

**Roanoke Soccer League
Constitution and Bylaws
Adopted February 22, 2025**

<https://roanokesoccer.com/>

The purpose of Roanoke Soccer League is to provide an enjoyable experience for each participant while developing character, skills, sportsmanship, and to promote good will among all teams and individuals. Although sports are competitive by nature, RSL's intends to place less emphasis on winning, while promoting the building of lifetime physical activity and health for each participant.

Disclaimer: RSL will abide by the rules of the "United States Soccer Federation" and FIFA and these rules will apply to the By-laws except as modified herein.

Playing Year

The RSL has year-round playing seasons, these being Winter, Spring and Fall. The Spring season will run from April 1st-July 1st and the fall season will run from September 9th-November 1st and winter season from December -March.

Age Classification

1. Age determined on July 31 of the current season.
2. All players must be at least 18 years of age
3. Only properly registered players may participate in sanctioned league games. Violations of this rule, including but not limited to the use of non-registered players, will result in all or any combination of the following disciplinary actions as determined by the Board or its disciplinary committee:
 - a. A fine of not less than \$100.00 per ineligible player, to be imposed on the team committing the infraction. The fine is to be paid before the next game.
 - b. Suspension of the team coach and/or team representative for a minimum of two games in the current or succeeding season of play.
 - c. Failure to pay the assessed fines or adhere to suspensions will result in the suspension of the offending team and each registered player of the team and forfeiture of games as determined by the RSL.

Fees

The registration fees are to include the following:

- Player fee-fees determined by the sanctioning board of MDCVSA.
- Field fees
- Referee fees

- Fees are subject to change per season due to changes in payment by services used by the RSL. These include but are not limited to: referee fees, field fees, and sanctioning fees.

Refunds

No refunds will be provided following the first scheduled league game unless one or more of the following criteria are met:

- The player moves out of town and can no longer play in the RSL
- Medical reasons, including pregnancy which prevent the player from playing.
- The team disbands.
- Refunds will be prorated from the original player's fees less the sanctioning fee.

Requests for exceptions to these rules must be presented in writing to the RSL board for consideration. Once a player is registered with the league, only a partial refund will be issued.

Insurance

Players are responsible for their own **primary** medical insurance. The RSL will purchase liability insurance and supplementary medical insurance through the MDCVSA. MDCVSA runs from Jan-Dec. The \$20 will be collected at Spring registration.

Identification

All players must have current and valid identification with them at all games. Team reps may also vouch for their players but all players at games **MUST** be on the current roster.

Transfers

1. A player in good standing may transfer from one team to another. A player must advise the team captain/representative that transferring is desired. A team representative is required to release any player who requests release. Refusal to release a player may be grounds for disciplinary action. Any disputes between players and team representatives or between team representatives regarding their ability to transfer players between teams will be resolved by a majority vote by the RSL board.
2. No transfers will be permitted following the midpoint of the season. Midpoint is defined as the completion of half of the games of the regular season.
3. A player may transfer only once during the season.
4. If a team officially notifies the RSL that it is disbanding during the season, its players may transfer to another team if possible.

Team Registration

A returning *team* is defined as a minimum of 7 returning players from that same team from the previous playing season. If there are less than 7 returning players due to unforeseen circumstances, the Board will decide if that team shall be permitted to return provided they fulfill all team requirements. A *new* team is defined as one made

up of previously unregistered players or players from other teams not comprising a majority of any one former team at the end of the season.

Registration Procedure

1. Registration will be held for each season at least one month prior to the start of each playing season.
2. At the beginning of each season, registration of all players and new teams entering the RSL will be required. All new players will be assessed by MDCVSA, sanctioning fees, referee fees, and field fees. Any other fees the RSL incurs will be discussed by the Board and a decision shall be made as to who is responsible for them.
3. The board of the Roanoke Soccer League reserves the right to revoke, cancel, or withhold registration to any individual or team for any reason it deems proper.

League Meetings

Each team will need a team representative and an alternate representative designated by their team. All league and Captain meetings are MANDATORY. Captains are responsible for relaying information from meetings to their team.

