

Ohio Travel Soccer League

High School Division Rules / Regulations

ISSUED 1/25/2023 - by the OHTSL Board of Directors and the Operations Manager HS Division committee.

1.0 Intro:

- 1.1 In 2022 OHTSL voted to establish a High School division allow HS players to play in the Spring / Summer months. 2023 will be the inaugural season for the OHTSL High School Division.
- 1.2 The OHTSL HS League is to be considered a non-interscholastic program. League participation occurs outside the OHSAA interscholastic school season.
- 1.3 Code of Conduct: Participation in OHTSL activities plays an important role in promoting the physical, social and emotional development of children. It is therefore essential for parents, coaches, and officials to encourage youth athletes to embrace the values of good sportsmanship. Moreover, adults involved in OHTSL activities should be models of good sportsmanship and should lead by example by demonstrating fairness, respect and self-control.
- 1.4 OHTSL HS teams (players and coaches): Registration is required of all players participating in US Club Soccer-operated or -sanctioned programming. Approved OHTSL HS teams may have the opportunity to participate in US Club sanctioned tournaments from April – July. One example might include the annual GASC tournament in collaboration with OHTSL, APL, and NOASA in June.
- 1.5 All rules and regulations for the OHTSL HS Division shall be per [OHTSL Guidelines / Procedures](#) unless as noted below:

2.0 Divisions:

- 2.1 Girls may play on boy's teams. However, this team is considered a boys' team. Girls may play on girls only team and this is considered a girls' team. For the purpose of equalizing competition, OHTSL may permit an all-girl team to play in a boys' division at the appropriate level as determined by the league. Boys may only play on a boys' team. Players may not be rostered on more than one team that is registered for play in the OHTSL for any given season of play.
- 2.2 OHTSL has the final say on which division a team is placed in and reserves the right to move any team up or down in order to balance the level of play and number of teams in each division.
- 2.3 List of Divisions:
 - 2.3.1 All players shall be under 19 years of age, as defined by US Club Soccer and USSF. Refer to the [Birth-year registration and season matrix](#).
 - 2.3.2 U17 Boys Division: 11v11 – HS U14-U17 BOYS & GIRLS
 - 2.3.3 U17 Girls Division: 11v11 – HS U14-U17 GIRLS
 - 2.3.4 U19 Boys Division: 11v11 – primarily HS U18/U19 BOYS & GIRLS (HS players age U14-U17 permitted)
 - 2.3.5 U19 Girls Division: 11v11 – primarily HS U18/U19 GIRLS (HS girls age U14-U17 permitted)
 - 2.3.6 Each of the above age groups may be subdivided based upon the primary sponsoring club communities HS division ranking: D I, D II, or D III. During the team declaration process, the club should declare a team appropriately: i.e.: Club XYZ declares one U17 Boys D II team, and on U19 Girls D II team, etc. Compliance with the previous season HS division ranking is not mandatory, but is strongly encouraged to promote balanced competition levels.
- 2.4 Age group / divisions may be combined in the event of an insufficient number of teams per age group.

