MT. PLEASANT SOCCER CLUB HANDBOOK

2026 – 2027

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Welcome to the Mount Pleasant Soccer Club

Dear Players and Families,

Welcome to another exciting season with Mount Pleasant Soccer Club (MPSC)!

We are thrilled to have you as part of our soccer community. Whether you are new to MPSC or a returning family, thank you for choosing to grow with us on and off the field.

At MPSC, we believe soccer is more than just a sport—it's an opportunity to learn teamwork, resilience, discipline, and leadership. We are committed to providing high-quality coaching, appropriate age training, and a safe, supportive atmosphere for every player to thrive. This handbook is designed to help guide you through the season and set clear expectations for players, parents, and coaches alike.

Please take a few moments to review the information in this handbook. It outlines our club values, policies, and practices that help us ensure fairness, respect, and consistency across all teams.

We look forward to a season full of growth, excitement, and great memories. Thank you for being a part of the MPSC family—we're glad to have you with us.

See you on the field!

Warm regards,
The MPSC Board of Directors
Mount Pleasant Soccer Club

Our Mission

MPSC is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the growth of competitive youth soccer in the Central Michigan area while providing a safe and enjoyable environment.

Our Vision

MPSC strives to develop soccer players who pursue their personal best as athletes and individuals, alongside coaches and parents.

Our Values

- Respect and Responsibility
- Integrity and Sportsmanship
- Passion and Commitment
- Excellence and Perseverance

Program Overview

Mount Pleasant Soccer Club (MPSC) is dedicated to providing a positive and developmentally appropriate soccer experience for players of all ages and skill levels. Our programs are designed to foster growth in technical skills, tactical understanding, physical fitness, and character development—while keeping the game fun, inclusive, and challenging.

Age Group Structure

MPSC offers programs for players ages 8–18, organized by age and developmental stage:

U8–U12 (Foundation Phase)

Players develop core technical and tactical skills. Training emphasizes decision-making, creativity, and good sportsmanship.

U13–U18 (Competitive Travel)

A more advanced environment where players refine skills, learn systems of play, and compete at higher levels. Commitment, teamwork, and leadership are emphasized.

Season Format

MPSC offers both fall and spring seasons, typically running:

Fall Season: August to October

Spring Season: April to June

Each season includes weekly practices and weekend games, as well as opportunities for tournaments, friendly matches, and training camps.

Training & Development

All training sessions are led by certified coaches using age-appropriate, evidence-based methods that are reviewed and updated by our director of coaching. We aim to provide:

- A safe and inclusive learning environment
- Individual skill development and teamwork
- Respect for coaches, teammates, opponents, and referees
- A focus on effort, improvement, and a growth mindset

Game Play

Teams are scheduled to compete in leagues and events that match their skill level and development goals. Our recreational and academy players participate in local games, while travel teams compete across the region.

Team Organization

Based on US Soccer's recommendation and MPSC's player development model, ALL soccer training, coaching, and playing activities will be organized and/or conducted by MPSC coaching staff members. *No other person will*

be permitted to coach MPSC players, organize tournaments, open practices, etc. without written consent from the Director of Coaching or President of the Club.

MPSC reserves the right to move players between teams within the club at any time if there is a deemed need.

- For club payment and uniform issues please contact the club registrar
- For logistical issues like tournament fees and travel information, please contact your MPSC Coaching Staff.
- For soccer related issues like playing time, performance, scheduling conflicts, please contact your coach using the protocol set forth in the **Club Conflict Resolution for Players/Parents** and **Mt. Pleasant Soccer Club's Spectators, Parents/Guardians, & Player Code of Conduct.**

Equipment and uniform guidelines

Uniforms

MPSC utilizes Soccer Village for uniforms. A link will be provided for athletes to purchase their uniforms. A minimum kit is required which typically includes a home jersey, away jersey, shorts, and two pairs of socks. Cleats and shin guards are not included but are required for training and matches. Uniforms are updated on a 2-year cycle per our contract with our vendor.

Required Equipment

Soccer Ball: Players should bring a properly inflated ball to every practice. A soccer ball is provided at the beginning of the fall season.

- Size 3: U5–U8
- Size 4: U9–U12
- Size 5: U13 and older

Shin Guards: Must be worn under socks for all practices and games. This is required for safety and compliance with league rules.

