

MOORESTOWN SOCCER CLUB PLAYER, PARENT, COACH AND SPECTATOR POLICY AND CODE OF CONDUCT



I. INTRODUCTION

The Moorestown Soccer Club promotes the highest levels of conduct both on and around the playing field. This includes players, parents, coaches, trainers and club officers. By participating in the MSC, all members must comport themselves to standards that help the players, the long run best interests of the Club and the game of soccer. When we host games or visit other facilities we are ambassadors for our Club and Moorestown. We must all seek to lead our children by example, even if others around us accept other standards.

To help ensure that everyone knows what the expectations are, the MSC Board has provided this policy for all player, parents, trainers, coaches and spectators. We find a commitment to such core values is a part of the culture of the MSC and defines who we are. We consider this a compact among all of us. Like the game our kids play, being a part of a club requires each of us to give a little to make the team greater than the sum of its parts. By honoring these core values and practices, the soccer experience of each team, player and family will be the best it can be.

II. GOALS FOR PARENTS

The Moorestown Soccer Club encourages parents to positively support their children both on and off the field. Soccer is a complicated game that takes years to master. Parents who support both their child and the others on the team will make for a great experience. The Club always encourages conduct that encourages positive and sportsmanlike play.

On the other hand, the MSC will not tolerate conduct unbecoming the Club, a team or the sport of soccer. Just because another team or parent does not act properly is not an excuse nor justification to engage in unacceptable conduct.

We fully support the efforts of parents or coaches to keep bad behavior from becoming contagious. Most teams never have an issue. But if parents think they cannot be heard without



imitating a difficult or obnoxious parent, the problem spreads. We all must work together to keep this a positive experience for the players and volunteers.

Parents are caretakers for our fields and facilities. When you see a problem, report it. If there is garbage or other items on our fields that reflect poorly on Moorestown, remove them. Don't assume it is someone else's job – it is all of our jobs.

III. GOALS FOR PLAYERS

All players should play for the love of the game and not to please their parents or coaches. Players must play by the rules and never attempt to inflict injury upon another player. Play as you would want to be treated. Players should never argue with officials nor blame them. Good refs will make bad calls. It is part of the game. Players who rise above that will be exceptional.

All players should take playing soccer for MSC seriously. Show up on time for practice and games and bring the right equipment and drinks. Cooperate with your teammates, even if you do not get the position you want. Never use bad language or blame another player. Remember it takes a whole team to score and concede a goal.

IV. GOALS FOR COACHES AND TRAINERS

Coaches and trainers will give the best efforts they can to promote the sport of soccer, make the team successful and make each player the best he/she can be. Coaches should follow the guidelines of the MSC and all controlling league rules and the laws of soccer. Coaches and trainers are expected to dress professionally, and in uniform if attending a game or other function representing MSC to the public. We ask that our players take pride in the uniform they wear, coaches should set that example.

Coaches are also to respect the rulings of officials, even if they disagree with them or the reason for the call. Coaches who are carded by an official will face financial and disciplinary sanctions. Coaches must always remember that players watch how disputes are resolved. A coach who gets caught up in the emotion of a controversial call always makes the situation worse, not better.

Communication among coaches, families, players and trainers is essential. The Coaching Staff should meet regularly to set objectives and training approaches. Coaches should then clearly outline for the team what they can and cannot do during the season. Each coach's and trainer's style is different. Remember, teams belong to the MSC and the members – not the coach or trainer.

V. SPECIFIC ISSUES FOR MSC MEMBERS

Over the years, the MSC has accumulated a list of items that can affect a player's experience both positively and negatively. While not exhaustive, the MSC requires the following of all members and any other spectators. Any member who feels he/she cannot follow these and similar guidelines should contact the Board about voluntarily withdrawing from the Club. Should violations occur, the MSC reserves the right to remove a member.



