



2026 WVFC CAPITAL CUP TOURNAMENT RULES



The rules of this tournament shall be in accordance with US Youth Soccer and West Virginia Soccer Association (“WVSA”) except as modified and approved herein.

I. TEAM ELIGIBILITY

This tournament shall be open to all teams composed of properly registered youth players born in the years 2007-2019, provided such team is in good standing with its youth state association or country, as necessary.

It shall be the responsibility of each National State Association to certify the eligibility of its competing teams and to provide such teams with a certified copy of the roster, permission to travel, and proof of insurance.

II. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

Players must be legally registered through their respective National State Association or National Organization member according to their registration requirements.

All teams must have current US Youth Soccer or approved organization player passes or the appropriate National State Association passes to participate.

Passes must be verified, photo attached, and laminated.

III. PLAYER’S AGE AND ELIGIBILITY

Division	Birth Years	Roster Limits	Guest Player Limits
Under 8 Boys & Girls	Up to 2018	Up to 14	3
Under 9 Boys & Girls	Up to 2017	Up to 14	3
Under 10 Boys & Girls	Up to 2016	Up to 14	3
Under 11 Boys & Girls	Up to 2015	Up to 16	3
Under 12 Boys & Girls	Up to 2014	Up to 16	3
Under 13 Boys & Girls	Up to 2013	Up to 22	5
Under 14 Boys & Girls	Up to 2012	Up to 22	5
Under 15 Boys & Girls	Up to 2011	Up to 22	5
Under 16 Boys & Girls	Up to 2010	Up to 22	5
Under 17 Boys & Girls	Up to 2009	Up to 22	5
Under 18 Boys & Girls	Up to 2008	Up to 22	5
Under 19 Boys & Girls	Up to 2007	Up to 22	5

*****PLAYERS U8 - U15 MAY NOT PLAY FOR MORE THAN ONE TEAM IN THE TOURNAMENT. Players U16 and older may be dual rostered on a maximum of 2 teams with permission of the tournament director. Dual rostered players may only participate in 2 games per day. Email requests for dual rostered players to capitalcup@westvirginiafutbolclub.com*****

IV. PRE-GAME PROCEDURES

Tournament officials shall conduct all credential checks:

- At initial registration
- At the field prior to each game
- In no event will a player be allowed to participate who has not been certified by the tournament credential's committee.

A player who arrives late at the playing field after the pre-game procedure may enter the game once the game's official(s) verify the player is eligible and with the permission of the referee.

Only at the pregame procedure may a player be challenged by an opposing manager/coach. Challenged player(s) will be reviewed at that time by the referee and the site coordinator. A decision will be made at that time, and if deemed eligible to play by the referee and site coordinator, the play will be permitted to play. A challenged player does not constitute a game protest, no protests shall be allowed. A late arriving player may be challenged at the time he/she is allowed to participate by the referee.

Each manager/coach or assistant must have a valid coach's pass and be listed on the roster. If a manager or coach is ejected, an assistant may conduct the team. If the assistant is also ejected, or there is no assistant, the game will be forfeited. In no case will a team be allowed to participate without a properly registered coach or assistant.

Souvenir patches, flags, crests, etc. may be exchanged and group team pictures may be taken at this pregame procedure or during the handshake after the game.

V. CONCUSSIONS

If the referee (or assistant referee) believes that, in his/ her opinion, a player has suffered a head injury or possible concussion, the match must be stopped IMMEDIATELY. The injured player, if able to leave the field on their own, must be escorted to their coach and the coach must be told that the player cannot return for the duration of the match. If a trainer is brought onto the field because the player is incapacitated, the referee must still notify the coach that the player cannot return to the game. It is the responsibility of the coach and the player's parent(s) or legal guardians to seek medical attention. The player may not resume participation until he/ she has been cleared by a medical professional authorized to clear a player to return to play. The Referee HAS NO FURTHER responsibility beyond removing the player for the match to which the player was injured.

The referee crew must ensure that UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES or due to the appeal from any coaching staff that the player is allowed back in the game without approval from an authorized medical professional.

VI. HEADING GUIDELINES

This applies to all teams from in or out of the state of West Virginia. In conjunction with US Soccer and US Youth Soccer, West Virginia Youth Soccer Association will be instituting a heading ban for players aged 10 and younger.

