

VICKSBURG SOCCER ORGANIZATION, INC.
LEAGUE POLICY (All Ages/All Genders)

	<u>Page</u>
<u>Section A - General</u>	2
<u>Section B - Field of Play</u>	2
Priority of Soccer Fields -	2
Playing Fields -	2
Practice Field -	2
Field Equipment -	2-3
<u>Section C - Team Players</u>	3
Registration -	3
Division III (Recreation) Team Formation -	4
Division II (Recreation) Team Formation -	5
Division I (State) Team Formation -	5
Player Rating -	5
Player Equipment -	5
Player Substitutions and Playing Time -	5
Player Transfers -	6
Guest Players -	6
Player Waiting List -	6
Multiple Brackets -	6
Younger Players on an Older Age Team -	6
Player Suspension, Ejection, and Cautions (Red and Yellow Cards) -	6
<u>Section D - Coaches</u>	
Length of Term -	6
Licenses -	6
KidSafe Forms -	7
Player Registration -	7
Sponsorships -	7
Field Control -	7
Crowd Control -	7
Suspension and Removal -	7
<u>Section E - Team/League/Division Standings</u>	8
Fall Season -	8
Spring Season -	8
Tie Breaking Procedures -	8
Results Reporting and Standings -	8
<u>VSO Policies</u>	8
<u>Appendix</u>	9

VICKSBURG SOCCER ORGANIZATION, INC.
LEAGUE POLICY (All Ages/All Genders)

Section A - General

The VSO League Policy is not intended to be a replacement of the "Laws of the Game of Soccer" as authorized by the Federation International De Football Association (FIFA) and the United States Soccer Federation (USSF), nor the laws of the VSO Constitution and By-Laws. It is, however, meant to supplement these rules and regulations with the general and specific day-to-day operating policy of the VSO, the respective leagues, and the League Directors (LD). In the event of a conflict, the "Laws of the Game" as authorized by the USSF and FIFA shall apply and have precedence.

The VSO League Policy is not intended to supercede Policies or requirements of the Mississippi Soccer Association (MSA) or the U.S. Youth Soccer Organization (USYSO). In instances where a conflict exists between the policies of the VSO and those of the MSA or USYSO, the policies of the MSA shall govern, except that the VSO reserves the right to deviate from the MSA policies on matters specifically identified in the USSF Laws of the Game relating to field size, player numbers, length of play, and substitutions, as allowed for players under the age of 19.

Section B - The Field of Play

Soccer Fields -

The VSO maintains a number of fields near Bovina, MS, as shown on Attachment 1. The VSO Complex is the primary facility where age groups U12 and below practice and compete. Satellite fields are used for teams age U14 and above. These fields are available for both practices and games, pending approval by the Field Commissioner and as discussed below.

Playing Fields -

The Field Commissioner shall assign and approve all playing fields for each league. The League Director (LD) shall be responsible for establishing a game schedule, subject to the approval of the Vice President (VP) and the Field Commissioner. Disputes regarding game schedules that cannot be resolved by the LD, VP, and Field Commissioner may be heard by the Executive Council. Games (including makeup games) shall have precedence over scheduled practices for field use.

Practice Field -

Each team may establish a practice schedule at a time and location for their convenience. The VSO Council, through the Field Commissioner, shall assign and approve the use of fields at the VSO Complex (including satellite fields) for practice. Teams wishing to utilize other facilities for practice (schools, KC, etc.) must obtain written permission from the appropriate authorities and furnish a copy to the Field Commissioner. Practices shall be limited to two (2) per week, no more than three (3) hours per practice, and no more than four (4) hours total per week, excluding games. A third practice may be held on weeks in which no game is scheduled.

