

Metro Senior Women's Soccer League



Code of Conduct and Discipline Code

March 2021

PART I: TEAM CODE OF CONDUCT

To ensure that the objectives of the MSWSL are upheld, the League has developed the following Code of Conduct for players, coaches, managers and any other team officials to abide by. Each team's coach, manager, team captain and League representatives are responsible for ensuring that their team understands and abides by this Code. This Code of Conduct applies to behaviour at any time before, during, or after a game that the team member is acting or can be construed to be acting as a member of their team, regardless of whether the conduct is sanctioned by a referee.

1. **FIFA Laws:** Players must abide by the laws of soccer as stated in the official FIFA Laws of the Game.
2. **Unacceptable behaviour on and off the field:** Threatening or unsporting behaviour at or from the sidelines is unacceptable. Fighting is strictly prohibited. Foul language on and around the field is unacceptable. The coach, manager, team captain and League representative will be held accountable for the actions and words of team members on the field and on the bench and for any of the team's fans who demonstrate unacceptable behaviour before, during, and after a game.
3. **Team captain:** The team captain must identify herself to the referee at the coin toss. The team captain must be respected and should assert her position within the team and, subject to the laws of the game and the discretion of the referee, only she will approach the referee and request explanations of unclear decisions.
4. **Defusing situations:** A team's coach, manager, team captain and League representative must take all precautions necessary to defuse heated situations involving their players, team officials or spectators and prevent any violence from occurring.
5. **Respect for officials:** Player's must demonstrate restraint and respect the decisions of the referees, whether they agree with the decisions or not. The referees are in control of the game play. Any complaints about a referee must be put in writing to the Executive of the MSWSL. Do not harass referees during or after a game, even if you believe your complaint to be legitimate.
6. **Sporting behaviour:** Fair play and sporting behaviour are principal objectives underlying the MSWSL. Persistent unsporting behaviour can result in a team or a player being ejected from the League.
7. **Cooperation:** Treat all players as you would like to be treated. Players must cooperate with League officials, coaches, team-mates and opponents.

If this Code of Conduct is violated by any coach, manager, league representative or player, a complaint may be sent in writing to the MSWSL executive within 48 hours of the incident. (See Section E of the Discipline Code.)

PART II: MSWSL DISCIPLINE CODE**1) PURPOSE OF CODE**

This Code describes and categorizes infractions by degrees of severity and outlines the penalties for these infractions. The purpose of this Code is to ensure consistency in the administration of discipline in the MSWSL. This Code supplements Soccer Nova Scotia's standard penalties for misconducts. If there is a discrepancy between this Code and the penalties set by SNS or, the higher penalty applies.

2) APPLICATION OF CODE

This Code applies to team officials and players. An individual or team may be disciplined under more than one section of this Code at any one time.

3) CODE SETS MINIMUM PENALTIES

The penalties listed in this Code are the MSWSL's minimum for the infraction. In many instances they are higher than the standard set by Soccer Nova Scotia. More severe penalties may be also applied, taking into account the circumstances of the offence, an individual's or team's past record, any apparent pattern of behaviour, the seriousness of any resulting or potentially resulting injuries, whether the conduct was malicious or represented a wilful disregard for the safety of others, the attitude of the team or individual during the disciplinary procedure, and any verbal or other abuse of discipline committee members or the League Executive.

4) PENALTIES SUMMARILY IMPOSED

Any of the penalties set in this Code may be summarily imposed by the League Executive or as specified in this Code, and the person who is the subject of the penalty must be notified of the sanctions by email sent to the team's coach or other team contact provided to the League. Any individual or team who wishes to respond to a penalty summarily imposed under this Code may request a hearing with a discipline committee within 3 days of the penalty being imposed. A hearing with a discipline committee will be conducted in accordance with Rule 6 of the MSWSL Rules and Regulations.

5) MISCONDUCT AGAINST GAME OFFICIALS

Incidents of misconduct directed against match officials falls within the exclusive jurisdiction of Soccer Nova Scotia and are dealt with by Soccer Nova Scotia. Any incident being dealt with by Soccer Nova Scotia results in an automatic suspension of ALL soccer activities. Contact the League President to find out the status of an infraction.

6) FURTHER PENALTIES

A player or team official who fails to immediately leave the field area after being ejected, will incur further penalties.

7) PENALTIES INTO NEXT SEASON

A suspension carries over from one season to the next season. Yellow cards accumulated in a single season are nullified and do not carry over to the next season.

