

Suburban Friendship League
2416 Rosedown Drive
Reston, VA 20191-1620
September 1, 2022

Dear Coaches and Club Officials:

This season the SFL scheduled about 470 teams. We would like to welcome back the returning teams and extend a special welcome to those who are new to the SFL and hope that all teams have an enjoyable season.

It is the SFL's goal to provide timely and accurate information to the clubs and teams playing in this league. Our Web Site (www.sflsoccer.org) helps us accomplish this objective. Our Email address is sfl@sflsoccer.org. The Web Site contains most of the information in your package and we will try to keep it updated. We would appreciate any comments you may have on how the league operations can be improved. Additional information about the season's operations and our web site is discussed below.

This is considered the season mailing and contains the following:

- Season letter
- Information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on concussions.
- Information from US Soccer on concussions.
- Information concerning lighting safety.
- Overview of SFL Processes and Procedures for Coaches and SFL Club Representatives
- SFL Club and Coach Guide
- SFL Administrative Rules for The Laws of the Game
- Listing of team contacts, Email addresses (see discussion below), and phone numbers. This listing also provides the contact information for the SFL Commissioner and SFL Age Group Commissioners. (This information is not published on the web site version).
- Listing of SFL Club Representatives. **You should contact your SFL Club Representative concerning questions that arise during the season. Also, if you have problems contacting another team during the season, you should contact that team's SFL Club Representative. The SFL Age Group Commissioners will formally respond only to matters referred to them by the appropriate SFL Club Representative.** (This information is not published on the web site version.)

We have also developed a Guide for Game Officials that extracts the key material from the above documents that relate to the game officials in one easy-to-use document. In addition to posting this document to the SFL web site on the SFL Documents page, the SFL will be sending this guide to SFL Club Referee Coordinators for their use.

The SFL has three key documents that govern its operations.

- Overview of SFL Processes and Procedures for Coaches and SFL Club Representatives
- SFL Administrative Rules for the Laws of the Game
- SFL Club and Coach Guide

We would like you to take some time and review the Overview of SFL Processes and Procedures for Coaches and SFL Club Representatives Document. This is designed to provide (1) a one page summary of the key SFL Club Representative duties and dead lines, (2) a one page summary for each of the seven (7) SFL processes, and (3) a glossary of terms commonly used in the process charts and by the SFL, e.g., proper red card report, scheduling forfeit, game rescheduling, etc. Reviewing pages 3, 4, and 5 of this document should help the vast majority of the coaches (1) understand what they must do and (2) how their actions (or inactions) impact their team, club, and the SFL. Spending a few more minutes reading the glossary of terms, will also provide a better understanding of the specific requirements discussed in the process charts. We welcome suggestions on how to make this summary guide more useful.

KEY DATES

The following are some of the key dates:

Date	Event
September 7	Deadline for providing the Master Player Roster that will be used by the SFL to generate the SFL Team Rosters (see discussion below).
September 8	SFL Team Rosters provided to SFL Club Representatives
September 9	Coaches provided approved rosters by SFL Club Representative.
September 10	First game weekend.
September 10	Coaches allowed an unlimited number of uniform number changes on their SFL Team Rosters. Starting on September 17, teams are limited to three (3) uniform changes.
September 28	Last day to submit uniform number changes to SFL Team Rosters – SFL Team Rosters are considered final for the season.
October 8	Holiday weekend – No games

INCOMPLETE GAME AND FIELD INFORMATION

We did not receive all the game field and time information for some of the games scheduled since some clubs are waiting for the travel schedules to set these games to maximize the referees and field slots. Once we are provided with this information, we will update the web site. In addition, several clubs did not confirm that the field slots submitted were still correct prior to the publication of the game schedules. Accordingly, please check the web site before your game is played to make sure that the most current information is being used. The web site highlights recent game changes and Google Maps is available to assist in getting field directions.

SIGNIFICANT RULE CHANGES

Most rules for this season are fairly consistent with those used in past seasons. The SFL Documents page (www.sflsoccer.org/sfl-documents/) contains a discussion of all the rule and process changes considered by the SFL Club Representatives for the Fall 2022 season and the rationale used for by the SFL Commissioners when recommending or adopting or rejecting a given proposal. During the Fall 2022 Preseason meeting, the SFL Club Representatives did not accept all the recommended changes. Accordingly, the final rules and process changes may be different than those shown in the Proposed Changes document.

The following are the significant rule and process changes adopted by the SFL Club Representatives for this season.

