

# LSA POLICY MANUAL

## Policy 311-2 Premier League/Premier State Cup

### A. PREMIER TEAMS

#### 1. PREMIER TEAM DEFINITION

- a. Any team meeting the criteria and deadlines for Premier League competition that qualifies through participation in that league may earn a slot in the LSA Premier State Cup. Also, a team that completes the Sub-Regional Premier League play will earn a slot in the LSA Premier State Cup. Play-in games are part of the LSA Premier State Cup games.
- b. All coaches of teams participating in Premier League must have a USSF "D" license, National Youth license, NSCAA National Diploma, or equivalent as approved by LSA. Coaches have one year from when they register as a team head coach to meet the coaching certification.
- c. No player under the age of 9 can participate on a Premier team (See Bylaws Section 304).
- d. Premier teams shall be limited to 5 transferred players per season year (See Bylaws Section 306).
- e. The team must demonstrate continuity of rosters between the league and National Championships competitions by maintaining a minimum of 9 players common to the rosters of both competitions for age groups U11 – U15. For U16 and up teams must maintain a minimum of 11 players.
- f. As per the US Youth Soccer National Championship Policy (Section 2 of Rule 221) - A team may have on its team roster only players of the following age groups for the seasonal year in which the team is participating in the National Championships
  - 1 For teams competing in the Under 14 and Under 15 age groups, each player on the team must be
    - a. of the age of the age group competition in which the team is participating in that seasonal year, or
    - b. of the age in either of the next 2 younger age groups of that age group competition in which the team is participating in that seasonal year
  - 2 For teams competing in the Under 16, Under 17, Under 18, and Under 19 age groups, each player on the team must b
    - a. of the age of the age group competition in which the team is participating in that seasonal year, or
    - b. of the age of any younger age group, through the Under 14 age group, of that age group competition in which the team is participating in that seasonal year

## 2. TRYOUTS

The LSA State Premier Committee will administer Premier Team Tryouts as per LSA State Premier Committee Policies and Procedures.

In general, open team tryouts for the following soccer year shall be conducted by member clubs forming Premier Teams after the conclusion of the Premier State Cup, in that age bracket, during an established Tryout Period. Member clubs must be properly affiliated and constituted at the start of the Tryout Period in order to form Premier Teams for the following year.

At the conclusion of the Tryout Period, an established Dead Period will ensue. Teams may not host tryouts or directly solicit players during the Dead Period. Invitations for team membership shall be extended to players during the Dead Period. The invitations must be in writing and sent via USPS mail to players postmarked no earlier than an established Invitation Date for the given age group. Players shall accept in writing to only one team by the conclusion of the Dead Period.

Players who are not placed/selected by this procedure may contact any team with openings after the Dead Period. Teams may conduct additional tryouts after the Dead Period.

The dates of each age bracket Tryout Period, Dead Period, and Invitation Date for the following soccer year will be established and announced by the LSA State Premier Committee prior to the State Association Winter AGM.

### U11-U13 Teams

Tryout Period	The Tryout Period shall commence the Monday after the conclusion of U11 and U12 Premier State Cup Championship Weekend. The Tryout Period shall end 25 days later.
Dead Period	The Dead Period shall commence the 4th Friday after the Tryout Period starts. The Dead Period shall end on the day following the invitation date.
Invitation Date	The Invitation Date shall be the first Tuesday after the Dead Period starts.

### U14-U19 Teams

Tryout Period	The Tryout Period shall commence the Monday after the conclusion of U17-U19 Premier State Cup Championship Weekend. The Tryout Period shall end the Thursday prior to the commencement of Regionals.
Dead Period	The Dead Period shall commence the day after the Tryout Period ends. The Dead Period shall end on the day following the invitation date.
Invitation Date	The Invitation Date shall be the day after Regionals ends.

## 3. Ethical Standards and Professional Rules of Conduct

All Club Directors of Coaching, Coaching Staff, Independent Coaches, Assistant Coaches and Team Managers must adhere to Section 500-1 Ethical Standards and Professional Rules of Conduct.

