



MICHIGAN STATE YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION

DIRECTOR'S ACADEMY

2025-2026 PROGRAM RULES



1. General

- a. The MSYSA Director's Academy is a program of the Michigan State Youth Soccer Association.
- b. The MSYSA Director's Academy shall be referred to as the "DA" for the remainder of this document.

2. Administration & Governance

- a. The DA shall be administered and governed by the MSYSA State Office.
- b. The MSYSA State Office shall register DA teams directly with MSYSA. Teams will register directly with MSYSA, pay registration fees directly to MSYSA, and receive a roster and passcards directly from MSYSA.

3. Junior State Cup

- a. DA teams are required to participate in that seasonal year's Junior State Cup. A portion of the DA fees will be applied to cover the Junior State Cup registration fees.
- b. The only exception to the Junior State Cup requirement above is for teams who do not have 50% of their rostered players residing in Michigan (i.e. "out-of-state teams"). However, in those instances, the club is still responsible for paying the full program and registration fees for those teams.
- c. Junior State Cup games may be counted as DA games, provided that the teams involved are the same, players on the game roster(s) meet all eligibility requirements for both programs, and prior permission from MSYSA is received.

4. Competition Dates

- a. The FALL season of the DA shall run from AUGUST 9, 2024 to NOVEMBER 16, 2025.
- b. The SPRING season of the DA shall run from MARCH 7, 2026 to JUNE 12, 2026.
- c. During the SPRING season, there shall be no DA league games scheduled on MAY 16 or MAY 17, 2026.
- d. Once accepted into the DA, it is required that a team participate in both the fall and spring seasons unless a determination is made by the MSYSA Executive Director that their continued participation in the spring season is not in the best interest of the players on the team. Should a team be permitted to withdraw from the DA program, there shall be no refunds.
- e. MSYSA may accept new U11 teams (any tier) and new U12 teams (Tier 2 and Tier 3 only) for the spring season but is under no obligation to do so. In the case that MSYSA does accept a new team for the spring season, program and registration fees must be paid in their entirety.
- f. All games must be played within the timeframe stated above for each season.
- g. MSYSA reserves the right to alter competition dates as needed by weather or other extenuating circumstances.

5. Program Format

- a. The DA offers competition at the U10, U11, and U12 age groups.
- b. There is no minimum or maximum number of teams that will be accepted into the DA at any age group.
- c. Teams may or may not be split into multiple tiers depending on number of teams. However, it is the intention of MSYSA to create a Tier 1 that incorporates statewide play at the U11 and U12 age groups. Furthermore, it is the intention of MSYSA that all subsequent tiers be based loosely on geography.
- d. Match-ups will be determined solely by MSYSA. Teams may not play every other team in their same tier, and likewise, teams may be scheduled to play the same team multiple times.
- e. All teams will be scheduled for 8-10 games in the fall and 6-8 games in the spring.
- f. All games are scheduled by the teams involved unless MSYSA intervention is necessary.
- g. Referees will be scheduled for all games by the DA Referee Assigning Committee.

6. Club Selection

- a. New clubs seeking participation in the DA must submit an application.
- b. Returning clubs may be subject to a review by MSYSA at any time for any reason, including to ensure minimum program requirements are met and to ensure that they meet the same minimum criteria that is outlined in the New Club Application Evaluation Point System.
- c. If a club is selected for participation into the DA, not all teams listed on their application shall automatically be accepted into the DA. Individual team acceptance is decided by MSYSA only.
- d. To be considered for participation in the DA, clubs must meet minimum criteria. These minimum criteria are listed within the New Club Application Evaluation Point System.
- e. In addition to meeting certain minimum requirements, new clubs will be evaluated on several areas outlined in the New Club Application Evaluation Point System. Clubs receiving an overall score of 170 or higher will be selected for participation. Clubs receiving a score of 169 or lower will not be selected for participation.
- f. For those clubs who earned a score of 169 or lower and not selected for participation, MSYSA shall provide guidance on the steps needed to reach a passing score.
- g. A club who meets the selection criteria may not be accepted for participation for the following reasons:
 - i. The club did not fulfill the club requirements as stated in these rules either this year or in the prior seasonal year
 - ii. Team from within the club forfeited one or more DA games in the prior seasonal year of play
 - iii. Team from within the club and/or club itself had one or more instances of unsporting behavior by the coaches, players, and/or spectators in the prior seasonal year of the DA
 - iv. Teams from within the club and/or club itself had one or more instances of using illegal players in the prior seasonal year of the DA
 - v. Application and/or payment guidelines were not adhered to

