



MEMORANDUM

August 5, 2026

VIA EMAIL

TO: Men's and Women's Soccer Conference Commissioners, Conference Sport Administrators, Directors of Athletics, Senior Woman Administrators at Conferences and Institutions and Head Coaches.

FROM: Rich Grady, secretary-rules editor
NCAA Men's and Women's Soccer.

SUBJECT: Soccer Playing Rules Reminders for the 2026 Season.

As a new playing season approaches, here are a few important items for the 2026 season. The 2026 season will be the first year using the 2026 and 2027 NCAA Soccer Rules Book, which can be downloaded as a PDF [here](#). The 2026 major rules changes and 2026 points of emphasis are available on the NCAA soccer playing rules [website](#) under Updates and NCAA Center Circle at [RQ+](#). As rules questions and interpretations are issued throughout the 2026 season, they also will be available on the NCAA soccer playing rules website and Center Circle.

1. Points of Emphasis for the 2026 Season: The points of emphasis that will be in place for the 2026 season are available [here](#) for review.
2. Suspensions and Illegal Participation (Rule 12.8.1): To be consistent with the rules change to Rule 12.8.1 that eliminates the additional game suspension for each successive red card of the season, any individuals who were facing a multi-game suspension from ejections for receiving a second (or more) red card ejection in the 2025 season that carried over to the 2026 season will now only have to serve the penalty associated with the specific ejection without the additional game(s) for multiple red card ejections.
3. Postgame Protest Procedure (Rule 5.8.1): The NCAA will continue to utilize the postgame protest procedure that was first implemented in 2022. A protest may be filed by authorized representative of the involved institution or governing sport authority provided it relates to player identification and illegal participation by ejected or suspended student-athletes, coaches and team personnel. The Soccer Protest Form is available [here](#).
4. Division I Men's Substitution Rules. Substitution cards will be used to properly document the use of each substitution moment. Those cards are available [here](#). Each team is expected to print out cards for their use for each match.
5. Box score verification: Officials are required to confirm the information in the box score with the official scorer before leaving the site of competition. This is imperative in order to make sure that the correct individuals are charged with any disciplinary cards that have been given.

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6. Registration on RQ+: The NCAA Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee will continue to utilize RQ+ as the official platform to distribute rules clarifications, announcements and interpretations. Officiating updates and clarifications also are posted throughout the season. The central hub is now available at www.refquest.com. Commissioners, conference soccer administrators and head coaches are automatically uploaded into the central hub based on information provided in the NCAA Directory. Coaches that don't have access to Center Circle, or need access for additional staff/coaches, please register at no cost using the link above. Conference commissioners and conference soccer administrators who need access to Center Circle may contact Barb Hallam at barb@refquest.com.

Should you have any rules questions, please contact Rich Grady at ncaasoccersre@gmail.com or 847-644-1206.

Thank you in advance for your support and have a great season.

RG:sb

cc: NCAA Division I Men's Soccer Rules Subcommittee
NCAA Division I Women's Soccer Rules Subcommittee
NCAA Divisions II and III Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee
NCAA Division I Men's Soccer Oversight Committee
NCAA Division I Women's Soccer Oversight Committee
NCAA Registered Soccer Officials
NCAA Men's and Women's Soccer Conference Coordinators
Selected NCAA Staff Members