Team Rosters

1. Must be completely filled in and submitted electronically.
2. Must have a copy of a legal identification attached unless one is already on file with RSL.
3. Players may be added to the official roster until the day of the first game. An updated roster should be submitted to the board by 2 pm. on the day of the first scheduled game.
4. Each team must bring a copy of their roster to each game.
5. A team may find a sponsor and advertise said sponsorship with prior approval by the Board of the sponsor.
6. Rosters must be established by midpoint in the season to be eligible for Playoffs/Championship matches.

Substitute Players

1. RSL registered players may play for other teams as an “emergency” guest player. If a team has 10 or fewer of its OWN rostered players, that team may take up to 3 subs from another team. If a team has 13 of its OWN rostered players, no subs from another team will be permitted. If a team has 11 of its OWN rostered players, they may take up to 2 subs and if a team has 12 of its OWN rostered players, the team may only take 1 sub. The total must never go past 13 players. The only sub from another team that DOES NOT count towards the 3 sub limit is a rostered goalie. All teams MUST provide subs from another team with a same color jersey or pinny in order for the subs to play.

Rules of Play/Code of Conduct

1. Shin Guards are **mandatory** and must be covered completely by socks.
 - a. Shin Guards should be the appropriate size to protect the player's shin. Manufacturer shin guards without modifications are expected. Referees can refuse play if deemed altered or too small.
2. Rubber soled or rubber cleated shoes only.
3. Team's jersey color must be designated upon registration with RSL. Each team is required to have an official uniform with permanent numbers (no handwritten numbers will be accepted). If a team changes their color during the season, they must notify the RSL in writing and must also notify their opponents for the remainder of the season. In the case of similar colors between opposing teams, the home team (as set per the schedule) will be responsible for wearing an alternate color. Failure to comply will result in a forfeit of the game with a score of 1-0 for the opposing team if the game is not played. If a color conflict arises because a team fails to tell an opponent of their change in jersey color, the team that changed colors will be assessed any penalties resulting from the color conflict whether or not they are the home team. In this case, the other team will not be penalized.
4. All jewelry is prohibited.
5. If the score is tied at the end of a regular game, the game will be recorded as a tie.
6. Players or coaches ejected with two yellow cards are automatically disqualified from the team's next match. If ejected with a red card they are disqualified from the team's next 2 matches. Players ejected or sanctioned by referees for sportsmanship reasons shall immediately leave the field and the area surrounding the field for the remainder of the match. Because of the seriousness of a sportsmanship sanction or ejection, the RSL board reserves the right to eject the offending player from all games for the remainder of the season and withhold any refund. The RSL board further reserves the right to refuse that player future registration to any RSL activities or leagues. Any such sanction shall be effected by a majority vote by the RSL board, and the board shall notify the ejected player by electronic communication within one week of the sanction or red card.
7. Each game will be played in 45-minute halves for 11v11 and 10v10 25 min halves for, 9v9, 8v8, and 5v5. A team forfeits under the following conditions:
 - At the scheduled start of a game, if any team has fewer than:
 - o 8 acceptable players for 11v11. (3 females must be on pitch for)
 - o 6 acceptable players for 8v8 (4 females must be on pitch for coed)
 - o 3 acceptable players for 5v5 (2 females must be on pitch for coed)
 - o If a team has fewer than 'acceptable' number players at any time during a game.
 - o A team uses ineligible players.
 - o The home team fails to have uniforms of contrasting colors. If the game is not played, the home team will forfeit with a score of 3-0.
 - o A team that knows it will forfeit an upcoming game and does not inform the board in advance .will pay a fee equivalent to the cost of the referees and field rental for that game. This fee is to be paid to the RSL Treasurer the following Thursday after the forfeited game or their next game will not be played.

8. Slide tackling will not be permitted under any circumstances. If players do slide tackle and contact is made, the ref will issue a direct kick from point of contact on the field to the opposing team. If contact is not made, the ref will issue an indirect kick from point of contact on the field to the opposing team. A yellow card will be issued to the offending player in either case.
9. If a game is abandoned due to weather conditions, the score of the game at time of abandonment will stand. The game will be played in its entirety at a later date, if fields and referees are available.
10. If a game is abandoned due to player, coach or spectator behavior, the RSL Board will investigate the incident within seven days of notification. They will then determine if the game is to be replayed or the official outcome of the game. The RSL Board can also bring forth sanctions against any team or individual, which may include suspensions for the rest of the season and the following season or disbanding a team.
11. FIFA Laws of the Game will be followed with the following exceptions:
 - Field size is a minimum of 100 yards by 75 yards. There are exceptions to this rule as fields size will vary.
 - Substitutions are unlimited and may be made with the consent of the referee at the following times: 11v11
 - a. Prior to a throw-in in your favor
 - b. Prior to a goal kick by either team
 - c. After a goal by either team
 - d. After an injury by either team when play has stopped.
 - e. At half time
 - f. A player receiving a yellow card may be substituted before play resumes and the other team may substitute an equal number of players.
 - 9v9, 8v8 and 5v5
 - Subbing is on the fly with referee acknowledgement
12. The designated home team is responsible for a game ball and any field equipment if required. Beginning with Spring 2025, All captains will be charged a deposit to maintain a game ball for the duration of the season. At end of the season, the captain will be given the deposit back in exchange for the game ball.

Player, Coach and Team Discipline

Disciplinary action taken by the RSL Board may include reprimand, suspension, fines or forfeiture of the game, player or coach suspension from the league for the remainder of the season and the following season or permanent expulsion from the league. An external reviewer may be utilized when deemed appropriate.

Participation in the RSL is a privilege, and not a right, and can be withheld at the discretion of the RSL board. Discipline is wholly at the discretion of the RSL board as recommended by the board discipline committee.

Ejections

1. A coach or player ejected from a regularly scheduled game for a technical infraction (such as violations of the rules) may be suspended at the discretion of

the disciplinary committee. A coach or player ejected from a regularly scheduled game for behavior that includes the following:

- Denies an opponent a goal or obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball; or
- Denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent who is moving towards the players goal by an offense punishable by a penalty kick or a free kick; or
- Uses insulting, offensive, or abusive language; or
- Receives a second caution in a game,

Canceled games do not count towards the fulfillment of any game suspension. Any player sent off from the final game of the season shall be suspended from the appropriate number of games of the following season.

2. Any player sent off the field of play for serious foul play shall be suspended for a period of two regularly scheduled games, and fined a fee up to \$50.
3. A coach or player ejected for violent conduct including spitting at another person or opponent will be suspended for the next three regularly scheduled games and will be fined \$75.
4. Sanctions can be imposed by the RSL Board at its discretion.
5. Team officials and coaches will be subject to all rules pertaining to misconduct contained herein, including ejections, cautions, and standard suspensions. Other individuals who may be construed as being associated with a team, such as relatives and spectators will also be subject to the authority and jurisdiction of the RSL. Any team official or coach will be held responsible for the actions of any individual(s) at any match that, in the opinion of the referee, is a supporter of the team. Prolonged abusive disagreement or remarks with the referee or lines people by such individual(s) will result in a request by the referee to the team official/coach to control the unacceptable behavior. If the coach/team official cannot or will not control the person(s) involved, the referee will have the authority to caution the coach/team official for unsportsmanlike conduct. If any disturbances continue uncontrolled with no attempt by the team official/coach to control it, the referee shall have the authority to eject the team official/coach for continuing to allow such misconduct after receiving a caution.
6. Anyone guilty of pushing or otherwise attacking a referee or directing insulting, foul, threatening or abusive language against a referee shall receive a suspension as directed by the RSL Board in enforcing USSF policies regarding referee abuse and assault. Any player reported as having broken this rule by the RSL Board will be subject to a temporary suspension until a disciplinary meeting is held. This meeting will be held within 15 days of the incident. Any player committing referee abuse as defined by the rules and policies of the USSF may incur a fine of \$100 and an additional suspension of three league games including playoffs. Any player committing referee abuse a second time will be suspended for a minimum of one year from all sanctioned play. Any further instances of referee abuse by a player will result in additional one-year suspensions for each infraction.
7. Coaches, team officials and spectators are subject to the jurisdiction of the RSL Board in the same manner as players are for the above mentioned offense.
8. Any player who does not have the referee's permission to be on the field and who enters the field during or immediately before or after an incident will be

suspended from all league play for one year. This excludes a team captain attempting to restore order or prevent disorder.

9. Any player who carries a weapon onto the field for any reason will be suspended permanently from all RSL play.
10. Any sanction or league expulsion from any RSL division or activity shall apply to any other RSL division or activity, including coed division, single-gender divisions, and any fund raising or charitable activities for the duration of the expulsion or sanction. Any disciplinary action against a player in any RSL divisions shall apply to any and all other RSL divisions that the player participates in. (For example, a player enrolled in the Men's division and in the Co-ed division that incurs a 2-match ban shall not be permitted to play for 2 matches in either division the player is enrolled in.)
11. Any suspension or sanction, including referee-issued red and yellow cards shall be reviewed by the RSL disciplinary committee and the RSL board for enhanced sanctions at its sole discretion. The disciplinary committee may, at its discretion, replace members of the committee to ensure fairness in its decisions.

Fighting

1. Any team who engages in abusive language, abusive behavior, or fighting involving multiple players from each team and/or fans and spectators may be suspended for the rest of the season. During any suspension, the team will be ineligible to participate in any sanctioned play and players may not transfer from a suspended team. The RSL Board may require that the team post a performance bond when it is allowed to return to play.
2. Any team whose spectators, fans, or supporters enter the field of play during a game or attack either the referee or players on the opposing team may be suspended from play pending an investigation by the RSL Board. If the teams are permitted to continue to participate in League play may be required to post a performance bond. Any further fights or fan disturbances during this one year period by the team will result in forfeiture of the bond and the team being removed from the league.
3. Referees may institute a forfeiture of any active game for abusive language, abusive behavior, or fighting, and may award 3 points to the opposing team.
4. Any fan, spectator, or player may be temporarily or permanently banned by the disciplinary board from attendance at future events or games, and will be subject to trespassing charges for any refusal to adhere to the ban.

Off-Field Disciplinary Actions

1. Abusive Language

Definition: Use of derogatory, threatening, or excessively profane language directed at an individual.

Examples:

- Using racial, gender-based, or other discriminatory slurs.
- Threatening physical harm to a player, fan, coach, or official.
- Excessive swearing.

Consequences:

- Investigation by the disciplinary committee.
- Possible reprimand, suspension, fine, removal from the league for the season, or permanent expulsion.

2. Physical Altercations

Definition: Any harmful physical contact outside the context of normal gameplay.

Examples:

- Fighting, including punching, kicking, or headbutting.
- Spitting on another individual.
- Hair pulling, grabbing, pinching, shoving, or biting.

Consequences:

- Investigation by the disciplinary committee.
- Possible reprimand, suspension, fine, removal from the league for the season, or permanent expulsion.
- Local law enforcement may be notified if necessary.

3. Stalking;Harassment

Definition: Persistent and unwanted attention or intimidation directed at another person.

Examples:

- Following or waiting for a player, fan, coach, or official after games.

Consequences:

- Investigation by the disciplinary committee.
- Temporary ban while under investigation.
- Possible suspension, expulsion, or legal action if necessary.

4. Division-Wide Sanctions

Definition: Any suspension or expulsion from one RSL division applies to all RSL divisions and activities.

A two-match ban in one division applies to all other divisions the player is enrolled in.

Example: Player is dual-registered and receives a 2-game match suspension during a week he has a game for both teams. This suspension will apply to both teams.

- All red/yellow cards will be reviewed for possible enhanced sanctions.

5. De-escalation Self-Defense Clause

Individuals have the responsibility to attempt to remove themselves from a volatile situation.

Appropriate actions may include:

- Moving toward teammates, coaches, referees, or a neutral area; Verbally de-escalating and walking away without further engagement.
- Unacceptable actions that will not be considered self-defense:
 - Retaliating with punches, kicks, or excessive force after initial contact has ended.
 - Continuing to engage in a fight instead of seeking a safe area.
 - Pursuing the aggressor after an initial altercation.

Each case will be reviewed to determine if the actions were a necessary response to a threat.

6. Disciplinary Process

- Investigations will be completed within one week of an appeal.
- Serious cases requiring more time will have weekly updates provided to all involved parties.
- Failure to adhere to a temporary ban may result in trespassing charges
- The disciplinary committee reserves the right to revise any sanction, fee, or suspension.

7. Accumulated Offenses

If a player gets three yellow cards in different matches, that player will automatically be suspended from the next game. A third yellow card subjects the player to suspension for a minimum of 3 games. A red card is a 2 game suspension. Multiple red cards may lead to league expulsion. The discipline committee has discretion to review each offense and determine further action.

Standings

RSL standings will be determined on the following basis in order:

1. Record of wins, ties and losses (3 points for a win, 1 point for a tie and 0 points for a loss).
2. Fewest goals allowed.
3. Goal differential (goals scored minus goals allowed)

Appeals

1. All appeals of disciplinary actions will be directed in writing to the RSL Co-Chair by the following Wednesday after the game.
2. Decisions of the Discipline Committee may be appealed to the entire RSL Board.

Amendments

Amendments to the bylaws may be made at a RSL meeting by a vote of two-thirds of the voting membership present, providing that all teams have been given 14 days written notice of the meeting and a written copy of the changes. Voting members for this purpose are defined as team representatives or their alternates of all affiliated teams in good standing and Board members. Amendments will be in effect at the beginning of each playing season.

Weather Policy

1. Anytime Lightning is visible, then all players, coaches, fans and umpires should take shelter immediately!
2. Flash (Bang) Method – Count seconds between lightning flash and thunder and divide by 5
 - This gives the distance of lightning in miles. If the count is 30 seconds or less Take Shelter Immediately!
3. The Referee and Board Members should instruct all players, coaches and fans that danger is present and they should seek shelter immediately. Safe places for shelter would be fully enclosed metal vehicles with windows up, enclosed buildings or the low ground. Seek cover in clumps of bushes. Unsafe shelter areas include all nearby outdoor metallic objects like flag poles, fences, high mast light poles, metal bleachers, etc. AVOID water, AVOID open fields, AVOID using the telephone.
4. If you feel your hair standing on end or hear “crackling noises” you are in lightning’s electric field. Immediately remove metal objects (including baseball cap), place your feet together, duck your head and crouch down with hands on knees.
5. If anyone is struck by lightning CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY. People who have been struck by lightning do not carry an electrical charge and are safe to handle. Apply CPR immediately if you are qualified to do so.
6. Wait at least 30 minutes after the last lightning flash before resuming activities.
7. If a game is called due to the lightning, the score will be recorded as is.
8. If a game is cancelled before starting due to lightning, each team will receive a tie and the game will NOT be made up at another time.

Board

1. RSL shall be under the responsibility of a board.
2. All games MUST have a board member or Field Marshal present. The member must NOT be playing a game at the time. Example: If you play at 3pm you cannot be the board member responsible for that game. This is to ensure all games run smoothly and without incident.
3. The number of board members shall be determined on a yearly basis. Candidates will put their names in by July 1st of each year and voting will take place by July 30th. The elections committee shall consist of one board member and two representatives from any team. The board shall consist of no less than 6 persons but shall be no greater than 15 persons. The new board will take over by Aug. 1st of each year.
4. The directors shall fill the following officer positions at a minimum:

Basic Policies

1. No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, political beliefs or religious creed and no otherwise qualified handicapped individual shall, solely by reason of their handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity sponsored or operated by any member of the League.
2. The name of the League and the names of any members in their official capacities shall not be used for any purpose unless written authorization is provided by RSL.
3. The Association may cooperate with other organizations and agencies that develop, promote, advance and administer the sport of soccer.
4. All members of the League shall be governed by the By-Laws and Policies and Procedures of the League. Failure to comply with these policies will result in disciplinary action to include but not limited to expulsion, denial of registration and any other actions deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors.