



## LOWER MERION SOCCER CLUB

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*Providing each and every child with a fun filled experience in a soccer environment*

## 2023-2024 INTRAMURAL SOCCER RULES

### AFC Fitness in Bala Cynwyd

- Games are played with four field players and a goalie. All age groups use a size 4 ball. There is a maximum of 11 players on a team. If a team is losing by five goals or more, that team may add a fifth field player.
- Games are 45 minutes long with no half time. The clock does not stop for any reason. Referees have been instructed to end the game before the next pair of teams are scheduled to take the field.
- We do not keep team records or maintain standings. There are no champions and no undefeated seasons.
- If the ball goes over a sideline, play is restarted with a pass in. The player must attempt to pass the ball to a teammate. The player may not dribble the ball onto the field or shoot the ball. There are no throw-ins. The ball may be placed two feet inside the field of play.
- If the ball goes over the goal line, play is restarted by a goal kick or corner kick. For a goal kick, the opposing team must retreat back to their own half of the field and remain there until the ball is played.
- There is no offside rule. Coaches are expected to ensure that their players do not “cherry pick.”
- Slide tackles are illegal. Referees are to strictly enforce this at all times.
- If the referee calls a foul, play is restarted with a direct free kick. Defenders must be four yards away.
- Players may not head the ball. If a ball is rocketed at their face, the referee will not call a penalty if a player instinctively raises their arm to prevent the ball from striking their face.
- **GOALIES** - May use their hands inside the penalty area, which extends from one sideline all the way to the other sideline. Goalies may play the ball with their feet when outside of the penalty area.
  - When goalies have possession of the ball with their hands, all opponents must retreat to their own half of the field. They may not return to their offensive half until the goalie has played the ball.
  - Goalies may NOT punt the ball. They may throw it, roll it or put the ball on the ground and play it like a field player. Goalies may not throw the ball into the opposing team’s final third of the field.
- **COACHES** – Be sure ALL players get equal playing time. Rotate goalies a few times each game. Get two goalie pinnies from the referee before the game, return the pinnies to the referee after the game. You may make substitutions when the ball is in play, but be 100% sure that the players who are coming off the field are well on their way to the bench area.
- **REFEREES** – Stay out of the way of play, it is best to stand close to a sideline as much as possible.
  - When you blow the whistle, blow it loud enough so that the players will know to stop play. Briefly explain the call to the players.
  - Start the game less than five minutes after the time listed on the schedule. End the game **BEFORE** the next pair of teams are scheduled to enter the field.
  - Referees are **NOT** to call a hand ball if a player puts their hands up to protect their face when the ball is kicked towards their face.
- **SPECTATORS** – It is preferred that you go upstairs and watch the game from the balcony. If you watch the game from the sideline, please stay 100% off the field. The lines are part of the field of play. Be aware that you might get struck by a ball or run over by a player. If this happens, it is NOT the fault of the players.