will be 4, 15-minute quarters, 60 Minutes Total

10u- Size 4 Ball

13u- Size 5 Ball

Field will be 40 yards wide x 70 yards long.

Goal size is 6.5' x 18.5'.

Slides Tackles and Heading the Ball are allowed in 13U only.

For 10U, an indirect free kick to the opposing team will be awarded if a player intentionally heads the ball

Junior Varsity and Varsity Divisions:

Roster Size: Maximum Number of Players plus 11 Substitutes are recommended.

Minimum players to start a match: 7 per team Maximum players on field: 11 per team

Match will be two halves of 35 minutes, 70 Minutes Total

Size 5 ball.

“AHSAA” regulation field

Slides Tackles and Heading the Ball are allowed.

Players must be in the 7th to 12th Grade to participate in these divisions.

Community Reps will designate Teams as either “Junior Varsity” or “Varsity”, based on players’ experience, mix of female and male players, and other factors.

Sub-Divisions for schedules of “Varsity”, “Jr Varsity”, and “Girls” will be considered, based on number of enrolled players in the league.

This is a Coed, Recreational Soccer Program.

Referees and Coaches should always emphasize safety to players.

As of August 2023, all matches are planned to be played at Hartselle.

Practices to be conducted at local community fields.