Field Equipment -

Each league shall be furnished with goal nets and corner flags. The LD shall be responsible for setting up and removing nets each season. Coaches of the home team for any scheduled game are responsible for ensuring that corner flags are in place prior to the start of the game and are removed at game completion. Technical areas and spectator lines shall be utilized on each field. The spectator line shall be located opposite the team's technical area on the side of the field, parallel to the touchlines. The spectator and touchlines shall be approximately two yards apart, depending upon the condition and terrain around the field. All spectators shall remain behind their spectator line during the game. The coach shall appoint either the team manager or a parent to be responsible for the enforcement of the spectator lines. The Technical Area consists of a zone centered on the halfway line that is 20 yards wide and one yard away from the

touchline. The coach and player substitutes must remain within this area during the game. Each team shall be responsible for a least one game-quality ball and a sufficient number of practice-quality balls. Required ball sizes are as follows:

Age Group	Ball Size
U - 8	#3
U - 10	#4
U - 12	#4
U - 14	#5
U - 16	#5
U - 19	#5

Section C - Team Players

Registration -

Registration will officially begin and end at times designated by the Council for both the fall and spring seasons. Teams will be formed from those registering during that time. Individuals registering after the deadlines shall be placed on a waiting list until placed on a team on a first- come and space-available basis. Second-year individuals whose birth month is August shall be allowed the option of playing up in the next older age bracket. Teams formed in the fall will play together in the spring, each coach is advised to contact their rostered players to determine their desire to play or not. New players in the spring will be assigned to existing teams with available space.

Division III (Recreation) Team Formation -

Division III is the recreational and entry playing level for the U-6 through the U-19. Play in the U-6 is 3 V 3 and U-8 is 4 V 4. U8 teams will be limited to 8 players; U-10 teams play 6 V 6, and will be limited to 12 players; U-12 teams play 8 V 8, and will be limited to 16 players; and U-14 through U-19 play 11 V 11, and will be limited to 21 players. No team will be permitted to roster more than 18 players, unless given express permission by the VSO Executive Council and the Registrar for MSA.

Leveling of DIII Teams:

Draft Meeting for U8 and older - League Directors will have a Fall draft meeting with all coaches in attendance. LD is to insure that all teams are leveled by ability and by age to the best of their ability.

Coach's son/daughter will be the first selected for that coach for the appropriate round (Ex. If coaches son is rated a number 2 then the coach will select his number 1's first then when the 2's are to be selected the son will be the coaches first 2 selected).

Assistant coach's children are not protected and will be in the general pool. Siblings will be placed on the same team and should be drafted as soon as possible in appropriate round.

Request - request should be given to the coach before the draft for him to help fill the request. Trades to fill request can made between coaches only for players of equal rating provided age leveling is not thrown out of proportion. Trades must be approved by ALL Coaches in the league and the LD.

Rating Players - All coaches should agree with the ratings of all players before the draft. If needed, the VP or DOC will decide on a players rating if coaches and LD cannot agree on a players rating. It is rare that a younger player in a league should be a 1 (Ex. 1 rated player in U8 moves to U10- they will in most cases not be a 1 rated player when compared to U10 players).

Draw for draft order - Draft order is as follows 123321123321.....

All older 1's should be drafted then all younger 1's, older 2's then younger 2's, older 3's and then younger 3's, etc...

The age ratio of any team shall not deviate from the entire league ratio by more than 15%. New players in the Spring will be added to level teams based on ability and age.

Division II (Competitive Recreation) Team Formation -

What is Division II? Division II (D2) is the Intermediate Soccer Program of Mississippi Soccer Association (MSA), Under-10 through Under-19. D2 teams are coach-selected from the Division III (D3) recreational players in the age group. VSO is a participant in the MSA D2 Program. (For more information on D2, go to www.mississippisoccer.org, Click on D2-Intermediate)

Who should be interested? Recreation players who are seeking an opportunity to further develop as soccer players in a more competitive environment characterized by professional and higher-level coaching than is typical of recreation soccer. The D2 Program offers opportunities for a recreation player to challenge themselves at a level above their recreational team.

What about the team I'm already on? Players selected to participate in D2 continue to play with their recreational teams. Players are fully obligated to practice and game requirements of their recreation team. Recreational team schedules take precedent over D2 team schedules.

