

Merced United League

Rules

MISSION STATEMENT:

Merced United League exists to promote and encourage soccer amongst adults to compete in a friendly, positive, safe, and family environment.

VISION:

Merced United League will strive to:

- Develop and foster interest in soccer in the greater Merced area.
- Encourage a spirit of teamwork, fair play and sportsmanship.
- Provide coherent competition amongst area players and soccer teams.
- Support Merced United's youth soccer programs via volunteering and monetary donations to youth soccer.

MODIFICATIONS TO LAWS OF THE GAME:

The most current Laws of the Game apply as stated by The International Football Association Board (IFAB) on THEIFAB.COM, except for the modifications listed below:

- ***Additional Co-Ed Modifications Listed in Red***

Law 01

The Field of Play:

Games will be played on a standard USSF u12 field; however, local conditions may mandate use of non-standard or sub-optimal fields.

Law 03

The Players:

A match will consist of a maximum of eight (8) players; one must be the goalkeeper. The match will not start or continue if either team has fewer than 5 players.

- ***Maximum five (5) male/female players***
- ***Minimum one (1) male/female player.***

Rosters may consist of an infinite number of players, but must have no fewer than ten (10) players per team. Unlimited Substitution are allowed.

Law 05

The Referee:

Dual system of referees will be used for all league competition matches.

Three-person system of referees (i.e. Assistant Referees) may be used in semi-finals and/or finals.

Law 07

The Duration of the Match:

Games will consist of two (2) twenty-five (25) minute halves. Due to the tight scheduling of matches, referees are instructed to start the first half exactly at game time and start the second half exactly five (5) minutes after the end of the first half. Stoppage time will only be added to the end of a half for extenuating circumstances.

Law 10

Determining the Outcome of the Match:

Semi-final matches will go directly to Penalties after a drawn match. Final matches will proceed with two (2) five (5) minute periods of extra time before going to Penalties after a drawn match.

- ***Female goals scored into the opponent's goal will count as two (2) points. "Own goals" will count as 1 point. Penalty kicks scored during a game by a female will count as two points, but not during the Semi-Finals or Finals Penalty kicks after a Drawn Game.(Note: Unintentional deflections are not considered own goals)***

Law 12

Fouls and Misconduct:

Sliding will result in an indirect free kick to the opposing team if no contact is made with the opposing player. A direct free kick will be awarded if contact is made with an opponent (penalty kick if inside the penalty area). If a player standing in his/her own penalty area, kicks/throws the ball into their attacking half without first making contact with his/her own half's ground or another player, the referee will award an indirect free kick to the opposing team at the mark closest to where the ball crossed the center line.

- ***Male players may not challenge/obstruct/shadow female players in possession of the ball outside of either penalty areas. At least a ten-yard radius will be given at all times to the female in possession of the ball.***

FEES:

Fees shall be \$75.00 per player and can be paid in two weekly increments of \$40 & 35. After week five, any new player is to pay \$40.00 upon signing up, be it on the fifth game or on the last game of the season. Depending on the number of teams that sign up, teams will get six to seven games.

A team shall have at least ten players fully paid as of week five. If ten players are not paid fully as of week five, then on week six the total fee difference shall be paid before any wristbands are distributed to any player on that team.

ROSTER:

The league will keep an active roster on the fields. All players are required to fill out an Adult Player Registration Form once, and present a valid government issued ID as proof of age to the league before every game. Players not registered that are found to be playing will be the cause of

1. Forfeit for the team in question, and result in a \$100.00 donation by the team to Merced United before the team can play again.

CROSSOVERS:

Players are not allowed to play on two teams in the same division. Players are allowed to play in different divisions during the same season as long as they fulfill the age requirements and complete payments for each League. Example: Players can play in a Mens Division 8v8 and in Co-Ed Division 8v8, but not on two teams in Mens 8v8 or in two teams in Co-Ed 8v8. Players that are found to be playing in two divisions will be the cause of

1. Forfeit for the second team that the player registered for, and result in a \$100.00 donation by the player to Merced United before the player can play again.

YELLOW & RED CARDS:

A red card issued will carry at least an automatic one (1) game suspension. A suspended player may not be reinstated prior to the incident being reviewed by the league's disciplinary review committee (Penalties, Appeals, and Discipline PAD). The PAD will confer on all red cards and incidents on Wednesday nights. Committee decisions are final. A \$50.00 donation to Merced United will be levied for all red card violations and transaction must be completed before the player may play again.

Any Red Card suspension received in any division is also carried over to any other division the player may be concurrently rostered in.

Two red cards in one season may result in an automatic lifetime disqualifier from playing in Merced United League.

At the moment a red card is issued, the number of players left must remain for the totality of the game. Example: There are seven players in the game and one gets a red card, that team will then have a maximum of six players for the rest of the game. Regardless if more players show up after the red card is issued.

Yellow Cards: Players who receive a yellow card must immediately leave the field of play. The team will play a person short for 4 minutes. If subsequent players receive a yellow card before any previously yellow carded player(s) has come back on the field, the team continues to play down that amount of players. If the team reaches a total of less than five players, the game will result in a win for the opposing team with the score when the game ended, or 3-0, whichever is greater.

