DDSL COMPETITION RULES 2017 **(AMENDED)**

1.

The League shall consist of eleven divisions;
One for boys and girls under 8 on the 1st of January in the current year
One for boys and girls under 9 on the 1st of January in the current year
One for boys and girls under 10 on the 1st of January in the current year
One for boys and girls under 11 on the 1st of January in the current year
One for boys and girls under 12 on the 1st of January in the current year
One for boys and girls under 13 on the 1st of January in the current year
One for boys under 14 on the 1st of January in the current year
One for boys under 15 on the 1st of January in the current year
One for boys under 16 on the 1st of January in the current year
One for boys under 17 on the 1st of January in the current year
One for boys under 18 on the 1st of January in the current year

Sections of any division will be established at the discretion of the executive committee.
The top section in eleven a side aged divisions shall be called "Premier Division"

2. (a) Players must be registered to the league, via the FAInet electronic registration system. Each player's name, address and other relevant information must be completed on the FAInet system.

(b) When the players are registered on the FAInet system, each team must furnish the league with each player's signature on a registration sheet supplied for this purpose via the FAInet system.

(c) A player is eligible to play provided his/her details have been duly registered on the FAInet system and his/her signature has been received by the league on the registration sheet bearing the official league stamp one day or more prior to the date of the fixture.

(d) Any club or player that provide false information or incorrectly fill out registration forms shall be dealt with by way of a fine and/or suspension by the executive committee.

(e) Receipts bearing official league stamp is the clubs only proof of the player's registration and it is the responsibility of the club to ensure that receipts are collected from the league offices.

(f) The onus in on all clubs to make sure that the parent/parents/guardians sign on behalf of the child who wishes to join a club in the DDSL. The signature of the parent/parents/guardian will be required under separate cover and this may be requested at any time by the executive committee.

3. (a) Players may only be registered to play during the official playing season for which the registration form relates, this being the 1st March to 30th November in any calendar year.
(b) The month of January shall be deemed a closed month and players may be approached to sign for any club registered to a league operating under the calendar year season, such players cannot be registered to such clubs until after January 31st.

4. All players must be registered to play in the league. Teams found playing un-registered players, improperly registered players or ineligible players will face the loss of game(s) he/she played in plus the further deduction of three points and a fine of €100.

5. (a) A player can play for only one club in the league in any one season except when he/she has received a transfer from the club last signed for. No player can be re-registered except when they have received this transfer.

(b) The transfer form must be received by the league prior to re-registration of the player as per rule 5(c) either by post (date and postmark will be accepted as date of transfer) or electronically or received by the league registrar bearing the official league stamp.

(c) The transfer of the player must be registered on the FAInet system and the re-registration of the said player must be carried out as per rule 2.

(d) Transfers will not be accepted after the 30th April in each season for players up to and including under 16 years of age division.

(e) For divisions playing at under 17s and above there shall be two transfer periods as follows;

1st June to 30th September inclusive in the current season.
1st December to 31st January in the current season.

(f) Transfer forms must be passed by a special committee unless the transfer form has been agreed by both clubs.

(g) A player cannot be transferred more than once without the sanction of the committee and must be re-registered as per rule 2.

(h)The transfer of a player from a DDSL club to a club from any other league or a player from another league to a DDSL club will be permitted up to the transfer deadline of the other league concerned if that date is later than the 30th April.

(i) For players in the under 8 to under 11 age groups, transfers between two teams within the same club will be permitted from 15th June to 31st July inclusive in the current season. Such players cannot be transferred more than once without the sanction of the committee and must be re-registered as per rule 2.

(j) A player may only play for one team in each domestic cup competition (DDSL Cups). A player becomes "cup tied" on when he/she participates in the game.

(k) No player can play at the same age group for different teams within the same club in any one season without being transferred.

6. In the event of a club or team resigning or being removed from the league, the said players become the property of the league. The Hon. Officers may give permission for the said players to be re-registered for clubs in league if so requested. A maximum of 3 players will be permitted to re-register for any one club in the current season. Last date for permission to be granted will be 30th September in the current season.

7. The player's names including substitutes must be entered in accordance with instructions on referee's card.

8. The referee's card must be filled in before the start of the match by the official in charge of the team who shall certify as to the eligibility of his team. **Seven (7) substitutes are permitted from under 12's to under 18's within our league from the agreed panel of players. The number of substitutes permitted in the Small sided games are covered by the FAI player development plan**,

9.
The use of roll on/roll off substitutes in line with the FAI Player Development Plan are permitted within all DDSL fixtures.

10. The signature and date of birth of the player or players must also be supplied **on request by opposing manager/official** within 10 minutes of the end of any match played. Not more than 6 signatures & dates of birth may be requested. Refusal to accede to such requests will be regarded as an admission of guilt.

11. (a) The secretary or a designated representative of a club shall be at liberty to examine the registration forms of his opponents of the previous game for the purpose of making a protest. All irregularities shall be dealt with by the executive committee or elected committee members nominated by the officers.

(b)For the purpose of this the Hon. Registrars (or their nominee) shall attend the offices of the league on each Monday and Thursday night between the hours of 7.00pm and 8.30pm during the playing season. Alternative arrangements may be made by appointment with the league registrars. A fee of €10 will be charged for each named inspection requested.

12. The executive committee may during the season adopt whatever measures they may consider necessary to ensure that the players of the various clubs are within the age as prescribed by Rule.

13. (a) In all matters relating to the age of players it is the responsibility of the club for which the player is registered to provide proof that the player is within the age as per prescribed rule and such proof must be provided within 7 days of receipt of any request from the league.

(b) Failure to provide such proof within the 7 days will be dealt with at the discretion of the committee.

(c) Such proof shall be in the form of an original birth certificate, passport, international identity card or documentation issued by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and acceptable to the league officers as proof of age. Failure to produce proof of age will deem the player to be in-eligible as per prescribed rule and the player treated as over age.

14. (a) Any team found guilty of playing over-age players shall be deducted 15 points and fined €200. Offending player(s) shall be fined and/or suspended for a maximum of 6 weeks from participation in any DDSL fixtures.
The offending manager/coach will be liable to a suspension of no more than a period of 3 months from participation within the DDSL.

(b) Players and/or managers/coaches found guilty of committing a second offence under this rule during the one season may be expelled from all competitions within the DDSL at the discretion of the executive committee.

(c.) Offending clubs shall pay all costs of protest, i.e. search fees, protest fees, birth certificate fees, registered letter fee and any reasonable vouched costs incurred to the club who proves same against them.

15. All fixtures, venues and times of kick-off shall be arranged by the relevant fixtures secretaries.

16. Clubs shall play home and away matches except otherwise decided by the honorary officials.

17. (a) No club or clubs shall have the power to break or postpone a fixture. **All games must start at the stated kick off time.** Clubs found guilty of the systematic breach of this rule without permission of the league shall be dealt with at the discretion of the executive committee.

(b) Clubs and teams are expressly forbidden to make or agree fixture arrangements between themselves without the approval of the relevant fixture secretary. Any such fixture shall be nullified by the relevant fixture secretary or the executive committee and clubs will be fined at the discretion of the executive committee.

(c.) Postponements where players are involved in league or international duty will only be granted when any single team **has a minimum of two (2) outfield players** or its goalkeeper on duty. Player(s) placed on standby will not be taken into account for the purposes of this rule.

18. Each club in the league shall register its colours with the Hon. Secretary. In the event of two clubs playing in similar colours that the match referee deems unsuitable, the home club shall change colours when such clubs meet in competition. The referee's decision shall be final in this matter. Goalkeepers must wear colours that distinguish them from other players.

19. (a) Players sent off are automatically suspended for one game as per FAI rule. This being the immediate next game in which the team that they signed for are participating within the league. Walk-overs or cancelled fixtures do not count.

(b) The player(s) shall stand suspended from all games under our jurisdiction until sentence is served.

(c.) Only matches played count towards periods of execution of suspension. If a match is abandoned, suspension is only considered to have been served if the team to which the suspended player belongs is not responsible for the abandonment of the match.

(d) An expulsion from a match incurs an automatic suspension even if imposed in a match that is later abandoned and/or annulled.

(e) If a player is sent off in an SFAI or FAI Cup match, the player shall serve that suspension in that competition. If that team is no longer in the competition the suspended player(s) shall serve the suspension or remainder thereof in the next competitive DDSL league or cup game(s).