- **Excessive Game Scores** – Although the winning team is still required to reduce the number of players on the field once the goal differential reaches four (4) goals until the minimum number of players required for a game is reached, **it is up to the losing and winning coaches to determine when a game should be terminated, i.e., neither the winning coach nor the game official is required to terminate the game once a given score differential is reached.** No penalties are assessed for games terminated early because of excessive score differentials. Specifically, the losing team may terminate the game once the score differential reaches four (4) goals and the winning coach may terminate the game once the goal differential requires the team to remove a player that would cause the team to only have the minimum number of players on the field. **In addition, when both coaches agree to continue playing a game after the minimum number of players is reached and the winning team scores another goal, the winning team no longer is required to remove a player.** No forfeits are assessed for excessive game scores or where game officials fail to enforce the play down rule since the losing coach may terminate the game at any time without penalty once the goal differential reaches four (4) goals. Section X. of the SFL Administrative Rules for the Laws of the Game discusses this subject.
- **Eliminating the Covid Guide as a Separate Document** – Due to the changing COVID guidance, the clubs agreed to streamline the guidance and eliminate the COVID Guide. Section VI.B. of the Club and Coach Guide now contains the streamlined guidance. This section embraces a fundamental concept of letting (1) the two affected clubs make the decision on whether playing the game complies with a given club's COVID guidelines and (2) whether both teams believe that the game should be played. Accordingly, the applicable SFL Club

Representatives and coaches are involved in the ultimate decisions on how the situation is addressed and the best approach to ensure that a safe environment is maintained by all and that the actions taken are compliant with the affected clubs' COVID protocols and individual team concerns.

- **Special Bonus Season Games and Tournament Games** – Due to the inability of the clubs to support the SFL tournament, the tournament was replaced with Special Bonus Season Games during the Spring 2022 season. Unfortunately, during the Spring 2022 season we found that even this limited number of games could not be supported by the clubs and many teams were unable to commit to the games and numerous games had to be cancelled which prevented teams that desired to play from having a game. Accordingly, the clubs decided to simply adopt an eight (8) game season that is scheduled at the season outset. The reduced costs by eliminating the tournament and Special Bonus Season Games have been passed onto the clubs through reduced team registration fees.

We would also like to highlight the following rules.

- **Wednesday phone call** – The home team is required to contact the visiting team on the Wednesday preceding the weekend's game. While this has been a long-standing requirement, based on reports received this has not been done as much as it should have been done. The purpose of this discussion is to resolve such issues as potential color conflicts and field directions.
- **Misconduct issues and reporting game scores** – Both teams are required to report game misconduct issues involving red cards and individuals being asked to leave the field on the day of the game or forfeits may be assessed. Both coaches are also responsible for report game scores for games not involving disciplinary issues by Monday at 6 PM without a penalty. (Club and Coach Guide – Section VI.B.5.a.(1))
- **Color clashes and leading zeros on uniform numbers** – Section IV.B. of the SFL Administrative Rules for the Laws of the Game discusses how color clashes must be resolved. The key point is that the alternate color uniform must have a number that is consistent with SFL Team Roster or (for regular season games only) are shown as one of the acceptable uniform number changes on the SFL Team Roster. In addition, the SFL Team Roster system accepts leading zeros to uniform numbers. Accordingly, if a player's uniform number has a leading zero, e.g., "07", then that number must be shown on the Master Player Roster. Finally, while the jerseys that goalkeepers may use are not required to have a uniform number, the goalkeeper is required to have an appropriate field jersey should a roster check be performed. (Club and Coach Guide – Section IV.B.3. discusses these issues in more detail.)
- **Names shown on SFL Team Rosters** – If a uniform has a player's name on it or a player has a nick name that is not common to the name shown on the Master Player Roster, then that name must be shown on the SFL Team Roster. For example, assume the player goes by his/her middle name but the Master Player Roster only shows the first and last names of the player. The middle

name should be shown on the Master Player Roster. In addition, final SFL Team Rosters will be generated after Wednesday following the week 3 games. (SFL Administrative Rules for the Laws of the Game – Section III.B.2.)

- **Game cancellations and rescheduling games** – The game cancellation and rescheduling process are discussed in Section VII. of the Club and Coach Guide. Please remember that (1) the SFL must be notified by the club on the day a game is cancelled and (2) clubs are encouraged to decide on the day prior to the game day for games starting prior to 10 AM for regular season games. This section also discusses (1) when clubs are allowed to make changes in games for the convenience of the club and (2) when opposing coaches are required to agree to such changes.

WEB SITE AND PRIVACY POLICY

Each team has an individual team schedule with field directions. These pages can be found by selecting **Team Information/ Schedules** and then selecting the **Individual team schedules with game results and field directions** for a given age group, e.g., Under 12 Boys, from the home page. **You may not add any team specific information to this page and the page cannot be customized for a given team.** A privacy policy has also been developed and we encourage you to take a few minutes to read it. The privacy policy link can be found on the left side of our home page.

Please review the information that pertains to you and your team(s) and **notify your SFL Club Representative immediately of any errors.** If you have questions on any of these materials, please call Chris Martin at (703) 476-6611 or by Email at sfl@sflsoccer.org or check the information on the Web Site (www.sflsoccer.org). Please familiarize yourself with the information contained in this package and carry out your administrative responsibilities as soon as possible.

Good luck and we hope you have a successful and fulfilling season.

John Paladino
SFL Commissioner