SEASONS:

Merced United League will run as many seasons as possible per year, with playoffs and finals at the end of each season.

TEAM DIVISION PLACEMENT:

In the case there are 2 or more divisions in the same age group, the Champion and Finalist of the lower divisions will be promoted to the next upper division, and the two teams that end in last place in any division will be relegated to the next lower division. Merced United League reserves the right to change, alter or combine divisions at any time for scheduling or competitive purposes.

LEAGUES:

Merced Soccer League intends to offer the following leagues: 8v8 for men and/or women and/or coed, 11v11 Co-Ed, 11v11 Men's and/or Women's Open, and 35+ Men's. Other leagues may be established upon verified interest and field availability.

SCHEDULE CHANGES:

Once a season schedule is published, no changes will be made unless an unexpected logistical problem arises, or Acts of God. If this is the case, all managers will be notified of the change(s). Weather and field availability permitting, all teams will play their full season of games, plus playoffs.

START TIMES, MAKEUP GAMES AND CANCELLATIONS:

If a team does not have the minimum number of players on the field and ready after 10 minutes of the scheduled match time, the score is an automatic 1-0 score for the team that is on the field and has the minimum number of players. The team on the field will get a 3-0 win at the 15 minute mark if the other team does not field a team with the minimum number of players.

A match is considered official once the 1st half has been completed. If play must be halted after the start of play, but before the half is complete, the scheduler will make every attempt to reschedule the shortened game. However, if field, weather or other situations preclude timely rescheduling, the game may not be replayed. If this occurs, the score at the time the game was stopped will be used as the final score of the game.

FORFEIT:

Failure to have a minimum amount of players will result in a forfeit, a 0-3 score, loss of 1 point in the league standings, and in a \$100 donation to Merced United. Of this amount, \$50.00 will go to the team that did not forfeit. If the forfeit was deliberate to affect the score/outcome of standings, the PAD will deal with the situation for a common sense decision. At the second forfeit of the season, the team may be removed from league play.

PLAYER CONDUCT:

Players are responsible for fair, sportsmanlike and polite behavior at all times. No fighting will be tolerated. Foul, vile or vulgar language will not be used on the field either toward other players, referees, or in general. Referees are instructed to card offenders. Any fight will result in an immediate Red Card, suspension, fine, and loss of team point(s) to whoever began the confrontation. All other individuals who get involved in a mass confrontation will be also suspended and/or penalized and fined. Games will be terminated if any non-team members enter the field at any time, with the team the non-team member(s) is/are part of losing the game as a forfeit.

Referee abuse will not be tolerated. Assault includes the following acts committed upon a referee: hitting, kicking, punching, choking, spitting at, or on, grabbing, stepping on, or running into a referee; the act of kicking or throwing any object at a referee, damaging the referee's uniform or personal property. Referee abuse is also defined as a verbal attack or physical approach that implies or threatens physical harm to a referee or the referee's property or equipment. Verbal threats are remarks that carry the implied or direct threat of physical harm. Threats such as: "I'll get you after the game" or "You won't get out of here in one piece" shall be deemed referee abuse. Commission of any of the preceding acts will carry a 6 month to lifetime ban determined by the PAD - all committee decisions are final.

REFEREES:

All game decisions made by the referees assigned are final. No appeals will be accepted pertaining to

decisions by the referee. No one shall enter the field of play without the referee's permission, except during substitutions.

REFUNDS:

There shall be no refunds once paid. The exception to refunds shall be if a league does not start and/or dissolves.

CHECK-IN PROCEDURE:

All players are to check in 30 minutes before their game and provide a picture government ID before every game. Merced United League will verify every player before every game and provide a colored bracelet to every player. Teams will have different colored bracelets. Players cannot play without having on an assigned colored bracelet.

UNDERAGE PLAYERS:

In 35+: players must turn 35 anytime during the current calendar year.

All other divisions:

1. Teams are permitted a maximum of two underage male players on their roster, but the players must:
 - a. Be 17 at the time of play.
 - b. Have parent/guardian sign waiver on the registration form in the presence of a league representative.
2. Coed teams are permitted a maximum of five underage female players on their roster, but the players must meet the standards above 1 a. & b.

UNIFORMS:

All teams are required to wear matching and numbered uniforms in order to play. Shorts and socks do not necessarily need to be of the same brand name or style but have to be of the same color (or very similar). Clashing colors will not be allowed, such as wearing green instead of red, or orange instead of royal blue. Matching and numbered pinnies are acceptable. A referee shall disallow a player from the field of play until the player is wearing team matching colors. If player refuses to change then that player shall not be allowed to play.

SCORING/ POINT CALCULATIONS:

Games played will be awarded points based on the following system:

- | | | |
|------|---|-----------------------------|
| Win | - | 3 points for winning team |
| Tie | - | 1 point for both teams |
| Loss | - | 0 points to the losing team |

SEASON POINT TIE-BREAKERS:

In case of point ties at the end of the season, the tie will be broken in this order:

1. Goal Differential
2. Head to Head winner
3. Most Goals For
4. Least Goals Against
5. Least amount of red-cards received during the season
6. Coin toss

If there is any disagreement with regards to the above rules, it will be the Merced United League representatives that shall have the final word and responsibility to interpret such rules to the parties affected.

The decision is final.