



GULFSOUTH RUSH SOCCER CLUB POLICIES

The mission of GulfSouth Rush Soccer Club ("GulfSouth Rush" or the "Club") is to offer a comprehensive learning platform for players to maximize their personal capabilities, provide an environment for players to foster healthy competition and teamwork, all the while creating a rewarding and enjoyable experience for every family.

To have a successful program, there must be mutual understanding, cooperation, open communication and shared expectations between parents/guardians, players and coaches. We have a common goal, to develop skilled soccer players and to foster winning life-long skills well beyond the game. As such, it is GulfSouth Rush's intention to create clear and transparent policies.

All members of the Club including parents/guardians, players, coaches and volunteers are expected to abide by the policies described herein.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Policy for Setting a Team Roster
2. Playing Time Policy
3. Policy for Playing Up in an Older Age Group
4. Policy for Guest Players
5. Player Attendance Policy
6. Tournament Policy
7. Fee Schedule and Discount Policy
8. Financial Good Standing Policy
9. Refund Policy
10. Coach Expense Reimbursement Policy

1. Policy for Setting a Team Roster

The GulfSouth Rush playing year is defined as August through May. A team's roster will be filled by the Club (with Team Coach input) at the beginning of each playing year, in August. Once a roster is set, it will be maintained for both the fall and spring seasons (August through the end of May). For all players and teams, there will be a mutual expectation of a one-year commitment. Rosters will be determined based on the birth year of the player. Additional players may be added to the roster for the spring season based on the results of supplemental tryouts which are held in January. To the extent an age group has a Black and Blue/White team, additional players rostered from supplemental tryouts will be added to the Blue/White team first until minimum roster sizes are satisfied. Rosters will be filled as follows:

Format	Minimum # of Players Rostered
11 v 11	14
9 v 9	12
7 v 7	9

For any team's roster, if the minimum number of players cannot be met with a single birth year, the Club and the respective Team Coach will consider younger players to determine if an option for playing up exists (see Policy #3: *Policy for Playing Up in an Older Age Group*). Only after considering younger players within the Club may guest players be considered.

Formation of a Black and Blue/White Team and Roster Sizes

The creation of a Black and Blue/White team is typically done at the 7 v 7 or 9 v 9 age groups. If a team roster grows too large, competition, player development and the Club's ability to manage matches and run productive practices can become negatively impacted. As a result, at the start of the fall or spring season, a specific age group can be split into a Black and Blue/White team as follows:

Format	Minimum # of Age Group Players	Roster Sizes (Black vs. Blue/White Team)
11 v 11	14	Team Coaches are authorized to cut at 11 v 11. As a result, roster size and number of teams (Black and/or Blue/White) will be determined by the DOCs (with Team Coach input).
9 v 9	>24 24 23 22	Only Minimum Roster Size Restrictions Apply Teams of 12 Each Teams of 12 and 11 Teams of 12 and 10
7 v 7	>18 18	Only Minimum Roster Size Restrictions Apply Teams of 9 Each

2. Playing Time Policy

GulfSouth Rush is committed to striking a balance between competition and player development. Factoring in age group format, the Club's playing time policy strives to balance the two goals and set forth clear expectations for parents/guardians, players and coaches. The playing time policy is applicable to all tournaments, matches and friendlies.

Format	Targeted Playing Time
11 v 11	80/20% Rule – Each player should play a minimum of 20% of the total available match minutes.
9 v 9	75/25% Rule - Each player should play a minimum of 25% of the total available match minutes.
7 v 7 (Year 2)	66/33% Rule - Each player should play a minimum of 33% of the total available match minutes.
7 v 7 (Year 1)	50% Rule - Each player should play approximately 50% of the total available match minutes.
Championship Match Exception	No Playing Time Target – A Team Coach is authorized to play to win in championship matches.

Parents/guardians and players should understand that targeted playing time percentages are “**aspirational**” and can vary match to match given the facts and circumstances of any match. Additionally, a Team Coach has the flexibility to take into consideration other factors when making a playing time decision. For example, player attendance (see Policy #5: *Player Attendance Policy*), behavior, attitude, or game-day performance or match significance (i.e. a semi-final match which is down to the wire) can factor into any specific playing time decision. GulfSouth Rush does **NOT** guarantee any specific playing time. Rather, the Club's policy attempts to set forth some reasonable expectations and aspirational guidelines.

3. Policy for Playing Up in an Older Age Group

GulfSouth Rush's priority is to develop players to their fullest potential, and we understand that children develop at different speeds and times. As such, deviation from rosters based on the birth year of the player will be considered on an individual basis based on the following:

- The overall benefit of the Club and the specific age group
- The overall development of the team for the specific age group
- The number of players needed to fill the roster
- The individual player's ability, overall development, and financial good standing within the Club

The Team Coach of the older team, the Team Coach of the birth year team, the Directors of Coaching (the “DOCs”), and one (1) other coach as a “Coaches Committee” will work together on the decision to move a player up an age group. The final decision to move a player up will reside with the DOCs. ALL DECISIONS MADE BY THE DOCS ARE FINAL. Prior to setting the roster, parents/guardians may decline the invitation for their player to play up an age group. If moved up to an older age group team, players may be asked to play with their birth year group team for specific tournaments or matches, and GulfSouth Rush encourages them to do so when available.

During tryouts, all players will tryout with their birth year age group. The decision to allow an individual player to play up or continue playing up in an older age group will be evaluated annually during spring evaluations / tryouts, prior to setting the roster for the following year.

4. Policy for Guest Players

The Club will allow guest players for tournaments or matches on an as-needed basis. The decision to add guest players to a team's roster for tournaments or other matches is at the discretion of the Team Coach, with approval from the DOCs and the Registrar. If the same guest player is utilized for three (3) or more tournaments in a year, then that player will be invoiced a pro-rated amount to cover tournament registration fees. For recruitment purposes, guest players may be invited to play in one (1) tournament or match with the approval of the DOCs and Registrar. The following criteria is to be used when utilizing guest players:

- Guest players may only be utilized if the minimum number of rostered GulfSouth Rush players are not available for a tournament or match (see Policy #1: *Policy for Setting a Team Roster*).
- If a birth year age group has more than one GulfSouth Rush team, then players from the other team (Black or Blue/White) should be invited to play prior to inviting guest players from outside the Club. Black or Blue/White team players may only play with the other team if it does not conflict with one of their own scheduled tournaments or matches.
- As playing time is important in fulfilling the mission of the Club, guest players from outside the Club may not be utilized at the expense of GulfSouth Rush players not getting their appropriate playing time on the field (see Policy #2: *Playing Time Policy*).

Adding Guest Players to a Roster

- Requests must be submitted to the DOCs and Registrar for approval.
- Team Coaches must provide details on why the request is being made.
- The following information is required:
 - Match/Tournament information (Date(s), Location)
 - Current # of players on the regular roster
 - # of players available for match/tournament
 - Brief description/reason roster players are not available
 - List of guest player(s) being requested

Lending Guest Players to Another Club

- Requests must be submitted to the DOCs and Registrar for approval.
- Players are prohibited from playing for another club when their GulfSouth Rush team has a scheduled activity, including but not limited to, practice, friendly match, social event or tournament.
- Players are also prohibited from guest-playing for another club if they are not in financial good standing with GulfSouth Rush.

5. Player Attendance Policy

Players are expected to attend and be on time to all practices and tournament matches unless excused by the Team Coach. Whether or not an absence is excused is at the discretion of the Team Coach. If a player has to miss a practice or match, it is the

player's/parent's responsibility to notify the Team Coach in a timely manner so the Team Coach can make necessary adjustments to the training/game plan. Unexcused absences may result in reduced or no playing time in matches.

Excused absences include:

- Absence due to injury or illness of player.
- Absences due to serious illness or death of family member.
- Absences due to scheduled school or church activities.
- Absences due to special school assignments.

Unexcused absences include:

- Coach not notified in a timely manner.
- Absences not approved in advance by the Team Coach.
- Absences due to conflicts with other sports or non-school/church related activities.
- Not arriving to practices or matches at the time specified by the Team Coach.

For all GulfSouth Rush players:

- Attendance at two (2) GulfSouth Rush team training sessions / week is mandatory.
- Attendance at all matches of six (6) tournaments is mandatory.
- Attendance at specialty training or Speed, Agility & Quickness is optional.
- Team Coaches are to be notified in advance of any absences.

Exception for GulfSouth Rush ECNL-RL players:

- Because Coastal Rush ECNL-RL practice is mandatory twice per week in Pensacola, ECNL-RL players are excused from one (1) GulfSouth Rush team training session each week.
- Attendance at one (1) GulfSouth Rush team training session / week is mandatory.
- Consideration of the ECNL-RL schedule will be taken into account by the Team Coach prior to setting the team tournament schedule.
- Attendance at four (4) GulfSouth Rush team tournaments is mandatory.

6. Tournament Policy

Each full season (fall and spring) GulfSouth Rush's goal is to provide each team with a total of six (6) tournaments, three (3) in the fall and spring, respectively.

Individual teams may elect to play in additional tournaments beyond six (6). However, to the extent a team elects to add an additional tournament, parents/guardians of the applicable player will be responsible for their pro rata share of all additional tournament fees and expenses to include the Team Coach's travel and lodging costs and food stipend (see Policy #10: *Coach Expense Reimbursement Policy*).

Additionally, GulfSouth Rush will only reimburse a Team Coach for hotel room expenses for a total of four (4) out-of-town tournaments which factors in GulfSouth Rush's home tournament requirement (detailed below). To the extent a team elects to add an additional out-of-town tournament beyond four (4) and/or request a waiver from the home tournament requirement, parents/guardians of the applicable player will be responsible for their pro rata share of all additional hotel room expenses for the Team Coach.

The Team Coach and Team Manager will coordinate to set the annual tournament / match schedule at the beginning of the season in July/August in consultation with the DOCs. This information will be posted to each team's schedule in TeamSnap when available.

With respect to tournament scheduling the following guidelines apply:

- **Each team is required to participate in GulfSouth Rush's two (2) home tournaments (i.e. Trident Cup and PCB Classic).** Subject to special facts and circumstances, the Team Coach may obtain a waiver from this home tournament requirement from the DOCs.
- Each team is encouraged to schedule a "local area" tournament. A "local area" tournament is defined as Destin, Panama City Beach, Pensacola, Mobile, Fairhope, Foley or Dothan.
- Each team may also schedule an "out-of-area" tournament. An "out-of-area" tournament is defined as Hattiesburg, Tallahassee, Jacksonville, Auburn, Montgomery, Birmingham, Gulfport, Jackson, New Orleans, Atlanta, Orlando, Tampa, Nashville, etc.
- To the extent a team schedules an out-of-area tournament greater than five (5) hours away, such as Jackson, New Orleans, Atlanta, Orlando, Tampa or Nashville, DOC approval is required.
- To the extent a team schedules three (3) or more out-of-area tournaments in a fall or spring season, DOC approval is required (to include consultation with such team's parent/guardian group as additional costs will be incurred).
- To the extent a team schedules an out-of-area tournament greater than eight (8) hours away, DOC approval and unanimous parent/guardian consent (of the applicable team) is required. Absent unanimous parent/guardian consent, the Team Coach and Team Manager will need to select an alternate tournament.
- In situations where a team's roster size exceeds the "minimum roster size" (see Policy #1: *Policy for Setting a Team Roster*), the Team Coach and Team Manager should add additional tournaments to ensure that all players participate in six (6) tournaments throughout the season. In these cases, GulfSouth Rush will be responsible for all additional tournament fees and expenses to include the Team Coach's travel and lodging costs and food stipend.

7. Fee Schedule and Discount Policy

The initial registration and team fees cover the issuance of US Club player cards, affiliation fees, tournament fees (a total of six (6) tournaments), referee fees, equipment and field usage fees, coach's salaries and expenses, technical and specialty training and administration operating costs. The initial registration fee is non-refundable. Team fees are subject to the GulfSouth Rush refund policy (see Policy #9: *Refund Policy*).

The initial registration and team fees do not include uniform costs¹ or travel or lodging costs which are additional costs and are the responsibility of parents/guardians and each player. Last of all, to the extent a team elects to add an additional tournament,

parents/guardians of the applicable players will also be responsible for their pro rata share of all additional tournament fees and expenses to include the Team Coach's travel and lodging costs and food stipend.

2025-2026 Seasonal Year (August – May):

Format	Registration Fee	Team Fee	Total
11 v 11	\$275	\$1,260	\$1,535
9 v 9 & 7 v 7	\$275	\$1,115	\$1,390
ECNL-RL Players	\$275	\$655	\$930

¹ Uniforms are purchased on a two-year cycle. Uniforms cost approximately \$250-\$350 depending on age group format and the number of items purchased (mandatory vs. elective such as extra jerseys, socks, shorts, track suits, personalized bags, etc.). The purchase of elective items can increase costs substantially.

Discounts

GulfSouth Rush does not provide a multi-child discount or a military/veteran or first-responder discount.

Members of the GulfSouth Rush Board are entitled to receive a discount for any team fees in connection with the registration of one (1) player.

To the extent a Team Coach has a GulfSouth Rush player, the Team Coach is entitled to receive a discount for any team fees in connection with the registration of one (1) player (per team coached). Any discounts utilized will be deducted from the respective coach's coaching fee.

8. Financial Good Standing Policy

Failure to fulfill a player's financial obligations to GulfSouth Rush may result in a player being placed in "Not in Good Standing" status with GulfSouth Rush and US Club Soccer. A player's financial obligations are for the full year (fall and spring seasons) regardless of a decision to pay up front or via payment plan.