## B. PREMIER COMMITTEE

1. The LSA Premier League shall be supervised by the LSA Youth Premier Commissioner. A Premier League committee shall be formed annually composed of members from each club forming a Premier Team. Each club will have the number of votes based on the voting strengths as they have for general meetings of LSA. The LSA Youth Premier Commissioner may appoint additional members to insure adequate representation. Committee members will be selected by the clubs

prior to the LSA AGM from coaches, parents, or managers currently involved with competitive soccer who have the time and willingness to serve. Notice of the appointment of each club's representative shall be reported to the LSA State Office in writing. Normally, only those present are allowed to vote. However, for meetings at LSA Office, those clubs that are located more than 100 miles from the location of the meeting can participate and vote by telephone.

2. Any proposed changes to premier policies do not have to be on the agenda of a Premier Committee meeting to be considered, voted on, and made effective.
3. Once any Issue or Policy is voted on by the Premier Committee at any of its meetings, the same Issue or Policy cannot be brought up for discussion and another vote for a period of twelve (12) months from the date of the first vote, unless a majority of the clubs present and voting, vote to bring the Issue or Policy to another discussion and vote.
4. The Premier League Chairman will be appointed by the Premier Commissioner and that appointment approved by the LSA Premier Committee and then by the LSA Executive Board annually in August preceding the soccer year. He/She, in coordination with the LSA Youth Premier Commissioner, shall be responsible for timely notification to all LSA affiliated clubs of all deadlines, fees and rules for Premier League play. The rules and procedures for governing the Premier League shall be approved by a majority vote of the LSA Executive Committee.
5. The Louisiana Sub-Regional Premier League Chairperson will be appointed by the Premier Commissioner and that appointment approved by the LSA Premier Committee and then by the LSA Executive Board annually in August preceding the soccer year a person is to be the Louisiana Sub-Regional Premier League Chairman

## **C. PREMIER LEAGUE**

1. The purpose of the Louisiana Soccer Association Premier League shall be to foster and advance the highest level of competitive soccer in Louisiana while providing a venue for advancement to the Premier State Cup through participation in the Premier League. The purpose shall also be to promote the ideals of good sportsmanship, honesty, loyalty, and courage through organized athletic competition.

This league shall be open to U11 through U18 boys and girls teams who are in good standing with the Louisiana Soccer Association and their LSA affiliated club.

Individual team standing and eligibility will be verified by the team's Club President at the time of declaration for league play.

2. Guest players inter or intra club are NOT allowed in Premier League games (Sub Regional or Louisiana)
3. Effective with the 2003-2004 soccer season teams will either participate in the Louisiana Premier League or the Sub-Regional Premier League or potentially both, if their age group has less than 4 teams participating in the Louisiana Premier League at the letter of intent date.
  - a. The Premier Commissioner will be authorized to recommend Louisiana teams to participate in the Sub-Regional Premier League in the following order for current year U13-U17 to participate during the following soccer year (at the next highest age group):

1. Current Year State Champion
2. Current Year Regional Champion
3. Current Year Sub-Regional Premier League Champion
4. State Finalist
5. Additional teams in order of finish in Premier State Cup.

A team (as used above) is defined as having 50% of the players from the previous year's Premier State Cup roster plus one player.

Failure to complete all games in the Sub-Regional Premier League will result in teams being required to participate in the Louisiana Premier League and fulfill all of their obligations in order to participate in the Premier State Cup.

Also, the Premier Commissioner will be authorized to add a substitute team in the event that a qualified team either disbands or elects not to participate in the Sub-Regional Premier League.

- b. The Premier League rules will govern the Louisiana league.
  1. Qualified teams shall be admitted to the LSA Premier League upon receipt of
    - a) The signed Letter of Intent to Participate which has been endorsed by the head coach and team's Club President.
    - b) The Premier League Fee as shown in the current Fee Schedule (Policy 206-1)
    - c) A Performance Bond in the amount of \$ 250.00 per Club. This bond check will not be deposited unless a team does not complete their obligations. If a Club's bond check is deposited, the Club must submit another \$ 250.00 bond check within 10 days or all of its teams will not be able to participate in Premier League or State Cup. The above shall be RECEIVED at the LSA Office on or before August 8th for U11 through U18, and April 15th for U19. If either date falls on the weekend, the deadline will be the following Monday.  
For teams that complete a letter of intent to play in the Premier League, they are ineligible to enter the Division 1 State Cup unless they withdraw from the Premier League the earlier of their first Premier League match or September 30. If they are the only team from their Club in the Premier League, LSA will deposit the \$250.00 bond fee that was submitted by the Club. This action results from the team not completing the Premier League season after entering
    - d) Effective with the 2009-2010 soccer season, age groups that (at the Letter of Intent Date) have less than 4 teams participating in the Louisiana Premier League, the Sub-Regional teams will be required to participate in the Louisiana Premier League. These games will determine seeding for the State Tournament. Any red cards received by either team count and the suspension must be served in the next Premier League Game or the first game of the State Cup whichever comes first

Headquarters for the LSA Premier League shall be the administrative office of the Louisiana Soccer Association.

#### 4. Premier League Rules

##### a. Age Group Coordinator

1. The Premier Committee members or other volunteers from LSA clubs will serve as Age Group Coordinators who will be the main contact for that age group and be responsible for:
  - a. Placement of teams into groups (if necessary)
  - b. Scheduling of premier games

c. Tabulation of games result and communication of problems to the Premier League Chairman and/or Premier Commissioner.

**b. Letter of Intent/ Fees/ Roster**

1. Fees are set to cover referee assignor fees, and administrative costs. Premier League fees are non-refundable.
2. Rosters are limited to the number of players specified in LSA By Laws. A copy of the official LSA roster shall be given to the game referee prior to each game.

**c. Competition/ Format**

1. LOUISIANA PREMIER LEAGUE

- a. Premier League Play will consist of round-robin play.
- b. Age groups with thirteen (13) or less teams will play total round robin.
- c. Any age group with fourteen (14) teams or more will be split into two divisions. Should two divisions be needed due to the number of teams in the league, the team will be "snaked" into the divisions based on the results of the prior State Cup Tournament. Any new team will be added to the bottom of the State Cup rankings based on the date they declared their team.
- d. Divisions will not consider geography, except for the U11 age group where all teams are new.
- e. Age groups with less than four teams are still required to play a minimum of three games prior to the State Cup. The teams can play other age group teams for extra games. Games played against teams in other ages groups will not count for win/loss results; but any red cards earned in the games will count and the suspension must be served.

2. SUB REGIONAL PREMIER LEAGUE

Follows the rules established by Region III Premier League.

**d. SCHEDULE**

1. To achieve the highest level of play in the Louisiana Premier League, teams will play no more than one game per day. An exception will be allowed if desired by a team traveling more than 100 miles or due to scheduling constraints recognized by both the Age Group Coordinator and the Premier League Chairman. In the event that two games per day must be played, there must be a rest period of no less than two hours between the conclusion of game one and the start of game two
2. No Premier League Games can be scheduled on an ODP date for U12 teams and older.
3. The Age Group Coordinator will send out a tentative schedule showing brackets, teams and playing dates for the entire year by the date determined by the Premier Committee and detailed on the Premier Calendar.
4. The Age Group Coordinator will list one team as the home team, who will be responsible for securing a field, referees and game time.
5. If desired by the teams, they may agree to change any of their scheduled games to locations and times of their choice as long as both teams and the Age Group Coordinator agree and those games are scheduled (date and location determined) by the date determined by the Premier Committee and detailed on the Premier Calendar. The games that are rescheduled should follow the below detailed rules:
  - a. Games do not have to be scheduled on a premier league date.
  - b. Games can be played during the week.

- c. Games can be scheduled at a tournament provided that the tournament agrees for the game to be regulation length and the game is the first game of the day for both teams.
- 6. The teams must secure the fields and notify their Age Group Coordinators of these arrangements before the Age Group Coordinator issues the final schedule by the date determined by the Premier Committee and detailed on the Premier Calendar...
- 7. Re-scheduling of games after the final schedule has been issued will only be done if both teams agree to the re-schedule, it has the approval of the Age Group Coordinator, and still complies with 50% of the league games being scheduled in the Fall if applicable. A maximum of three (3) re-scheduled games per team will be allowed.
- 8. Any team not playing all scheduled Louisiana Premier League games will be denied participation in Louisiana Premier State Cup.
- 9. The Premier league will be scheduled requiring that 50% of the league games to be played in the Fall Season. All Premier League games must be scheduled to be played prior to the first State Tournament either Premier or Division 1.

**e. TABULATION OF LOUISISANA PREMIER LEAGUE GAME RESULTS AND SEEDING FOR STATE CUP TOURNAMENT**

- 1. The team manager of each team is required to post the game score and Yellow and Red cards received within 72 hours after completion of the game. All game reports where a red card is received must be sent to the Louisiana Premier League Chairperson within 72 hours of the completion of the game.
- 2. Premier League games will be scored as follows: 3 Points for a win, 1 point for a tie and 0 points for a loss.
- 3. Final Louisiana Premier League standings will be determined by calculating the points earned during the league as described above.
- 4. Age groups that are split into two divisions will be combined and ranked and placed in order by the points earned during the league.
- 5. Only scores of games of teams participating in State Cup will be used in determining Premier League Standings. An exception to this Rule will be made if a team plays all of its matches and does not participate in the State Cup. Extenuating circumstance situations may be appealed to the Premier Committee
- 6. If the divisions do not have the same number of teams, the teams will be ranked by calculating a percentage of Points Earned (Points earned/Maximum Total Points that could have been earned)
- 7. Ties will be broken per Policy General Tournament Rules.
  - a. To apply tie breakers to age groups that have divisions that do not have the same number of teams the following will be used for the application of Most Wins, Goal Differential and Goals Allowed if they are part of the tie breakers:
    - 1. Most Wins: number of wins divided by the number of games played.
    - 2. Goal Differential (maximum of plus or minus 4). For example for a score of 2-1, the goal differential for the winning team would be +1. Another example is 5-0, the winning team's goal differential would be +4. If the divisions do not have the same number of teams, and a tie exists between two teams in different divisions calculate a percentage. The percentage would be calculated as follows: Goal Differential/Maximum Possible Goal Differential (each game's maximum would be +4).
    - 3. Goals Allowed (no maximum). If the divisions do not have the same number of teams, and tie exists between two teams in different divisions calculate the average

goals allowed per game. The average would be calculated as follows: Goals Allowed/Games Played

**f. COACHES/REFEREES**

1. Assignment of referees will be the responsibility of Association hosting the Premier League game. LSA will pay to the host Association a \$4.00 per game referee assignor's fee. Fees are to be submitted to LSA for payment NO later than December 31 for games played in the fall and no later than June 30 for games played in the spring.
2. Payment of referees will be "CASH-IN-HAND" at the field by the team managers prior to the games. Each team will contribute one-half the total referee fees for that age group.

**g. RULES OF PLAY**

1. Rules of Play shall be in accordance with Policy 310 Section B. General Tournament Rules, unless hereafter noted.
2. At the referee's discretion, if a game must be terminated due to inclement weather and/or unsafe field conditions and one half of the game has been completed prior to termination, the results of the match at the time of termination will stand. The game will not be replayed.
3. Teams should surrender Players Passes and a copy of the Roster (with players' jersey numbers) to the Referee prior to the beginning of the game. The referee should check the players against the Player Passes prior to the start of the game. If a team does not have their USYS player passes and/or a copy of their official state roster at the start of the game the game may be started but must be present and checked by the end of the match. If the team is unable to present passes and /or roster at the end of the match the opposing team will be awarded a 4-0 win.
4. Games may end in a tie (no overtimes, etc).
5. If a Premier League Game does not have 3 referees, the game can be played as long as both coaches agree. Every effort should be made to contact the assignor to see if referees can be obtained in a reasonable time. If both coaches do not agree to play the game with less than 3 referees, then the team that had been the home team and was responsible for scheduling the referees will give up their home field advantage for the rescheduled game. If the game was originally to be played at a neutral location, then the game will be re scheduled again at a neutral location.

**h. PLAYER MISCONDUCT**

1. Ejections (send-off): A player who is ejected (sent-off) from a game shall leave the playing area and team sideline under the supervision of a designated adult team representative
2. If a player is sent-off during a game, the team manager shall retain possession of the player pass
3. A player who is ejected (sent-off) from a Premier League game shall be suspended and as a minimum shall not be allowed to participate in his/her team's next playable Premier League game. The player may not be on the team's side of the fields while serving the suspension. If a suspended player participates in a premier league game before serving the suspension, that game will be recorded as a forfeit and the player will still have to serve the one game suspension.
4. It is the responsibility of the head coach and team manager to make sure that suspensions are served. They shall notify the referee of suspensions that are being served so that the referee can record that a specific player did not participate in that game.
5. The suspension for an ejection (sent-off) issued in the final Premier League game will be served in the first game of the State Cup Tournament. As with Louisiana Premier League, any ejections in the last game of the Sub Regional Premier League, the suspension will be served in the first game of the State Cup.