7. Club Requirements

- a. All clubs must advertise/publicize their tryouts in the Michigan Soccer magazine for any/all teams that desire to participate in the DA. Only teams whose clubs advertised in the Michigan Soccer magazine will be considered for participation in the DA.
- b. All clubs participating in the DA shall adhere to the MSYSA rules regarding club tryouts.
- c. All clubs participating in the DA are responsible for providing the information set forth by the MSYSA Technical Director or MSYSA Executive Director, which may include surveys on a variety of topics.
- d. The rostered head coach for every team participating in Director's Academy must attend at least one (1) MSYSA approved coaching education event. A portion, to be determined by MSYSA, will be provided to clubs to help subsidize the cost of attendance. The only exception to this is outlined in 7f below.
- e. Approved coaching education events to satisfy 7d above include:
 - i. USSF C, B, A-Youth, A-Senior, or Pro License Courses
 - ii. USSF A-Youth, A-Senior, or Pro License Renewal Course
 - iii. MSYSA Coaching Symposium
 - iv. MSYSA Continuing Education Class
 - v. North American Soccer Expo
 - vi. United Soccer Coaches Convention
 - vii. United Soccer Coaches (NSCAA) Director of Coaching Diploma Course
 - viii. United Soccer Coaches (NSCAA) Goalkeeping Diploma Course
 - ix. United Soccer Coaches (NSCAA) Premier, Advance National, or National Course
- f. There are two exceptions from 7d above. First, if the head coach of a DA team volunteers his/her time to be an evaluator for ODP identification weekend (or other similar role with prior permission from MSYSA), that person may be exempt. Second, if the head coach of a DA team arranges in advance with MSYSA to attend and participate in the 2nd weekend of a D course, that person may be exempt. However, only one person per club per seasonal year will be granted each of these exceptions.
- g. Failure to have team coaches attend MSYSA approved coaching education events may result in fines, loss of DA status by the team and/or club, and/or other sanctions as determined by MSYSA.

- h. Clubs, rather than individual teams, are responsible for reporting game schedules to MSYSA and for creating rosters in GotSoccer.
- i. Each club may be subject to a review by MSYSA at any time for any reason to ensure minimum program requirements are met and to ensure that they meet the same minimum criteria that is outlined in the New Club Application Evaluation Point System.

8. Team Eligibility

- a. All teams participating in the DA must be in good standing and be registered directly with MSYSA.
- b. All MSYSA teams must have been in good standing with MSYSA and their MSYSA affiliating league in the prior seasonal year.
- c. All teams must have had at least 51% of the players registered with the DA club in which they want to participate in the prior seasonal year. Exceptions may be made as determined by the MSYSA Executive Director.
- d. All out of state teams must receive permission from their home state association or national governing body (Canadian teams) to register with MSYSA and participate in the DA. Out of state teams must also have been in good standing with their registering state association (or national governing body) and affiliated league in the prior seasonal year.

9. Team Official Eligibility

- a. Team Officials shall refer to coaches, assistant coaches, managers, and trainers.
- b. All team officials must be registered with and in good standing with MSYSA.
- c. All team officials must be Risk Management certified by the Michigan State Youth Soccer Association and must have a current MSYSA Risk Management Card at all their DA games.
- d. All team officials must have completed the SafeSport Training through the US Center for SafeSport within the past year of each DA game in which they participate.
- e. All rostered coaches and assistant coaches must have completed the CDC Heads-Up Online Training Course within the past three (3) years of each DA game in which they participate.
- f. All rostered head coaches must have a minimum of a USSF D Coaching License.
- g. All rostered assistant coaches and trainers must have completed the US Soccer Grassroots 9v9 and 11v11 courses (online or in person) or have a USSF E Coaching License.
- h. Temporary exceptions may be made when the individual is currently in the process of obtaining the proper license and with the recommendation of the MSYSA Technical Director.
- i. Licenses from other governing organizations may be accepted at the discretion of MSYSA.

10. Player Eligibility

- a. All players must be registered with and in good standing with MSYSA.
- b. Any player wishing to play for a Michigan-based team in the DA who is not a resident of Michigan must first receive written permission from the State Association where the player resides (home state) and from MSYSA. Permission must be obtained each seasonal year.
- c. Any player needing international clearance per current FIFA rules must receive clearance before they will be registered to a DA team.
- d. Any player wishing to transfer from one club to another club may only do so with the prior approval of both clubs and subject to the rules of MSYSA.
- e. A player is permitted to dual roster between a DA team and a non-DA team, provided that the non-DA team's club and affiliating league approves the dual registration request. Some restrictions apply – See Rule 10f and 11g. Dual registration forms, policies, and fees from the affiliating league(s) may apply.
- f. In all cases of dual registration between a DA team and a USYS National League, NAL, or MSPSP team, the National League, NAL, or MSPSP team must be considered the player's "primary" team. In all cases of dual registration between a DA team and a select team, the DA team must be considered the player's "primary" team.
- g. For all age groups, at least 51% of the rostered players must have a birth date corresponding to the age group that the team will be playing in during the 2025-2026 seasonal year of the Director's Academy.

Exceptions may be made by the MSYSA Executive Director upon written request by the appropriate club's Director of Coaching.

- h. For all age groups, each player on the team must be (A) of the age of the age group competition in which the team is participating in that seasonal year, or (B) of the age in the next younger age group of that age group competition in which the team is participating in that seasonal year. Exceptions may be made by the MSYSA Executive Director upon written request by the appropriate club's Director of Coaching.
- i. A player's age group is determined by their birth year:

Age Group	Dates of Birth
U12	Born in 2014
U11	Born in 2015
U10	Born in 2016
U9	Born in 2017

11. Rosters

- a. In all age groups, the team's initial DA roster is due no later than 12:00pm on AUGUST 8, 2025.
- b. In all age groups, a team's spring roster must contain at least 75% of the players who were rostered on the team in the fall. Interpretation of this rule is the sole responsibility of the MSYSA State Office. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the MSYSA Executive Director.
- c. A team may not participate in any DA games until the team has been registered with the MSYSA Director's Academy, and pass cards and a roster have been created by MSYSA for the team.
- d. A team's DA roster shall not include club pass card players.
- e. A player may only appear on the DA roster for one team in the DA. As long as a player appears on the DA roster for one DA team, the player may not appear on the DA roster for any other DA team.
- f. A player may be added to a team's DA roster at any time throughout the season, provided that all MSYSA rules and policies are adhered to. See rule 10d for restrictions on player transfers.
- g. A maximum of four (4) dual rostered players are allowed per team for players who are dual rostered on teams in different clubs. There is no restriction on the number of dual rostered players who are dual rostered on teams within the same club. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the MSYSA Executive Director.
- h. The maximum number of players allowed on a roster is outlined below:

Age Group	Recommended Team Roster Size	Maximum Team Roster Size	Maximum Game Roster Size
U12	11 - 13	16	16
U11	11 - 13	16	16
U10 9v9	11 - 13	16	16
U10 7v7	9 - 10	12	12

- i. The players selected for the game roster must be clearly indicated and documented on the official DA Game Report.
- j. It is the club's responsibility to input all rostered players into GotSport so that the players appear on the GotSport DA Game Report.
- k. The GotSport DA Game Report with the game roster selection must be submitted to the referees at the time of check-in. No changes will be allowed to the game roster after the team has checked in.

12. Club Passcarding

- a. Club Passcarding is permitted within the DA as long as all subsequent rules are met.
- b. A team may use a maximum of three (3) club passcard players in each game. Exceptions may be made (and more than 3 club pass players may be permitted) provided that:
 - i. A club or team official submits the request for exemption via email (submit to sarah@michiganyouthsoccer.org) in advance of the DA game in question.
 - ii. The request for exemption demonstrates a hardship (as determined by MSYSA)

- iii. The request for exemption is granted by the MSYSA State Office
- c. The club pass players' name and jersey number must appear on the game report (handwritten on the GotSport game report).
- d. A player may only club passcard for a team in the DA if that team belongs to the same club as the player's primary team. (See "Club" definition below).
- e. It is recommended that an individual player participates in no more than twelve (12) total DA games in a given season.
- f. A player may not pass card "down" an age group, except as noted below.
- g. A player who is primarily rostered to an older team may club passcard "down" to a DA team if they are age eligible for that DA team.

13. Definition of "Club"

- a. A "Club" is defined as an organization providing structured soccer training and competition for its members.
- b. A club may be a direct member of MSYSA, an associate member of MSYSA, or an indirect member of MSYSA which registers players with MSYSA.
- c. At no time shall an affiliated member who functions as a "scheduling" league also be considered a club.
- d. In the case where a club sets up satellite branches in the state, those satellite branches may only be considered part of the main club for the purposes of the Director's Academy if the teams and players from the satellite branch are registered in the same GotSport account as the main club.
- e. The only exception to D above is if all the following criteria are met:
 - i. The main club and satellite club have the same Board of Directors
 - ii. The main club and satellite club have the same Tax ID Number
- f. All teams from within a club must have similarly designed uniforms with similar colors, logos, and other acceptable identifying marks.

14. Player Pass Cards

- a. All team officials and players (including club pass card players) shall present to the referees their MSYSA pass cards (individually cut) prior to the start of each game.
- b. Pass cards must have a permanently affixed photo of the named individual and must be for the current seasonal year.
- c. Should a player's pass card not be available prior to the game, the player may be permitted to play if all of the following occurs:
 - i. The player provides their name, date of birth, and jersey number to the referees prior to the game.
 - ii. The referees note all the above information on the official DA game report.
- d. The opposing coach may challenge the eligibility of a player without a pass card by contacting the MSYSA State Office within two (2) business days of the game. If the MSYSA State Office finds that the player is properly registered and eligible to play, the matter shall be considered resolved. If the MSYSA State Office finds that the player is not properly registered or is not eligible to play, penalties as described in these rules shall apply.

15. Scheduling & Scheduling Conflicts

- a. The official schedule of all DA games is kept by the MSYSA State Office.
- b. MSYSA is solely responsible for determining match-ups in any given season. Requests will not be accommodated.
- c. All games are scheduled by the teams involved, unless MSYSA intervention is necessary. It is strongly recommended that teams keep written record of mutually agreed upon game logistics in case proof of agreements becomes necessary.
- d. Game dates, times, and locations must be mutually agreed upon by both teams. Games that are more than 60 miles one way must be played on a Saturday or a Sunday unless it is otherwise mutually agreed upon to play on another day.

- e. All games must be played within the lower peninsula of Michigan. Some restrictions are noted below:
 - Any/all home games for Ohio teams must take place in Milan, MI or north of Milan.
 - Any/all home games for Indiana teams must take place in Kalamazoo, MI or east of Kalamazoo.
- f. Teams may not be scheduled to play any more than one (1) DA game per day, unless the club makes a written request for exemption and that exemption is granted by the MSYSA Executive Director.
- g. It is recommended by MSYSA and US Soccer that teams do not schedule more than two (2) consecutive days with league games.
- h. If both coaches cannot agree on game date(s), time(s), and location(s) for their DA games, the MSYSA State Office will schedule the game(s). Scheduling of the game is at the sole discretion of the MSYSA State Office. The game(s) must be played as scheduled by the MSYSA State Office.

16. Schedule Reporting

- a. Fall schedules are due into MSYSA by 12:00pm on July 25, 2025.
- b. Spring schedules are due into MSYSA by 12:00pm on February 23, 2026.
- c. The home team's club is responsible for scheduling games in GotSoccer by the scheduling deadlines.
- d. MSYSA is responsible to making any schedule additions or changes in GotSoccer after the scheduling deadlines.

17. Game Suspension, Cancellations, and Reschedules

- a. Games may be rescheduled for any reason by submitting an official request, written record that both teams have agreed to the change, and relevant fees (if applicable) at least seven (7) days prior to the original game date. The rescheduled game must take place at least three (3) days after the reschedule request and fees are received.
- b. No fees shall be assessed if the game reschedule request is received 30 days or more before the originally scheduled game AND if the rescheduled game takes place at least 10 days after the day the reschedule request is received.
- c. Games may only be rescheduled less than seven (7) days prior to the game date if the facility revokes use of the fields, the referee deems the field not playable, the referee cancels the game due to weather, the referee suspends play due to unacceptable spectator behavior, or MSYSA feels there is just cause.
- d. For all games cancelled less than three (3) days prior to the game date, teams must send notice of game cancellations to sarah@michiganyouthsoccer.org AND the Coordinator of MSYSA Assigning (eshrews@gmail.com, 248-467-7846) as soon as possible.
- e. For all games suspended in the first half or at halftime by the assigned referee and that cannot resume play the same day, the game shall be rescheduled for another day with permission from MSYSA. The rescheduled game must be played in its entirety. This only applies when neither team is at fault for the initial stoppage of the game.
- f. For all ages, MSYSA may determine that a game is complete at any time after the commencement of the second half.
- g. If a known game cancellation is not communicated to MSYSA in time to cancel the referees assigned to the game, the referee fees must be paid by the home team before the rescheduled game will be played.
- h. If a game is suspended by the referees due to weather before the game even begins, the referee fees must be split by the two teams.