8) SUSPENDED PLAYERS/OFFICIALS

Any player or team official who is serving a suspension for a game must not be involved in the game in any way and may not sit on the bench. For a player to serve a game suspension, the player's team must actually play a League game (does not include a forfeited or rained out game) and put the suspended player's name on the game sheet noting the suspension.

9) *TEAMS RESPONSIBLE FOR FINES LEVIED AGAINST LEAGUE*

If a fine or other penalty is imposed on the League as the result of a team's actions or failure to act as required, then that team must pay to the League an amount not less than the amount paid by the League, as determined by the Executive.

10) *FINES AND BONDS*

All financial sanctions MUST be paid before reinstatement. A team that fails to pay a fee, a fine or post any bonds levied against them is not in good standing with the League and will not be permitted to return to the League until all accounts are paid in full. For any deadline that is missed, or payment that is late, a team will be charged a \$100 fine – or such amount agreed to under the circumstances by the League membership, plus an identical amount added on for each further week that non-compliance continues.

11) *REVOCAION OF PENALTY*

A discipline committee has the authority to suspend any portion of a suspension or bond at their discretion, as long as the suspension served does not fall below the minimum as set in this Code.

12) *APPEALS*

Appeals from hearings with a discipline committee are as set out in Rules 6 and 7 of the MSWSL Rules and Regulations. Appeals from any decision made by an MSWSL discipline committee to Soccer Nova Scotia cannot challenge the jurisdiction of the League to impose penalties under this Code, as it is a condition of membership in the League to abide by the Code; therefore appeals may be requested on issues of interpretation and application of SNS rules and the rules of the game only.

13) *DEFINITIONS*

In this Code, the following definitions apply:

- "player" means all individuals listed on the official team roster as registered with Soccer Nova Scotia and the MSWSL, and includes an individual who is called up to play on a team and is listed on the game sheet for a game
- "team official" means a team's coach, manager, League representative, or any other person who holds a position of authority with the team and includes a club official if the club official is acting on behalf of the team
- "Ineligible player" is defined as:
 - an underage player, in contravention of the Rules of the MSWSL
 - a player registered with another team in the same or higher (Senior AA or AAA) level
 - an unregistered player
 - a suspended player
 - a player who is playing under an assumed name

- During the COVID-19 pandemic, a player who has failed to complete the COVID-19 screening form in accordance with the timelines and processes of the season.

SECTION A – CUMULATIVE YELLOW CARDS

A.1 – PLAYERS

Misconduct	Action
First Caution	No action
Second Caution	No action
Third caution	1-game suspension
Fourth Caution	No action
Fifth Caution	2-game suspension
Sixth Caution	3-game suspension
Seventh Caution	5-game suspension

A.2 – TEAM OFFICIALS

Misconduct	Action
First Caution	No action
Second Caution	No action
Third caution	2-game suspension
Fourth Caution	No action
Fifth Caution	3-game suspension
Sixth Caution	4-game suspension
Seventh Caution	6-game suspension

SECTION B – CUMULATIVE RED CARDS

B.1 – PLAYERS

#	Misconduct	First Seasonal Offence	Second Seasonal Offence	Third Seasonal Offence
1.13A	Dismissed for “receiving a second yellow card in the same game”. <i>For the purposes of counting yellow and red cards, two yellow cards received in the same game are to be counted as one red, not as two yellow.</i>	1-game suspension	2-game suspension	3-game suspension
1.13B	Dismissed for “receiving a second yellow card in the same game” for which at least one of the cautions was directed at the game official(s). <i>For the purposes of counting yellow and red cards, two yellow cards received in the same game are to be counted as one red, not as two yellow.</i>	2-game suspension	3-game suspension	4-game suspension
1.14	Dismissed for “serious foul play”	2-game suspension	4-game suspension	6-game suspension
1.15A	Dismissed for “using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures” directed at anyone other than the game official(s). <i>If comments are racist or sexist, see 1.73.</i>	2-game suspension	4-game suspension	6-game suspension
1.15B	Dismissed for “using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures” directed at a game official(s). <i>If comments are racist or sexist, see 1.73.</i>	6-game suspension	Discipline Hearing on penalty. Suspension to be applied to all competitions	
1.16	Dismissed for spitting at an opponent or any other person other than the game official(s)	4-game suspension	8-game suspension	12-game suspension
1.17	Dismissed for “violent conduct”	3-game suspension	Discipline Hearing on penalty.	
1.17A	Violent conduct with intent to injure	Discipline Hearing on penalty.	Discipline Hearing on penalty.	