Soccer Cleats: Athletic footwear appropriate for grass. No baseball or football cleats (no toe spike).

Water Bottle: Labeled with the player's name. Hydration is critical—please send enough water for the entire session.

Weather-Appropriate Clothing: Layers for cold weather (gloves, hat, thermal shirt/leggings under practice gear), rain jacket if needed. No hooded sweatshirts during games for safety.

Code of Conduct & Commitments

Players and Coaches

We have a responsibility to promote high standards of behavior in the game. Mt. Pleasant Soccer Club will implement this code of conduct to ensure soccer can be enjoyed in a safe, positive environment. Remember, youth soccer is a time for players to develop their technical, physical, tactical and social skills. Winning isn't

everything. Play your part and help enforce the Mt. Pleasant Soccer Club Code of Conduct for Players and Coaches at all times.

When playing soccer, I will:

- Always play to the best of my ability
- Play fairly – I won't cheat, complain or waste time
- Respect my teammates, the other team, the referee or my coach/manager
- Play by the rules, as directed by the referee
- Shake hands with the other team and referee at the end of the game
- Listen and respond to what my coach/team manager tells me
- Talk to the coach and then director if not resolved when unhappy
- Never engage in, or tolerate, offensive, insulting, or abusive language or behavior on or off the field, in person or through other forms of communication.

I understand that if I do not follow the Code, any/all of the following actions may be taken by Mt. Pleasant Soccer Club. I may:

- Be required to apologize to my teammates, the other team, referee or team coach
- Receive a formal warning from the coach or the club committee
- Be substituted
- Be suspended from training or match play
- Be required to leave the club

Parents/Guardians

Soccer is an exciting, fast moving and fun game. Coaches, players and fans should remember that the objective is to have fun and learn the game of soccer. It is important to our soccer program that all participants conduct themselves in a positive and responsible manner.

Mt. Pleasant Soccer Club will **NOT** tolerate behavior which brings the Club, team, or game into disrepute. Remember, youth soccer is a time for players to develop their technical, physical, tactical and social skills. While we strive for winning and competitiveness, it is not everything. Inappropriate comments or actions by adults bent on short-term success rather than the long-range benefits undermines competition and introduces stresses which are unsuitable for our athletes.

- I will set a good example for my child by behaving in accordance with the MPSC code of conduct by following:
- I will not openly criticize the referees before, during, or after games.
- I will not openly criticize our opponents or engage in arguments with their parents or officials during or after games.
- I will only give positive feedback to players on both teams.
- I will cheer at all games within the spirit of fair play.

- I will be mindful of our opponents when cheering for our team in lop-sided games.
- I will do my best to teach my player to become a student of the game and do likewise.
- I will show the quality of our sportsmanship during and after each and every match and encourage my child to congratulate opponents and match officials after every game.
- I will do my very best to have my child on time and prepared for every match.
- I understand that improper behavior at a match, practice or other Pipeline sponsored events may result in a parent being asked to leave the field or the event by a referee, coach or team manager.
- I understand that, upon review of improper behavior by members of the board, a parent can, and will if necessary, be suspended from watching their child play should such behavior be considered rude or otherwise offensive.
- I will leave the coaching to the coach and refrain from giving my child or any teammate any instructions during training or games.
- I will endeavor to give timely notice (more than 24h) to my coach should my player be unable to attend a team event.
- Should I have a soccer-related concern regarding my player, I agree to reflect for at least 24 hours before raising the issue with the coach.

Failure to comply with the Parent Code of Conduct could result in removal from the fields, Club, sanctions, and/or police involvement.

By accepting a position in the club, parents and athletes agree to the code of conduct.

MPSC Policies & Procedures

Club Pass/Guesting

Players may be assigned to play for a team in an older age group based on the following:

- Tryouts- Players may be asked to try out for an older team if they have been evaluated as the top player in their age group AND it is clearly in the players best interest for LONG TERM DEVELOPMENT, mentally, socially, technically, tactically and physically as determined by the Director of Coaching, the Board and MPSC Coaching Staff.
- Assignment- Players may be asked to play up or on a team based on the Director of Coaching and coaching staff's belief that this player will be an impact player on the older team and will allow for appropriate, continued development of the player. The general rule that is followed in these circumstances is that the player has been evaluated to be in the top 2-3 players in the older team. The player and parents will be consulted about this possibility and have the ability to choose which team they would like to play for.
- Players are evaluated each year even if a player has "played up" the previous year that will not automatically place them on the older team.

