



## 2025-26 BOYS & GIRLS SOCCER PARTICIPATING SCHOOL TOURNAMENT INFORMATION

### 1. TOURNAMENT FORMAT

The MHSAA LP Boys & Girls Soccer tournaments are conducted in four equal Divisions. Each school is assigned to one of 16 District tournaments in each Division as determined by MHSAA staff based on geography and travel considerations. The District assignment will be finalized in the fall. A "Tournament Notification Form" is emailed to all member schools and found in the School Administrative Services section online.

Each District winner advances to one of four Regional tournaments in each Division. District and Regional host schools are determined by MHSAA staff based on hosting requests, rotation, facility specifications and hosting ability. Regional champions advance to Semifinal games at two locations in each Division. Championship games are played at one site in the fall and spring.

#### **Boys Dates**

Districts First Round – October 8-10  
District Semis/Finals – October 13-18  
Regionals – October 21-25  
Semifinals – October 29  
Finals – November 1

#### **Girls Dates**

District First Round – May 20-22  
District Semis/Finals – May 26-30  
Regionals – June 2-6  
Semifinals – June 9-10  
Finals – June 12-13

### 2. TOURNAMENT PROCEDURES

Individuals or teams shall be accompanied to the event by the coach, administrator or appointee of the school in order to participate in a MHSAA event.

**Practice at tournament site** - During the weeks of District, Regional or Semifinal games, teams may not practice on the respective game fields (except the host school on its home field). If the MHSAA Final is played on artificial turf, a team in the Final who has not played on artificial turf that season may practice on the Finals field if host management can make arrangements to do so.

**School Administrator** - A school administrator or faculty designee (not the coach) **MUST** be present at all MHSAA tournament series games. First round District games, though played at different sites, are considered a part of the MHSAA tournament series. The start of the game **will not be delayed**; however, schools not complying will face MHSAA administrative disciplinary action.

**Pep Bands** – Pep bands are allowed at soccer games as long as they do not interfere with the officials' adjudication of the game. Instruments that could potentially be confused with the official's whistle or the scoreboard horn should not be used.

### **3. OPT OUT POLICIES, ELIGIBILITY LISTS, ROSTERS**

Schools must see that tournament managers receive an accurate Master Eligibility List and Team Roster by the Opt-Out Due Date. These forms are available at mhsaa.com. Failure to fulfill the above obligations by the specified Opt-Out Due Date will result in MHSAA penalties as stipulated in the MHSAA Handbook. For Boys Soccer, the Opt-Out Due Date is September 17. For Girls Soccer, the Opt-Out Due Date is April 29. Schools must notify the tournament managers by the Opt-Out Due Date if they **DO NOT** intend to participate in a previously assigned MHSAA tournament.

The maximum player roster size is 25. An exception can be made for teams that have carried more than 25 for the entire season. The roster can change from game to game. In addition, a maximum of 6 additional coaches and/or team personnel are allowed to be in the team area.

Additions or updates to the Master Eligibility list (except transfer students who enroll after the dates in Regulation I, Section 9 [F]) may be accepted by the Tournament Manager if submitted and received prior to the start of competition for ANY team in the first level of that tournament to which the school is assigned.

To be eligible to compete in the MHSAA tournament for Soccer, a student must have competed in that sport in at least four games with his/her school team against other MHSAA member school teams.

**Waiver Procedure for Individuals** – If a student has been a member of the MHSAA school-sponsored high school soccer team (subvarsity or varsity) since the earliest date of practice within the MHSAA season and has been present, dressed, and on the bench for most games that season and not been a member of a non-school team during the same season, but has not played in four regular season high school games due to the customary selection of players being entered into a contest by the coach, no waiver request is necessary. The student is eligible for the MHSAA tournament.

An administrator of a school may make a written request to the MHSAA for an otherwise eligible student who has not participated in four contests during the regular season to participate in the MHSAA tournament.

Consideration will only be given if the student did not meet the four-game minimum due to the cancellation of games caused by weather conditions, or due to the student's injury, illness, family tragedy, or other reason deemed appropriate by the MHSAA (not ineligibility under MHSAA rules or school action for academic, disqualification or discipline reasons).

The request must describe the student's involvement with the school team, departure from the non-school team (if applicable) and the reason the student has not participated in four games.

If the MHSAA administrator in charge of the sport and the executive director or his/her designate concur that this is a reasonable request, the school may allow this student to participate in the MHSAA tournament. The request must be received by noon of the last business day prior to the start of competition for ANY team in the first level of that tournament to which the school is assigned.

