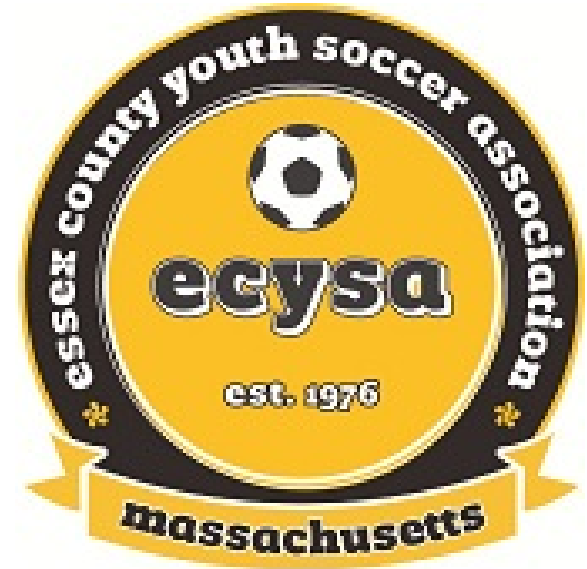


Essex County Youth Soccer Association Spring Coaches Meeting

April 1st & 2nd, 2026

Remember to follow us on Facebook





Welcome and
Introductions

Important Dates

A message from
MA Youth Soccer

Sportsmanship
Process/Statement

US Soccer Referee
Abuse Prevention
531-9

Rescheduling
Process (Updated)

Coaches
Requirements

ECYSA and Mass
Youth Scholarships



ECYSA BOD



President	Amanda LaFlamme	president@ecysa.org
Vice President, Northeast	Keith Totten	vpnortheast@ecysa.org
Vice President, North Shore	Jose Isidro	vpnorthshore@ecysa.org
Secretary	Lisa Roy	secretary@ecysa.org
Treasurer	Justin Walters	treasurer@ecysa.org
Girls Commissioner	Bob McGarvey	girlscommissioner@ecysa.org
Boys Commissioner	Kevin Brothers	boyscommissioner@ecysa.org
G4 Girls Director	Mark Ercolini	grade4girlsdirector@ecysa.org
G4 Boys Director	Charles Yorke	grade4boysdirector@ecysa.org
G6 Girls Director	Jim Talbot	grade6girlsdirector@ecysa.org
G6 Boys Director	Mike McGoldrick	grade6boysdirector@ecysa.org
G8 Girls Director	Mike Bluette	grade8girlsdirector@ecysa.org
G8 Boys Director	Josh Ercolini	grade8boysdirector@ecysa.org
G10/PG Boys & Girls Director	Michael Kilkelly	grade10toPGdirector@ecysa.org
Registrar	Janet Gargan (At-Large Director)	registrar@ecysa.org
Tournament Director	Dean Sidell (At-Large Director)	tournament@ecysa.org



ECYSA BOD



Director/Education	Jeff Chambers	education@ecysa.org
Director/Rules and Handbook	Michael Kilkelly	atlarge1@ecysa.org
Director/Communications	Sharon Clement (At-Large Director)	atlarge3@ecysa.org
Director/Discipline and Reschedules	Dan Daley (At-Large Director)	atlarge4@ecysa.org
Director/Technology and Website	Jeremy Derby (At-Large Director)	technology@ecysa.org
Director/TOP Soccer Development	(Open)	atlarge6@ecysa.org
Director/Referee Committee	David Singer (At-Large Director)	dsinger@ecysa.org
Referee Assignor	Ben Reed	refereeassignor@ecysa.org
Accountant	Steve Heintzelman	accountant@ecysa.org
Director/Community Development	Keith Totten	directorcd@ecysa.org
Director/Awards	(Open)	awards@ecysa.org
Board of Directors	N/A	bod@ecysa.org

Important Dates:

Coaches Meetings: April 1st and 2nd

Opening Day: April 11th

MTOC Roster Freeze: May 15th

Close of Season: June 7th

G4 Jamboree: June 13th

Playoffs: June 14th - 21st

MTOC: June 26th- 28th





**A Message From Rob Holliday
Executive Director of Mass Youth Soccer**

**Mass Youth Soccer Pre-
Season Coaches Meeting**

Sportsmanship Statement Procedure



- After all pre-game activities are complete, both teams and the referee crew will line up at the halfway line of the coaches Sideline
- Led by officials, all players and coaches will walk across the field and line up facing spectators, 4-5 yards from the sideline.
- The Sportsmanship Statement will be read by a representative of the Home team to all coaches, players and spectators.
- Following the reading of the script, players will perform a pre-game handshake. (Home team to walk down the line of Away Team). After the pre-game handshake, all players and coaches will return to benches and starting players will assume positions on the field of play.