6. If the suspension is not served in the next Premier League Game and/or State Cup game, the suspension will be served in the next available game (Premier League or State Cup) and any games played in by the player will be recorded as a forfeit.
7. The Premier Committee has the right to review all sends-off and add additional penalties and suspensions.

**i. TEAM MISCONDUCT**

A team shall forfeit a game if conduct by players, coaches or spectators causes a game to be prematurely terminated or abandoned. Any caution or send-off in the forfeited game is still subject to penalties and suspensions. Such team may be subject to a hearing of the Premier Committee

**j. COACH MISCONDUCT**

1. A coach who is ejected (sent-off) shall leave the immediate vicinity of the playing area and is prohibited from any further contact, direct or indirect, with the team during the remainder of that game.
2. If a coach is sent-off during a game, the team manager shall retain possession of the player/coach pass. The Age Group Coordinator will forward the game report to LSA.
3. A coach who is ejected (sent-off) from a Premier League game shall be suspended and as a minimum shall not be allowed to participate in his/her team's next playable Premier League game. The coach may not be at the soccer complex while serving the suspension, unless he/she is coaching another team. If a suspended coach participates in a Premier League before serving the suspension, that game will be recorded as a forfeit and the coach will still have to serve the one game suspension.
4. It is the responsibility of the head coach and team manager to make sure that suspensions are served. They shall notify the referee of suspensions that are being served so that the referee can record that a specific coach did not participate in that game.
5. The suspension for an ejection (send-off) issued in the final Premier league game will be served in the first game of the State Cup Tournament. As with Louisiana Premier League, any ejections in the last game of the Sub Regional Premier League, the suspension will be served in the first game of the State Cup Tournament.
6. The Premier Committee has the right to review all send-offs and add additional penalties and suspensions.

**k. PROTESTS**

- a. Protests shall be referred to the Premier League Committee. Decisions of the Committee shall be final and binding on all teams involved. To be valid and eligible for consideration, protest must be received in writing at the LSA office within 72 hours from the scheduled game time or occurrence of the event and must include a certified check or money order made payable to LSA in the amount of \$100. Personal checks and cash will not be accepted.
- b. The head coach may lodge protest only.
- c. The referee's game report must be received in the LSA Office before the Premier League Committee can take any action.
- d. Any protest relating to goals, nets, or playing field conditions shall be entertained only if an objection had been lodged with the game referee prior to the start of the game.
- e. The fee required will not be refunded if the protest is denied.
- f. There are only three acceptable causes for the protesting of a game and they are:
  - a. Ineligible Player: A team knowingly plays an unregistered, ineligible or suspended player.

- b. Misinterpretation of the Rules: There has been an obvious error made in the application of the Laws of the Game that directly affects the outcome of the game. No protest can be entertained if they are based on judgment decisions made by the referee during play.
- c. Grounds, Goals Post, Etc.: Any protest relating to the grounds, goals post, or other appurtenance of any match shall not be entertained unless an objection has been lodged with referee before the commencement of the game.
- d. Grounds, Goals Post, Etc.: Any protest relating to the grounds, goals post, or other appurtenance of any match shall not be entertained unless an objection has been lodged with referee before the commencement of the game.

## **D. PREMIER STATE CUP**

### **1. Entry Forms**

All entry forms and tournament fees must be submitted to LSA not later than April 1 for U11-U18 teams, and not later than April 15th for U19 teams. If that date falls on the weekend the due date will be the following Monday.

Entry into the State Cup places a responsibility on the State Cup champion to represent Louisiana at Regionals, and, if successful there, at Nationals. The Club sponsoring the State Cup champion will be responsible for fees and fines charged by Region III or US Youth Soccer for withdrawal. These fees may reach \$3,000.

Failure to pay the fine within 30 days of receipt of the fine in writing from LSA shall result in that Club being deemed henceforth "not in good standing" and teams from that Club shall be denied participation in all age gender groups in any Premier State Cup until said fee is paid.

