Sierra Vista Soccer League

By Laws

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**By Laws**

The rules and regulations governing the internal operations of an organization. The scope is specific to the organization and more detailed. It addresses day-to-day operations, membership, committees, etc. It can be enforced by the organization, itself. It is subordinate to the constitution. Hence, the amendment is easier to amend, requiring a simple majority vote. Requires a higher threshold for approval, two-thirds majority. Due to the nature of a constitution, revisions will be tracked.

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| **ACTION** | **DATE** | **DESCRIPTION** |
| Adopted |  |  |
| Revised | August 22, 2024 |  |
| Revised | August 15, 2025 | Split Constitution & Bylaws, Insert correct SVSL Logo, update Bylaws based on new votes |

### ARTICLE I – GENERAL

The name of the league shall be “Sierra Vista Soccer League” hereinafter called SVSL.

* 1. **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the SVSL shall be to:

1. Promote the game of soccer and the understanding of the rules of soccer.
2. Promote a sense of fair play and sportsmanship amongst all the participants of the game.
3. Promote consideration and a closer relationship between players, teams, referees, soccer associations, and other interested parties.
4. Be a fun league for all players regardless of skill level.
5. Engage in any other lawful purpose that supports its primary purpose.
	1. **RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Individuals**

1. All participants, regardless of role, must abide by SVSL Constitution, By Laws, policies, and guidelines.
2. All participants, regardless of role, must sign the Code of Conduct/Ethics.
3. Players must be properly registered.
4. Players who do not have a team, can register as a Free Agent to enable teams to recruit them.

Note: Individual player registrations made after the season midpoint may be entitled to a reduced rate.

**The Team Representative**

1. Overall responsible for the team and must be at least 18 years old.
2. Have one (1) vote in all matters where a vote by the Board of Directors is necessary.
3. Ensure that all players can provide identification upon request from the Official or SVSL representative.
4. Ensure every player has completed the registration waivers prior to playing a game.
5. Ensure their team is properly registered and in good standing. This includes all current dues, fees, and assessments due the SVSL must be paid. Membership dues are payable on or before the registration date set by the Board of Directors and become delinquent with commencement of league play.
6. Ensure utilization of Free Agents to recruit additional players. If a Free Agent is selected, ensure SVSL registrar is notified to ensure player is removed from Free Agent status.
7. Due to language barrier between players and referees, the captain from team will inform referee of any derogatory language being said during game.
8. Provide the registrar prior to registration opening, team primary and alternate jersey color and an appropriate team name. Nothing that is vulgar or obscene, regardless of language.

**SVSL Committee Members**

See the SVSL Policies and Procedures – Committees

**SVSL Board Members**

See the SVSL Policies and Procedures – Board Members

### ARTICLE II – RULES AND REGULATIONS

The “Spirit of the League" is the philosophy behind this organization. It is defined as recreational soccer for fun and not serious competition. It is playing soccer to have a good time, improve the skills of all players and socialize within and between organized teams. It is meeting new friends and learning new skills. It is sharing your expertise with your fellow teammates and fellow league mates. It is being a team player and not an individual. It is playing fair and acting as a good sport, at all times. It is being generous when you win and being graceful when you lose. It is obeying the officials and accepting their decisions. It is promoting the enjoyment of soccer for all. We should all strive to achieve the “Spirit of the League” when participating in this organization.

This league will be committed to the players, with a focus on the youth players that are still working towards High School, College or even Professional soccer careers. With the vast age range in the league, the adult players should strive to assist the younger players to raise their level of play by mentoring, coaching and setting a good example. Even while playing competitively, all players will maintain respect, courtesy and fair play.

The SVSL is a “Not-for-Profit”, tax-exempt organization that depends entirely on its players to volunteer to run the organization. Its purpose is to organize safe, recreational soccer for players 14 and up.

Teams and players are responsible for reading and understanding all the league rules and regulations.