In accordance with the recent U.S. Soccer recommendations on concussion risk management: WVSA has eliminated heading in matches for player's aged 11-years old and younger (11U and younger), per the new calendar year registration guidelines. These guidelines apply to leagues, tournaments, and other WVSA sanctioned events.

VII. TOURNAMENT HOUSING

All teams, except as noted below, are subject to book lodging through a designated WVFC Capital Cup Hotel as a condition to compete at the event.

- a. Teams that are located within a 75-mile driving distance of Shawnee Sports Complex are not required to book.
- b. Teams that are located within a 90-mile driving distance of Shawnee Sports Complex and have a drive time of less than 90 minutes are not required to book.
- c. All teams over 90 miles are expected to book with a designated WVFC Capital Cup Hotel as a condition to compete-no exceptions.
- d. Addresses used for the determination of the distance/ time will be the address of the Shawnee Sports Complex.
- e. Google Maps™ or other approved online mapping services will be used to determine driving distance and time.

VIII. LAWS OF THE GAME

All games shall be according to FIFA "Laws of the Game," except as modified below:

Competition sanctioned by this association shall abide by the "Laws of the Game," along with any modifications or regulations of the association.

A. Modifications for 8U (4v4)

- Size 3 Ball
- Teams must have an alternate jersey or Pennies to wear in case of color conflict.
- In the event of similar team colors, the designated home team will be required to change to a color or wear pennies accepted by the referee.
- No Goalkeepers.

- Unlimited substitutions at any stoppage with permission from the referee.
- After a goal is scored there must be a kickoff to restart the game.
- A goal may not be scored directly from a kick-off.
- Kick offs, free kicks, throw-ins, goal kicks and corner kicks are used to start or restart play.
- All restarts of the ball out of play over the touchline will be taken as a throw in.
- Goal kicks and corner kicks should be taken in the general vicinity of the respective goal or corner.
- On goal kicks, the opposing team must retreat to behind the midfield line. They may cross the midfield line once the ball has been touched.
- Opponents should be 5 yards away from the ball on all restarts.
- All free kicks are indirect.
- No penalty kicks.
- No offside offenses.

B. LAW 2: THE BALL

- 8U Size #3
- 9U, 10U, 11U, 12 U Size # 4 (25-26 in. - 11-13 oz.)
- 13U-19U Size # 5 (27-28 in. - 14-16 oz.)

C. LAW 3: NUMBER OF PLAYERS PER SIDE

- 13U and Older Maximum Eleven (11) Players Minimum Seven (7)
- 11U and 12U Maximum Nine (9) Players Minimum Six (6)
- 9U and 10U Maximum Seven (7) Players Minimum Five (5)
- 8U Maximum Four (4) players

C. LAW 3: SUBSTITUTIONS

- Substitutions may be made only upon proper notification of the referee through the assistant referee, with the referee's permission, and at the referee's discretion, during any stoppage of play:
 - The substitute shall not enter the field of play until the player he is replacing has left, and then, only after receiving a signal from the referee.

D. LAW 4: PLAYER EQUIPMENT

Player equipment shall be in accordance with the requirements of WVSA and FIFA rules.

- Screw-in cleats are permitted; however, judgment as to their safety is at the discretion of the referee.
- a. Hard casts must be padded and approved by the referee prior to the match.
- b. Braces must be worn as intended by the manufacturer and approved by the referee prior to the match.
- c. In a and b approval shall be by a referee that is 18 years old or older.
- Shin guards must comply with FIFA Law 4:
 - Shin guards are covered entirely by the stockings.