**Use of ineligible** - Individuals or teams which are defeated by an ineligible opponent or teams which allowed one or more ineligible students to participate do not advance in MHSAA tournaments. If placements in MHSAA tournaments are vacated as a result of an individual being ineligible or a team allowing one or more ineligible students to participate, other individuals or teams neither advance to those placements nor receive awards for those places.

### **4. DRAW PROCEDURES**

District hosts do not need to host a draw meeting. The District bracket will be determined by the MHSAA and posted to the MHSAA website on the Sunday 10 days prior to the tournament. Prior to that date, typically at the beginning of the season, District hosts are asked to notify the MHSAA and participating schools on the date, time and location of the semifinals and finals. Within 24 hours after the District draws have been posted, hosts should finalize First Round game days, times and locations and provide to the MHSAA. Assigners have a very short time to assign officials for these games, so this needs to be a timely process.

All teams in the District are seeded according to MPR, with #1 playing #8, #2 playing #7, and so on. More information about MPR can be found in the Tournament Managers Manual and MHSAA.com.

When a higher-seeded school in a First Round District game (and thus would be the host) does not have a field at least 60 yards wide and 110 yards long, the game will be held at the site of the other school. If neither school has a field at least 60 x 110 yards, the game will be held at the field offered by the higher-seeded school.

## **5. TIME SCHEDULE**

All District Semifinal/Final, Regional, and Semifinal game times shall be determined by the Tournament Manager with consideration given to team travel and the opportunity for spectators to be present.

In the fall season, District and Regional doubleheaders are not to be played on fields without lights. District hosts without lights should play the semifinals at two sites with the higher-seeded school hosting. Regional hosts without lights will play one semifinal on Tuesday and one on Wednesday with the championship game on Saturday. If playing on an unlighted field, games should be scheduled early enough so an OT game can be completed before conditions are too dark – 4:30 should be the latest start time for an unlighted field.

Teams are encouraged to arrive one hour before game time. Failure to be ready for play by 25 minutes after the scheduled starting time will result in forfeiture. In emergency situations and when a delay has been reported the manager may delay the start time more than 25 minutes.

## **6. AWARDS**

The winning school in each division at each District and Regional Tournament will receive a trophy. The runner-up team and championship team in each division at the Final Tournament will receive a trophy.

Twenty-five medals will be awarded to members of winning teams at District, Regional, and Final Tournaments. The same number of medals will be awarded to runner-up teams at the Final Tournament. By Representative Council action, only MHSAA-approved awards may be presented. If additional medals are desired by winning schools, they may be ordered through the MHSAA at school expense using the [Extra Medal Order form](#).

## **7. LIMITS OF COMPETITION**

Teams and individuals may have a maximum of 18 games during the regular season. MHSAA tournament dates do not count against season maximums. An athlete may participate in three halves on the same day, including on two different levels (JV/Varsity, for instance). For multi-team tournaments, an athlete may participate in no more halves than what is being played by the school's highest team level in the tournament that day.

Individuals must have also played in four regular season games to be eligible for the postseason; a waiver procedure can be found at #3 in this document.

A student or team may participate in a multi-team tournament where the event counts as one of 18 regular season contests. The event format could consist of up to two full 80-minute games, or a format in which the total allowable playing time for any team is no more than 180 minutes (with a maximum of 30-minute halves). All multi-team tournament games that are at least 40 minutes long will count toward MPR/Seeding purposes.

The Limited Team Membership rule (Reg. I, Sect. 12) prohibits students from competing with non-school teams in the same sport during the high school season. Schools should never knowingly violate MHSAA Regulations, but exceptions have been made to this rule for girls soccer due to the overlap of club/school soccer in the spring season. The MHSAA encourages kids to participate in high school soccer, whether it be for the first time or after returning from a club experience. Thus, it has allowed some intentional violations of this rule in specific situations. If a student participates in a club team event after practicing with the high school team, the violation must be reported by the school and the student becomes ineligible for a minimum of the next three dates of competition. A second violation would likely make the student ineligible for the remainder of the season.

The Limited Team Membership rule was amended in 2020-21 to allow a girls soccer player to participate in scrimmage competition during the SPRING season at up to two college ID camps. These camps must be held at a college facility during the season, sponsored by that college and be conducted by coaches of that college. In the past girls could go to these spring events, but they could NOT participate in scrimmages; they CAN participate in scrimmages now. The rule is unchanged for the boys.

## 8. FINANCES

Starting with the District Final game, GoFan digital tickets are required. Ticket prices for MHSAA Soccer Tournament games are \$7 for District games, \$9 for Regional games, \$10 for the State Semifinal games and \$11 for State Final games.

For the first two rounds of Districts, host schools sell tickets using the same method as a regular season home game. If you are a GoFan school or would like to use GoFan to sell tickets, you can set up the ticket yourself or we can help you. Whether you sell GoFan or cash tickets, the ticket price is \$7. If you sell via GoFan, be sure to set "Attendee pays fee" to off (which will result in a lower net fee to the host).

Each team assumes all costs/expenses of participation at all levels of the MHSAA Soccer Tournament.

## 9. OFFICIALS SELECTION/ASSIGNMENTS

Managers will hire officials at the District level from the MHSAA-approved list. **For District games hosted by the higher-seeded team, managers should make clear who is arranging game officials.** At the Regional, Semifinal and Final games, officials will be assigned by the MHSAA.

## 10. PLAYING RULES/ADAPTATIONS

All National Federation soccer playing rules will be used with the MHSAA adaptations and points of emphasis listed in the [2025-2026 Soccer Rules Supplement](#).

**Overtime Procedures** - When the score is tied at the end of regulation time, the referee will instruct both teams to return to their respective team areas. There will be five minutes during which both teams may confer with their coaches, and the referee will instruct both teams as to proper procedure.

1. There shall be two, full 10-minute overtime periods. (No Golden Goal)
  - a. A coin toss shall be held as in Rule 5-2-2d.
  - b. At the end of the first 10-minute overtime period, teams shall change ends.
  - c. There shall be a 2-minute interval between periods.
2. If the score still remains tied, all coaches, officials and team captains shall assemble at the halfway line to review the procedure as outlined below:
  - a. The head referee shall choose the goal at which all shots from the penalty mark shall be taken. **Only officials and players taking kicks shall be on the field.**
  - b. Each coach will select any five players, including goalkeeper, on or off the field (except those who may have been disqualified) to take the kicks.
  - c. A coin toss shall be held. The team winning the toss shall have the choice of kicking first or second.
  - d. Teams will alternate kickers. There is no follow-up on the kick.
  - e. The defending team may change the goalkeeper prior to each penalty kick.
  - f. Following five kicks for each team, the team scoring on the greatest number of these kicks shall be declared the winner.
  - g. Add one goal to the winning team score and credit the team with a victory. An asterisk (\*) may be placed by the team advancing to indicate the advancement was the result of a tiebreaker system.
3. If the score remains tied after each team has had five kicks:

- a. Each coach will select five different players than the first five who already have kicked to take the kicks in a sudden-victory situation, wherein if one team scores and the other team does not score, the game is ended without more kicks being taken.
- b. If the score remains tied, continue the sudden-victory kicks with the coach selecting any five players (except disqualified players) to take the next set of alternating kicks. If a tie still remains, repeat 3-a.

If players are cautioned during the shootout, use the Misconduct Procedures listed at the end of the Tie-Breaking Procedures in the NFHS Soccer Rules Book.

## **11. MEDIA NOTES**

For information on credentials, locker room privacy policy, microphones, photographers, flash photography, postgame interviews, press box, results, streaming (audio and video), and videotaping, go to this [Media/Streaming Information PDF](#).

**Souvenir Program Policies** - Teams winning Regional titles in selected sports must fill out and e-mail program information and a team photograph to the MHSAA office to be used in the souvenir program for the Semifinals and the Finals in the event the team qualifies for Final round play. Complete directions for filling out and submitting information and photographs is included with each kit. All program information and photographs must be submitted by e-mail.

**Information For District/Regional/Semifinal Tournaments** - Teams competing in MHSAA District, Regional and Semifinal tournaments shall provide, upon request, team rosters, photographs and other information as necessary, to local tournament managers so that a souvenir program may be assembled for the event.

## **Merchandising/Promotion Policies**

Use of MHSAA logo – The MHSAA logo and acronym are registered trademarks. MHSAA tournament trophy designs are also copyrighted. Use of these legally protected marks requires written permission of the MHSAA. Contact the MHSAA Communications Director for additional information.

**Postgame Interviews** -- Coaches should also be readily available to meet with the media shortly after the conclusion of a contest. It is recommended that approximately five minutes after the game, managers provide a location other than the team locker rooms for postgame interviews with coaches and/or players the coach may wish to designate for interviews. Locker room access should never be allowed to media. Inasmuch as many media outlets are often on deadline following contests, interviews should be granted before any lengthy team meetings occur.