Sportsmanship Statement

All participants deserve the right to play in an environment free from hostile and distracting behavior.

Poor sportsmanship will not be tolerated, the game may be stopped and sanctions applied for violations of policy or codes of conduct.

Please enjoy the game and do your part to create a positive soccer experience for all.

RESPECT THE CALL



531-9

YOUTH REFEREE

Under 18 Years of Age





PENALTY OVERVIEW

The Penalties Matrix defines consequences associated with physical and non-physical offenses against Referees.

NON-PHYSICAL OFFENSES of gross misconduct, abuse, and / or assault

NON-PHYSICAL*	MIN. GAMES	TIME
Insulting, Belittling, Insinuating or Taunting Behavior Undermining Referee Authority	2	
Harassment, Intimidation, Retaliation, Abusive, or Threatening (Non Physical) Language	4	
Aggression, Attacking, Derogatory, Cyberbullying, Doxing or Threatening (Physical / Violence) Language	6	6 - 24 Months
Offensive or Discriminatory Act	10	12 - 24 Months

PHYSICAL OFFENSES of gross misconduct, abuse, and / or assault

PHYSICAL*	MIN. GAMES	TIME
Minor or Slight Deliberate Touching	3	1 - 6 Months
Pushing, Grabbing, Pulling, Squeezing, Pinching, Lightly Slapping, Use of Object in Non Striking Manner, or Physical Property Damage	10	6 - 24 Months
Hitting, Punching, Elbowing, Kicking, Biting, Spitting, Choking, Tackling, Throwing or Use of Object or Any Part of Body (Forearm, Knee, Head) in a Striking Manner		12 Months - Lifetime

(*) Disclaimer: These are only a few examples of abuse – other actions or statements may also fall into this category.

KEY PENALTY FACTORS

- Single offenses are at **minimum the prescribed game penalty or time penalty** for non red zone offenses
- Penalties can be **both game and time depending on severity** / circumstances
- Second time offenders receive **double punishment**
- Third time offenders receive a **lifetime ban**
- More than one offense at the same time is **at least the punishment for the most serious offense**
- Offenses against minors are automatically subject to a **“minor multiplier” resulting in triple punishment**
- **One offense warning per league** to be managed by states and leagues collaboratively
- Game consequences are **inclusive of 1 game penalty for any red cards given**
- Optionality for **50% penalty for first offense from a minor**

Please follow your current reporting structure – updated reporting procedure will be a part of Phase 3.

Implementation of 531-9 Sanctions - What is gross misconduct?

Examples from last couple of seasons: Do we have a common understanding of how we might adjudicate the following offenses?

Coach Drops F-Bomb multiple times while complaining about referee calls. - **Yellow Zone - 2 games - minor multiplier = 6 games**

Coach receives a Red Card for continued complaining. **Simple Red Card - 1 game suspension.**

Coach receives no card but is reported to have said things like "are you blind" "watch the game" etc. - **Yellow Zone - 2 games**

Coach is heard putting down the referee and telling their players to ignore her. **Yellow Zone - 2 games - minor multiplier - 6 games.**

Coach refuses to leave the field once they are Red Carded for arguing with the referee and a yelling match ensues and as a result the referee leaves the field. **Red Zone - 4 games - minor multiplier - 12 games.**

Spectator constantly yelling at the referee and insulting their ability to know the rules: **Yellow Zone - 2 games - minor multiplier = 6 games**



ECYSA Rescheduling Update





Reschedule Changes – Spring 2025

Eligible Reschedules

- School (curricular) / Religious Exemptions
- Midweek Reschedules
- Coach Agreed Reschedules
- No School Vacation Reschedule *

* Redundant as Coach Agreed Reschedule can be used for games scheduled during school vacation

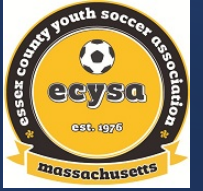


Updates to School / Religious / Midweek Reschedules

School / Religious / Midweek Reschedule Request Changes:

- Requesting TD to submit reschedule with new date / time; mutually agreed upon reschedule date.
- Deadline to submit no later than the Sunday before kick-off (11:59PM)
- School and Religious Exemption can only be used if the event impacts enough rostered players resulting in team having less than the required minimum number of players on field.