### **2. Rosters Freeze Date (Naming of the Roster)**

A player may play for only one team in State competition in any seasonal year.

If a player is on the roster of a Premier team or a Div 1 team, as of the roster freeze date, the player may not be on the roster of any other team for Premier State Cup competitions for that seasonal year. This includes both the rosters of Premier and Division 1 teams.

The roster freeze date for U11 through U19 **Premier** teams is the Monday of the week preceding the week of the start of the Premier State Cup for the age group, unless an age group advances to Regionals by virtue of being the only team in its age group; in this case the roster freeze date will be set by the Premier Commissioner. As the Play-In games are defined as part of the State Cup competition, the rosters of all teams participating in play-in games are frozen as of the close of business two days prior to the date of the play-in game.

### **3. Teams that Drop out of Premier State Cup after registering**

A team that drops out of the Premier State Cup *after April 1st and before the roster freeze date* will forfeit its entry fee. The brackets will be realigned for any team dropping out during this period.

A team that drops out of the Premier State Cup *after the roster freeze date* will forfeit its entry fee, and their club will be assessed a fine of \$250.00 (payable to LSA) plus the club will be denied participation in the following year's tournament by any team of the same sex and next older single

age group as the offending team. Failure to pay the fine within thirty (30) days of receipt of the assessment in writing from LSA shall result in that club being deemed henceforth "not in good standing" and shall be denied participation in all age/sex groups in any Premier State Cup until said assessment is paid. Brackets will not be realigned for any team dropping out after the roster freeze date, all games for the team will be recorded as forfeits.

#### **4. Premier State Cup Bracket Draw**

- a. For the Premier State Cup, teams will be "snaked" into brackets based on Sub-Regional Fall Premier League and Louisiana Premier League as follows:
  1. The teams participating in the Sub-Regional Premier League will be seeded first, second, third or fourth based on their order of finish in the Sub-Regional League Play.
  2. The teams participating in the Louisiana Premier League will be seeded after the team's participating in the Sub-Regional Premier League, based on the order of the final standings in LA Premier League.
  3. Effective with the 2009-2010 soccer season, for age groups where all teams participate in both the Louisiana Premier League, including Sub Regional Premier League teams, the teams will be snaked in brackets based on the results of the Louisiana Premier League.

If all teams do not participate in Louisiana Premier League, the seeding will done as described in paragraph 1 and 2 above.

- b. As U19 Boys and Girls do not participate in a league, seeding will be determined by a random draw conducted by the Premier Commissioner.

#### **5. Eligibility of Verification Form**

Eligibility Verification Form must be turned in at check in for Premier State Cup.

#### **6. Rules of Play**

All Rules of Play shall be in accordance with Policy 310:C. General Tournament Rules. If the winner or teams advancing has been determined before all the brackets games have been played, the LSA State Representative may declare that unnecessary games will not be played. Every effort will be made to play all games in those State Cups where teams will not advance to Regionals.

#### **7. Tournament Format**

U11 through U19 Premier State Cup Tournaments will use the Seeded Standard Two-Weekend State Tournament Format as listed in LSA Policy 310-C 2.

Participation in Premier State Cup shall be limited to the top sixteen (16) teams as determined by Premier League play and follow the current 16-team format. For age groups subject to National Championship Rules this does not apply and play-in games will be used if there are more than 16 teams in an age group.

Premier Commissioner is given the authority to modify the format of Premier State Cup in certain circumstances where all effected parties are in agreement.

Consolation matches will be played at the Premier State Cup for ages U13 and older to determine the 3rd place team for the Sub-Regional Premier League. Failure of one team to participate will result in that team being determined the 4th place finisher in the State. Failure of both teams to participate will result in these teams being ineligible for the next year's Central Sub-Regional League.

No consolation matches will be played for age groups with 4 teams, as teams finishing third and fourth will be determined on the preliminary weekend.

## **8. Premier State Cup Referee Assignment**

Once tournament locations are determined no other games, adult or recreational, can be assigned in that metropolitan area on tournament dates until all State Tournament games have been assigned. Host sites are responsible to assign referees. Until all referee assignments for Sub-Regional Premier League games are completed no other games can be assigned at the host site.