"Not in Good Standing" status means failure to:

- Pay all club dues including the initial registration fee and all team fees;
- Pay all additional tournament fees and expenses (to the extent a team elects to add an additional tournament or an additional out-of-town tournament as invoiced via TeamSnap or otherwise); and
- Pay the stub amount after the application of any scholarship award or other discount.

Players who are placed in "Not in Good Standing" status with GulfSouth Rush will have their playing privileges suspended until the financial obligations are fulfilled. The suspension of playing privileges will result in:

- Prohibition from being able to register with GulfSouth Rush, Coastal Rush or any other affiliate;
- Prohibition from being able to play in any subsequent tournaments, matches or camps (i.e. will not be registered or rostered);
- Prohibition from being able to guest-play for any other club;
- Ineligibility to apply for any subsequent financial aid or scholarships; and
- GulfSouth Rush will not release the respective player card to any other club until the financial obligations are fulfilled.

9. Refund Policy

The initial registration fee is non-refundable. Team fees are subject to the GulfSouth Rush refund policy. Any refund requests must be submitted to the Registrar in writing and will be taken into consideration at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. ALL DECISIONS MADE BY THE BOARD ARE FINAL. The term “refund” in this policy applies to both a refund of up-front payment-in-full as well as a request to stop payments on the payment plan.

Registration with GulfSouth Rush is taken as a sign by the player of their commitment to play soccer for the full playing year (August through May). When a player registers to play on a team with the GulfSouth Rush, it is the intent of GulfSouth Rush to do its best to place the player on an age and skill-appropriate team.

However, registration with GulfSouth Rush does not guarantee a player a spot on a specific team or with a specific coach, and full refunds will not be given for these reasons. The approval of any refund will not be considered precedent setting. GulfSouth Rush will provide a full refund if a player is not placed on a team following registration.

Due to the nature of club soccer, there are various expenses that occur in planning for the year and season. In order to operate the Club in a fiscally responsible manner, it is important that our members read and understand our refund policy prior to registering their player(s).

Refunds will be approved under the following circumstances:

- Season ending injury
- Certain life and/or family circumstances

Partial refunds may be approved in the following circumstances:

- When a player decides to no longer play
- If a player requests a certain team and is unable to be placed on said team
- If a player requests a certain coach and is unable to be on that coach’s team

Calculation of partial refunds will be as follows:

- If the request is made in writing to the Registrar prior to the 1st practice of the season, 100% of the team fees may be refunded. The initial registration fee is non-refundable.
- If the request is made in writing to the Registrar prior to September 30th, 60% of the team fees may be refunded. If on a payment-plan, payment installments will stop as of November 1st but no refund will be given for past payments. The initial registration fee is non-refundable.
- If the request is made in writing to the Registrar prior to December 31st, 20% of the team fees may be refunded. If on a payment-plan, payment installments will stop as of February 1st but no refund will be given for past payments. The initial registration fee is non-refundable.

Refunds and requests to stop payments will not be considered for the following:

- If a player is suspended and/or removed from the Club

No refund will be given once a playing year has already started, except as noted above. All requests must be made in writing to the GulfSouth Rush Registrar (email: Registrar@gulfsouthsoccer.com).

Failure to fulfill your financial obligations to GulfSouth Rush may result in the player being placed in "Not in Good Standing" status with GulfSouth Rush and US Club Soccer (see Policy #8: *Financial Good Standing Policy*).

10. Coach Expense Reimbursement Policy

A Team Coach is expected to travel with their team to all matches, friendlies and tournaments. As a result, GulfSouth Rush commits to reimburse certain authorized expenses as detailed below:

- **Fuel** - GulfSouth Rush will reimburse a Team Coach for fuel expenses for travel to and from all tournaments.
- **Lodging** - GulfSouth Rush will reimburse a Team Coach for hotel room expenses for a total of four (4) out-of-town tournaments which factors in GulfSouth Rush's home tournament requirement (See Policy #6: *Tournament Policy*). Per out-of-town tournament, hotel room reimbursement is limited to two (2) nights at a rate of \$250 per night (subject to reasonable adjustments for tax and inflation). Hotel room expenses exceeding this amount require GulfSouth Rush Treasurer approval.
- **Per Diem** - A Team Coach will receive a \$25 per day per diem for six (6) tournaments. The per diem shall be paid as \$50 per weekend, not to exceed \$300 per season (August through May). A Team Coach is not required to provide food receipts to receive such per diem amount.
- **Expense Reimbursement Claims** - Receipts for fuel and hotel room expenses must be submitted to the GulfSouth Rush Treasurer within thirty (30) days of when the expenses are incurred.