NEW: Coach Agreed Reschedule



Coach Agreed Reschedule

- Coaches of given game agree to reschedule and determine a mutually agreed upon reschedule date / time
- Requesting Coach's TD to submit reschedule with new date / time
- Deadline to submit no later than the Sunday before kick-off (11:59PM)
- New Fee Applied to requesting team's town organization for reschedule equivalent to referee fee for Grade Group
- Rescheduled game to be played even if referee is not assigned

Summary



Deadline to Submit Reschedules: from 72 hours to Sunday before game date

Reschedule Date Required as part of Reschedule Request
Submission: Removal of two step process of Reschedule / Game Change

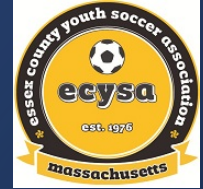
New Coach Agreed Reschedule: Requesting TD to Submit; Fee equivalent to referee fee applied to requesting team's town organization

Games to be played regardless of referee attendance for rescheduled games of Coach Agreed Reschedules

Reschedules of Reschedules allowed; could result in multiple fees for requesting team organization

2026 Laws of the Game - Changes

Overview	Overview of Changes
Total	Total IFAB Changes: There are 9 Law changes for the 2025/2026 season.
Minor	Minor vs. Major: 7 changes are minor technical adjustments.
Key	Key Focus: 2 major changes are highlighted: one adopted by ECYSA this Spring, and one applicable at the 2026 Massachusetts Tournament of Champions (MTOC).



2026 Laws of the Game - Changes

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct (Goalkeeper Control)

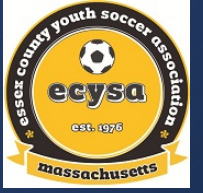
- **The New Rule:** A goalkeeper who controls the ball with their hands/arms for more than **eight seconds** will be penalized.
- **The Penalty:** A **corner kick** is now awarded to the opposing team.
- **The Goal:** Designed to improve game flow, reduce intentional time-wasting, and provide a more reasonable penalty than the previous Indirect Free Kick.
- **Enforcement:** This is a major point of emphasis for 2026 referee certifications.

2026 Laws of the Game - Changes

Defining Goalkeeper Control

A goalkeeper is considered in control when:

- The ball is between their hands/arms or between their hands and any surface (e.g., ground or own body).
- Holding the ball in an outstretched open hand.
- Bouncing the ball on the ground or throwing it in the air.
- **Referee Signal:** The referee will visually count down the last **five seconds** with a raised hand.
- **Protection:** Opponents cannot challenge a goalkeeper who is in control of the ball.



2026 Laws of the Game - Changes

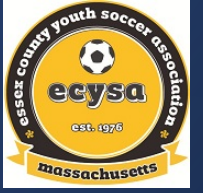
Law 12 Implementation Details

- **Placement:** The corner kick is awarded on the side of the field closest to where the goalkeeper was penalized.
- **Disciplinary Action:** No cards are issued unless the goalkeeper repeatedly commits the offense.
- **Grade 4 Special Note:** For Grade 4 games, referees are directed to use this rule as an opportunity to **instruct** goalkeepers rather than just penalize.

2026 Laws of the Game - Changes

Law 3 – The Players (Team Captains)

- **"Only the Captain" Guideline:** An optional IFAB guideline to manage mass confrontations with officials.
- **The Protocol:** Upon a referee's signal, only the designated captain (wearing an armband) may approach the referee.
- **Sanctions:** Any other player entering within **4.5 yards** of the referee following the signal is subject to a yellow card.



2026 Laws of the Game - Changes

MTOC vs. ECYSA Season

- **ECYSA Regular Season:** This "Only the Captain" process is **NOT** adopted for the regular season or ECYSA playoffs.
- **MTOC Requirement:** This rule **WILL** be in effect for all 11v11 Massachusetts Tournament of Champions (MTOC) matches.
- **MTOC Prep:** Qualifying teams will receive the full Law text and two captain's armbands in their MTOC packet.