18. Score Reporting

- a. The winning team (or the Home Team in the event of a tie) of each game must **report the score** in GoSport within 24 hours of the completion of the game.
- b. The winning team (or the Home Team in the event of a tie) of each game must **upload the completed game report** to GotSport within 24 hours of the completion of the game.
- c. Failure to report the game scores or failure to upload the completed game report may result in disqualification of the winning team (or the home team in the event of a tie) and/or a \$100 fine.

- d. Modifying a completed game report is not permitted, and any person caught modifying a completed game report or uploading a modified game report may be fined and/or disqualified from any/all future competition with MSYSA.
- e. Game scores and standings shall be kept internally within the MSYSA State Office. There shall not be a public record of game scores or standings, with the exception of the U12 Tier 1 divisions in the spring season (due to National League endorsement implications).

19. Approved Fields & Field Status

- a. Teams are not permitted to play DA games on fields that have been specifically designated as not acceptable by MSYSA. A list of these fields shall be made available to teams.
- b. Any game played on a field that has been designated as not acceptable by MSYSA shall be forfeited by BOTH teams and all forfeit rules shall apply.

20. Field of Play

- a. Teams shall report to the field of play at least 30 minutes before the scheduled start of the game to allow for the check in of players.
- b. Teams are to be seated on opposite sides of the field, unless otherwise directed by MSYSA or unless it is impractical to do so based on field/facility set-up.
- c. All team personnel who are not players must have a MSYSA passcard and be listed on the official DA Game Report. All team personnel without a MSYSA passcard must remain in the spectator area.
- d. Players who are on the team's DA roster but are NOT selected to the game roster may remain in the bench area but may not wear the match jersey. These players are permitted to wear the alternate team jersey.

21. Home Team (and/or Home Team's Club) Responsibilities

- a. The home team's club is responsible for scheduling games in GotSoccer in the timeframe stated in these rules for the purpose of assigning referees.
- b. The home team is responsible for ensuring that the conditions of the fields are sufficient (excluding conditions due to weather), and the fields have all the proper field markings and equipment (nets, corner flags) prior to kick-off. If failure by the home team to meet these responsibilities results in a game needing to be rescheduled, the rescheduled game shall take place at the home field of the original visiting team.
- c. The home team is responsible for providing the game ball.

22. Coaching from the Touchline

- a. Per the MSYSA Rules, Regulations, and Policies a coach may coach his/her own team from the touchline provided that mechanical devices are not used, tone of voice is informative and not a harangue, and he/she stays between the top of the penalty area and the half field mark during the game.
- b. "Mechanical Devices" (above) includes but is not limited to cell phones and other devices as determined by MSYSA.
- c. Failure to abide by the criteria in coaching from the touchline may result in sanctions by the MSYSA such as dismissal of coaches and other team officials, game suspensions, game forfeitures, and fees.

23. Spectators

- a. Coaches are responsible for the spectators that accompany their team.
- b. Spectators will occupy the same side as their team, unless otherwise directed by MSYSA or unless it is impractical to do so based on field/facility set-up.
- c. If it becomes evident that the spectator(s) become unruly and cannot be controlled, the field sidelines will be cleared of all spectators. If spectators refuse to leave the field of play, the game will be suspended and perhaps forfeited upon an investigation by MSYSA.
- d. If a game must be replayed because of a spectator's behavior, no spectators will be allowed at the game site of the replayed game.

- e. A coach, team, and/or club may be fined a maximum of \$1,000 because of unacceptable spectator behavior or referee abuse. Furthermore, a team official may receive game suspensions because of unacceptable spectator behavior or referee abuse.
- f. MSYSA reserves the right to remove any spectator from the fields or facility whose behavior is deemed inappropriate and/or whose presence imposes a threat to any member of the MSYSA membership, board, or staff.

24. Unmanned Aircraft System (Drones)

- a. The use of non-approved unmanned aircraft systems (ex: drones) is strictly prohibited at any/all DA games.
- b. The use of unmanned aircraft systems may be approved by MSYSA for a specified promotional activity given that the request is submitted in writing to the MSYSA State Office.
- c. Any person in violation of this policy shall be immediately removed from the field, facility, and/or event.

25. Referees

- a. The DA Referee Assigning Committee will assign referees to all DA games.
- b. Teams must use the referees as assigned by the DA Referee Assigning Committee. Failure to do so may result in game forfeiture and applicable fees by one or both teams.
- c. For all games, referee fees shall be paid prior to the start of each game, and the fees shall be divided equally among the teams playing.
- d. The center referee for each game should be at least one year older than the players, and all referees should be USSF certified.
- e. Neither the center referee nor assistant referees shall have an immediate family member participating in the DA game they are officiating, unless it has been disclosed in advance and agreed to by the participating teams.
- f. In the cases when an assigned referee is not present, games may be played with only one or two MSYSA assigned referees present provided that the teams mutually agree upon a replacement(s). The replacement(s) may only serve as an assistant referee and shall not be paid.

26. Referee Fees

- a. If a DA game is scheduled to be played at a site which charges admission or parking fees, the home team is responsible for reimbursing the referees in cash prior to the start of the game for any/all admission or parking fees.
- b. Referee fees vary by age group, as detailed below:

Age	Center Referee	Asst. Referees	Total Cost	Individual Team Cost
U12	\$50.00	\$35.00 each	\$120.00 per game	\$60.00 per game
U11	\$50.00	\$35.00 each	\$120.00 per game	\$60.00 per game
U10 9v9	\$50.00	\$35.00 each	\$120.00 per game	\$60.00 per game
U10 7v7	\$40.00	\$30.00 each	\$100.00 per game	\$50.00 per game

- c. In the event there are less than three (3) assigned referees present, those that are present shall receive game fees as indicated above and the remainder of the fees shall be returned to the teams.

27. Game Format

- a. FIFA Laws of the Game will govern all games unless modified by US Soccer, US Youth Soccer, or MSYSA.
- b. Modification(s) may be made with or without notice.
- c. Game format is detailed below:

Age	Game Format	Game Length	Ball Size	Field Size	Goal Size
U12	9 v 9	30 Minute Halves	4	45-55 yards wide x 70-80 yards long	6.5 x 18.5 ft or 7 x 21 ft
U11	9 v 9	30 Minute Halves	4	45-55 yards wide x 70-80 yards long	6.5 x 18.5 ft or 7 x 21 ft
U10	9v9	30 Minute Halves	4	45-55 yards wide x 70-80 yards long	6.5 x 18.5 ft or 7 x 21 ft
U10	7v7	25 Minute Halves	4	35-45 yards wide x 55-65 yards long	6.5 x 12 ft or 6.5 x 18.5 ft

28. Free Kicks

- During a free kick situation, until the ball is in play, all opponents must remain at least eight (8) yards from the ball, unless they are on their goal line between the goal posts.

29. Heading

- All players age 10 and younger, regardless of what age group they play in, may not head the ball.
- All players in the U11 age group or younger may not head the ball.
- A header by these players (whether deliberately or accidentally) shall result in an indirect free kick awarded to the opponent at the spot of the infraction. If the header occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick shall be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred.

30. Build Out Line

- When the goalkeeper has the ball in their hands during play from the opponent, the opposing team must move behind the build out line until the ball is put back into play.
- Once the opposing team is behind the build out line, the goalkeeper can pass, throw, or roll the ball into play (punts and dropkicks are not permitted).
- After the ball is put into play by the goalkeeper, the opposing team can cross the build out line and play resumes as normal.
- The opposing team must also move behind the build out line prior to a goal kick and may only cross the build out line once the ball is in play.
- If a goalkeeper punts or dropkicks the ball, an indirect free kick shall be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense.
- If the punt or dropkick occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick shall be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infringement occurred.

31. Games Played Indoors

- A ball that comes in contact with the ceiling, roof, structure, etc. shall be restarted at the closest point of contact as an indirect free kick for the team that kicked the ball into the ceiling, etc. AND the ball must be kicked to their opponent's goalkeeper.

32. Substitutions

- In all age groups, teams shall be permitted unlimited substitutions.
- Either team may make a substitution with the referee's permission at any stoppage in play.

33. Uniforms

- All teams participating in the DA must affix the DA patch (or screen the DA logo) to at least two sets of team jerseys. The patch and/or logo may only be located on the jersey's sleeve, chest, or back. In all cases, the logo must be visible even when the jersey is properly tucked in.
- Failure to wear the DA patch/logo during DA games may result in fines (not to exceed \$50 per occurrence).
- Except for the goalkeeper, each player shall wear differently numbered and similarly designed jerseys.