## Schedule

#### Playing Year

The playing year is intended to take place between the months of September to the following calendar year August, although some years dates can fall outside of this timeframe. In accordance with the ASA, the Board of Directors and the Scheduling Committee will determine the number of seasons, season dates, and durations of each season.

#### Canceling/Rescheduling Games

The SVSL will use player season fees to pay for fields used for regular season and playoff games.

Teams may not agree between themselves to have a "friendly" game and count it as an "official" game.

To reschedule a game, a team must notify the Executive Board and the opposing team in

writing at least one week in advance. The opposing team must agree to the reschedule in order for it to be approved. Game dates and times are subject to the availability of fields and referees.

When requesting a reschedule, the team must include two proposed dates for the make-up game. The Board of Directors will work with the teams to find a mutually agreeable date.

A rescheduled game must be completed within 2 weeks of the original scheduled game day and before the postseason begins.

Postseason matches cannot be rescheduled EXCEPT for inclement weather.

If the opposing team will not reschedule, a forfeit with a score of 3-0 will be the result.

#### Postseason Games & Team Standings

Standings are determined as follows:

* Win counts as three (3) points
* Tie counts as one (1) point
* Loss counts as no (0) points

At the end of the season, if any teams are tied in the standings, meaning that they have the same point totals, then the following determines which team is placed above the other(s).

* Head-to-head competition
* Goals against
* Goal differential
* Goals for
* Coin flip

Official games not played (other than due to a forfeit) do not count in the standings.

At the end of any season, play-off games may be held. The playoff structure will be voted on by all eligible teams and board members prior to their start.

Trophies and participation awards will be decided on prior to playoffs by all eligible teams and board members

## Registration/Team Formation

#### Registration

Registration fees will be set by the SVSL prior to each season registration.

Player registration fees must be paid three calendar days prior to playing in any league game, tournament or any match that the SVSL sponsors.

The team representative shall provide the Registrant and the Registrar with their consent or dissent.

Registrants who do not request to play with a specific team will be put into the free agent pool and will be assigned to a team by the SVSL.

A player can transfer teams during the season, provided the Team Representatives from both teams agree and sign the player transfer form.

Registration will open at least three weeks prior to the first scheduled game of each season and will close three weeks prior to the final regular scheduled game. The Board of Directors will establish specific dates within the period.

#### Insurance

Players are responsible for their own medical insurance. The SVSL will purchase liability insurance through A.S.S.A.

#### Eligibility

Any male or female in good standings with the USSF is eligible to register in the SVSL.

Active professional soccer players are not allowed to play in this league. This is an amateur soccer player league.

#### Youth Players

Players between the ages of 14 and 18 years of age may register with SVSL provided their parents or legal guardians have expressed their consent in writing. Parents and players must sign a waiver and acknowledge that they understand this is an adult league.

A youth player officially registered with, and in good standing with the Arizona State Youth Soccer Association (ASYSA) may play with the SVSL in accordance with USSF rule 2104.

ASYSA players are not eligible to compete in any competition leading to the USSF Open or Amateur Cup.

All regulations regarding eligibility for high school participation must be adhered to. Youth players must be 14 by the date of the first match played.

#### Fees

The Board of Directors, prior to the start of each season, shall set the amount of such dues. The registration dues must accompany a player’s application for membership. Those who register after the season midpoint may be eligible for reduced fees.

Board of Directors have their league fees waived each season they are in active office. Team Captains get 50% off discount on their league fee cost each season they are representing their team *(added May 4, 2023)*.

#### Refunds

A refund request, along with the player pass (if issued), must be submitted in writing to the SVSL Treasurer before the first game of the season. Once the player is registered

with the state, only a partial refund will be given. Once the player’s first game is played, no refunds will be given. Exceptions can be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and may require documentation.

#### Player Passes

Each player must provide the registrar with a digital JPEG photograph. All player passes will be locally issued. Permanent and/or temporary player passes may only be issued from the SVSL registrar. Each player shall present to the referee their individual player pass before the start of each game. All passes will be returned to the team representative at the conclusion of each game unless the referee retains a pass (or passes) because of misconduct or violations. Guest players, who do not have their player pass with them may use their virtual player pass from the registration website.