		Suspension to be a minimum of 4 games.		
1.18A	Dismissed for “denying an opponent a goal or obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball”	1-game suspension	2-game suspension	See misconduct 1.22
1.18B	Dismissed for “denying an opponent a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player’s goal by an offence punishable by a free kick or penalty kick”	2-games suspension	4-games suspension	See misconduct 1.22
1.19	Persisted in “using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures” directed at the game official(s) after having been previously dismissed	Discipline Hearing on penalty. Suspension to be between 6 to 8 games in addition to the suspension for the red card.	Discipline Hearing on penalty. Suspension to be between 8 to 10 games in addition to the suspension for the red card.	See misconduct 1.22
1.22	Received a third dismissal within a 12-month period	Discipline Hearing on penalty. Suspension to be applied to all competitions		
1.64A	Game official assault or attempted physical contact or threatening behaviour	Discipline Hearing on penalty by SNS. Suspension to be applied to all soccer activities		
1.64B	Game official assault for deliberate physical contact or any form of violent conduct or attempted violent conduct.	Discipline Hearing on penalty by SNS. Suspension to be applied to all soccer activities		
1.64C	Game official assault – spitting at a game official	Discipline Hearing on penalty by SNS. Suspension to be applied to all soccer activities		
1.73	Dismissed or reported by a game official or another registrant for discriminatory or sexual comments made during the game or in the vicinity of the field either before, during or after the game.	Discipline Hearing on penalty by SNS. Suspension to be applied to all soccer activities		

1.80	Intentionally acted in a manner deemed to be detrimental to the game.	Discipline Hearing on penalty. Suspension to be applied to all competitions
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B.2 – TEAM OFFICIALS

#	Misconduct	First Seasonal Offence	Second Seasonal Offence	Third Seasonal Offence
2.01	Dismissed for “delaying the restart of play by opposing team”	1-game suspension	2-game suspension	See misconduct 2.22
2.02	Dismissed for “deliberately leaving the technical area to dissent or act in a provocative or inflammatory manner”	2-game suspension	3-game suspension	See misconduct 2.22
2.03	Dismissed for “Entering the opposing technical area in an aggressive or confrontational manner”	3-game suspension	Penalty to be determined by Discipline Hearing	See misconduct 2.22
2.04	Dismissed for “entering the field of play to confront the match official or interfere with play, an opposing player or game official”	Discipline Hearing on penalty. Suspension to be a minimum of 4 games.	Penalty to be determined by Discipline Hearing	See misconduct 2.22
2.05	Dismissed for “deliberately throwing/kicking an object onto the field of play”	2-game suspension	3-game suspension	See misconduct 2.22
2.13A	Dismissed for “receiving a second yellow card in the same game”. <i>For the purposes of counting yellow and red cards, two yellow cards received in the same game are to be counted as one red, not as two yellow.</i>	2-game suspension	3-game suspension	See misconduct 2.22
2.13B	Dismissed for “receiving a second yellow card in the same game” for which at least one of the cautions was directed at the game official(s). <i>For the purposes of counting yellow and red cards, two yellow cards received in the same</i>	3-game suspension	4-game suspension	See misconduct 2.22

	<i>game are to be counted as one red, not as two yellow.</i>			
2.14	Dismissed for “physical or aggressive behaviour towards an opposing player, team official, spectator or any other person excluding the game official”	Discipline Hearing on penalty. Suspension to be a minimum of 4 games.	Penalty to be determined by Discipline Hearing	See misconduct 2.22
2.15A	Dismissed for “using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures” directed at anyone other than the game official(s). <i>If comments are racist or sexist, see 2.73.</i>	3-game suspension	5-game suspension	See misconduct 2.22
2.15B	Dismissed for “using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures” directed at a game official(s). <i>If comments are racist or sexist, see 2.73.</i>	6-game suspension	Penalty to be determined by Discipline Hearing Suspension to be applied to all competitions	Penalty to be determined by Discipline Hearing Suspension to be applied to all competitions
2.16	Dismissed for spitting at an opponent or any other person other than the game official(s)	5-game suspension	9-game suspension	Penalty to be determined by Discipline Hearing
2.19	Persisted in “using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures” directed at the game official(s) after having been previously dismissed	Penalty to be determined by Discipline Hearing Suspension to be between 6 to 8 games.	Penalty to be determined by Discipline Hearing Suspension to be between 8 to 10 games.	See misconduct 1.22
2.17	Dismissed for “violent conduct”	4-game suspension	Penalty to be determined by Discipline Hearing	
2.22	Received a third dismissal within a 12-month period	Discipline Hearing on penalty. Suspension to be applied to all competitions		
2.64A	Game official assault or attempted physical contact or threatening behaviour	Discipline Hearing on penalty by SNS. Suspension to be applied to all soccer activities		

2.64B	Game official assault for deliberate physical contact or any form of violent conduct or attempted violent conduct.	Discipline Hearing on penalty by SNS. Suspension to be applied to all soccer activities
2.64C	Game official assault – spitting at a game official	Discipline Hearing on penalty by SNS. Suspension to be applied to all soccer activities
2.73	Dismissed or reported by a game official or another registrant for discriminatory or sexual comments made during the game or in the vicinity of the field either before, during or after the game.	Discipline Hearing on penalty by SNS. Suspension to be applied to all soccer activities
2.80	Intentionally acted in a manner deemed to be detrimental to the game.	Discipline Hearing on penalty. Suspension to be applied to all competitions

SECTION C – OFFENCES UNDER MSWSL RULES AND REGULATIONS

C.1 - INELIGIBLE PLAYERS:

Team officials are responsible for ascertaining the status of any player playing with their team and must verify the status of their players with their club registrar. In accordance with the MSWSL Rules and Regulations, a player is deemed to have played in a game if the player's name is on a game sheet for the game.

#	Misconduct	First Seasonal Offence	Second Seasonal Offence	Third Seasonal Offence
1.24	Senior player played as an ineligible player except for a player who played while under suspension in which case misconduct 1.70 shall apply.	2-game suspension	4-game suspension	6-game suspension
1.70	A player who participated in a soccer activity from which the player was suspended.	Penalty to be determined by Discipline Hearing. Suspension to be between 1 to 3 months.	Penalty to be determined by Discipline Hearing	

1.71	A player who participated in any soccer related activity under a false name	Penalty to be determined by Discipline Hearing. Suspension to be between 3-12 months	Penalty to be determined by Discipline Hearing	
2.8	A team official played an ineligible player or suspended player in a sanctioned game. <i>All games in which the ineligible player participated in shall be forfeited by the team.</i>	Penalty to be determined by Discipline Hearing. Suspension to be between 6-12 months	Penalty to be determined by Discipline Hearing. Suspension to be a minimum of 12 months	Penalty to be determined by Discipline Hearing

- 1) A team who plays a second ineligible player or the same ineligible player a second time, will be fined \$200 and the team must submit to a review by a league discipline committee. The committee may impose any sanctions up to and including expulsion from the League.

C.2 - FAILING TO PLAY SCHEDULED GAME:

- 1) A team who fails to appear for a scheduled game but who gives the League and the opposing team 48-hours' notice will forfeit the game and pay any referee fees for the game.
- 2) A team who does any of the following will forfeit the game and must pay a fine of \$50 and pay any referee fees for the game,
 - a) fails to appear for a scheduled game without 48-hours' notice to the League and the opposing team
 - b) fails to have the minimum number of players dressed and ready within the time allowable for a kick-off thereby causing the cancellation of a game.
- 3) A team that fails to play a scheduled game under 1) or 2) for a second time must post a \$100 performance bond in addition to the penalties under 1) and 2).
- 4) A team that fails to play a scheduled game under 1) or 2) for a third time must submit to a review by a discipline committee which may, in addition to the penalties imposed under 1) and 2), impose any sanctions up to and including expulsion from the League, and any future participation in the League in the following season must be reviewed by the League membership, which may place whatever conditions it considers necessary on the team's future participation, including requiring a \$500 performance bond to be posted.
- 5) A Team that causes a game to be abandoned by leaving the field of play without the referee's permission must submit to a discipline committee hearing on the matter.

C.3 - EQUIPMENT FAILURES:

- 1) A team who does any of the following will receive a \$25 fine
 - a. fails to provide nets and corner flags when they are the "home team" on a grass field
 - b. fails to supply 2 suitable game balls when they are the "home team"

- c. fails to provide an alternate coloured uniform when they are the “away team”
 - d. fails to provide an official game sheet and/or properly filled out game sheet.
- 2) A team whose failure to provide equipment or documents under 1) results in the cancellation of a game will be sanctioned in accordance with Section C.2, with the stipulation that every effort must be made on the part of the opposing team to ensure that the game is played by providing the missing equipment.
 - 3) An opposing team who does not make every effort to ensure that a game is played under 2) will receive a \$25 fine and the game may be rescheduled at the discretion of the League Executive.

C.4 – PROVINCIAL REPRESENTATIVES

- 1) A team who has opted-in under Rule 15.2 and who does not fulfil their commitment to participate in Provincials will receive a fine in an amount of not less than the amount of any penalties imposed upon the League because of the team’s withdrawal, as determined by the League Executive.