D2 Registration. Players selected to participate in D2 will secondary-register with MSA and pay an additional player registration fee (\$16). D2 teams are subject to some of the same requirements as Division I (Select) teams. As such, D2 players will be issued a picture player pass (\$5).

When does D2 play and practice? Players selected for D2 play during the same season as the recreational teams. Thus, a D2 player is expected to participate in additional practices and games and/or tournaments. D2 practices will be scheduled to not require an unreasonable amount of a player's time. There are no league games in D2. There are no playing-time requirements in D2.

VSO Division II Program. The MSA Division II program is designed to initiate after recreation teams are formed in September. The VSO D2 program will begin over the next several weeks. The VSO D2 program is now under the administrative direction of the Vice President for Division II. The VSO Director of Coaching (DOC) provides coaching expertise and direction. VSO is actively pursuing an effort to organize D2 programs in most of its age divisions in Under-10 and up this fall.

D2 Developmental Player Pools: When D2 was formed several years ago, a new "team" concept was introduced, the *Developmental Player Pool*. Player pools were created to provide additional opportunities to train more players and to play more matches in the secondary-registered player environment. Pools offers two major advantages. First, the coaches can train an extended roster, e.g., one with a larger number of players than on a typical, single team. This gives a larger number of players the opportunity to participate in D2. Players who work hard will advance the most. Second, MSA provides a mechanism for an unlimited number of "event rosters," from the pool for practice games or tournaments. These are temporary rosters for games. This provides players, in the pool game opportunities, who on a given day, do not have recreation team responsibilities.

Selection of Permanent Rosters. Permanent (final) team rosters must be submitted from the pools by April in order for the team to participate in President's Cup, the D2 state tournament. Bottom line... the *Developmental Player Pool* provides for an extended tryout program for D2 players over the developmental period, from roster submission in the fall until the deadline for permanent rosters in April, during which they receive upper-level training in a more competitive environment.

How are D2 Pools formed? The coaching staff for the D2 program is selected by the VSO DOC. The VSO procedure for forming D2 pools is to conduct up to three training sessions for the purpose of selecting candidates for the Developmental Player Pool in each age group.

Uniforms. Additional uniforms for the D2 teams will be required.

Costs. In addition to player secondary-registration costs, participants will share all costs including, but not limited to: referee fees for friendly matches, fees for all other tournaments, and a nominal fee for professional training. Some inter-state travel is possible for a DII player.

President's Cup. The MSA state tournament for D2 is the President's Cup.

Division I (State) Team Formation -

Division I is the highest playing level. Teams may be formed in any age grouping from U-11 through U-19 and either gender group with approval of the Council. Team formation in Division I shall be by open tryout, suitably advertised to the entire player pool. Although scheduling, player selection, etc. normally are the functions of the team coach, the Director of Coaching shall have overall responsibility for the Division I teams similar to the recreational LD, and as outlined in the VSO Constitution.

Player Rating -

The need to develop “level” or equal-ability teams within a League cannot be overemphasized. Teams within each league shall be leveled by age and talent. All players in Division I, II, or III who played the previous season shall be classified by their coaches and verified by the LDs. This classification should be an honest attempt to show the talent of their players. The classifications are Classes 1, 2, or 3. Players not having ever played before for VSO will be classified as a Class 4, unless there is good cause to classify otherwise. Classes are defined as follows:

- Class 1: Above Average
- Class 2: Average
- Class 3: Below Average
- Class 4: Unknown

Note: Above average is defined as an exceptional player with highly developed skills at his/her age, plays well as a team member, possesses leadership qualities, and would be rank in the top twenty percentile of players in the entire league. Average is defined as a knowledgeable, skilled player, willing to learn, and would be ranked in the middle sixty percentile of all league players. Below average is defined as a player who requires training in many phases of the game, requires constant monitoring, and would be ranked in the lower twenty percentile of all league players. Unknown players have never played in VSO; however LDs may classify unknown players to a higher classification if circumstances so warrant.