- Shin guards are made of a suitable material (rubber, plastic, or similar substances).
- Shin guards must PROVIDE A REASONABLE DEGREE OF PROTECTION.
- Shin guards are required for any WVSA event for the safety of the players.
- It is the policy of WVSA that no player be allowed to wear ANY jewelry while participating in any WVSA sanctioned match. The only exception that may be allowed is a medical alert bracelet or necklace when taped to the body. The referee shall make the decision as to the safety of the player and the referee's decision is final.
- A player may be removed from the game at any time if the referee determines that the player is using or is attempting to use a brace to injure another player.
- Uniforms
- Teams will wear uniforms of matching design and color with a minimum of six (6) inch numbers affixed to the back of the uniform shirt.
- No two players may have identical uniform numbers on the team roster or while both players are playing on the field at the same time.
- In the event of similar team colors, the designated home team will be required to change to a color accepted by the referee.
- Teams dressed predominantly in colors of those associated with the referee uniforms will be responsible for providing the referee and assistant referees with a jersey that is distinctively different from the uniforms worn by either competing team.
- The goalkeeper uniform colors must distinguish him/her from the other players, the referee, and the assistant referees.

E. LAW 5: REFEREES

Referees are required to submit a completed, official game report to the site director containing any information relating to any game incidents involving players/coach, spectator misconduct, or injuries.

- Referees will not be paid before any required post-game reports have been submitted.
- In the event the assigned referees fail to appear and the assignor and/or site director fails to provide a replacement, the senior assigned assistant referee shall assume the duties and shall find an alternate assistant referee. The game will be played as scheduled and will be deemed official.

F. LAW 6: ASSISTANT REFEREES

Two (2) assistant referees will be assigned in the appropriate age group games. In the event the assigned assistant referees fail to appear; the referee must find suitable assistant referees. The game will be played as scheduled and will be deemed official.

G. LAW 7: DURATION OF THE GAME

- The duration of the games will be:

18U	17U	16U	15U	14U	13U	12U	11U	10U	9U	8U (7v7)	8U (4v4)
80	80	80	70	70	70	60	60	50	50	50	40

- All games will consist of two (2) equal halves with one half-time period of five (5) minutes.

- Preliminary games will have no overtime periods to settle ties.
- Semi-Final and Championship Games for all age groups which end in a tie will not play overtime and will proceed directly to Penalty Kicks.

H. LAW 8 - LAW 17: GAME CONDUCT

- CONTROL OF SIDELINE CONDUCT

- Players, reserve players, managers, coaches, and fans are expected to conduct themselves within the letter and spirit of "The Laws of the Game ". The tournament director (or designee) has the authority and the responsibility to remove any person(s) from the tournament for abuses of conduct, in addition to any specific disciplinary action brought about by any other authority. In addition to good manners, these rules will apply to this tournament:
- The tournament director (or designee) will designate one sideline to be for the sole use of the players listed on the game roster and two manager/coaches from each team, with one team occupying one side of the midfield and one team the other.
- While the game is in progress, the manager/coach(s) and the reserve players must remain on their respective benches and may not roam the sidelines.
- The tournament director (or designee) will designate the opposite sideline for the spectators.
- Manager(s)/coach(s) will be responsible for the behavior of their fans and the referee will have the authority to warn, and ultimately send off, any coach whose fans behave in an abusive or disruptive manner.

- CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

- All players and managers/ coaches shall be subject to West Virginia Youth Soccer – Discipline and Sanctions. It shall be solely the team’s responsibility to determine the status of its players. Any suspensions from a tournament, local league, etc. is the responsibility of the team to notify the Tournament Director of this suspension at the time of the player’s check in. Per West Virginia Youth Soccer-Red Card Suspension or send off suspensions can only be served with the team with which the suspension was earned in games played by their team. Players MAY NOT serve suspensions as “guest players.”
- The tournament committees shall have a discipline committee of not less than three (3) members and shall be selected by the tournament director. The discipline committee will review and rule on all reports of unacceptable conduct by players, managers, coaches, referees, spectators, etc. using the West Virginia Youth Soccer standards.
- All players and managers/coaches shall be subject to West Virginia Youth Soccer-Discipline and Sanctions.
- A player or manager/coach ejected will have an automatic minimum one (1) game suspension regardless of cause of ejection. Duration of suspension is cumulative based on further misconduct after receiving the initial dismissal. For age groups U16 and above (showcase age groups) a player will only serve a suspension if the red card is for violent conduct, serious foul play, offensive or abusive language.

- For age groups U16 and above (showcase age groups), if a player is removed due to a red card for any reason, that player may be replaced with a valid rostered player on the bench. The red carded player must still sit out the next game for serious foul play, violent conduct or foul and abusive language.
- Depending on the severity of the unacceptable conduct, the discipline committee may recommend the suspension of up to the duration of the tournament with further disciplinary action by the appropriate National or State Association Federation or any other USSF affiliated organization. The discipline committee recommendations will be available to the affected parties no later than before their next scheduled game.
- At the conclusion of the tournament, passes will be returned to the coach (even if a suspension has not been completed). A complete report will be sent to WWSA within seventy-two (72) hours of the conclusion of the tournament for possible further discipline.
- **POST-GAME PROCEDURES**
 - As a mutual courtesy, both teams meet at the center circle and congratulate each other for a game well played.
 - Referees will return player passes to the coaches.
 - The coach/manager of each team will confirm the score with the referee, sign the game report, and collect passes after each game except for those participants sent off (if any).
 - Referees will submit the game report to the Site Coordinator.
 - The manager/coach of both teams will ensure their respective sideline areas are clean and that all trash is in containers.

IX. DETERMINATION OF GROUP WINNERS

- A. In group play, there will be no overtime games. Standings in a group will be determined by game point awarded as follows:
 - 3 points for a Win
 - 1 point for a Tie
 - 0 points for a Loss
 - TIE BREAKERS:
 - Head-to-Head Competition
 - Net Goal Differential to a maximum of 3 per game
 - Goals allowed to a maximum of 3 per game
 - Goals scored to a maximum of 3 per game
 - Kicks from the penalty mark per FIFA rules
- B. If three (3) teams tie in points, then standings in a group will be determined as follows:
 - Total Points Awarded Against other tied teams
 - All Tie Breakers above
 - Kicks from the penalty mark per FIFA rules with a blind draw to determine which two teams play. Third team draws a "bye". The winner then plays the team that had the "bye". The winner will advance.
- C. If four (4) or more teams tie in points, then standings in a group will be determined as follows:

- Total Points Awarded Against other tied teams
- All Tie Breakers above
- Kicks from the penalty mark per FIFA rules with a blind draw will determine which teams play each other and the winners advance.

X. DETERMINATION OF SEMI-FINAL AND FINAL GAME WINNERS:

- A. If a game requiring a winner is tied at the end of regulation time, the game goes straight to kicks from the mark. There is no overtime period.

XI. CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL CEREMONY

Following the completion of each championship game, the two competing teams will present themselves to the game site coordinator for awards.

XII. FORFEITS

The minimum number of players that constitutes a team is: seven (7) players for 13U and above, six (6) players for 11U-12U, and four (4) players for 10U and below. Games should start at a given starting time. In case the team does not have the minimum number of players present, it should be allowed a maximum of fifteen (15) minutes grace period before awarding the game to the opponent. A forfeit will be scored 3-0. The same rule limit will apply for a referee or assistant referee not showing up at the required time. The tournament director or referee assignor will appoint another referee or assistant referee for the game.

If a team forfeits a preliminary round game, the team shall be fined \$100.00. The fine must be paid prior to the start of your next game. Teams forfeiting quarter final or semifinal games shall be fined \$200. Teams forfeiting championship games will be fined \$500. These fines will be used solely to reimburse teams who were denied an opportunity to compete due to the forfeit.

XIII. PROTEST AND DISPUTES

All decisions of the referee are final and will only be reviewed by the Tournament Director for the misapplication of a Law. All decisions of the Tournament Director are final. Protests/appeals from individuals or teams will not be heard.

XIV. EXTERNAL CONDITIONS, WEATHER., ETC.

Regardless of weather conditions, players and coaches must be on the field at the scheduled time, ready to play. In case of inclement weather or field conditions, games may:

- Be shortened – The Tournament Director may reduce the length of halves due to weather conditions before the restart of a match; all such matches will be considered official.
- Be rescheduled (Time and location) to be determined by the Tournament Director.
- Go to “taking of Kicks from the Penalty Mark.” (Time and location determined by the Tournament Director).

- If the Tournament Director rules that during the preliminary round “Taking of Kicks from the Penalty Mark.” Will be done due to inclement weather or field conditions; the following rules will apply:
 - Each team will take a maximum of five (5) kicks from the penalty mark.
 - At the end of five (5) kicks the game will be scored as a 1 – 0 win for the team that has scored more kicks from the penalty mark, or a 0 – 0 tie if both teams are tied in kicks from the penalty mark at the end of five (5) kicks.
- Be canceled- the tournament committee has the right to cancel any match that has no bearing on the scoring and progression of tournament play.
- In the event that unusual conditions necessitate the rescheduling, curtailment, or cancellation of games, the tournament committee shall have absolute authority to make the changes in order to best serve the interests by a certain time period.
- In case of extreme weather (heat/humidity), the referee shall allow a brief stoppage of the game to allow players on the field a water break.

XV. HOME TEAM DESIGNATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- The team listed first in each pairing is the home team.
- The home team furnishes the game ball unless it is provided by the tournament.
- The home team shall change jerseys if, in the opinion of the referee, there is a conflict.

XVI. 7v7 BUILD OUT LINE

- The build out line promotes playing the ball out of the back in a less pressured setting.
- When the goalkeeper has the ball, either during play (from the opponent) or from a goal kick, the opposing team must move behind the build out line until the ball is put into play.
- Once the opposing team is behind the build out line, the goalkeeper can pass, throw or roll the ball into play (punting is not allowed).
- After the ball is put into play, in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the Game, by the goalkeeper, the opposing team can cross the build out line and play resumes as normal. Violations of this rule will be penalized in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the Game, and at the discretion of the referee.
- If a goalkeeper punts or drop kicks the ball, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense.
- If the punt occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infringement occurred.
- The build out line will also be used to denote where offside offenses can be called.
- Players cannot be penalized for an offside offense between the halfway line and the build out line.
- Players can be penalized for an offside offense between the build out line and goal line.

XVI. GENERAL

The tournament committee, WVSA and/or the host affiliate will not be responsible for any expense incurred by any team due to the cancellation in part or whole of this tournament.

- The tournament committee's interpretation of the foregoing rules and regulations shall be final.
- The tournament committee reserves the right to decide all tournament matters.
- Tournament Entry Fee will be returned/refunded as follows:
 - within five (5) days after notification that the team is not accepted by their application.
 - within five (5) days upon cancellation of the tournament.
 - within ten (10) days of withdrawal request of the application by a team prior to acceptance of that application by the tournament.
- If not, enough teams are realized within a specific age bracket, the tournament director shall notify the participants as soon as possible and the participants shall be given the option to play up or to receive a full refund.
- The tournament committee has the responsibility to uphold any previous suspension imposed by WVSA/US Youth Soccer.
- The tournament committee agrees to have a copy of the tournament rules at all game sites and complete rules of the competition and team eligibility are located on the WVFC Capital Cup website. All questions concerning the competitions should be directed to the tournament committee.
- Many leagues/clubs enter teams in competitions. In doing so, they agree to play to the rules and guidelines of the competition in addition to the laws of the game.
- Each league/club/team official should understand what is expected of them to preserve the good name of their organization. It is suggested that, to avoid any misunderstandings, a copy of rules and guidelines are in the possession of the coach and league officials at all competitions.
- Teams, coaches, and respective staff (with valid pass cards) shall occupy the same side of the field.
- Spectators will observe spectator lines marked on the field. If there are no lines, spectators will remain five feet back from the touchline. No spectators will be allowed behind goal lines.
- The COACH is ultimately responsible for the conduct of himself/herself, support staff, players, and spectators/supporters.
- The coach or his/her designee must sign the referee's scorecard. By doing so, he agrees to the referee's score on the card. He should check the card carefully before signing.

XVII. ALCOHOL AND/OR ILLEGAL DRUG USE

- WVSA prohibits the use of or being under the influence of alcohol and/or illegal drugs at its competitions.
- Persons suspected of alcohol or illegal drugs, regardless of where the alcohol was consumed or the drug was used, will be removed from the area of competition.
- Penalty for violation of this rule will be suspension from all WVSA activities for not less than one year.

XVIII. TOBACCO USE

- WVSA discourages the use of tobacco products at youth events. Please refrain from its use while on touchlines or around the facilities where youth are present.

- Tobacco use is prohibited at Shawnee Soccer Complex. Competitions held at this complex will respect this prohibition.