- d. Goalkeepers must wear colors that differentiate them from the field players.
- e. Unless otherwise specified, all FIFA, US Youth Soccer, and MSYSA rules regarding uniform acceptability will apply.
- f. In addition to wearing different color jerseys, teams must also wear different color socks.
- g. In cases of dispute over color (socks or shirts), the referee will decide. In general, the home team shall wear light jerseys and the visiting team shall wear dark jerseys.
- h. In addition to the DA logo, only the team/club logo, MSYSA affiliated league logo, sponsor logos, US Youth Soccer, and MSYSA logos are permitted on the uniform. At no point shall logos from competing organizations be displayed during DA games. Any team not adhering to this rule may be fined, face game forfeitures, be disqualified from the DA, and/or not be permitted to participate in future DA programs.

34. Standings

- a. Game scores and standings shall be kept internally within the MSYSA State Office. There shall not be a public record of game scores or standings except for the U12 Tier 1 divisions in the spring season (due to National League endorsement implications).

35. Forfeitures

- a. A minimum of five (5) players constitutes a team for 7v7 division, and a minimum of six (6) players constitutes a team for 9v9 divisions.
- b. A fifteen-minute grace period shall be allowed beyond the official start time of the game if the minimum number of players are not available at start time. If the minimum number of players is available, then the game can commence. If, at the end of the 15-minute grace period, the team still does not have the minimum number players, then the referee will suspend the game and report the failure of the team to take the field on the official DA game report.
- c. MSYSA may determine the game to be forfeited after examining the game report and investigating.
- d. The score awarded to the winning team resulting from a forfeiture is 3 – 0.
- e. **A forfeiting team will be fined a minimum of \$500.00 per game forfeited.** Any team and/or club that does not pay the fine will be considered in bad standing, and the team will not be permitted to play in any future DA games until MSYSA receives payment. Furthermore, other teams from the same club as the forfeiting team will not be permitted to play in future DA games.

36. Disciplinary Actions, Warnings, and Sendoffs

- a. If a team uses an illegal or ineligible player at any point during a DA game, the team shall face sanctions as determined by the MSYSA State Office which may include forfeiture, fines, and/or disqualifications. Furthermore, the use of an illegal or ineligible player may be grounds to deny the team, club, and/or coach participation in future MSYSA events and programs, including but not limited to, the Director's Academy, National League, Junior State Cup, and/or MSYSA State Cup.
- b. If a game is abandoned by the referees due to inappropriate actions of a team or their accompanying spectators (as determined by MSYSA), the team/club shall be fined a minimum of \$250 and the team shall be placed on probation for the remainder of the seasonal year.
- c. Multiple teams placed on probation from the same club may result in the club losing their DA status in future seasonal years.
- d. A team receiving three red cards (or more) or five yellow cards (or more) in one game may result in the team coach to appear before the MSYSA Board for review and/or sanctions.
- e. Game suspensions due to red cards received in the DA must be served during the next DA game.
- f. If a player or coach receives a suspension in a DA game and that suspension is not fulfilled during that seasonal year, it will follow the player or coach to the next league game (US Youth Soccer sanctioned league game) that the player or coach participates in.
- g. In order for a player or coach to officially serve their suspension, the player or coach's name must appear on the game roster and there must be an indication that the player or coach did not participate due to suspension.
- h. A team official may be shown a yellow card and/or verbally sanctioned for dissent.

- i. A team official may be shown a red card, verbally dismissed, or dismissed via a referee's gesture from a game for irresponsible behavior. Failure by the referee to show a physical red card does not negate the ejection, and disciplinary sanctions as noted below will apply.
- j. Any player, coach, or other team official who has been ejected from a DA game in the previous 3 years and who is ejected from a game in the current seasonal year of the Director's Academy will likely have a total suspension length greater than the minimum suspension length below.
- k. The MSYSA State Office will decide on the length of suspensions.
- l. Minimum Disciplinary Sanctions:
 - Player Ejection for Accumulation of Two Yellow Cards: Minimum one game suspension
 - Player Ejections for Denying a Goal Scoring Opportunity (Handling or Foul): Minimum one game suspension
 - Player Ejection for Foul & Abusive Language: Minimum two game suspension
 - Player Ejection for Spitting at Opponent: Minimum two game suspension
 - Player Ejection for Violent Conduct: Minimum two game suspension
 - Player Ejection for Serious Foul Play: Minimum two game suspension
 - Team Official Ejection for Irresponsible Behavior: Minimum one game suspension
 - Player, Coach, or Team Official Striking an Official: Immediate and minimum one-year suspension from all soccer activities (separate hearing).
 - Team Official Threats: Minimum two game suspension
 - Team Official Fighting: Minimum two game suspension
 - Player Fighting: Minimum two game suspension
 - Player or Team Official Striking an Official: Immediate and minimum one year suspension from all soccer activities (separate hearing).
- j. If considered serious enough, a player, coach, or team official may face additional sanctions for other offenses as determined by MSYSA.
- k. Upon being dismissed from a game by a referee or representative of MSYSA, a dismissed team official must leave the field of play quickly and quietly. This person must be far enough away that they cannot be seen or heard by officials at the field. Failure to abide by these rules may result in increased suspension length, fines, and/or game forfeitures.