- Parents are never permitted on the player sideline during games or breaks, except to deliver equipment or water. If you need to speak with a coach, please do so other than the time during or immediately before and after a game.
- Any parent who is enlisted to be a sideline official must not coach or offer comments. You are a member of the officiating crew and must act as such.
- Do not coach your child from the sideline. You may think your son/daughter should be in a different place. But if the coach made a different instruction, you will create confusion and put the team at risk.
- Please do not smoke on the field of game or practice (this is a league rule). Parents also should never drink alcohol or otherwise be impaired while spectating a game. This includes tailgating during away games, summer select and tournaments.
- Children must be at, and picked up from, practices and games on time. Parents who are late for pickups risk having their player banned. Coaches cannot leave a child at the fields. They are volunteers, not babysitters.
- All players must be paid up before the start of the season. Failure to pay dues places strain on both the Club and the resources of the Coach.
- No parent shall get into a physically violent or heated incident with anyone at a match.
- Pets at games must be kept on a leash and are never permitted on the playing field, even at half-time. If your pet makes a mess, you must clean it up.
- When a team is assigned to handle set up or breakdown of nets, please help the coach. If a MSC team cannot host a match because is not ready in time for the ref's inspection, the home team can forfeit the match.
- Parents are never permitted to speak to the officials before, during, or after a game. This is a league rule and the official may take action against the coach by means of a fine and/or suspension.
- Sending emails or posting materials in social media that are not positive of the team are strictly prohibited. Only the coach is permitted to mass communicate with the team. Parents should refrain from using email or other mass communication outlets to negatively discuss a player, coach, trainer or the team. (See below for how to lodge a complaint).
- No parent shall taunt players, coaches, officials or other spectators by means of baiting, ridiculing, threatening gestures, abusive or demeaning language.
- Making racist or other discriminatory comments will not be tolerated.



- Throwing of any object onto the field or at another spectator or participant is also prohibited.
- You are responsible for guests you bring to the field, even if they are not members of MSC.
- Parents should avoid talking with coaches about a game within 24 hours of its playing time (before or after). Coaches need time to set their game plans, prepare for the game and digest what happened during a game before getting parent feedback. Coaches may want to speak with parents after a game, but if they do not, please respect that the time right after a game is not ideal for sharing your views with the coaches.
- Coaches may want to meet with players immediately after a game. If that happens, please stay away from the gathering and allow the coaches to interact with the players without parents being nearby. You should budget into your schedules that games may go 10-15 minutes longer than their posted finish time due to such meetings.

VI. PROCEDURE FOR ADDRESSING TEAM ISSUES

If a parent believes he/she has an issue with the team, it should be handled as follows:

1. Contact the coach on the team. Ideally this should be the head coach, but if you are more comfortable with another, please let an assistant know. Try to address your concerns verbally to start. Email and text often loses the subtleties of your concerns. Avoid “shopping” an answer from multiple coaches.
2. If the coach cannot or will not address the parent’s concern, a communication should be sent directly to the MSC Board. A member of the Board, unconnected to the affected team, will respond to the parent.
3. If the matter is still not resolved, the parent may take the matter up with the entire MSC Board.

VII. ENFORCEMENT OF GAMES AND MSC STANDARDS

The club is responsible for the enforcement of all aspects of this policy including the section on disciplinary action. At a game, only the coaches or an attending Board member are authorized to address problems with officials, the other team or a spectator incident. If a coach is engaged with an official, all other parents/spectators must stay out of and away from the discussions.

Officials have the authority to stop a game when a parent(s)/spectator(s) is displaying inappropriate and/or disruptive behavior that interferes with other spectators or the game. The official(s) will identify the violator(s) to a league or an executive representative (may be a coach) who is responsible for speaking to the individual and/or removing the disruptive individual from the facility/game area. Once the individual is under control of his/her emotions or removed from the facility, play will resume.

Anyone who receives a red card, or two yellow cards in the same season, must undergo a review before the MSC Board. The decision of the executive board will be binding.



All Parents and Coaches hereby agree that if they fail to conform their conduct to the foregoing while attending, coaching, officiating or participating in a MSC event, they will be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to the following in any order or combination, at the discretion of the MSC Board of Directors:

- Oral or Written warning;
- Suspension or immediate ejection from any MSC program or event;
- Suspension from multiple MSC programs or events;
- Season suspension;
- Fines; and
- Permanent termination from all MSC programs and events.

These penalties will be in addition to imposed league penalties, fines or suspensions. The MSC may impose any level of sanction appropriate and need not apply progressive discipline. These are examples only.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The MSC wants participation in the Club to be the best experience possible for players, parents, coaches and trainers. By agreeing to follow this Policy and Code of Conduct, everyone can help reach that goal. Any questions, please feel free to contact a member of the MSC Board.

Thank you.

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

_____ DATE

PLAYER SIGNATURE

_____ DATE

Last updated, approved and adopted by the Moorestown Soccer Club Board on July 10, 2013