## **12. SPORTSMANSHIP**

When a student is disqualified during a contest for flagrant or unsportsmanlike conduct, that student shall be withheld by his/her school for the remainder of that day of competition and for at least the next day of competition for that team. Disqualified layers and coaches must also complete the NFHS Sportsmanship Course before returning to play.

When a coach is disqualified during a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct, that coach shall be prohibited by his/her school from coaching for the remainder of that day of competition and from coaching at or attending at least the next day of competition for that coach's team.

Failure of the school for any reason to enforce this regulation will prohibit the school from entry in the next MHSAA tournament for that sport, or from the remainder of the current tournament if the disqualification occurs during an MHSAA tournament or during the last regular-season contest.

Disqualifications from one season carry over to the next season in that sport for undergraduates and coaches, or the next season in any sport for seniors. If the playing rules for a sport specify an additional penalty or more rapid progression, or use of such a progression for other violations, the playing rules apply.

Any coach who is disqualified for unsportsmanlike conduct two or more times during a season, any player who is disqualified for unsportsmanlike conduct three or more times during a season, is not eligible to participate in the MHSAA tournament for that sport that season. If the tournament disqualifying ejection for that individual occurs during the MHSAA tournament, that player or coach is ineligible for the remainder of that tournament.

If a team is removed from competition in protest, the contest is forfeited to the opponent and the coach and principal of the removed team must appear before the Executive Committee to indicate why additional action should not be taken. The Executive Committee may also require the appearance of personnel from other schools and game officials.

If the coach is ejected from the contest and an assistant coach, or an assigned school representative is not available to continue as the coach the event is terminated and forfeited to the opponent.

When a contest is interrupted or it ends prematurely because of breakdown of proper sportsmanship and whether or not the on-site officials forfeit the contest to one team, one or both schools may be subjected to any or all, but not limited to, the following: censure, probation with competition, probation without competition, forfeiture, loss of privilege of revenue sharing, expulsion. In addition, it may be required of one or both schools that their coaches and administrators appear before the Executive Committee to indicate why additional action should not be taken.

**Team Spectator Sports Celebrations:** During contests, officials will penalize under applicable sportsmanship or playing rules student-athletes or coaches who leave the field of play and contact or approach spectator areas for celebrations.

Each school shall assign an acceptable number of adult crowd control supervisors to be stationed in front of its student cheering sections. These individuals are to be admitted free into the contest, enforce this policy and include a school administrator. Each tournament manager or the MHSAA Staff will determine the acceptable number of crowd supervisors necessary for each school dependent on the situation.

At the conclusion of contests, prior to or after awards are presented, athletes shall not enter spectator areas or physically contact spectators in the stands. After awards are presented, athletes may approach their spectators (e.g. stand in front of their sections while on the field of play) but for safety reasons athletes are not to enter or physically contact spectators in the stands. Crowd supervisors are to ensure that spectators do not press the facility and possibly cause damage.

The cost for repair or replacement to facilities damaged as a result of celebrations shall be paid by the school involved directly to the host facility within 30 days of the bill being submitted to the school. MHSAA reimbursement or revenue sharing will be withheld until paid by the offending school. Future tournament hosting privileges or school reimbursements to offending schools may be withheld if payment is not made.

### **13. WEATHER POLICIES, SUSPENSIONS, POSTPONEMENTS**

MHSAA Regulations regarding suspension of competition for thunder and lightning will apply as follows:

When lightning is observed or thunder is heard and the contest is suspended, contestants shall not return to the playing field until lightning has been absent from the local sky and thunder has not been heard for 30 minutes.

Weather delays in the MHSAA tournament do NOT follow the regular season guidelines. Games may be delayed by more than 90 minutes. Common sense and discussion with participating team administrators will dictate the maximum length of a delay.

**In addition the following suspension regulations apply:**

The game is not official until the first half is completed. Any game stopped and not able to be resumed before the first half is completed is treated as a suspended game.

For MHSAA tournament games, if conditions make it impossible to finish any game, the referee shall declare it a completed game if one complete half or more of the game has been played and if a team is behind by more than one goal. The score at the time of the suspension of play will be the final score. If these conditions are not met, it is a suspended game.

For MHSAA tournament games, a match is complete when 60 minutes of the allotted 80 have been played and one team is ahead in score. If fewer than 60 minutes have been played, and if one team is behind by only one goal, then it is a suspended game. If the game goes to overtime, the entirety of the OT must be completed.