2026 Laws of the Game - Changes



IFAB CHANGES 2025/2026:
[LINK TO CHANGES](#)



FULL LAWS OF THE GAME:
[LINK TO FULL LAWS](#)



Coaches Requirements



Game Day Responsibilities

- Roster Check and Game Cards
- Field Preparation
- Check everything (including Web access) in advance of Opening Day
- Working with the Referee
 - What to do with no referee?
- Game time behavior w/ FINES
 - Coaches
 - Players
 - Spectators
- Player Pass: G4-PG MTOC Roster Freeze May 15th
- Post Game – Coaches and Referee Reports within 48 hours
- No Manipulation of Rosters
- TeamSnap is not ECYSA Accepted Documentation



13. Referee No-Shows

- a. In the event the referee does not arrive within fifteen (15) Minutes after the scheduled kickoff, both coaches should make every effort to agree on an acting referee so that the match is played and counted as an official game.
- b. If the referee or acting referee of a match with only one game official becomes injured and is forced to withdraw from the match, both teams' coaches should make every effort to agree on a replacement referee, who meets the requirements of this section, so that the match is played and counted as an official game.
- c. An acting referee may be an ECYSA referee with valid credentials or a coach with a valid ECYSA coaches' card. In the younger Grade Groups, it is also possible to have a youth (under the age of 18) referee the game if that youth has experience because a CORI check is not required.
- d. Spectators and parent volunteers who are not registered with ECYSA may not serve as an acting referee.
- e. In the event that both coaches cannot agree on an acting referee the game shall be postponed under Section I.B.6. The home coach shall notify their Travel Director who will notify the Appropriate ECYSA Grade Group Division Director and the Referee Assignor about the no-show referee.
- f. After the ECYSA Assignor has notified the home Travel Director that a referee will not be provided by ECYSA, the Home Organization Travel Director may select a substitute referee who meets the requirements of this section.
- g. In order for a match to be considered official, the name, Member Organization affiliation, address and phone number of the acting referee must be printed on the game card. The Home Coach must also report the game as provided in Section I.C.11 above.

Game Cards

Game cards are available in 2 places:

- From the Coach Menu, the game reports will be pre-populated with the game id and other relevant information.
- On the main ECYSA.org page, blank game cards will be available for coaches, TDs, and referees to print.

It is the home coach's responsibility to bring game cards to the game.

At the end of the game, the referee will fill out the game card. If either team's coach wishes to have a copy of the game card, they can either take a picture of the completed game card, or fill out another game card for the referee to sign.



Full system usage details for coaches is available at ecysa.org under the Education Tab:



www.ecysa.org/ECYSA/technology-tips-for-coaches

Website issues or questions? Email us at technology@ecysa.org



Scholarships

To apply, please visit: ECYSA.org
Four \$1K Scholarships available

ECYSA Scholarship Awardees - Spring 2025

- Sera Trigilio, Georgetown Youth Soccer.
- Sophia Fritz, Salem Youth Soccer.
- Camila Ferrer Gomez, Danvers Youth Soccer - Salem Youth Soccer.
- Jack Fielder, Topsfield Youth Soccer.