Player Equipment -

The basic VSO uniform will consist of USSF approved footwear, jersey or T-shirt, shorts, shin guards, and socks. All jerseys must be of the same color except the goalkeeper, whose jersey must distinguish them from the other players and from the referee. The jersey shall be numbered on the back with a minimum four- (4) inch tall number. The number may also be applied to the front.

Player Substitutions and Playing Time -

Each Division player shall play a minimum of one- half game except in cases whereby the player’s time may be reduced due to health, injuries, or discipline. The team coach may only enforce the discipline reduction with prior approval from the LD, and after notifying the referee prior to the start of the game. Division I players are exempt from the minimum playing rule. Playing time and substitutions are governed by the age grouping. Players in U-8 and U-10 leagues shall be substituted at times indicated by the referee (approximately quarters), or for injuries. Players in U-14, U-16, and U-19 leagues will be substituted freely in accordance with FIFA rules. The U-12 players shall be substituted at quarters, unless the LD has stipulated prior to the start of the season that free substitutions will be allowed. Quarter “breaks” are for substitutions only, and players not substituted may not leave the playing field. Breaks at halftime shall be five (5) minutes in length.

Age Group	Game Time	Substitution	Minimum Playing Time
U-8	40 minutes	Four quarters	Two Quarters
U-10	50 minutes	Four quarters	Two Quarters
U-12	60 minutes	Quarters or Free	One-half of game
U-14	70 minutes	Free	One-half of game
U-16	80 minutes	Free	One-half of game
U-19	90 minutes	Free	One-half of game

Player Transfers -

The VSO Council must approve the transfer of any player of one team to another team for any reason; however, the VSO does not endorse player transfer except in hardship cases. No team may have more than three (3) transfer players in a single soccer year. Once the teams are established by the LD and approved by the VP, the team rosters are given to the coaches. Coaches are not permitted to transfer players except under the MSA Player Transfer rule.

Guest Players -

No coach or team may recruit a player as a guest player in any game without the concurrence of the Coaches and League Directors from both the receiving and lending teams. **GUEST PLAYERS SHALL NOT BE PERMITTED DURING LEAGUE GAMES FOR ANY REASON.**

Player Waiting List -

Those who register after fall will be placed on a first-come-first-served waiting list and assigned to an existing team in order as vacancies develop and providing that the team ability is not significantly altered and that age ratios remain within MSA limits. Addition of these players would generally occur in conjunction with the spring registration. If there is sufficient number of players for a new-leveled team, that team may be formed by the LD.

Multiple Brackets -

A league is comprised of all teams of a given age group and gender. Separate divisions may be established within a league, provided they are comprised of four or more teams. The LD may appoint division directors to assist in and oversee each division, but they have no status on the VSO Council.

Younger Players on an Older Age Team (Play Up Requests) -

Playups shall only be considered prior to the beginning of the fall season at a special meeting of the VSO Board. Playups will only be considered if the player has the technical ability for the age group being considered. Players desiring to "play up" within the Recreation Division, or from the U-10 league to Division I, must petition the Council for approval, except for August birthdays as noted in Section C under registration. Individuals desiring to participate on an older-age Division III team must petition the VSO Council for approval. U-10 individuals desiring to participate on a Division I team shall petition the VSO Council for approval.

Player Suspension, Ejection, and Cautions (Red and Yellow Cards) -

The Coach shall report within 48 hours to the respective LDs all player cautions and ejections (yellow and red cards) issued. The LD shall subsequently notify the coach of their next opponent of a one game suspension, in the case of an ejection, and shall notify the Registrar and VSO President at the end of each month of all cautions and ejections within that League. The Head Referee also reports the names of all players who are cautioned or ejected to the VSO President and Registrar for each month. The Registrar shall keep records of suspensions, ejections, and cautions, and the VSO President shall report these to the MSA. Failure by any Coach to report cautions and ejections, whether received locally or away, may result in disciplinary action by the Council.

Section D - Coaches

Coaches Length of Term -

Coaches serve for a period of one year following the annual meeting, and at the discretion of the LD. The LD is responsible for obtaining coaches in their league for the fall and spring seasons. Coaches must be at least 18 years old, except under special circumstances approved by the Council.