SECTION D – OFFENCES INVOLVING TEAM SPECTATORS

- 1) Teams are responsible for the conduct of their spectators and must make every effort to ensure the proper conduct of their spectators. Team supporters who enter the field of play may cause the team to be suspended from further participation in League play.
- 2) Any team official or player found guilty of inviting spectators onto the field of play for the purpose of engaging members of the opposing team, will be suspended for the remainder of the season.

SECTION E – OTHER MISCONDUCTS BY TEAM OFFICIALS

Any actions to induce or attempted to induce a registered player to leave their team before the end of that team’s current season is prohibited. Should such a complaint come forward, an investigation will be conducted, and a discipline hearing will be held to discuss the liability and penalty if required.

SECTION F – COMPLAINTS AND SUPPLEMENTARY DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- 1) Any team that wishes to complain about misconduct or unsporting behaviour (including bullying, belittling or disparaging comments) by a player, team official or team, whether sanctioned by game officials or not, must send a complaint, in writing, detailing the conduct complained of to the League Executive.
- 2) Upon verifying the conduct suspected or complained of, the League will
 - a. issue a written warning to any team, team official or player about their conduct and request a response within 3 days indicating how the team intends to prevent such behaviour from occurring again and immediately suspend the coach of the team involved for 1 game, and may, if considered warranted, send the complaint to a discipline committee for review and further sanctions;
 - b. for a second complaint about a team, team official or player, summarily discipline the team, official or player in accordance with the penalties set out in this Code for similar conduct, including any fines or bonds;

- c. for any subsequent complaint about a team, team official or player, suspend the team, team official or player until they show cause to the discipline committee as to why they should be allowed to continue to participate in the League.
- 3) On receiving a complaint, or on its own initiative at any time, the League may investigate suspected misconduct or unsporting behaviour by a player, team official or team by interviewing any player, team official, game official or any other person with information relevant to the conduct or behaviour.
- 4) Any team that is found to have made frivolous or vexatious complaints against a player or team official under this Section will be fined \$500 and any team official or player involved may be subject to further discipline by the League.
- 5) This Section may not be used to protest a game or alter a game result. Protests must be in accordance with Rule 6.

PART III: COVID-19 APPENDIX

- Any individual (player, coach, team official etc.) found to not respect league or facility rules regarding COVID-19 protocols will be subject to sanctioning which could include permanent suspension from the current competition.
- If there is a difference between the length of suspension levied by SNS and MSWSL, the penalty with the longest period of time will apply.
- This appendix will be included in the Code until the COVID-19 pandemic state of emergency in Nova Scotia is removed.

CODE OF CONDUCT AMENDMENTS:

APRIL 2012:

- Fines and Bonds: addition of \$100 fine for missed deadlines or late payments, plus additional weekly fines
- Sections A & B: eliminated fines for players
- Section C.1: clarified meaning of “same or higher division”; removed 12-month suspension for underage players (not eligible to play for remainder of season anyway b/c underage)
- Section C.2: reduced requires performance bond to \$100 and \$500
- Section D: clarify duty of team to control spectators; include team officials in item 2) (oversight)
- Section E: indicate that other SNS sanctions may apply to coaches who are ejected (e.g. playing restrictions)
- Section F: clarify that complaints apply to bullying etc. and add in automatic 1-game suspension for coach if complaint verified

NOVEMBER 2012:

- Definition of violent conduct – deleted “foul and abusive language”
- Section D: added 2-game suspension for players who receive suspension for foul or abusive language as item 1) and renumbered items 2-15. (Further cards in the season for similar offences are then covered under items 13) and 14) of this Section.)

NOVEMBER 2016

- Section C-4 added to correspond with Rule change requiring teams who opt-in to commit to Provincials

MARCH 2017

- Part II” Teams responsible for fines levied against League” added

NOVEMBER 2019

- Typos corrected
- Updated to include the correct competition level

MARCH 2021

- Adjustments to Part 1 to remove duplication

- Addition of numbers to Part 2
- Removal of definitions of red and yellow card offences (can be found in FIFA LOTG)
- Addition of COVID Appendix
- Shift of Section A, B, and C to an easy to read chart
- Adjustments of suspensions for select red cards (highlighted in yellow) to bring them more in line with SNS and Canada Soccer
- Addition of suspensions for dismissal reasons not listed.
- Addition of suspensions for team officials in accordance with new Laws for yellow/red cards for team officials