If the permanent player pass is lost, the player may be charged a replacement fee of $5, payable to the Registrar.

#### Ineligible Players

Only properly registered SVSL players may participate in sanctioned league games or tournament play. Illegal players pose severe liability problems to the league if they are injured/injure someone else in a game. If a player is not properly registered, the team for which the player is playing shall automatically forfeit that game by a score of 3-0 and may face further disciplinary action as determined by the Disciplinary Committee and Board of Directors.

Violations of this rule, including but not limited to the use of altered official passes or use of non- registered players will result in all or any combination of the following disciplinary actions:

* Forfeiture of the game and any possible points gained from the following game.
* Suspension of the team’s voting privileges for a minimum of two meetings in the current or succeeding season of play.
* $50 fine assessed to the Team. Failure to pay assessed fines or adhere to suspension will result in suspension of the offending team and each registered player of that team and forfeiture of games as determined by the Executive Board.

#### Guest Player(s)

**Eligibility:** League members in good standing and registered with SVSL may play as guest players for another team during the regular season and consolation post-season matches.

**Number of Guest Players:** The total number of guest players allowed will not exceed six (6).

**Pre-game Requirements:** Team must have the minimum seven (7) rostered players rule (see “Forfeits” section). The total number of players are not to exceed thirteen (13).

Guest players must be present at the start of the game in which they are guest playing

and present their passes to the referee before the start of the match. Team representatives are responsible for identifying the player(s) they will be using to guest play with their opposing team representative and match officials prior to kickoff. Additional guest players will not be allowed to participate once the match has started.

**During the Match:** When/if additional rostered players arrive at the field and enter the field of play, they must replace a guest player. Once a guest player is replaced by a rostered player, they will not be allowed to return.

At the conclusion of the game, guest players are responsible for retrieving their player passes. Failure to do so could prevent the guest player from playing in their next scheduled match.

**Post Season:** Teams may not use Guest Players during competitive playoff matches. Guest players are allowed to be used in consolation matches.

**Other Restrictions:** Once a game has kicked off, guest players cannot be used to replace rostered players that need to leave the game early due to schedule or injury.

#### Disbanding Teams

Teams that disband during the season are required to notify the Registrar and President within 24 hours. The disbanding team’s remaining players may join another team without sitting out a game.

## Game Day Responsibilities

#### Equipment and Clothing Requirements

Each team must provide two (2) match balls prior to kickoff.

All players must wear the following equipment:

* A jersey, of the predetermined color(s), that is similar (excluding number and goalies) to their teammates'.
* Shin guards.
* Approved cleats or turf shoes (no metal spikes).
* Players must also wear a unique number on their jersey.

The number listed on the official game card as being the number worn by a specific player will only be worn by that player in that game.

Each team's goalie must wear a jersey with a color that is visibly different from the other players on their team and visibly different from the jerseys of the opposing team. Goalie jerseys are not required to be numbered.

Players who do not have an identical jersey (excluding their number and goalies) must be approved by the opposing team representative and match officials.

If there is a conflict with the opposing team's jersey colors, the teams must change jersey

colors at the beginning of the game. In these instances, the requirement of numbers for the jerseys is waived for the specific game. This must be done prior to kick-off.

No jewelry, hard casts, braces with exposed metal or any equipment that the referee deems dangerous to any player.

#### Behavior

Players will not drink alcoholic beverages before or during their game. A permit is required through The Sierra Vista Parks and Recreation Department. Those teams who do not obtain a permit but choose to consume alcoholic beverages at the field can be subject to fines from the city of Sierra Vista.

Team's members are responsible for the conduct of their spectators as well as their players. Please be aware that unruly people have a negative impact on the enjoyment of the game by others. Due to language barriers team captain will speak to the referee (center & AR’s) if conduct is in any way derogatory to referees, players or spectators.

Each team is responsible for field clean up after each game. This needs to be enforced by reminding teams as the fields have been left with trash (empty water bottles) everywhere.

#### Game Sheets

At conclusion of a game the team reps must check the game sheet to verify that all present players were checked in, especially the late arrivals.

Teams should forward referee evaluations to the Executive Board and Referee Coordinator. The team representative is responsible for ensuring that the above rules are followed.

#### Protests

Any team filing a protest for a game must do so in writing to the Board of Directors within 72 hours after the completion of the match in question.

Only Team Representatives may file a protest.

Concerns or questions about rules, fields, etc., may be brought to the attention of the Board of Directors in writing, at any time.

## Forfeits, Fines and Discipline

#### Forfeits

Forfeits are recorded as a 0-3 loss for the forfeiting team and a 3-0 win for the non-forfeiting team. A team forfeits a game when:

* The team does not show up or cancel’s their game after the cancelation deadline (see below). In this case, the forfeiting team will be penalized with a $130 fine to cover the cost of fields and referees. This fine is the responsibility of the team representative and must be paid before the team’s next game.
* The team does not have enough players. If a team has fewer than the minimum number of rostered players, it forfeits the game 15 minutes after the scheduled start of the game. The minimum number of rostered players is seven (7). In this case, the forfeiting team will be penalized with a $50 fine. This fine is the responsibility for the team representative and must be paid before the team’s next game.
* A team that starts a game with the legal number of players but then, due to an ejection or injury of a player, falls below the minimum requirement for a legal team, forfeits the game to the other team regardless of the score at the time. In this case, the $50 penalty fee will be waived.
* The team or its spectators are responsible for the abandonment of the game. If the Disciplinary Committee and Board of Directors judge that a team or its spectators are responsible for the abandonment of the game, the team forfeits the game. This includes situations where the team or its spectators engage in unsportsmanlike conduct, such as fighting or throwing objects.
* The team uses ineligible players. If a team uses ineligible players, the team forfeits the game. Ineligible players include players who are not registered with the league, players who are suspended, guest players outside of what is outline by the constitution or pre-match team representative’s agreement, or players who are under the age of 14.

Teams must notify board 2 days before their scheduled game (Thursday by 5pm for Sunday games) if they want to forfeit and avoid the $130 fine. If any team forfeits 3 of their matches, their team cannot play in the playoffs (their players may still guest play for teams playing Consolation Matches).

#### Player Fines & Disciplinary Action

See the SVSL Policies and Procedures – Fines & Disciplinary Action

# Referees

See the SVSL Policies and Procedures – Referees

# Rules of Play

IFAB Laws of the Game prevail with the following exceptions:

#### Team Representatives

SVSL implements use of the ‘Only the captain’ IFAB guidelines to improve on-field behavior and to enhance cooperation and strengthen the rapport between the players and the referee. Team Representatives or Captains are the only persons allowed to voice concerns to the referees; other players should speak with their captain or representative in order to communicate with an official. The team captain will be identified via armband. When speaking to a referee, the Team Captain(s) and representatives will maintain respect. If a referee feels they have been verbally abused by a player, captain, representative or spectator, they not only have the right and ability to caution the individual, but they will report the offense to the Board of Director and the Disciplinary Committee who will decide if further punishment needs to be administered.

Team representatives must stay within 10 yards to either side of the center line during the game.

#### Game Start Time & Duration

Games will start at the time indicated on the schedule. A forfeit will be recorded against any team that does not have the legal number of players on the field within 15 minutes after the scheduled start time and/or are missing their player passes.

In the event that a referee fails to show within 15 minutes after the scheduled starting time, a substitute referee may be used upon mutual agreement of the teams. A game officiated by a substitute referee counts as an official game and will be reflected in the league standings. It is the substitute referee’s responsibility to notify the league in order to collect his or her payment for officiating the match. Teams using a substitute referee must notify the league's referee coordinator as soon as possible after the match.

In the event that a referee fails to show within 15 minutes past the scheduled starting time and/or no substitute referee is available, the game must be rescheduled.

If a game starts after 15 minutes past the scheduled starting time due to weather, field problems, or other unforeseeable circumstances, which are not the fault of either team, the referee can shorten the game.

Games will consist of 45-minute halves (this is subject to change during the fall season should the amount of light interfere with the safety of the game). The referees have the discretion of ending the game due to darkness, weather or other factors that make playing conditions dangerous and their decision shall be final.

Water breaks will be held as close to the 22:30 mark of each half. Time will continue to run during these breaks.

The referee and team captains have the freedom to add additional water breaks due to extreme heat during the summer and fall season. This decision must be made during the coin toss and both team captains along with the referee have to agree to them. If one of those people does not agree then no additional water breaks will be granted. Additional water breaks cannot be added solely because a team is short on players. Player attendance is the team’s responsibility and no one else.

There will be a 5-10-minute break at half time.

No Mercy Rule.

#### Inclement Weather

See the SVSL Policies and Procedures – Inclement Weather

#### Substitute Players

You ***MAY*** substitute a player at the following times:

* On a throw-in by your team
* On a goal kick by either team
* On any kickoff
* For an injured player on your team
* To replace a player receiving a yellow card, the player substituting must be ready to come onto the field (no delaying the game while players remove their sweats, etc.).

Substitute players must enter from the center line and wait until the referee waives the player onto the field of play. Players coming off the field may leave by the most direct route.

Players ejected from the game because of a red card cannot be substituted for and must leave the general vicinity. The team must play short-handed.

Upon the stoppage of play and acknowledgment from the referee, a team playing with fewer than 11 players is allowed to add eligible players to the game.

#### Slide Tackling

**No slide tackling will be permitted.** A slide tackle is defined as when a player not in possession of the ball and in direct proximity to an opposing player leaves their feet to play the ball. Generally, a slide tackle is an intentional slide within the player’s horizontal body length of an opposing player. Whether the opposing player is touched in any way is irrelevant. The following plays are legal: Sliding for the ball when there are no other players within the player’s horizontal body length; a goalie sliding for the ball within the penalty area, even if feet first, so long as the goalie’s intention is to catch or smother the ball; reaching for the ball, but unintentionally slipping due to field conditions, etc. If a slide tackle occurs, an indirect free kick or direct free kick, depending on the slide outcome, will be awarded to the opposing team at the site of the slide tackle. The referee has the discretion to issue a yellow or red card, if warranted.

#### Playoffs

Teams may not use Guest Players during competitive playoff matches. Guest players may play in consolation matches.

Teams may only use players that were registered and on the team roster in accordance with the 3-week registration cut-off.

All players in the play-offs must have played a minimum of 3 games throughout the current season. For those players that registered just before the cut-off for registration, that means they must play in each of the last 3 games and have been checked off on the official game card for those games.

In the event that playoff games are tied at the end of regulation time, play shall be extended by two 15- minute halves. Overtime shall begin after a rest period of two minutes. If the score remains tied after the overtime periods, the game will be decided by

shots from the penalty mark in accordance with the USSF/IFAB laws of the game.

## League Catch-All

The Board of Directors of the SVSL reserve the right to dismiss, fine or take any actions against any participant in the league for any reason at any time. The “Spirit of the League” is the bottom line. Any decisions made by the Board of Directors may be consistent with, contrary to or in lieu of action already taken by the officials.

## Amendments to the Rules and Regulations

Amendments to the Rules and Regulations or Policies and Procedures may be made at any SVSL meeting by a vote of two-thirds of the voting members present, providing that all league teams have been given 14 days written notice of the meeting and written copy of the proposed changes. Voting members for this purpose are defined as executive board members, the team representatives of member teams in good standing, and division coordinators. Voting members have the option to extend the vote to the SVSL General Populace, whereby voting will take place on the fields the first games following the SVSL annual general meeting (AGM) in August. Amendments cannot be made for rules implemented by USSF, IFAB, or the ASA.