



## **GEORGIA SOCCER ADULT STATE CUP 2026 OFFICIAL RULES OF COMPETITION**

### **1. Governing Authority**

The Georgia Soccer Adult State Cup is sanctioned by the Georgia State Soccer Association and serves as the qualifying competition for the USASA Region III Amateur Cup. All matches shall be played in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the Game, USASA policies, and these 2026 Rules of Competition.

### **2. Entry Fee and Registration Deadline**

The 2026 entry fee is \$500 per team. All teams must be registered and paid in full no later than March 2nd, 2026 in order to be accepted into the competition. For 2026 the Bond was waived at typically \$500 fee. Pending team behavior standards (red card sanctions/ trash pickup, overall GA Soccer Code of Conduct standards) the bond is refundable.

### **3. Team Eligibility**

Teams must be properly registered with a USASA-affiliated organization and be in good standing with Georgia Soccer. All players must possess a valid USASA player pass and maintain amateur status as defined by USASA and U.S. Soccer Federation regulations.

Red cards received in league play will carry over to the State Cup event. Any active suspension (players, managers, team officials) must be served in full before returning to play in the competition. Red cards received in the State Cup event will carry over to league play and/or the next competition if a suspension is not served in full.

### **4. League Participation Requirement**

Participating teams shall compete in a USASA-sanctioned adult league unless otherwise approved by Georgia Soccer Adult Council.

## **5. Rosters and Player Passes**

Official match rosters must be presented at each match check-in. Players are required to present a valid USASA player pass with photograph. Only individuals listed on the approved roster may participate in any match.

The roster max is 24 players with 18 players eligible on game day. Players must be selected prior to kick off at check-in with the referees. All players and team officials must be properly registered with a USASA or GA Soccer Roster and passes.

There shall only be a maximum of 4 team officials present in the technical area during the match.

## **6. Roster Freeze**

The roster freeze will occur eight (8) days prior to the first date of competition. No player may be added after this date without written approval from Georgia Soccer.

## **7. Guest Player Policy**

Guest player use must align with current Georgia Soccer policies and standards governing adult leagues. Any guest player must be properly registered and approved in accordance with those policies prior to participation and the roster freeze date.

## **8. Match Day Procedures**

Teams must arrive and check in no less than thirty (30) minutes prior to their scheduled kickoff time. A fifteen (15) minute grace period may be allowed at the tournament's discretion if a team does not have the minimum number of players available to start a match. A minimum of seven (7) players is required to begin a match.

## **9. Match Format**

All matches shall consist of two 45-minute halves with a maximum 15-minute halftime interval. Knockout matches tied after regulation shall utilize two 15-minute extra time periods followed, if necessary, by kicks from the penalty mark. Group Matches may end in a tie. Point system is three (3) points for a win, zero points (0) for a loss, and one (1) point for a tie.

Tie Breakers:

1. Winner of head-to-head
2. Winner of most matches
3. Goal difference (Max Goals of +5)
4. Fewest goals allowed
5. Most Goals Scored
6. Penalty Kicks

- a. If both teams are not present, the Tournament may replace the Penalty Kicks tiebreaker with a coin toss to break the tie.

## **10. Substitutions**

A maximum of seven (7) substitutions per match are permitted with no re-entry. Over-40 and Women's divisions may utilize unlimited substitutions when approved by the competition committee.

## **11. Advancement to USASA Region III**

State champions earn the right to represent Georgia Soccer in the USASA Region III Amateur Cup and must comply with all regional entry, roster, and credential requirements. In the event that the State Champion cannot attend, the finalist will advance in their place.

## **12. Financial Support for Regional Event**

Georgia Soccer will pay the team entry fee into the Region III event and will provide a travel subsidy. Teams are responsible for all other expenses. The travel subsidy will be awarded after completion of the regional or national event. Teams must pay the Bond for the event. All financial support is subject to review by the Adult Council and Georgia Soccer.

## **13. Discipline**

A red card results in a minimum one-match suspension; violent conduct carries a minimum two-match suspension. Sanctions may be carried into USASA regional competition. All red cards are subject to be reviewed by the Adult Council for further sanctions if applicable.

Any Referee Abuse that occurs as a sanction is subject to immediate suspension pending a review and possible hearing by the Georgia Soccer Adult Discipline Committee.

Red cards received in league play will carry over to the State Cup event. Any active suspension (players, managers, team officials) must be served in full before returning to play in the competition. Red cards received in the State Cup event will carry over to league play and/or the next competition if a suspension is not served in full.

## **14. Referees**

Match officials are assigned by Georgia Soccer Adult assignors. All participants are bound by Georgia Soccer codes of conduct and respect policies.

## **15. Protests and Appeals**

Protests must be submitted in writing within published deadlines with required fees and will be adjudicated by the Georgia Soccer Adult Discipline Committee. Deadline to file a protest or appeal must include a written statement of the Laws of the Game misapplied or Georgia Soccer policies within four (4) hours after the conclusion of your match. A fee of

\$500 dollars must accompany your written statement. Personal checks will not be accepted. Fee shall be refunded if the protest/appeal is upheld.

An email must be sent with your intention to protest/appeal to [ccoca@georgiasoccer.org](mailto:ccoca@georgiasoccer.org) to alert the tournament committee. The committee will also receive your written statement and payment.

### **16. Forfeits and Withdrawal**

Teams withdrawing without proper notice may forfeit entry fees and matches may be recorded as 3-0 results for the opponent. Teams may also be assessed additional fees pending review by the Tournament Committee.

### **17. Unforeseen Circumstances**

The Adult State Cup Committee reserves the right to modify schedules or procedures due to weather, safety, or operational necessity.

### **18. USASA Compliance**

Where any conflict exists between this document and current USASA policies, USASA policy shall prevail.

### **18. Regional Representation**

Once a team commits to the regional event, they must attend ALL matches for the duration of the event. Any team who does not follow this protocol will forfeit their travel subsidy and may be subject to further fines and discipline after review by the Adult Council.