



## **Rules, Guidelines, And Procedures**

## **Mission Statement**

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Sunshine Conference exists to provide elite 13U-19U teams with the opportunity to compete against the most competitive teams within the state of Florida. The Sunshine Conference is operated by the FYSA State Office staff and serves as a statewide league designed to complement the USYS League Structure, including the USYS National League Showcase Series and USYS National League Southern Conferences. The overall direction of the league falls under the Sunshine Conference league manager, with support from the FYSA VP of Competition.

## **Definitions**

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1. “Registered” means having the intent to play the sport of soccer and having paid the fees to become a member of Florida Youth Soccer Association and USYS (US Youth Soccer).
2. “Rostered” means a registered player has been assigned to a club’s team roster.
3. “Eligible” means registered, rostered as a verified player under a Primary or Club Pass designation, and not under suspension or in bad standing.

## **100. League Management**

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### 100. Sunshine Conference League Manager

**100.1** The Sunshine Conference League Manager will be appointed by US Youth Soccer. The day-to-day operations of the Sunshine Conference will fall under the responsibility of the FYSA State Office.

## **200. General Rules**

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### 201. Eligibility

**201.1** Teams from registered FYSA member clubs in good standing and from the age groups of 13U to 19U that are currently registered and in good standing with FYSA.

**201.2** Team and player eligibility requirements are the same as those used by FYSA in its Rules and those of USYS in its National Champions Series rules. The Sunshine Conference is not part of the National Championship Series but uses their eligibility requirement to ensure compliance for FYSA teams that enter into the National Championship Series competition.

**201.3** Coaches who are rostered to a team and players who are rostered to a team as Primary or Club Pass players are eligible to participate in Sunshine Conference games. Secondary and Guest players are not permitted. The participation of an ineligible player will result in the game being declared a Forfeit as detailed in Section 308.

### 202. Participation

**202.1** All applications must be completed on-line by the established deadline. Payments must be received by the application deadline. Failure to provide league fee payment by the application deadline may result in the team's removal from consideration for the league and/or a late fee no greater than \$100.

**202.2** Submitting an application is NOT a guarantee of acceptance into the Sunshine Conference. It is the teams responsibility to have the correct information on the application.

**202.3** Eligible teams may only participate in their age group. Playing up an age group is not permitted unless it is designated as a combined age group.

**202.4** Clubs will be notified of their team’s application status and placement by the last Friday of June. Application is considered the teams agreement to participate in the league.

**202.5** Withdrawing from the league after the application has been accepted but prior to start of play will result in forfeiture of the entry fee and an additional \$2,500 fine.

### 203. Fees

**203.1** The FYSA Competition Committee shall set the entry fee for the following season by December 31. Teams will be responsible for required travel, and referee fees.

**203.2** Referee Fees - Each team will pay ½ of the total Referee fees for each given match. The current fees are below. All fees will be paid in cash prior to the start of the match.

<b>Group</b>	<b>Total Fee</b>	<b>Center</b>	<b>AR1</b>	<b>AR2</b>	<b>Total Per Team</b>
13U-14U	\$120.00	\$60	\$30	\$30	\$60
15U-16U	\$140.00	\$70	\$35	\$35	\$70
17U-19U	\$160.00	\$80	\$40	\$40	\$80

**203.3** Referee Assignor Fees - All Referee Assignor fees for games hosted at a neutral location will be covered by FYSA.

### 204. Bond

**204.1** Sunshine Conference reserves the right to require a team to post a performance bond of up to \$500 prior to the start of the season. During the season, Sunshine Conference may also require a team to post a performance bond prior to the team’s next game in response to incidents of non-compliance.

## **300. Playing Rules**

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### 301. Laws

**301.1** The Sunshine Conference will be played in accordance with FIFA Laws of the Game Observed by USSF and USYS with the adjustments outlined in this document.

### 302. Minimum Number of Players

**302.1** Teams may begin play with a minimum of seven players and at no time may be the number of players on the field drop below 7 players per team. The addition of late arriving players, who are on the official roster, will take place with the permission of the Referee and at regular legal substitution periods. The opposing team may play at full strength.

### 303. Age Format

**303.1** Age groups will play as follows:

AGE	FORMAT	ROSTER LIMIT	BALL SIZE	HALFTIME	HALVES
13U	11v11	24**	5	10	2x35 min.
14U	11v11	24**	5	10	2x35 min.
15U	11v11	24**	5	15	2x40 min.
16U	11v11	24**	5	15	2x40 min.
17U	11v11	24**	5	15	2x45 min.
19U	11v11	24**	5	15	2x45 min.

### 304. Club Pass Players

**304.1** An eligible club pass player is one who is properly rostered to a team within the same club. A team may have no more than thirteen (13) club pass players on their roster for any game. The total roster of primary and club pass players may not exceed 22, with 18 named per game.

### 305. Weather

**305.1** If lightning is in the immediate area, the Referee and/or Site Administrator will suspend play or delay start of the match. USSF Lightning Policy will be followed. Such delay or suspension must remain for a minimum of 30 minutes past the last sighting of lightning or longer at the

discretion of the Referee. If a match is cancelled prior to starting or during the first half due to weather, the match will be rescheduled and replayed in its entirety. Matches in which the first half of the game has been completed will be considered completed. Sunshine Conference, FYSA, USYS, nor anyone affiliated with them, assumes any responsibility or liability if a match is cancelled in whole or in part for any reasons, weather related or not.

### 306. Players' Uniforms and Equipment

**306.1** Each player shall have a number on the player's jersey. The number shall be affixed to the back of the jersey and shall be clearly visible. Duplicate numbers are not permitted.

**306.2** In the event of a uniform color conflict, the team designated as the home team will wear light colored jerseys and socks, and the team designated as the away team will wear dark colored jerseys and socks.

**306.3** Goalkeepers must wear colors that distinguish them from other players and game officials.

**306.4** A player or team official at a game site to participate in a game and all other activities of the competition may only have on the outer wear of the player or team official a name, logo, or other identifying mark of a youth soccer organization that is US Youth Soccer, a State Association or other member of US Youth Soccer, a member of a State Association, or an organization that is a member of an organization that is a member of a State Association. A name, logo, or other identifying mark of any other youth soccer organization not affiliated with FYSA or US Youth Soccer must be removed, replaced, or covered before the player or team official may continue to remain at the game site or related events.

**306.5** The Referee is the sole judge of allowed player equipment as prescribed by FIFA Laws of the Game.

### 307. Check In

**307.1** It is recommended that each team submit all appropriate paperwork to the referee at least 30 minutes prior to each match. All credential verification must be completed by the start of the match.

**307.2** Each team must have the following items present prior to the start of the match

- A.** A one sided USYS laminated pass issued by FYSA and signed by the issuing registrar for each rostered player and coach. Each pass must have a recent picture. Players must be verified and coaches must show as KidSafe/CDC/Safesport Approved.

personnel who do not meet these requirements are not permitted to participate in the upcoming match. Failing to uphold this rule will result in the match being declared a forfeit.

- B.** An official Sunshine Conference game report printed from Gotsoccer for each team with accurate jersey numbers for each player.
  
- C.** A properly signed medical release form for each rostered player will remain in the possession of the coach or team manager. (Not required by Referee at check-in but team must have in its possession). Medical Releases are not required to be notarized.

**307.3** Teams without the minimum required players will be allowed a fifteen (15) minute grace period from the scheduled kick-off time before the match will be deemed a forfeit. All credentials must be checked and verified prior to the start times while waiting for the additional players to show. At the discretion of the league extended time may be allowed for unforeseen circumstances.

**307.4** Failure to present items detailed in Rule 307.2 will cause the dismissal of players which may result in an Administrative Forfeit of the match per Rule 307.3.

### 308. Forfeited and Terminated Matches

**308.1** Standard Forfeit – considered as a game in which one or both teams fail to show at a scheduled game, but notice was given to the Sunshine Conference League Manager at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled start of the match. For games that are classified in this manner, the opponent of the violating team will be awarded a 4-0 win. The violating team will be charged with a fine of \$1000.

**308.2** Short Notice Forfeit – considered as a game in which a team fails to show for a scheduled match without a minimum 72 hour notice. A team that fails to appear for a duly scheduled match without a minimum 72 hour notice to both the opponent and Sunshine Conference League Manager or his designee, shall be subject to the following:

- A.** The team will be fined \$1000 per match, up to an additional \$1,000 per match which will be redistributed to each affiliate as needed to reimburse travel expenses, and a \$500 performance bond will be required to be paid to FYSA within 30 days of the official forfeited match. If they fail to do so, the club will be placed in Not In Good Standing.
  
- B.** The club shall be placed in Not in Good Standing until such time that both the performance bond and fine are paid.

- C. The team may be barred from participation in the Sunshine Conference for the remainder of the seasonal year that the forfeit(s) occurred.

**308.3** Abandoned Match – Any match that is terminated for any reason outside the scope of weather, Sunshine Conference or team administration error, or hosting site error may be considered an Abandoned Match. A team which is found to be at fault for a game's abandonment will be scored a 0-4 loss, will be fined \$1,000, and any persons who are identified as contributing to the termination of a match may be subject to FYSA Code of Ethics violations. When the situation causing the abandonment is such that league officials cannot assign responsibility and each team will be fined up to \$1,000. The game will not be included in the standings.

**308.4** Any team which fails to play two or more officially scheduled games may be considered to be disqualified and will be fined \$1,000 in addition to any other fines assessed. A disqualified team's games will not count to determine standings.

**308.5** A team may appeal the assessment of the penalties if they can demonstrate catastrophic circumstance that precluded the team from participation. Catastrophic means an auto accident in route to the match, severe weather, such as a tornado or flood, or other situations that impacts the entire team. Avoidable conflicts are not considered to be catastrophic circumstances.

### 309. Touchline and Technical Areas

**309.1** Teams shall take opposite sidelines for their benches. Home teams have choice of preferred sidelines. Parents must take the same sideline as their respective team.

**309.2** No more than 4 Team Officials will be permitted in the technical area.

**309.3** All spectators will be located across from opposing teams bench.

### 310. Coach Requirements

**310.1** Each team will have a rostered and properly registered coach holding a USSF D License in the technical area for the duration of the match. Only individuals listed on the teams' roster will be permitted on the team's bench area. A match in which a team does not meet this requirement will be considered a forfeit. An exemption may be granted at the discretion of the League Manager.



## 311. Conduct

**311.1** Coaches are responsible for their behavior, for the conduct of the players, team staff, and spectators of their respective team. Coaches shall be familiar with the FYSA Code of Ethics.

**311.2** Referees are authorized to take appropriate action(s) to maintain proper control of matches. If the referee terminates play due to unruly behavior the match is recorded as an Abandoned Match and may result in further sanctions as defined in Section 308.

**311.3** Any person(s) “sent off” from a match either by being shown a red card (or asked to leave) according to FIFA Laws of the Game shall not participate further in that match and shall serve a suspension as set forth in FYSA Rule 502. Any player “sent off” may not be substituted. A player that receives a red card may remain on the team bench for the remainder of the match provided the player does not cause any additional problems.

**311.4** A player who has been ejected from a Sunshine Conference match will be suspended from their next scheduled Sunshine Conference match or if the season has ended the suspension will be served in the next higher match scheduled, National Showcase Series, State Cup or National Championship Series competition, whichever comes first. Failure to comply with this rule will result in the match being declared a forfeit, and additional individual penalties will be enforced per FYSA rules.

**311.5** Any coach, trainer, parent, or other person(s) removed from a Sunshine Conference match will serve their suspension from the next scheduled Sunshine Conference match or if the season has ended the suspension will be served in their next Sunshine Conference, National League, State Cup or National Cup competition, whichever comes first. Failure to comply with this rule will result in the match being declared an Administrative Forfeit, and additional individual penalties will be enforced per FYSA rules.

**311.6** Any Red Card issued during a Sunshine Conference game that is also counted as a game in another USYS sanctioned league will be reported to and served in the higher league.

**311.7** Violations that are deemed of a serious nature (including but not limited to fighting, assaults, threats, Referee abuse, etc.) may require further disciplinary action as referenced in FYSA Rule 502.

**311.8** The player card of the “sent off” player will be collected by the Referee, used in the completing the Match Report and returned to the team coach or team official after the conclusion of the match.

### 312. Substitution of Player

**312.1 Premier Division** – 13U/14U age groups will have unlimited substitutions. The 15U – 19U age groups will have limited substitutions. A maximum of 7 substitutions for each team will be allowed in each half of play. After leaving the game during a half of play, the substituted player may not re-enter the game during that same half of play.

1<sup>st</sup> Division – All age groups will have unlimited substitutions

**312.2** A cautioned player (shown a yellow card according to FIFA Laws of the Game) may be substituted by the coach, but substitution is not required.

### 313. Match Reports

**313.1** The Referee will complete and sign the official game report then return it to the Home Team official. Reports will include the printed name of all 3 USSF licensed referees. Each coach must verify the match results before legibly signing the report.

**313.2** Reports will be uploaded into the winning team document tab in Gotsoccer. In the event of a tie, the home team will be responsible for uploading the document within two (2) business days of the match completion date. Failure to do so will result in a \$50 fine. The report must be kept by the winning team manager (home team in event of a tie) until the end of season. Teams will be provided access to report score. The winning team is responsible to enter the final score along with misconducts into GotSoccer within 24 hours of the completion of the match.

### 314. Rosters

**314.1** Each team will produce an official Sunshine Conference game report roster for all matches. The referee will determine which game report will become the official document. Any person(s) serving a suspension must be crossed off and noted in writing on the Game report, as serving a suspension during the match that the roster is issued for and does not need to be included as part of the 18 players named for that match.

## **400. Protests and Appeals**

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### 401. Protest Requirements

**401.1** All questions relating to the qualifications of the competitors or interpretation of the rules, or any dispute or protest shall be referred to the Sunshine Conference League Manager. A protest may be discarded in the case that the protest violates any portion outlined below.

**401.2** All protests relating to the ground, goal posts, bars or other appurtenances of the game shall be entertained only if a written objection has been lodged with the referee and the opposing coach prior to the start of the game.

#### 402. Filing a Protest

**402.1** All match protests must be filed with and to the attention of the Sunshine Conference League Manager, no later than noon of the next FYSA business day.

**402.2** All protests related to the decisions of the Sunshine Conference League Manager must be filed with and to the attention of the League Manager, no later than the end of business one week after the decision was communicated.

**402.3** All Protests must include the following items:

- A.** A verdict-dependent refundable fee in the amount of \$500. This fee may be in cash, cashier's check, or money order (Payment is to be made payable to "FYSA"). Personal checks will not be accepted.
- B.** Protest must include full particulars of the grounds on which the protest is lodged.
- C.** Protest must include any information to be presented by witnesses.

#### 403. Protest Procedure

**403.1** Upon receipt of a protest which meets the above criteria the team against which the protest is made shall be given a copy of the protest and all particulars and will then have a right to defend its case, with or without witnesses.

**403.2** A plea of ignorance to the rules and regulations of the Sunshine Conference is not sufficient grounds for protest. Judgment decisions of the referee are not subject to protest.

**403.3** The Sunshine Conference League Manager shall compile the necessary information to hear the protest, from all available sources before the protest is heard. This shall include, if possible, coaches, field marshals, referees, assessors, witnesses, if necessary, etc. All materials will be treated with confidentiality. After compiling the necessary information, the Sunshine Conference Commission will meet to review the protest. The decisions of the Commission shall be binding upon all parties.

**403.4** The Sunshine Conference League Manager will notify the parties of the final decision.

## **500. Structure and Schedules**

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### 501. Division Structure

**501.1** In most cases there will be a Premier Division and a First Division in each age group. Depending on the number of teams in the age group there may be only one division.

### 502. Schedule

**502.1** Sunshine Conference teams will be scheduled to play at neutral locations on the published play dates.

**502.2** A rescheduling period will be available prior to the start of season in which teams can reschedule games against local teams to a local venue.

### 503. Hosting Requirements

**503.1** Hosting Clubs are required to provide the following items on game days:

- A.** Adequate hydration for opposing clubs
- B.** Adequate seating in technical area for visiting teams
- C.** A certified ATC or medical personnel prior to the start of any match

### 504. Unplayed/ Rescheduled Games

**504.1** Sunshine Conference Commission reserves the right to schedule unplayed games in order to complete the league.

**504.2** Teams that request a game reschedule, outside of catastrophic reasoning, will be assessed a \$250 fee. This fee is only assessed if the game is scheduled at a location and has referees assigned.

## **600. Team Responsibilities**

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### 601. Game Day Responsibilities

**601.1** Both teams will be responsible for:

- A.** Provide a Sunshine Conference Game Report to the Referee at least 30 minutes prior to each scheduled match.
- B.** Presenting at least one match ball to the referee prior to the start of each match for the Referee's approval as the match ball.
- C.** Present the Player/ Coach passes for the active participants in the upcoming match.