In all cases, whenever the suspended game is resumed it is done so from the exact point of suspension on the next available day.

#### **14. INJUNCTION, RESTRAINING ORDER, PROTESTS**

If an injunction or restraining order is served or presented at an MHSAA tournament site and such purports to require the eligibility of or participation by a student or team which a school and/or the MHSAA has ruled to be ineligible under MHSAA regulations, the on-site tournament manager is to suspend the entire competition (team competition) or events in which that student is intending to participate (individual competition). If the meet has begun, it shall be completed.

Protests will not be reviewed by the MHSAA. All disputes must be decided at the site before the game proceeds. The umpires will make the final decision regarding game events. The Tournament Manager will resolve all next game concerns.

#### **15. TOBACCO AND ALCOHOL POLICY**

Use of alcohol or tobacco, including e-cigarettes or other smoking devices, is prohibited at MHSAA tournament events by players, coaches and spectators. Managers should stress in coaches meetings that they are not to use tobacco at the tournament venue.

#### **16. YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY**

During the MHSAA Tournament events, the MHSAA expects all designated managers, volunteer or paid staff assisting in the event, officials or any other personnel to follow local school district policy and state statute regarding the mandatory reporting of child abuse, bullying, hazing and sexual harassment. A report of such activity shall be made to legal authorities and to the MHSAA Executive Director or his designee.

#### **17. SPECTATOR POLICIES**

The following general policies apply to spectators at MHSAA Soccer Tournament events. Tournament managers may also have additional school, facility or institutional restrictions and/or policies.

- Banners are allowed with Meet Manager approval.
- Noisemakers must be approved by the Meet Manager. Air horns, whistles and vuvuzelas are not allowed.
- Pep bands are allowed as long as they do not interfere with the officials' adjudication of the game. Instruments that could potentially be confused with the official's whistle or the scoreboard horn should not be used.
- Body paint is not allowed.
- Smoking is not allowed at the tournament site.
- Tournament management may request that spectator sections not stand during play if standing will block the view of other spectators. If possible, policies that prohibit spectator sections from standing during play should be communicated to participating teams in advance of their arrival at the tournament site.
- Spectators may tape games from their normal seating area but are not to interfere with the view of other spectators or news media personnel covering the activity. A manager is not required to provide electrical hook-ups; or tripod space and may arrange spectator videotaping from a designated location(s).



- The policies of the local host site shall prevail with respect to pets/animals. In the absence of local host policy, animals or pets shall not be permitted to enter MHSAA tournament venues; including spectator and team areas. However, properly marked or documented service animals that are leashed or harnessed at all times may accompany spectators paying admission or attending with other approved team or school personnel. Individuals who bring service animals are asked to bring their own waste disposal bags and request special seating in advance of the event if this is needed.
- [CHART: MHSAA Guidelines For Spectators & Teams](#) (includes noisemakers and music/speakers)

## **18. DRONE POLICY**

For the purposes of this policy the word “drone” applies to all Unmanned Aerial Vehicles. The policy is written for all MHSAA tournament contests. Local laws and policies control all regular-season contests.

Drones are prohibited for all indoor tournament contests in all sports. For outdoor sports, local, state, and federal laws govern the use of drones. Drones may never be flown over spectators, athletes, or the playing surface. All drones must stay outside of the “restraining line” or the normal footprint of the playing surface. This includes never flying over bleachers, press box, or anywhere that spectators sit or gather for a contest. The operator of the drone must be registered with the FAA and follow local, state, and federal law when flying the drone. [Register Your Drone](#).

Drones can never be used for the purposes of scouting opponent’s games or practices. Facilities reserve the right to restrict drones on their property. An exception to this policy may be made in specific cases for MHSAA broadcast partners, provided the management of the tournament facility permits the presence of UAVs for broadcast purposes under the control of the MHSAA.

## **19. RETURN TO ACTIVITY & POST-CONCUSSION CONSENT FORM**

[Return to Play Form](#)

## **20. 50/50 POLICY**

MHSAA tournament hosts can conduct 50/50 raffles provided the host site manager requests and receives the appropriate license from the State of Michigan. [Charitable Gaming Raffle License](#)



# **Your Cooperation Please...**

Fans are reminded that the broadcast and streaming rights of this event belong exclusively to the N-F-H-S Network, the M-H-S-A-A, and those media outlets which have pre-arranged to secure those rights. Any individual streaming of this event is strictly prohibited.

