
2021 / 2022

MTN NATIONAL FIRST DIVISION LEAGUE

RULES AND REGULATIONS



Compiled and Presented by
THE PREMIER LEAGUE OF ESWATINI

Approved by
ESWATINI FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION
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PREAMBLE

This document lays out the Rules and Regulations of the 2021/2022 MTN National First Division League (*hereinafter referred to as the Rules*).

The Secretariat of this league competition shall be at the PLE Offices at Sigwaca House, Ground Floor, Mbabane; all notices/correspondence must be served to the Chief Executive Officer on this location.

These Regulations for the MTN National First Division league 2021/2022 season have been customized to embrace and incorporate the regulations developed to address the COVID-19 pandemic ("COVID-19 Protocols") as prescribed by the relevant authorities in the governance of football domestically and internationally and the pertinent government and health authorities. The COVID-19 Protocols are set out in the annex to these Rules and either supplement or, if expressly indicated, replace the existing regulations and will remain in effect for as long as they are considered appropriate. Due to the continuously evolving understanding of COVID-19, including effective and appropriate methods to reduce the risk and severity of infection, EFA may modify or supplement the COVID-19 Protocols at any time, including by way of issuing a modified version of these Regulations. Any regulations, circulars, directives and decisions issued by EFA or other document intended to modify or supplement the COVID-19 Protocols shall be binding on the PLE and its members.

All PLE Member Clubs participating in the MTN PLE National First Division League competition shall be deemed to have:

- given their assent to these rules; and
- undertaken to abide by these rules and any regulations, circulars, directives and decisions issued to modify the COVID-19 Protocols.

Article 1: DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS OF TERMS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

1. **An Official or Premier League of Eswatini Official** is:
 - a) Any member of the office of the Premier League and/or any member of the Sub-Committees of the Premier League of Eswatini.
 - b) Any person designated by the Premier League of Eswatini's Chief Executive Officer or designated officer in his/her absence, to act in an official capacity during matches to include a Match Coordinator, Security Officer, COVID-19 Compliance Officer etc.
 - c) Invited dignitaries and/or guests, members of the Royal Eswatini Police.
2. **A Match Commissioner** is: The match official appointed by the Referees Committee that has an authority for ensuring that a match is officiated according to the rules of the game as well as those laid down in this document and who shall be responsible for preparing a report of the match in his/her area of responsibility, for the relevant authorities.
3. **Unsporting Behavior**: means the infringement of the Laws of the Game such as foul play, simulation, and denying an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by an offence which was an attempt to play the ball and the referee awards a penalty kick, dissent by word or action directed to an official, delaying the restart of play, improper registration of players, fielding of a defaulter, invading the field of play by supporters, throwing any objects onto the field of play or the surrounding areas, etc.
4. **Violent misconduct**: is when a player, official, match spectator or supporter uses or attempts to use force or excessive force or brutality against another person who may be an opponent, a team-mate, team official, match official, spectator or any other person, regardless of whether contact is made and will include the use of abusive or obscene words or conduct with the intention to insult, demean and provoke another person.
 - a) Invading the field of play, throwing of any object(s) into the field of play or its surrounding or unto persons thus assaulting or attempting to assault, use of threatening words and physical manhandling with intent to assault or to cause bodily harm.
 - b) Uttering abusive or obscene or derogatory words, spitting or emission of saliva onto a person or directed towards a person, use of provocative or insulting hand gestures/signals, and includes any incitement, conspiracy or attempt to engage in an act to bring football into disrepute.
 - c) Failure by club(s) to control their official(s) or player(s) or supporter(s) or fan(s).
5. A **Defaulter** means a player who is not eligible to play in a particular game for any reason such as suspension, improper registration, double registration who has played in the game in question.

6. **“International player”** means a player who is transferring from another association in the membership of FIFA into the territory of the EFA and has satisfied all the requirements of registration and is in possession of a valid work permit or a study permit.
7. **“Match Coordinator”** means an official allotted and entitled by the PLE or the Management Committee for the devotions of the administration of the competition matches at the match venue or stadium, who shall also have the accountability of generating a report for the MC or PLE with respect to the organizational issues around the match, where applicable in terms of the rules and regulations of the competition.
8. **“IFAB”** means the International Football Association Board being the body authorized to develop, amend and prescribe the Laws of the Game, which govern the constitutive practice of football matches.
9. The following abbreviations may be consistently used in this document:
 - a) PLE - Premier League of Eswatini.
 - b) CEO - Chief Executive Officer
 - c) COO - Chief Operations Officer
 - d) DC - EFA Protest and Disciplinary Committee
 - e) EFA - Eswatini Football Association
10. **“Head-to-head Rule”**: It is a rule of breaking ties in association football, when at least two (2) teams in a league competition or qualifying group or championship are level on points, where in order to separate them, the match or matches in which they played are considered. The team that has won the head-to-head encounter (match between the two tying teams) is placed higher than the other team. Where the competition is played on a home-and-away basis such as the league, the head-to-head rule, has an inherent rule the away-goal rule.
11. **“Away-Goal-Rule”**: It is a rule for breaking ties in association football, where the team that has scored more goals “away from home” wins, if the total number of goals scored by each team are otherwise equal. This away-goal-rule is also utilized in the determination of the log standings under the head-to-head rule at any point of the procession of the league matches, irrespective of whether the league has finished or not or the teams tying on points have played a single match or more.