37. Protests

- a. Misapplication of the Laws of the Game may be a valid basis for a protest.
- b. A Referee's judgment shall not be a basis for protests.
- c. Any protest must be presented in writing to the MSYSA Executive Director within one (1) day of the completion of the game in protest.
- d. All protests must be accompanied with a \$500.00 bond. If the protest is being submitted via e-mail, the protest must include a statement acknowledging that the required bond will be submitted to MSYSA within one (1) business day of the e-mail submission.
- e. If a protest is upheld, the bond will be returned.
- f. Decisions shall be communicated in writing either by mail or e-mail.
- g. The decision of the MSYSA Executive Director is final and may not be appealed.
- h. Although a protest may not be entertained by MSYSA due to the lateness of the filing of the protest, MSYSA may report any misconduct by any MSYSA player, coach, or team to the MSYSA Board of Directors or a higher authority for their consideration.

38. Protest of a Club's Application Rejection

- a. The protest must be physically received by the MSYSA Executive Director within two (2) business days of notification of rejection.
- b. The protest must include:
 - Protest fee of \$250.00 (cash, certified check, or money order made payable to MSYSA).
 - A written statement describing the specific grounds for the protest.
 - All information necessary to make a fair and just decision on the protest.

- A clear and concise statement of the relief or action sought by the protesting party.
 - Copies of all documents relevant to the appeal.
 - If a protest is upheld, the bond will be returned.
- c. Decisions shall be communicated in writing either by mail or e-mail.
- d. The decision of the MSYSA Executive Director is final and may not be appealed.

39. Appeals

- a. All decisions on matters relating to the DA by the MSYSA Executive Director are final and may not be appealed.

40. ANY DECISION MADE BY MSYSA SHALL NOT BE THE BASIS FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF A TEAM/CLUB FROM THE MSYSA DIRECTOR'S ACADEMY OR THE REFUND OF ANY PART OF THE DA PROGRAM OR REGISTRATION FEE.

41. Alcohol and Illegal Drugs

- a. Players and team officials in the DA are prohibited from consuming alcohol or using illegal drugs at the playing site of any DA game.
- b. Players and team officials are also prohibited from using any form of tobacco or marijuana at the playing site of any DA game.
- c. The penalty for violation by player and/or team official may be disqualification from the DA.

42. Spirit of the Game

- a. If MSYSA determines that a particular action by a team or any of its members or spectators is deemed unacceptable for any reason, the team may be disqualified, sanctioned, and/or face forfeiture of one or more games.

43. Ignorance of the Rules

- a. It is the responsibility of each player, coach, manager, trainer, team official, and league official to know and understand the rules of the DA. Ignorance of the rules will not be considered an excuse for failure to follow them.
- b. All clubs will be responsible for their teams' compliance of DA rules.

44. THE MSYSA DIRECTOR'S ACADEMY RULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITH OR WITHOUT NOTICE.

Dates To Remember:

March 31, 2025 at 12:00PM	MSYSA Director's Academy Application & Payment Deadline
May 2, 2025	Anticipated Date of Club Acceptance
June 13, 2025	Clubs Confirm DA Team Participation
July 25, 2025	Fall Schedules Due in GotSoccer
August 8, 2025	MSYSA Director's Academy FALL Rosters Due
August 9, 2025	Director's Academy FALL season begins
November 16, 2025	Director's Academy FALL season ends
February 23, 2026	Spring Schedules Due in GotSoccer
March 7, 2026	Director's Academy SPRING season begins
May 16 – 17, 2026	MSYSA Junior State Cup (NO DA league games permitted)
May 30 – May 31, 2026	MSYSA Junior State Cup
June 12, 2026	MSYSA Director's Academy Games End

Calendar Notes to Remember:

1. Games may be rescheduled for any reason if the request and payment is received 7-29 days prior to the original game date.
2. Games results must be reported to the MSYSA State Office within 24 hours of the completed game.