3.0 Age Group Exceptions:

- 3.1 Roster Rules-OHSAA Players: All 8th grade and older High School registrants for OHTSL must ensure they are compliant with all OHSAA regulations. OHTSL does not verify or enforce the policies of OHSAA, this is the responsibility of the declaring club, the adult players, and the youth player's guardian.
- 3.2 Roster Rules - U14/U15 Players: U14/U15 players are often in a transitional age. Some players may be in middle school in either 7th or 8th grade, while others could be in HS already. Any U14/U15 player who is in 8th grade or lower may play in the youth U14/U15 program and play on a HS team.
- 3.3 Roster Rules - U16 and U17 Players: Players that are age U16 or U17 are able to participate in the Boys & Girls HS divisions in the spring season. Proof of HS enrollment is not necessary.
- 3.4 Roster Rules-U18/U19 Players:
- 3.4.1 An U18 or U19 player are classified as an "Adult Athlete" on/after their 18th birthday. 3.4.2 An U18/U19 player will be permitted to participate in the OHTSL HS Divisions, provide they are currently enrolled in HS and compliant with all USSF, US Club Soccer Health and Safety national requirements, and any other requirements mandated by federal and state laws.
- 3.4.3 The league will require current proof of their status as an enrolled HS student (the most recent report card would be one means of proof).
- 3.4.4 Players who are classified as "Adult Athlete" by USSF are required to comply with all US Club Soccer Health and Safety national requirements, mandated by federal and state laws. Refer to the following links:
- 3.4.4.1 [US Club Soccer Policy 13.08 Rule for Background Screening](#)
- 3.4.4.2 [US Club Soccer Policy 13.09 Rule SafeSport](#)
- 3.4.4.3 [Senate Bill 252: Lindsay's Law: Sudden Cardiac Arrest in Youth Athletes](#)
- 3.4.5 In the event a separate U18/U19 division may not be able to be formed by OHTSL, an exception will be granted for a U18/U19 player and may be permitted to play in younger HS divisions. 3.4.6 Teams are limited to no more than six (6) U19 players on a team.
- 3.5 Note the following regulations are from the [OHSAA GENERAL SPORTS REGULATIONS 2022-2023](#) listed for reference, refer to the full rules for more information:
- 3.5.1 Regulations Permitting Students to Participate on Non-Interscholastic Teams Outside of the Interscholastic Team's Season: Team Sports – A member of a school program or team in the team sports of soccer may participate with a non-interscholastic program or team in contests, tryouts, training and/or practices prior to and after the interscholastic team's season under the following conditions:
- 3.5.1.1 The number of team members on the non-interscholastic team who are enrolled at the same school and participated in that sport at that same school in the preceding season, or team members on the non-interscholastic team who participated in that sport at another school in the preceding season and transferred or matriculated to the same school, is limited to the number of team members outlines below. Rotating players from the same team is not permitted within the player limitation.
- 3.5.1.2 Limitation of team members = 6
- 3.5.1.3 Note: Students who did NOT play for an interscholastic team the previous year do not count in the team limitation of that sport.
- 3.5.1.4 Note: 8th grade students that DO participate on an interscholastic team in the same school district will count in the team limitation of that sport.
- 3.5.1.5 The team limit is not in effect for the sport of soccer from June 1 through July 31 when the non-interscholastic team is coached by a coach not employed by the school in which the team members are participating.

- 3.5.1.6 For purposes of this regulation, “rotating players” is defined as utilizing a member of a school program who was not on the original roster of the non-interscholastic team in place of another member of the same school program due to an absence or injury.
- 3.5.1.7 A member of an interscholastic team may continue to participate with a non interscholastic team in a national qualifying tournament after July 31 until the team is eliminated from the tournament but no later than Labor Day.
- 3.5.1.8 Graduating seniors or students completing their athletic eligibility at the end of the semester are exempt from the team limitation once their school season in the same sport has been completed.

4.0 Rules of Play: All rules and regulations for the OHTSL HS Division shall be per the 11v11 requirements of the [OHTSL Rules of Play](#) unless as noted below:

- 4.1 Max Game Roster: 22 players. All rostered players may dress.
- 4.2 Minimum Players to Start: 7 players and 1 carded coach. At any time during the game, should the number of players or coaches on any team fall below this minimum number during a match for a disqualification/ejection (red-card), the game shall be terminated immediately, and forfeited by the team not in compliance with this rule.
- 4.3 Duration of the Game (no extra time permitted): 2 x 40 minute halves with a 5-10 minute halftime. Should both coaches agree, prior to the start of the game, to shorten the halves to 40 minutes, they shall inform the players, spectators, and referees. Shortening to less than 40 minutes shall not be permitted, unless to avoid forecasted inclement weather. Per FIFA / IFAB regulations both halves shall be the same duration.
- 4.4 Fouls & Misconduct: per [Law – 12](#), with the following additional rules:
- 4.4.1 OHTSL has elected to adopt the policies of OHSAA and NFHS rules and regulations on unsporting behavior, abusive language or taunting per rule 12.8. Article 1 and 2.
- 4.4.1.1 Article 1. A player, coach, or bench personnel shall be cautioned (yellow card) for objecting by word or mouth or action to any decision given by an official (dissent); or for any incidental use of vulgar or profane language; simulating a foul, or faking an injury.
- **PENALTY: A cautioned player shall leave the field of play and may be replaced. Should the team with the player elect to play shorthanded, the cautioned player may not re-enter nor be replaced until the next legal substitution opportunity.**
 - *Note: this is above and beyond the requirements of USSF, where unsporting behavior cautioned player must leave the field of play after receiving a yellow card. The referee should alert the coach of the offence, so the issue can be quickly addressed.*
- 4.4.1.2 Article 2. A Player, coach or bench personnel shall be disqualified (red card) for:
- Exhibiting violent conduct:
 - Taunting – use of word or act to incite or degrade an opposing player, coach, referee, or other individual; **NOTE: the NFHS AND OHTSL disapproves of any form of taunting which is intended or designed to embarrass, ridicule or demean others under any circumstances including on the basis of race, religion, gender, or national origin.**
 - Spitting at an opponent, teammate or game official;
 - Using insulting, offensive, or abusive language or gesture;
 - Leaving the team area to enter the field where a fight or altercation is taking place unless summoned by an official.
 - **PENALTY: A disqualified player must leave the field and may not return or be substituted for, and the player’s team must play short, the disqualified player is restricted to the team area. Disqualified team members who are not players are restricted to the team area and may not enter the game. Disqualified adult personnel must leave the vicinity of the playing area / field.**