## **700. Team Standings**

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### 701. Point System

**701.1** Team Standings in each bracket will be determined by a three-point system. Teams will be awarded points for each match as follows:

Win = 3 points

Tie = 1 point

Loss = 0 points

### 702. Tiebreakers

**702.1** In the event that at the conclusion of the season teams are tied on the basis of the points earned, the following tiebreakers will be considered in order until the tie is broken:

- A.** Winner of head-to-head competition. (This criterion is not used if more than two teams are tied.)
- B.** Most wins.
- C.** Team with greatest net goal differential (NGD) which is computed as "goals for" minus "goals against" with a maximum of +/- 4 NGD in each game.
- D.** Team with the most goals (maximum of 4 goals in each game.)

- E. Team with least goals against (there is NO limit on the number of goals that will be counted to determine this tiebreaker.)
- F. A blind draw will be held to determine the final standings for the seeding advancement requirements.

**702.2** More Than Two Teams Tied:

- A. If more than two (2) teams are tied, the sequence will be followed until a team is eliminated or selected over one of the tied teams. The remaining teams will then restart the sequence at #2 above until the tie is broken.
- B. If three teams are still tied after computing the listed tiebreakers, a blind draw will be held to determine the final standings for the seeding advancement requirements.
- C. If four teams are still tied after computing the listed tiebreakers, a blind draw will be held to determine the final standings for the seeding advancement requirements.

## **Amendments**

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### 800. Amendments

**800.** Amendments to the Sunshine Conference Rules, Guidelines and Procedures (this document) regarding playing rules may be implemented by the Sunshine Conference Commission between seasons. Amendments specific to the structure of the league and governance (predominately Rule 100) must be ratified by the FYSA Board of Directors before taking effect.

# FYSA Code of Ethics

## Coaches/ Volunteers

- I will never place the value of winning before the safety and welfare of all players.
- I will always show respect for players, other coaches, and game officials.
- I will lead by example, demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship at all times.
- I will demonstrate knowledge of the rules of the game, and teach these rules to my players.
- I will never use abusive or insulting language. I will treat everyone with dignity.
- I will not tolerate inappropriate behavior, regardless of the situation.
- I will not allow the use of anabolic agents or stimulants, drugs, tobacco, or alcohol by any of my players.
- I will never knowingly jeopardize the eligibility and participation of a student-athlete.
- Youth have a greater need for example than criticism. I will be the primary soccer role model.
- I will at all times conduct myself in a positive manner.
- Coaching is motivating players to produce their best effort, inspiring players to learn, and encouraging players to be winners.
- My actions on sidelines during games shall be in the spirit of “good sportsmanship” at all times. Profanity, profane gestures, arguing, inciting disruptive behavior by spectators and/or players, or any conduct not in the spirit of good sportsmanship, shall require disciplinary action from the affiliate.
- I shall not possess, consume or distribute before, during or after any game or at any other time at the field and/or game complex alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs or unauthorized prescription drugs.
- I will refrain from any activity or conduct that may be detrimental or reflect adversely upon FYSA, its members or its programs.
- I will accurately and completely complete the coach/volunteer application form and by application attest to the accuracy of the information submitted.

## Players

- I will encourage good sportsmanship from fellow players, coaches, officials and parents at all times.
- I will remember that soccer is an opportunity to learn and have fun.
- I deserve to play in an environment that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol; and expect everyone to refrain from their use at all soccer games.
- I will do the best I can each day, remembering that all players have talents and weaknesses the same as I do
- I will treat my coaches, other players and coaches, game officials, other administrators, and fans with respect at all times; regardless of race, sex, creed, or abilities, and I will expect to be treated accordingly
- I will concentrate on playing soccer. Always giving my best effort
- I will play by the rules at all times
- I will at all times control my temper, resisting the temptation of retaliation.
- I will always exercise self control.
- My conduct during competition towards play of the game and all officials shall be in accordance with appropriate behavior and in accordance with FIFA’s “Laws of the Game,” and in adherence to FYSA rules.
- While traveling, I shall conduct myself so as to bring credit to myself and my team
- I shall not possess, consume or distribute before, during or after any game or at any other time at the field and/or game complex alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs or unauthorized prescription drugs.
- I will never use abusive or insulting language. I will treat everyone with dignity.