

SFL Guide for Referees
(as of March 14, 2018)

This guide is intended to serve as a summary guide to referees on the key aspects of officiating the SFL regular season/tournament games and highlight differences between SFL games and games that may be played by other leagues. If you have questions during the tournament, please call 703-476-6611. The SFL welcomes comments on how this document can be improved.

Topic	Comments
Game times	<p>Regular Season Games – Game times for U11/12 games – two 30 minute halves, U13/14 games – two 35 minute halves, U16s – two 40 minute halves. Under 19 games may consist of two 40 minute halves due to field limitations although 45 minute halves are permitted when both coaches agree.</p> <p>Tournament Games – Game times for U11/12 games are two 30 minute halves. All other age groups have two 35 minute halves.</p>
Substitutions	<p>Substitutions may be made under the following conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After a goal. • Prior to a goal kick. • Prior to the start of the second half, • Prior to a throw-in by the team in possession (the opposing team may only substitute if the team in possession substitutes). • For an injury when the injured player is replaced (the opposing team may also substitute a player at that time). • After a player caution, at the request of the player's coach (only the cautioned player may be replaced with a substitute at that time). • At water breaks, if stoppage for the break occurs during one of the above substitution opportunities. Referees are encouraged to schedule water breaks during substitution opportunities for both teams.
SFL Team Rosters – General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaches are required to exchange paper copies of the SFL Team Roster prior to the start of each game. The referee may also request each coach to provide a paper copy of the SFL Team Roster. The only acceptable roster form is the SFL Team Roster generated by the SFL. • Only the players shown on the SFL Team Roster are allowed to play. • The SFL Team Roster shows all waivers that have been granted to the team. These include medical waivers that allow a player to “play down”. It also shows players on the roster that have been assigned to the team that are not allowed to play because they have not received the necessary waiver and any limitations on the waiver provided, e.g., players that do not meet the age requirements for their teams are not normally allowed to play. • The rosters also show roster problems that may prevent a player from playing. Players who have any of the following codes associated with their name are not allowed to play unless the opposing coach agrees to let them play: DPPMNP, DUNMBC, IBDMNP, No Number, and WRPMNP. Note: If a player’s permanent uniform number is preceded with a 0, e.g., 01, the roster may show it as a duplicate number although it is not considered a duplicate and the player may play. Tape is not allowed to be used to address uniform number issues.
SFL Team Rosters – Regular Season Games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The only changes allowed on the SFL Team Roster are uniform number changes. It is expected that all players at the field will be listed on the team roster and have uniform numbers that match what is shown on the team roster. The following are the limitation on uniform number changes unless the opposing coach agrees to waive these requirements – Week 1 – Unlimited, remaining weeks – no more than 3 changes • Some teams may have been given permission by the SFL to share players for regular season games. When teams are allowed to share players, (1) the players must come from the other team shown on the SFL Team Roster and (2) the combined team may not exceed 14 players when the team plays the 11 v 11 format or 11 players when the team plays the 9 v 9 format. No teams are allowed to share players during the tournament.

Topic	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to provide a proper team roster at the game is grounds for the game to be forfeited. Forfeits due to missing rosters are not mandatory for regular season games, but they are mandatory for tournament games. A coach may also request a roster check after the game has started when circumstances warrant such a request, e.g., a number of players for the opposing team show up after the game has started and missed the initial roster check.
SFL Team Rosters – Tournament Games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roster checks are required before all games. Each coach must provide the referee a paper copy of their roster. If a coach does not provide a paper copy of the roster that team forfeits the game and the game is abandoned. If neither coach has a roster, then both teams forfeit. Players stand up in uniform number order and provide the referee with their uniform number, name, and date of birth. Tape may not be used for uniform numbers unless specifically authorized by the SFL. Players whose uniform number, name, and/or birth date do not agree with the roster are not allowed to play unless the opposing coach agrees to let them play. If a color clash between two teams exists, it is the responsibility of the home team to change colors by using an alternate colored jersey. Required numbers will be waived. Teams may not use alternate colored jerseys to avoid the requirement that the numbers on the SFL Team Roster must agree with uniform numbers worn by the players, i.e., team decides to wear alternate colored jersey although no color conflict exists. Note: Leading zeros are not considered a uniform number change.
Play down rule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A team is permitted to play with a maximum of two additional players on the field than the opposing team when the opponent does not have the maximum players allowed. However, this does not apply if the shortage is due to player(s) being sent off because the player(s) received a red card. When the goal differential reaches 5 goals, the team with the most goals is required to (1) take a player off the field and (2) take another player off for each additional goal scored until the minimum number of players is reached (six for 9 v 9 games and seven for 11 v 11 games).
Player Injuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Player injuries that result in concussions are a point of emphasis by VYSA and the SFL. While the SFL has received few reports of severe injury during SFL games, all parties should ensure that actions are taken to minimize the risk of injury to the players in our league. Referees can assist by making player safety a point of emphasis during the season. Be prepared to stop play quickly if a player appears to be injured.
Coach or Spectator Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SFL has received an increasing number of reports of coaches and spectators that are foul mouthed and verbally abusive toward officials and opposing team players and parents. Several have threatened physical violence. Referees should vigorously enforce the existing rules by ejecting anyone displaying this type of behavior and reporting them after the game. If a coach or spectator refuses to leave the field, then the game must be suspended until the offender complies and leaves the field. Complete details of the incident must be included in the game report as soon as possible after the game (include the names of the offenders if possible). The club should also make a decision on whether the offense warrants submission to VYSA’s Adjudication Committee for additional sanctions.
Ending games early	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Games may be ended early when (1) weather conditions, such as lighting, dictate or (2) insufficient daylight exists to safely play the game. This is a referee decision and the game results at the time of termination are used regardless of when the game is terminated.
Can tournament games end in ties?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most tournament games use the single elimination tournament format which means that tournament games cannot end in a tie. The coaches should know whether the game can end in a tie. The web site has whether a game can end in a tie on the Tournament Schedule page. This is obtained by going to www.sflsoccer.org/age-group-information and clicking on the age group. Games that cannot end in a tie immediately go into penalty kicks if tied at the end of regulation time. The FIFA Procedures to Determine the Winner of A Match – Kicks from the Penalty Mark will apply, in accordance with applicable USSF guidance, unless otherwise instructed by the SFL.