- Similar to OHSAA Bylaw 4.5.4, any player ejected or disqualified from a match must immediately be placed under direct supervision of a parent or coach. This may be on the bench or in the team area but the player is NOT to be removed from the site.
- Coaches ARE required to leave the facility immediately upon ejection. In the event there is no coach remaining to coach/supervise the team, the match is completed at that point.

4.5 Guest Players: 11v11 = guest players permitted as long as they are carded by US Club.

4.5.1 Guest Players are not permitted between HS teams. Even if one community enters multiple teams in the same HS division, they are not permitted to guest play between teams.

4.5.2 Communities/Clubs/Coaches/Team Managers/Registrars must guarantee all guest players comply with OHSAA guidelines as mentioned in rule 3.1 and 3.5 above. During the entire season, no team have more than 6 players from the same community on a HS team on their roster, inclusive of all guest 8th grade players if the school has a 8th grade OHSAA Program. If the school/community does not have an 8th grade OHSAA program the 6-player rule does not apply for the 8th grade guest players.

4.5.3 Guest Players are only permitted to come from the club / school district / communities that are sponsoring the HS team and managed by their registrar. Example: School A and School B have teamed together to form a HS team. If School A declared the team for play in the OHTSL division, they are the sponsoring school, they can allow their 8th grade players coming from a U14 or U15 team to guest play up on a HS team. School B may have a team in the U14/U15 OHTSL division, but School A does not have access to School B's rosters / player cards or parental consent to allow a guest to play on the team for that match.

4.5.4 8th grade players and HS players are permitted to guest play on older teams provided they comply with all other requirements of these regulations.

4.5.5 Should OHTSL establish multiple age HS divisions, players may guest play on older teams, however older players may not play in younger youth or HS divisions.

4.5.6 Should OHTSL establish various classes in each HS divisions, lower class players may roster up in higher classes / ages. Higher class HS players may not roster or guest play in lower classes. 4.5.7 Girls may guest play on boys' teams, provided they are compliant with all other requirements of these regulations. Boys are not permitted to guest play on girls' teams.

4.6 Cautioned players (yellow card) shall be removed from play similar to NFHS and OHSAA requirements, refer to rule 6.1 below.

4.7 HS Division specific Rules / Regulations:

4.7.1 HS division team declaration, season schedule and dates shall match the OHTSL youth schedule.

4.7.2 A brief summary of [OHSAA Soccer regulations](#) and the [OHSAA Coaching requirements](#) that OHSTL recommends that clubs enforce are as follows (note these rules are outside of OHTSL control, and are modified annually by OHSAA. Refer to OHTSL rule 3.1 and 3.5 above, this information is for reference only, to be used and relied upon at your own risk, and all OHSAA regulations supersede):

4.7.2.1 No more than six (6) players may be rostered on an OHTSL HS team from a single OHSAA school program that is considered a returning player.

4.7.2.2 A returning player participated in the prior Fall soccer season for their local school district.

4.7.2.3 8th grade guest players may be used from the same OHTSL community that is sponsoring the HS team provided the community local school does not have a OHSAA program for their 8th grade students in the fall season. Should a local community have a OHSAA program for grade 8, these players count towards the 6-player maximum as mentioned in 3.5.1.

- 4.7.2.4 Players that are in 12th grade (graduating seniors) do not count towards the returning player limit.
- 4.7.2.5 Female players from the same school district may play on the OHTSL boys team. Female players do not count in the returning 6 player rule, if playing on a boys team during the off-season (spring / summer), provide they did not play on the OHSAA fall boys team in the prior scholastic year.
- 4.7.3 OHTSL community rules/regulations do not apply towards the HS division. It is encouraged that local community's partner with neighboring communities to form an OHSAA compliant teams to allow OHSAA players to participate during their official off-season period.
- 4.7.4 Clubs declaring teams for the OHTSL HS division shall pay the standard team / player fees for an 11v11 player.
- 4.7.5 OHTSL will set up an individual player registration process to assist with the OHSAA compliance.
- 4.7.5.1 Individual players that register directly with OHTSL may be:
- 4.7.5.1.1 Placed directly on a nearby OHTSL community team, provided that team has notified OHTSL to add players to their team. Re-registration may be required. Placement is not guaranteed.
- 4.7.5.1.2 Should placement with a neighboring club not be possible, the player may be placed in an open player pool. If volunteer adult coaches are available, OHTSL may form OHTSL HS teams. If a volunteer coach is not available or there are not sufficient players in the pool, refunds will be given to the players for their registration fees.
- 4.7.5.1.3 Individual player registration fees shall cover the cost of US Club Soccer insurance and player fees, OHTSL team fees, home team referee fees, and a dry-fit numbered jerseys for players/coaches.
- 4.7.5.1.4 OHTSL teams formed with a volunteer coach shall be required to play all games away, unless the assigned volunteer coach has secured a permit for a field at their own cost, and notified OHTSL at the Spring Declaration meeting.
- 4.7.5.1.5 Individual player registration fees do not include fines for no-shows, late cancelations or rescheduled games, other sanctions.
- 4.7.6 Coaches shall modify training programs to avoid other HS events / sports and allow adequate recovery time. OHTSL events should be secondary to all other scholastic sports. With volunteer coach limitations, practice fields or practice schedules are not guaranteed and may vary. Some coaches may have limited practice. This is a common occurrence for off season soccer to allow HS students to balance their time with other spring sports, scholastic efforts, jobs, musicals, band, etc.
- 4.7.7 OHTSL volunteer coaches/team managers that plan to be rostered from the open player pool as described in rule 4.7.5.1 above, must comply with all US Club Soccer Health and Safety national requirements, mandated by federal and state laws. Refer to links in Rule 3.4.4. above. Completion of these coaching requirements and completion of a background check can take multiple weeks, and early registration for all "adult participants" is highly encouraged. This process must be completed prior to participation with any practices or games.

5.0 Game Day Policy/Procedures: All rules and regulations for the OHTSL HS Division shall be per the 11v11 requirements of the [OHTSL Game Day Policy/Procedures](#) unless as noted below:

- 5.1 Revise section 1 of the OHTSL Game Day Policies/Procedures: Pre-Game player passes / Team Rosters limits: Teams may check in using a roster or player cards. Players are only allowed to play for one HS team.
- 5.2 Revise section 1 of the OHTSL Game Day Policies/Procedures: The 2 year play-up limitation shall not apply to the HS division. Parental registration of their HS players to compete with OHTSL, they shall

understand that any compliant HS player aged U14 through U19 may be placed on a team as stipulated in these rules/regulations.

5

5.3 Parents shall provide written consent to allow their 8th grade players to participate in the OHTSL program, acknowledging all rules/regulations.

5.4 Revise section 5 of the OHTSL Game Day Policies/Procedures: 11v11 must have 7 players and 1 coach to start the game, no more than 22 “dressed/rostered” players on the sidelines. Refer to Rule 4 above. 5.5 Clarification to Referee payment: Home team shall pay 100% of the referee fee for a HS 3-man crew, even if a single referee is assigned or if all three referees are assigned. Qualified volunteers can be recruited from the spectators / coaches to fill missing referee positions, should there be a no-show referee. Qualified volunteer referees shall be paid the same scheduled rate as an assigned referee. Assigned referees shall review the qualifications of volunteers at a pre-game referee conference and determine if they would prefer to allow the volunteers to help. Volunteers should have past referee, player, coaching experience, and shall have current SafeSport / Concussion / Lindsay Law training. Should an assigned USSF referee object to a volunteer, they may opt to referee a HS game with a 1-man, 2-man or 3-man system without the use of volunteers.

6.0 Discipline Process: All rules and regulations for the OHTSL HS Division shall be per the requirements of the [OHTSL Discipline Process](#) unless as noted below:

6.1 All players cautioned (yellow card) during a match shall be removed from play, similar to the requirements of NFHS and OHSAA, to allow for a coaching opportunity. The referee shall explain the reason for the caution to the player, and if possible, to the player’s coach (although not required). No added stoppage time is permitted in the OHTSL HS division, and the referee may determine when the best time to address the matter with the players’ coach might occur. The cautioned player is permitted to re-enter the field at the next available substitution opportunity.

6.2 Ejections (red card) game suspensions shall be completed in full and shall be applied towards future league sanctioned events or future seasons in the event they cannot be served in full during the current OHTSL HS Division season.

7.0 Miscellaneous Clarifications:

7.1 Disclaimer: Any and all information contained within the OHTSL Rules / Regulations, as well as any information and/or rules distributed verbally, electronically, or by written flyer, are subject to change, alteration or deletion by OHTSL at any time, with or without notice.

7.2 This Manual is for the use of OHTSL’s clubs, coaches, referees, players and/or parents. It may be reproduced for distribution.

8.0 Principles of Conduct: All participants (coaches, volunteers, team managers, players, referees, etc.) of the OHTSL High School Division shall abide by the following:

8.1 Safety

8.1.1 My first responsibility is the health and safety of all participants.

8.1.2 It is recommended that coaches become certified in basic first aid and are aware of their club, league or state requirements in this area.

8.1.3 Be prepared to handle first aid situations as well as medical emergencies at all practices and games, both home and away:

8.1.3.1 Have and know how to use a properly supplied first aid kit/ice

8.1.3.2 911 emergency procedures/telephone location

8.1.3.3 location of nearest emergency medical facilities

8.1.3.4 always carry emergency medical release forms and team safety and information cards

8.1.3.5 follow up all injuries with parents/guardians

8.1.4 Know and understand the Laws of the Game

8.1.5 Inspect players' equipment and field conditions for safety reason

8.1.6 Utilize proper teaching and instructing of players regarding safe techniques and methods of play

6

8.1.7 Implement appropriate training programs to make sure players are fit for practice and competition. Refer to Rule 4.7.6. above.

8.1.8 Supervise and control your players so as to avoid injury situations.

8.2 Player Development

8.2.1 Develop the child's appreciation of the game.

8.2.2 Keep winning and losing in proper perspective

8.2.3 Be sensitive to each child's development needs.

8.2.4 Educate the players to the technical, tactical, physical and psychological demands of the game for their level.

8.2.5 Implement rules and equipment modification according to the players age group.

8.2.6 Allow players to experience all positions they are able to play.

8.2.7 Players need to have fun and receive positive feedback.

8.2.8 Practice should be conducted in the spirit of enjoyment and learning.

8.2.9 Provide the appropriate number of training sessions and games according to the player's stage of development. Refer to Rule 4.7.6. above.

8.2.10 Strive to help each player reach his or her full potential and be prepared to move to the next stage of development.

8.3 Ethics

8.3.1 Strive to maintain integrity within our sport.

8.3.2 Know and follow all rules and policies set forth by clubs, leagues, OHSAA, state, and national associations.

8.3.3 Work in the spirit of cooperation with officials, administrators, coaches and spectators to provide the participants with the maximum opportunity to develop.

8.3.4 Be a positive role model

8.3.5 Set the standard for sportsmanship with opponents, refereed, administrators and spectators.

8.3.6 Keep sort in proper perspective with education.

8.3.7 Encourage moral and social responsibility

8.3.8 Just say no to drugs and alcohol.

8.3.9 Coaches should continue their own education in the sport.