(f) The disciplinary committee shall investigate each case on receipt of referee's report. If additional action (more than one match suspension) is deemed necessary the club shall be informed and a personal hearing may be convened before the league issues any additional suspension.

(g) Where a player is sent off for a hand-ball offence there shall be no fine on the player, manager or the club he plays for.

(h) A suspension may be deemed not served by the league if the league determines that a match has been arranged/re-arranged for the primary purpose of enabling a player to complete a period of suspension. If a suspension is combined with a fine, the league may prolong the suspension until the fine has been paid in full.
Clubs/players shall be further fined/suspended at the discretion of the executive committee for playing suspended players.

20. Any player or official who fails to turn up for a disciplinary hearing without sufficient reason shall stand suspended until he/she is dealt with by the league disciplinary committee.

21. (a) All protests much be sent in by registered letter for the attention of the Hon. Secretary of the league within three (3) days (Sundays and Bank Holidays excepted) of the date of playing the match on which the protest arises, and must be accompanied by a fee of €25 (cheque or postal order)

(b) An exact copy of the protest must be forwarded at the same time, by registered post, to the secretary of the team against whom the protest is being made against.
In the event of the protest being lost, the fee shall be forfeited.

(c.) A further 72 hours will be granted for the purpose of a cross protest. All protests shall be decided by the executive committee as they deem fit.

22. The Executive Committee shall have power to deal with any offending clubs, players, or officials as they deem fit, and to deal with any matter, situation or circumstances which arises that is not specifically covered within these rules.

23. (a) In league competition matches three (3) points shall be awarded for a win and one (1) for a draw. In the event of two or more clubs being equal on points, **those clubs shall playoff to decide the league winner and runner up positions.** The club scoring the largest amount of points shall be called the league winners.

(b) In all DDSL cup competition, matches shall be played to a finish on the day and all DDSL cup competitions shall be decided on the knockout principle unless otherwise decided by the executive committee.

(c.) Extra time and the use of the FIFA penalty rule shall be used to decide the outcome of the game in the event of a draw after extra time is played.

(d) The executive committee or its designated officials may organise additional competitions from time to time and shall determine the format of these competitions as they deem fit.

24. All cup competitions shall take precedence over league fixtures during the season.
(a) With the exception of a blanket call off of fixtures by the league, in all DDSL cup games if a pitch is deemed unplayable for any reason and should cause a postponement, the home team must find an alternative pitch or the fixture will revert to their opponent's ground. The arrangements for any such fixture reversal shall be the responsibility of the relevant fixture secretary.

(b) In all DDSL cup games, where the game started and is later abandoned by the referee due to weather or pitch conditions it shall result in the loss of home advantage and the fixture will revert to their opponent's ground. The arrangements for any such fixture reversal shall be the responsibility of the relevant fixture secretary.

25. (a) The Chairman, Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Secretary of the league shall be for all intent and purposes the legal holders of the cups in trust for the league. When the winning clubs have been declared the committee shall hand the various cups to their representatives.

(b)They shall make such provision for the safe return of the cups as they consider necessary. **All cups/trophies must be insured while in the possession of the winning club, loss or damage to any cup/trophy shall be paid for by the club. Winners and runners-up medals will also be presented. All trophies must be returned to the league offices as directed by the Executive.**

(c.) Failure to do so shall result in a fine of €50 per week or part of. Clubs in possession of cups shall be notified in writing prior to this deadline to return same.

26. Any objection to size of ball or pitch/markings must be made in writing to match referee prior to commencement of game.

27. In matters relating to the duration of games, pitch size, match ball size and game format they shall be in line with the FAI Player Development Plan for all age groups in the current season.

28. (a) Matches under the jurisdiction of the DDSL can be played on an artificial turf surface only where they are in complete compliance with, and certified in accordance with the FAI standards/codes.

(b) All opposition clubs shall receive 48 hours notice in advance of the fixture date that there is a possibility that an artificial surface of the required standard and certification will be used. **A copy of the pitch certification should be included in this notice.** This notification is to include details of any restrictions on the type of footwear allowed to be used on that particular pitch.

29. (a) Any team giving 2 walk-overs (unless they give a satisfactory explanation) may be removed from all competitions.
Clubs who give a walkover (unless they give a satisfactory explanation) shall be dealt with as follows;

(b) 11 a Side league or cup games, clubs will be fined €100 and the match awarded to the opposition.

(c.) 9 a side league or cup games, clubs will be fined €50 and the match awarded to the opposition.

(d) In all other games the club shall be fined €25 and the match shall be re-fixed at the discretion of the relevant fixture secretary.

30. When a team does not play and complete more than one third of its league fixtures programme then its record in that league shall be expunged.

31. (a) Teams in all "PREMIER" sections of the league up to and including the under 16 age are only allowed to register 18 players in any one season. Teams in other "Premier" divisions are allowed register 20 players in any one season.

(b) Permission may be granted by the executive committee to replace players for the following reasons;
(i) Long term injury supported by medical evidence from hospital attended by the player;
(ii) Transfer of a player to another club
(iii) A player leaving the team by their own volition. Evidence supporting this must be submitted by the club.

32. (a) When a player becomes a registered player with a club/team in any league it shall be an offence for any official, member of any other club/team or any other person to approach, encourage or influence that player or his/her parents/guardians on his behalf to seek a transfer to another team, participate in training, coaching or games under the auspices of another team Such offence(s) shall be deemed to be "poaching" and any person found culpable shall render him/herself and/or his/her team/club liable to a fine and/or suspension and his/her club/team shall be;

(i) Deducted 15 points for a first offence –
(ii) Automatically relegated for a further offence –

(b) The practise of teams or large number of players leaving in block i.e. managers and players to another club is not to be condoned. Any clubs who engage in this practise will not be given automatic entry into the DDSL league.

(c.) On receiving a complaint from the last club that the players signed for, the executive shall hold the application until a full enquiry is held into the reason for such a move and decisions are taken. **Where teams are found to have moved in block against the will of the original club the league will not accept the registration of more than 3 players to any one club other than the original club.**

33. No club is entitled to request or invite a player from another club for training, coaching or playing games either within their club, academy or associated academy during the official playing season (1st March to 30th November in any year)

34. (a) It is recognised that people are appointed by association football clubs to assess player's potential who might be influenced to sign for such clubs. These people, known as scouts/representatives are prohibited from acting as directors or in the administration of our league. These people must be licensed or act under accreditation from our league.

(b) It is the responsibility of clubs to ensure that all scouts, with whom they engage, have been approved by the FAI and vetted prior to allowing them access to their players under the age of eighteen (18).

(c.) All request for players to trial with club(s) inside or outside the jurisdiction of the FAI must follow the current FAI procedures.

(d) Where the executive find evidence of breaches of FAI procedures by players, clubs, scouts, or agents, the league shall ban those deemed responsible for up to 12 months

(e) Agents are ineligible to act in any capacity within our clubs or league administration

35. The protection and welfare of children:
(a) Any act, statement, conduct or other matter, which harms a child or children, or poses or may pose a risk of harm to a child or children, shall constitute behaviour, which is improper and brings the game into disrepute.

(b) It is mandatory that all clubs comply with all legislation and guidelines issued by any statutory agency in respect of child protection and welfare.

(c.) It is mandatory that all clubs comply with all FAI rules, regulations, codes, polices and guidelines in respect of child protection and welfare, including the appointment of a person to be responsible for all child protection and welfare matters within their club and the implementation of Garda Vetting of all those engaging with persons under the age of eighteen (18) and/or vulnerable persons.

36. The gathering, compilation, retention, storage or use of any information relating to underage players must be fully with all the requirements of the Data Protection Acts.

37. (a) Each club in membership of the league shall have the right to submit alterations to these rules. Such proposed alterations must be submitted to the Hon. Secretary of the league on or before 30th September in each year and signed for and on behalf of the club proposing such alterations by the Hon. Secretary of the club.

(b) Any alterations to rule must be passed by a two thirds majority of those present and eligible to vote.

38. (a) The Officers of the league shall be independent of clubs in membership of the league and shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the League for a two year period on a bi-annual basis as follows;
Year 1 - Chairman & Hon. Treasurer
Year 2 - Vice Chairman & Hon. Secretary

(b) No person can shall be appointed as an officer of the league if at the time of appointment that person has not served a minimum of two years working within the organisation.

(c) In the case of death or resignation of an officer the remaining officers shall appoint a person to act in their place until the following AGM.

(d) The AGM shall be held no later the November 30th in any calendar.

39. It is the responsibility of all DDSL clubs to assist in every way with the smooth running and operation of the league competitions and all entries are accepted on this basis. Where such co-operation and assistance is not provided, or is withdrawn, the executive committee has the right to refuse entry to such clubs for future competitions.

40. Clubs are obliged to release registered players to the representative teams of the league for which the player is eligible.
Any player selected to play in any training session/match arranged by the league and who without good or sufficient cause refuses to comply with the arrangements for the playing of the match or fails to play in such match, may be adjudged to be guilty of misconduct, and such player, or any club which may be deemed to have encouraged such player to such misconduct, may be dealt with as the executive committee deems appropriate.

41. (a) Every club must have in force Public Liability Insurance, including, where appropriate, Property Owners Insurance providing insurance cover in respect of all the club's activities. In addition, where a club engages any person under a contract of employment, the club must have in force an appropriate Employers Liability Policy.

(b) No club or team shall be admitted to membership of the league that fails to comply with (a) above. Where a club are already in membership and subsequently allow the insurance referred to in (a) to lapse or discontinue the executive committee shall as they deem fit expel or suspend from membership the said club until appropriate insurance referred to in (a) is in place.

42. (a) League fees for the season shall be determined by the executive committee and communicated to clubs at the start of each season.

(b) All applications **must be submitted on the leagues online payment system**

(c) 50% of league fees must be paid by 31st March in each season and the balance paid by 30th June in the same season. All payments to be paid electronically through the leagues website

(d) The executive committee shall have the power to deal with any club as they deem fit whose balance of fees have not been paid by 1st July in any season.

(e) League receipts will be issued for all monetary transactions **electronically by the online payments system.** All queries relating to payments shall be entertained only on the production of such receipts.

43. (a) Application for membership by clubs that were not registered members of the DDSL in the previous season or clubs that were removed from membership of the DDSL in the previous season will be considered by the executive committee for acceptance into the league.

(b) The Hon. Secretary shall inform all current member clubs in the same local area where such application has been received and these clubs may submit written support or objection to such applications and these shall be considered by the executive committee before acceptance or rejection of any such application.

(c) The executive committee or designated person from within the league shall have the final decision in these matters.

44. (a) All clubs are responsible for matters of discipline at their home venues. All complaints will be investigated by the executive committee or their nominees and breeches of discipline shall be dealt with as the committee deem appropriate.

(b) Any person(s) who insults anyone in any way, especially be using intimidation, threats, offensive gestures or language, or who violates the principles of fair play or whose behaviour is unsporting in any other way may be sanctioned with a suspension and/or fine and/or ban on participating or performing any football related activity or other sanction deemed appropriate.

(c.) Any person(s) who offends, disparages, discriminates against or denigrates someone, or a group of persons, in a derogatory manner on account of "race", skin colour, language, religion, ethnic and/or national origin(s) or sexual orientation, or perpetrates any other racist/discriminatory and/or contemptuous act, shall be subject to disciplinary action.

(d) The executive committee or their nominees shall consider and have the power to impose a suspension, fine and/or other sanction as deemed appropriate. In the case of individuals the minimum suspension shall be for a period of five (5) matches.

(e) If a spectator(s), engages in racist/discriminatory behaviour, including but not limited to chanting or displaying racist/discriminatory slogans at a match, the executive committee or their nominees shall sanction the member club that the spectator(s) supports. If the spectator(s) cannot be identified as a supporter, or supporters, of one or the member clubs the host club may be sanctioned.

(f) Anyone who intimidates a match official or league official with serious threats shall be sanctioned by a fine and a suspension as deemed appropriate by the executive committee or their nominees.

(g) Anyone who uses violence or threats to pressurise a match official into taking certain action or to hinder him/her in any way from acting freely shall be sanctioned with a fine and a suspension as deemed appropriate by the executive committee or their nominees.

(h) Anyone who has brought the game of football or the DDSL into disrepute by any means, written, verbal, by action or otherwise shall be sanctioned with a suspension and/or fine and/or ban on participating or performing any football related activity or other sanction deemed appropriate.

45. Any club in membership of the DDSL has the right to appeal to the SFAI or the LFA (where applicable) against a decision of the executive committee or any subcommittees or nominees in accordance with the rules of either the SFAI or LFA.