Licenses -

All recreational division coaches must obtain the appropriate coaching certificate (Level I, II, or III or higher) prior to the Western District Tournament, and are encouraged to do so as early in the season as possible. A National "D" license shall be the minimum license required to coach a Division I team.

KidSafe Forms -

Any adult who has the opportunity to be left alone with the team, including the coach, assistant coach, and manager, must complete a KidSafe form online. A KidSafe Criminal Conviction matrix is shown in Appendix A on page 10.

Player Registration -

The LD is responsible for player registration. However, the coach shall at all times assure the LD and VSO that all individuals participating in practices, scrimmages, and games have registered with VSO to comply with the health insurance requirements. VSO shall not be liable for any non-registered individual injured or injuring a registered player in a VSO activity.

Sponsorships -

Each team is responsible for obtaining a sponsor to help the VSO defray uniform costs. The Council sets sponsor fees for the year. VSO may place sponsoring businesses' names on a sign at the complex and/or on team uniforms. Sponsor checks should be made out to VSO and should be submitted through the LD, who provides it to the Treasurer.

Field Control -

LD is responsible for cleaning up the field area following the game and shall enlist the assistance of coaches, parents, and players to clean up all trash left by their respective team. Implicit in this requirement is the understanding that each team is responsible for the condition of the area it occupies. Failure to remove litter may result in disciplinary action by the Council.

Crowd Control -

The LD is responsible for the control of coaches, players and parents on and off the field of play until all persons have left the area. The LD shall delegate the daily responsibility of crowd control to the team coach or his designee for the actions of the players and parents prior to, during, or after the game. The referee shall use all their powers to insure an orderly game, which shall include suspension of the game if necessary. Forfeiture by the offending team is possible as directed by the Discipline and Protest Committee. The LD shall assist the referee as necessary. The spectator lines are the responsibility of the coach or his designee and not of the referee.

Suspension and Removal -

The LD is responsible for each of their coaches and may remove any coach for actions or behavior the LD deems to be contrary to the interests of the players or the organization. The removal shall be immediate and for a term specified by the LD, but may not exceed the remainder of the soccer year. Removals shall affect only the specified coaching position and do not extend to other coaching or Council positions. A removed coach has the right to appeal the decision to the Discipline and Protest Committee, and shall exercise that right by submitting a written request to the VSO president within five (5) calendar days of the removal. Decisions of the Discipline and Protest Committee to uphold or overturn the removal decision, or to impose additional sanctions may be appealed to the Council as provided in Article II of the By-laws.

The LD may suspend any coach for misconduct. The suspension shall be immediate and the LD shall assign a new coach, if necessary. Suspensions are not limited to the specified coaching position, but extend to any and all other positions in the VSO including Council positions and other coaching appointments. The LD will submit to the VSO President in writing all actions resulting in suspension within five (5) calendar days. The coach will be given seven (7) calendar days notice of a disciplinary meeting and informed of the grievances. The Committee may uphold or overturn a suspension of a coach, or may impose any alternate or additional sanctions deemed appropriate with a majority (51 %) vote, but only when 80% (four of five) of the Committee members are in attendance at the time of the vote. Decisions of the Discipline and Protest Committee may be appealed to the Council as provided in Article II of the By-laws.

Section E - Team/League/Division Standings

Fall Season -

The fall season is a developmental training season and shall be considered only partially competitive with records keeping. Coaches should use this season to develop individual skills, teamwork, and good sportsmanship, etc.

Spring Season -

The spring season will be fully competitive for U-8 leagues and above, with appropriate awards (honors, trophies, and medals) and will determine which teams will represent the VSO at the District Championships.