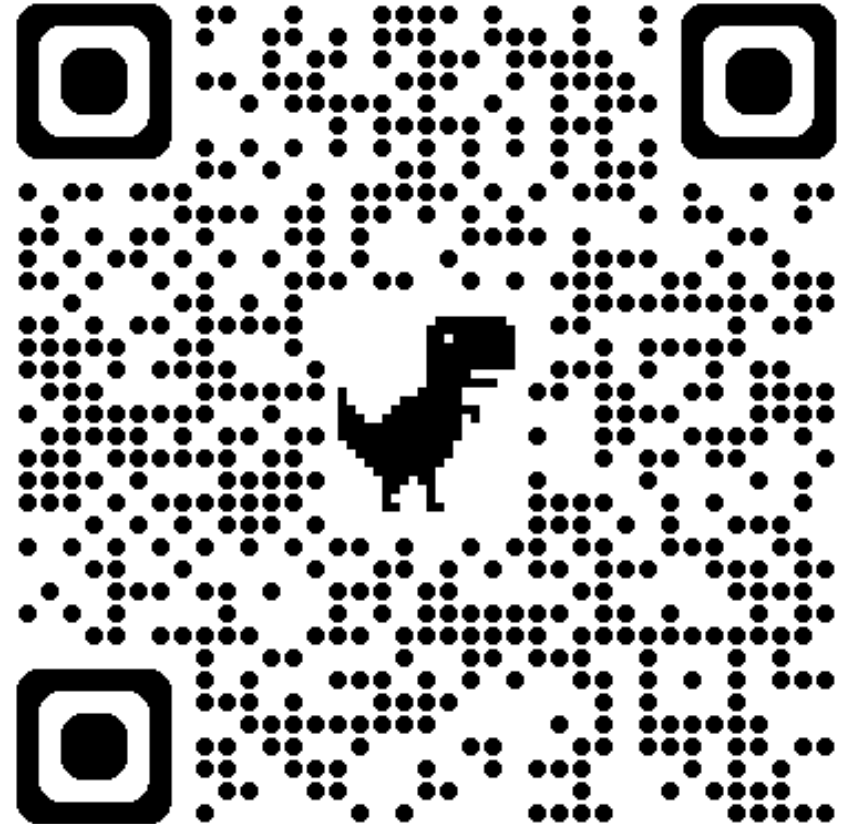


Two \$2,500 Scholarships available
Applications must be submitted by
June 1, 2026.

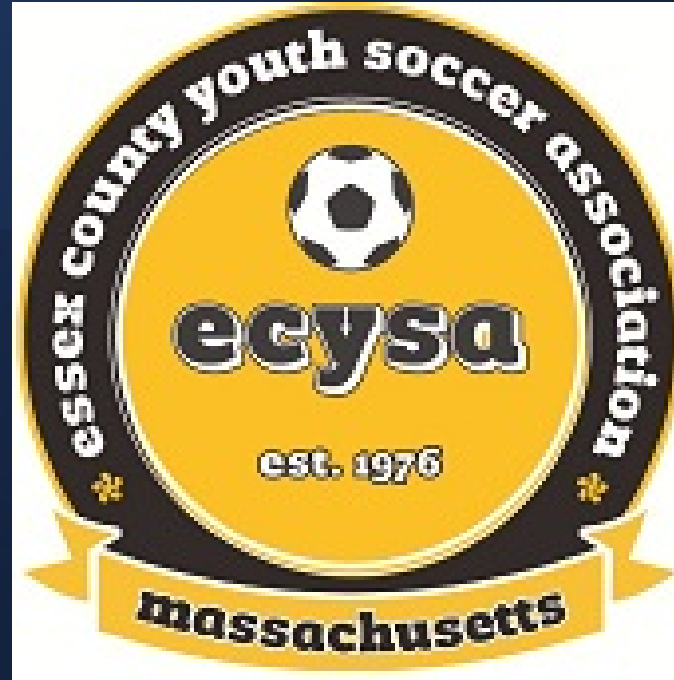
Code to register for tonight 4/2/26

• You will need the following information to record your attendance this evening. Some of this information will be found on the ECYSA website under the schedule tab

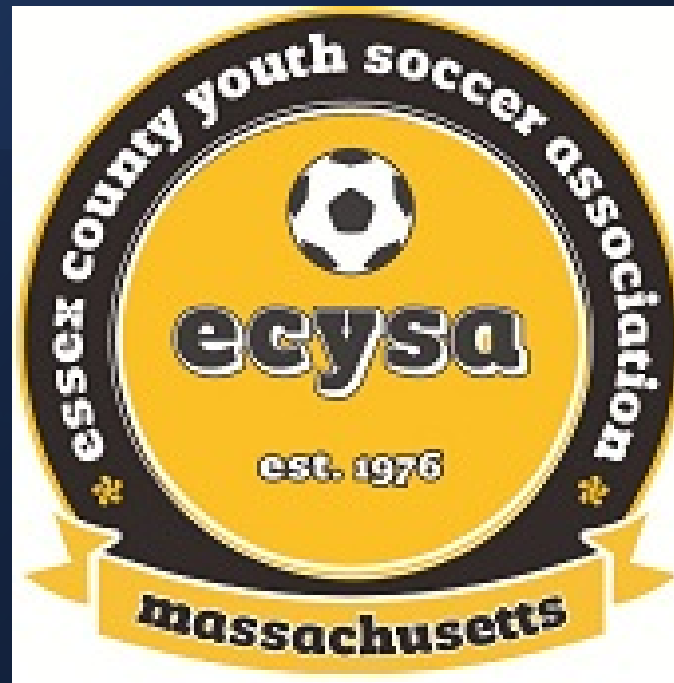
- Email
- Name
- Organization
 - Masco = Topsfield
- Grade & Sex
- Select / Regional / MTOC / County
- Division 1 or 2 or 3
- For those Grade 4 teams
 - Division 1 for Select
 - Division 2 for Regional
- Group number
- Team Name



QUESTIONS ??



Thank you!



Follow us on Facebook for periodic updates throughout the season