- Under most circumstances, the use of a club pass will be used to keep players registered at age yet allow that player the opportunity to play up with an older age as appropriate. The assigned team is the team of priority, playing up will only happen if there is not a conflict with the assigned team.
- During season playing up is only acceptable when the purpose is to introduce a younger player to a higher level of play or if there is not enough team members to play. Benching players in order to host guest players is ***NOT*** acceptable and needs to be brought to the attention of a Board Member to address with the Coach.

Club Conflict Resolution for Players/Parents

At MPSC, we believe open, respectful communication is key to resolving conflicts in a positive and productive way. If issues arise between players, parents, or coaches, we encourage concerns to be addressed calmly and directly following a clear process that supports understanding and resolution. Our goal is to maintain a supportive environment where everyone feels heard and respected. Use the following steps to assist with any conflicts that may arise:

1. If a conflict arises between your player and the coach, please contact your coach to schedule a meeting time after practice or a game. At U13 and older, we believe that part of growing as a player is to be able to communicate with your coach so it is important that your player be present for such issues as playing time concerns, effort concerns, performance questions or questions on the evaluations.
2. For other concerns and if your concerns above were not satisfactorily met, please inform your coach that you would like the Director of Coaching or Player Representative to be involved. Contact the Director of Coaching and/or Player Representative to arrange a time to discuss the concerns.
3. If the concerns are still not addressed and you feel you need to talk to the MPSC Board, please inform the Director of Coaching/Player Representative and they will arrange to have a meeting with the current Executive Board Members. The full board and executive board will be notified of the request and reserves the right to be present at the meeting.

Payment of Fees

ALL players will be expected to pay their first payment **before August 31st**. MPSC does have a payment plan which can be requested to the Player Representative or Club Registrar. MPSC will work hard to help parents and players navigate the payments, but it is the responsibility of each MPSC family to make sure they are up to date on payments. Payments must be made in full prior to the start of the spring season.

Current player fees can be found on the tryouts/registration page of the MPSC website. Player fees go towards coaching fees, field maintenance, referee fees, league fees, and other administrative costs. Tournament and uniforms are NOT included in player fees.

Weather policy

Mt. Pleasant Soccer Club collaborates with Mt. Pleasant High School and The City of Mt. Pleasant on which the fields sit. We take great pride in our fields as a great deal of time and money is spent on their upkeep. As such, when the fields are wet and the potential of harming field integrity is high, ALL fields will be closed.

Mt. Pleasant Soccer club follows common guidelines on weather delays. Practice and games will be suspended and will not resume until 30 minutes after the last sign of lightning/thunder.

Practice Cancellations

On those days when bad weather forces the complex to close, you will be contacted by your coach or team manager.

Photo Release

Informed consent will be obtained and documented by clicking a box on an electronic form.

I hereby grant MPSC permission to use my likeness, or the likeness of my child in a photograph and/or video in any and all of its publications, including website entries, without payment of any other consideration. I understand and agree that these materials will become the property of the MPSC and will not be returned. I hereby irrevocably authorize MPSC to edit, alter, copy, exhibit, publish or distribute photos or videos for purposes of publicizing the MPSC or for any lawful purpose. In addition, I waive the right to inspect or approve the finished product. Additionally, I waive any right to royalties or other compensation arising or related to the use of the photograph or video. I hereby hold harmless and release and forever discharge MPSC from all claims demands, and causes of action which I, my heirs, representatives, executors, administrators, or any other persons acting on my behalf or on behalf of my estate have or may have by reason of thus authorization.

Risk Management

The MPSC, on behalf of the Michigan State Youth Soccer Association (MSYSA), requires the submission of a Risk Management form for all persons over the age of 18 that will directly work with youth players (e.g. Head Coaches, assistant coach, team manager and trainers). Additional information may be found at Michigan's Youth Soccer Risk Management in the Risk Management section.

Player Safety Policy

- Mt. Pleasant Soccer Club is committed to providing a safe environment for players, parents, coaches and administrators. MPSC has adopted KidSafe risk management guidelines set forth by US Youth Soccer.
- All coaches undergo a hiring process.