MSA tournament rules employing a 10-point system shall be the method used to determine team standings and shall be the following system:

Six (6) points for win

Three (3) points for tie

One (1) point for a shutout

Zero (0) points for loss

One (1) point for each goal to maximum of three per game (win or loss)

Ten (10) points for a forfeit (6 points for a win, 1 point for a shutout, and 3 points for goals)

The team with the highest number of points at the end of the season will be designated as the league champion. The team with the second most points will be designated as the league runner-up. If, at the end of the regular season, two (2) teams are tied for the league championship by points, the MSA tiebreaking rules shall be used to determine the winner. If, after application of the tiebreaking procedures two teams remain tied, a single game playoff shall decide the championship. If more than two (2) teams are tied, a round robin playoff shall decide the championship. In case of tie games in the playoffs, the tie breaking rules for playoff games shall be followed. In the event the tie breaking game or games cannot be played or completed due to adverse weather and or time, then a coin toss shall be used to determine a winner. The following uniform tie breaking rules will be employed:

(1) By the order of head to head competition during regular season play, however, in the event of a three-way or greater-way tie, all teams must have played each other in order for this rule to apply.

(2) Highest goal differential (total goals scored minus total goals allowed) (3 goals maximum per game).

(3) Least goals allowed.

(4) Highest goals scored (up to 3 goals per game).

Results Reporting and Standings -

The LD shall be responsible for maintaining the overall standings of their league and may assist the coaches in reporting the game results to the news media.

VSO policies

Retaliation Against Whistleblowers -

The VSO Board shall protect and not retaliate against persons who report wrongdoing of VSO Board members and coaches. The VSO Board considers the act of self policing of and by members and parents to be one of its strengths and a service to the community. Any form of retaliation against the whistleblowers policy will result in removal from VSO.

Conflicts of interest -

When a possible conflict of interest develops with a board member, it is the responsibility of the board member to notify the VSO Board. The board member shall work with the VSO Board for resolution of the conflict. Failure to notify the Board can result in removal from VSO.

Appendix A**Kidsafe Criminal Conviction Matrix**

Age of Convictions:	0-36 months	37-84 months	85+months
Alcohol Consumption/Possession	ELIGIBLE	ELIGIBLE	ELIGIBLE
Arson	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE
Assault/Battery/Domestic Violence (Felony)	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE
Assault/Battery/Domestic Violence (Misdemeanor)	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	ELIGIBLE
Auto Theft	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE
Burglary/Breaking and Entering/Burglar's Tools (Felony)	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE
Burglary/Breaking and Entering/Burglar's Tools (Misdemeanor)	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	ELIGIBLE
Child Abuse/Molestation	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE
Child Neglect	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE
Child Support	ELIGIBLE	ELIGIBLE	ELIGIBLE
Computer Crimes	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE
Criminal Mischief/Damage to Property/Vandalism	ADVISORY	ADVISORY	ELIGIBLE
Disorderly Conduct	ADVISORY	ELIGIBLE	ELIGIBLE
Drug Possession/Drug Abuse/Poss. Of Drug Paraphernalia	INELIGIBLE	ADVISORY	ADVISORY
Drug Sale/Distribution/Manufacturing	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE
Embezzlement	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	ELIGIBLE
Forgery	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	ELIGIBLE
Fraud	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	ELIGIBLE
Harassment	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE
Kidnapping	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE
Manslaughter	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE
Murder	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE
Prostitution/Solicitation	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	ADVISORY
Rape	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE
Robbery	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE
Sexual Assault	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE
Stalking	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE
Theft/Larceny/Poss. Stolen Property/Credit Card Abuse (felon)N	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE
Theft/Larceny/Poss. Stolen Property/Credit Card Abuse (Misdemeanor)N	INELIGIBLE	ADVISORY	ADVISORY
Traffic Offenses (felony)	ADVISORY	ADVISORY	ADVISORY
Traffic Offenses (Other)		ADVISORY	
Trespassing	INELIGIBLE	ADVISORY	ADVISORY
Weapons Possession/Unlicensed/No Permit (felony)	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE
Weapons Possession/Unlicensed/No Permit (misdemeanor)	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	ADVISORY
Worthless Checks (felony)	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE
Worthless Checks (misdemeanor)	INELIGIBLE	ADVISORY	ADVISORY