

**ERIE PREMIER SPORTS**  
**Friday Night Rec-Social Soccer**

Welcome to Erie Premier Sports Friday Night Rec-Social Soccer. This league is truly unique to the Erie area as it is the only league that limits both player and team strength and emphasizes fun and fitness over winning and competition. As such, we don't keep score, have standings, or have playoffs. Additionally, there are a number of rules in place designed to minimize injuries and ensure fun for all. These rules are listed below:

**THE LEAGUE - GENERALLY**

**Teams:** Teams consist of 5 field players plus a goalkeeper. At least two of the field players must be female. The goalkeeper is gender neutral.

**Score:** As this is a non-competitive league, scores are not kept. There are no team standings and no playoffs.

**Equipment:** Soccer shoes (cleats, turf, or indoor) are encouraged. Gym shoes are also acceptable. No other shoes (boots, football cleats, etc.) are permitted. Shin guards are encouraged but not required.

**Eyeglasses:** A player wearing eyeglasses is at risk of serious injury if a ball strikes the player in the face. As such, sunglasses are not permitted. If a player insists on wearing prescription glasses during play, they assume all risk of injury resulting from wearing eyeglasses.

**Game Times:** Games consist of two 25 minute halves with a 2 minute halftime. For the Fall, Winter, and Spring sessions, games are played indoors and times are 6:35, 7:30, 8:25, and 9:20. A 10:15 game will be played if there are more than 8 teams in the league. For the Summer session, games will be played outside (weather permitting) and times are 6:15, 7:10, 8:05, and 9:00. A 9:55 game will be played if there are more than 8 teams in the league. All times are subject to change.

**ROSTER RULES**

**Players:** All players must be at least 15 years of age or older. Players under the age of 18 must have their roster signed by a parent/guardian. Proof of age may be required. As this is a recreation-social league, players with advanced skill or competitive attitudes are not permitted in the league. Factors to be considered include foot skills, speed, physical style, competitive attitude, the make-up of the rest of the player's team, etc.

**Team Shirts:** Captains must pick their team color prior to the first game. All players on their team should make every effort to wear a shirt that is substantially the team color. While some variations are acceptable, and occasionally forgetting a shirt is understandable, players should avoid wearing striped shirts or shirts that may confuse the referee or players from the other team. Goalies must wear a shirt color that is different than their own team color and the opposing team color.

**Roster management:** Captains are expected to manager player and team strength. The league director has sole discretion to remove any player or league inconsistent with the intention of the league. In addition to regular team members, captains are encouraged to have subs on standby whom can be called when needed. Subs should on the same level of play as the absent player so as to avoid claims of "stacking." All players must sign the roster waiver. Each team should submit their completed roster by the second game of the session. Captains are responsible for having new/substitute players sign the roster prior to the start of the game. Failure to do so will result in the player being ineligible to play the remainder of that game.

Players on multiple teams: No player is permitted to be on the roster of more than one team. If a captain knows in advance that players are needed and no players on his/her roster are available, the captain should try to contact a player from the “approved sub” list which will be provided early in the session. If a player is still needed, a captain may ask a player from another team but MUST get permission from the captain of the opposing team before the game begins. Failure to get this permission will result in the player being ineligible to play during that game.

#### BALL OUT-OF-PLAY RULES

Bringing a ball back into play: When a ball goes out of play, it will be brought back into play with a kick in. There are no throw-ins.

Indirect kicks: All balls are brought into play with an indirect kick OFF THE PLAYER’S OWN TEAM. The purpose of this rule is to discourage kicking the ball excessively hard at the goalie.

Stand back: When the ball is brought back into play with a kick-in, opposing players must stand back at least 10 feet from the player kicking the ball back into play. When the ball is kicked in from the dot outside the goal box, opposing players must stand back 3 feet and “power kicks” are not allowed. (See rule on Dangerous plays.)

#### DURING PLAY RULES

Goalie playing the field: The goalie cannot carry (dribble) the ball outside of his/her own goal box. Outside of his/her own goal box, the goalie is allowed to receive the ball or defend against an opposing player, but may only take enough touches (1-2) to pass or clear the ball. The goalie is not permitted to carry the ball down the field. The goalie can never leave his/her own half of the field. Violation of this rule will result in the opposing team gaining possession at the spot where the violation is called. Goalies also cannot go “cleats first” into a tackle to save a ball.

Substitutions: Substitutions are “on the fly.” The player coming off the field must be reasonably near the player coming on the field. If this rule gets abused the referred may require the use of “hand tags.” This rule does not apply when the ball is out of play and the outgoing and incoming player make it clear to the ref and opposing team

Goalie Ball: The ball will be given to the goalie whenever the goalie has “reasonable” possession of the ball. This rule is intended to protect the goalie.

Handballs: A handball foul will only be called if contact with the ball is intentional or if it gives the player or his/her team the advantage. A ref will not call a handball if a ball is kicked in the air and strikes another player’s arms/hands while at that player’s sides and no advantage is acquired. Players are also permitted to protect their face and torso with their hands/arms without a handball being called.

Swearing: The league is intended to be fun and children may be nearby watching. Swearing (in any language) is not allowed and can be considered a foul and result in a player being carded.

## DANGEROUS PLAY RULES

In addition to the usual dangerous play rules, additional rules are in place in order to minimize the risk of injury.

If any of these falls are called, the opposing team is awarded possession of the ball at the location where the foul occurred.

Sliding: Sliding is not allowed, even when no other players are around. This rule includes all instances of slipping, tripping, etc. Intent is not a requirement as players are expected to maintain control of their speed and body so that they stay on their feet in an upright position.

High Kicks: High kicks are prohibited, even when no players are nearby.

Excessive Force Kicks: Kicking the ball excessively hard is prohibited. The referee will make this call based on the force of the kick, the people in front of the ball, etc.

Body Contact: Pushing, bumping, etc. should be avoided. Use of the arms for leverage or to unbalance an opposing player is considered a foul. In addition, players should avoid defending by kicking at ankles or pushing against the player with possession. Rather, dropping back and defending is encouraged.

## REFEREE DISCRETION AND FOULS

Arguing with the Referee: Our referees are young and managing adults can be intimidating. They make the league affordable as they are paid much less than experienced referees. Players should keep this in mind before they decide to contest a call or lack of call. Additionally, keep in mind that all rules will be enforced with player safety as the ultimate goal. Arguing with the referee will not be tolerated. Red cards are likely if the league director has to get involved.

Disputing Calls: The referee will not change a call based on argument from a player (see above rule "Arguing with the Referee). The exception is if a player makes a call against him or herself or against his or her own team. This is consistent with being a "good sport."

Yellow Card: The player must come off the field for 2 minutes. A substitution is allowed.

Red Card: The player must leave the game.

Two Yellow Cards: Equivalent of a red card.

Game Forfeiture: The game will be forfeited without refund or possibility of rescheduling if the referee or the league director determine that players lose their temper or engage in behaviors that demonstrate a high risk of confrontation or injury.

## SUMMARY

It cannot be stressed enough: This league is about all players having fun. Every player should walk on the field intending to be a good sport and just enjoying playing the game. Keep this in mind when you go into a 50/50 ball, before arguing with a ref, etc. This is a social league. Talk to your teammates. Talk to your opponents. Talk to the ref. Again, just have fun.