- All coaches, managers and Executive Board Member's go through a background check with Michigan State Youth Soccer Association.
- All players go through a tryout process each year. No one is guaranteed a spot on a roster but we work hard to make sure that most players who want to play have an avenue to pursue that passion.
- Coaches may have limited tenures with teams and assignments may change.
- During the registration process, players, parents and coaches agree to follow Club Expectations and Club Policies

Concussion Procedures

Guidelines are in place through Michigan State Youth Soccer Association, which outline the proper protocol when dealing with a suspected concussion. All Mt. Pleasant Soccer Club Coaches have watched the Heads-up Concussion Training Video required by the state.

As mandated by US Soccer, players age 11 and under will not head the ball.

As mandated by US Soccer players age 10 and under will play using the Build Out Line as opposed to the Goalie punting.

Return to Play (RTP) Procedures After a Concussion

Return to activity and play is a medical decision. The athlete must meet all of the following criteria in order to progress to activity:

1. Asymptomatic at rest and with exertion (including mental exertion in school) AND have written clearance from their primary care provider or concussion specialist (athlete must be cleared for progression to activity by a physician other than an Emergency Room physician, if diagnosed with a concussion).
2. Once the above criteria are met, the athlete will be progressed back to full activity following the step-wise process detailed below. (This progression must be closely supervised by a Certified Athletic Trainer. If your school does not have an athletic trainer, then the coach must have a very specific plan to follow as directed by the athlete's physician).
3. Progression is individualized, and will be determined on a case by case basis. Factors that may affect the rate of progression include: previous history of concussion, duration and type of symptoms, age of the athlete, and sport/activity in which the athlete participates. An athlete with a prior history of concussion, one who has had an extended duration of symptoms, or one who is participating in a collision or contact sport may be progressed more slowly.
4. Stepwise progression as described below:

    Step 1: Complete cognitive rest. This may include staying home from school or limiting school hours (and studying) for several days. Activities requiring concentration and attention may worsen symptoms and delay recovery.

    Step 2: Return to school full-time.

Step 3: Light exercise. This step cannot begin until the athlete is no longer having concussion symptoms and is cleared by a physician for further activity. At this point the athlete may begin walking or riding an exercise bike. No weight-lifting.
Step 4: Running in the gym or on the field. No helmet or other equipment.
Step 5: Non-contact training drills in full equipment. Weight-training can begin.
Step 6: Full contact practice or training.
Step 7: Play in game. Must be cleared by physician before returning to play.

The athlete should spend 1 to 2 days at each step before advancing to the next. If post-concussion symptoms occur at any step, the athlete must stop the activity and the treating physician must be contacted. Depending upon the specific type and severity of the symptoms, the athlete may be told to rest for 24 hours and then resume activity at a level one step below where he or she was at when the symptoms occurred.

MPSC Concussion Return to Play Form

This form is adapted from the Acute Concussion Evaluation (ACE) care plan on the CDC website (www.cdc.gov/injury). All medical providers are encouraged to review this site if they have questions regarding the latest information on the evaluation and care of the scholastic athlete following a concussion injury.

Please initial any recommendations that you select below.

1. Athletes should not return to practice or play for at least 24 hours after their head injury has occurred.
2. Athletes should never return to play or practice if they still have ANY symptoms.
3. Athletes: Be sure that your coach and are aware of your injury and symptoms, and that they have the contact information for the treating physician.

Athlete's Name: _____ DOB: _____

Date of Injury: _____

THIS RETURN TO PLAY IS BASED ON TODAY'S EVALUATION

Date of Evaluation: Care Plan Completed By:

Return to This Office (Date/Time):

The following are the return to sports recommendations at the present time:

□ Do NOT return to sports practice or competition at this time.
□ May gradually return to sports practices under the supervision of the healthcare provider for your school or team.
□ May be advanced back to competition after phone conversation with attending physician (MD/DO/PAC/LAT/ARNP/Neurophysiologist)
□ Must return to physician (MD/DO/PAC/LAT/ARNP/Neurophysiologist) for final clearance to return to competition.
– OR –
□ Cleared for full participation in all activities and restrictions. Return of symptoms should result in re-evaluation by physician (MD/DO/PAC/LAT/ARNP/Neurophysiologist) for assessment.

Medical Office Information (Please Print/Stamp):

Evaluator's Name: Office Phone:

Evaluator's Signature:
Evaluator's Address: