

**SYA U19 (NCSL REC) SOCCER MODIFICATIONS TO THE IFAB 2025/26 LAWS OF THE GAME  
MARCH 31, 2026**

Law 1	The Field of Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Field Dimensions: 100-130 yards long by 50-100 yards wide</li> <li>- Center Circle: 10-yard radius</li> <li>- Goal Area: 6 x 20 yards</li> <li>- Penalty Area: 18 x 44 yards</li> <li>- Penalty Mark: 12 yards from goal line</li> <li>- Penalty Arc: 10-yard radius from penalty mark</li> <li>- Corner Arc: 1 yard radius</li> <li>- Corner flags are not mandatory; substitute items must be safe if used</li> <li>- Goals: 7 x 21 feet</li> </ul>
Law 2	The Ball	Size 5
Law 3	The Players	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 11 v 11 – 10 field players plus 1 goalkeeper</li> <li>- Minimum of 7 players to start/continue game</li> <li>- No team captains are required on field of play nor any player wear qualifying armband</li> </ul>
	Team Rosters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coaches must provide <u>paper copy</u> of official team roster to referee before game can begin; electronic rosters are not acceptable. No roster = forfeit</li> <li>- <u>Referee must perform player check-in</u> using paper copies of each team's roster. Players not listed or incorrectly listed on roster cannot play unless NCSL REC validates eligibility</li> <li>- Uniform number changes on roster are governed by NCSL REC rules</li> </ul>
	Grace Period	None. Referees should use common sense for late-arriving players to determine whether a game can be started within 5 minutes of scheduled kickoff time
	Substitutions	Unlimited in accordance with NCSL REC rules
	Participation Rule	Every player must play at least 50% of game
	Play Down Rule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No team can play with more than 2 additional players than their opponent</li> <li>- Also applies when players are temporarily off field due to injury or equipment issues</li> <li>- Does not apply when players are sent-off (red card)</li> </ul>
	Goal Differential (Mercy Rule)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 4 goals – leading team must remove 1 field player for each goal above 4-goal differential (until minimum number of 7 players to continue game is reached)</li> <li>- <u>NCSL REC Mercy Rule</u>: trailing team coach can ask referee to terminate game at any time if team trails by 4 or more goals. Both coaches can agree to continue game even if goal differential reaches 8 or more goals</li> </ul>
Law 4	The Players' Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Uniform numbers are required and must be indicated on shirt</li> <li>- Each player must have a unique number (not required for alternate shirts)</li> </ul>
Law 5	The Referee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Head coach is responsible for behavior of all players, team officials, and spectators</li> <li>- Referees can show yellow/red cards to coaches/team officials but not to spectators</li> </ul>
Law 6	The Other Match Officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If requested by the referee, home and away team coaches may provide "club linesman" to assist referee with ball in and out of play decisions</li> <li>- Club linesman may indicate possession/direction of restart at referee's discretion</li> </ul>
Law 7	The Duration of the Match	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2 x 40-minute halves (no added time) (total game time = 80 minutes)</li> <li>- 5-minute halftime</li> <li>- Referees can incorporate up to 3-minute water/hydration/cooling break in any half</li> </ul>
Law 8	The Start and Restart of Play	No SYA modifications to the Laws of the Game
Law 9	The Ball In and Out of Play	No SYA modifications to the Laws of the Game
Law 10	Determining the Outcome of a Match	No SYA modifications to the Laws of the Game
Law 11	Offside	No SYA modifications to the Laws of the Game
Law 12	Fouls and Misconduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All female players may use their hands or arms for chest protection</li> <li>- Any player may use their hands or arms to protect their head, face, or neck from impact with the ball (at referee's discretion)</li> <li>- Slide tackling is permitted</li> </ul>
Law 13	The Free Kick	No SYA modifications to the Laws of the Game
Law 14	The Penalty Kick	No SYA modifications to the Laws of the Game
Law 15	The Throw-In	No SYA modifications to the Laws of the Game
Law 16	The Goal Kick	No SYA modifications to the Laws of the Game
Law 17	The Corner Kick	No SYA modifications to the Laws of the Game