Article 2: ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS

1. Eligible players to participate in this Competition shall be players registered with Member Clubs who have satisfied all the requirements of registration as prescribed by the EFA including the payment of the registration fee of One Hundred Emalangenani (E100.00) per player.
2. Each Member Club shall be allowed to register a maximum of thirty (30) players inclusive of a maximum of five (5) foreign players.
3. In addition to the above, a player to be registered and play football under the auspices of the PLE and EFA, must have complied with the Covid-19 protocols as prescribed by EFA and/or relevant authorities, regulations, directives and decisions, as amended from time to time. All players shall be accredited by the PLE and/or EFA in line with the Covid-19 protocols, as may be amended from time to time.
4. Only players who comply with and pass the testing requirements and timelines stipulated in the COVID-19 regulations and match protocols as they relate to the COVID-19 pandemic (*negative test result*) are considered eligible. In this regard, a COVID-19 negative test result is compulsory for all players to be eligible to participate at the start of the season, at the point of their first match if they had not yet been registered at the start of the season, and at any given timeline where COVID-19 testing has been scheduled. **Players who do not fulfil these provisions are automatically disqualified, hence are not eligible to participate in matches of this competition and any participating football club/team that violates these provisions shall be summarily fined E 10, 000.00 for each player having violated these provisions.**
5. Any player who participates in this Competition without fulfilling the requirements of registration as prescribed in the registration regulations and directives of EFA shall be considered a defaulter and the club fielding a defaulter shall be guilty of misconduct and liable to lose the game and forfeit three points and three goals to the opposing club. However, if the goal difference in the field of play is greater than three (3), the result in the field shall be maintained. The offending player may be suspended for a period not more than six (6) official matches.
6. Any club that submits fraudulent documents to secure registration and/or accreditation of a player shall be guilty of misconduct and the PLE shall institute investigations and fine the offending team an amount not less than E 10, 000-00 by the D.C.

Article 3: PARTICIPATION IN THE LEAGUE COMPETITION

1. Each participating football club/team shall be responsible throughout the competition for:
 - a) The conduct of all accreditation-bearing players, coaches, managers, officials, media officers, representatives and guests of its delegation (hereinafter: Team delegation members), and of any person carrying out duties on its behalf throughout the competition;
 - b) Ensuring the provision of adequate insurance to cover its team delegation members and any other persons carrying out duties on its behalf against all risks, including but not limited to injury, accident, disease and travel consideration of the relevant rules and regulations;
 - c) Paying for incidental expenses and for any costs incurred by its team delegation members;

- d) Attending media conferences and other official media activities organized by PLE and/or EFA or organizing body in accordance with the applicable regulations and instructions issued by the PLE and/or EFA;
 - e) Ensuring that every member of its delegation complies with the FIFA, CAF, EFA and PLE Statutes, the applicable FIFA, CAF, EFA and PLE regulations, directives, guidelines and circulars and decisions taken by EFA bodies, in particular the Executive Committee, the Competition organizing Committee, the Referees Committee, the Disciplinary Committee, the Ethics Committee and Appeals Committee;
 - f) Complying with and implementing (*where applicable*) the measures and protocols mandated in the EFA COVID – 19 Health and Safety Protocol (“COVID -19 Manual”).
2. All team delegation members shall comply with the Laws of the Game and the FIFA, CAF, EFA and PLE Statutes and all applicable EFA regulations (including these regulations), in particular the EFA Disciplinary Code, the EFA Stadium Safety and Security regulations, the FIFA Anti-Doping Regulations, the EFA Code of Ethics, the EFA and/or PLE Media and Marketing regulations and the FIFA, EFA and PLE equipment regulations as well as all circulars, directives and decisions of FIFA, CAF and EFA bodies, unless these regulations state otherwise, and all further EFA guidelines that have any significance regarding this competition;
 3. All Team Delegation Members shall also fully comply with these Regulations and the Regulations stipulated under the COVID-19 Protocol, the Match Protocol and any other COVID-19-related requirements or instructions issued by FIFA, CAF and EFA, whether in circular letters or in any other documents.
 - a) **A proof of a negative test conducted, as prescribed by EFA and in accordance with the provision of the COVID-19 protocols must be provided for every match in order for a team delegation member to enter the match stadium and remain in the premises on match day. This shall apply to all the members of the teams’ delegation that will have access to Zone 1 and Zone 2 of the match venue or stadium.**
 - b) All other teams’ delegation members who shall not have complied with this provision, shall if being a part of the total allowable maximum of a delegation of 50 members, even if he/she were to serve in an official capacity for his/her team in the discharge of the match not be allowed to enter in Zone 1 and Zone 2 but instead be ushered to enter in Zone 3, where match participants who do not qualify to enter into Zone 1 or Zone 2 be allocated.
 4. All participating football clubs/teams shall indemnify, defend and hold EFA or PLE, and all of its officers, directors, employees, representatives, agents and other auxiliary persons free and harmless against any and all liabilities, obligations, losses, damages, penalties, claims, actions, fines, expenses (including reasonable legal expenses) of whatsoever kind or nature resulting from, arising out of, or attributable to, any non-compliance with these Rules and Regulations by the participating football clubs/teams, their team delegation members, their affiliates and any third parties contracted to the participating football clubs/teams.
 5. Unless otherwise stated in these rules and regulations, each participating football club/team hosting a match and on entering to participate in the competition shall automatically undertake to and shall be responsible for amongst other things:

- a) Guaranteeing, planning and implementing law and order as well as safety and security in stadiums and other relevant locations in conjunction with the relevant authorities. The applicable stadium safety and security regulations shall apply;
 - b) Ensuring that all measures taken in relation to team travel, transport, accommodation (where applicable), logistics, match preparation and the match itself are in line with the requirements set by the relevant authority(ies) and government;
 - c) Appoint a COVID-19 Compliance Officer over and above the Team Doctor in accordance with the COVID-19 regulations and applicable COVID-19 protocols as prescribed by EFA.
 - d) Completing the football specific COVID-19 screening tools, having at least three (3) consecutive days screening of all the delegation members, as mandated by the COVID-19 regulations or protocols and submitting it to the relevant EFA and PLE authority.
 - e) Accept that all administrative, disciplinary and refereeing matters related to the competition shall be dealt with by PLE or EFA in compliance with the relevant EFA and/or FIFA regulations;
 - f) Participate with the best possible team in all matches of the competition in which their team is scheduled to take part;
 - g) Accept and fully comply with EFA's and/or the PLE's right to sub-license the right to use on a non-exclusive basis, in perpetuity and free of any charge, any of their records, names, photographs and images (*including and still and moving representation thereof*), which may appear or be generated in connection with the participation of the team delegation members of all participating football clubs/teams in accordance with the relevant Media and Marketing regulations for competitions. To the extent that EFA's and/or the PLE's to use and/or EFA's and/or the PLE's right to sub-license the right to use any of the records, names, photographs and images may fall in the ownership and/or control of a third party, the participating football club/team and their team delegation members shall ensure that such third party waives, pledges and unconditionally assigns and/or transfers to EFA and/or the PLE with immediate effect, with full title guarantee in perpetuity and without any restriction, any such rights to ensure EFA's and/or the PLE's unfettered use as set out above;
 - h) Play all matches until conclusion of the competition.
 - i) Observe the principles of fair play.
6. The league competition shall be played as a two-legged league with clubs playing each other on a home-and-away basis and the club shown first (*left side*) on each fixture shall be the home and/or host club.
 7. Points for the league shall be awarded as follows:
 - a) Three (3) points for a win.
 - b) One (1) point for a draw.
 - c) Zero (0) for a loss.
 8. A fixture programme of all matches shall be prepared and issued to the clubs by the PLE and shall be adhered to by all clubs unless prior and written permission has been granted by the PLE for a club to deviate therefrom.
 9. The host club will advise the PLE office of the venue, date, and starting time of their match at least four (4) days before the date of the match, failing which the PLE may apply its own discretion to fixture the said game. Provided that the host team will still carry out hosting obligations where the match or competitions organizers or relevant authorities in the light of the Covid-19 protocols or any other reason have decided to change some or all of the provisions herein.

10. In turn, the PLE office shall ensure that the away club is aware of the fixture (date, venue, and starting time). Such information shall be communicated to the clubs by telephone or facsimile or e-mail to the designated club official, at least two (2) days before kick-off of their respective matches.
11. The home club shall be responsible for ensuring that the field of play is ready, the grass or turf is properly cut, the lines are properly marked, the nets are secured and flag poles are in place, where applicable floodlights are functional at least two (2) hours before the scheduled commencement of the match. Failure to comply shall mean that the team would have failed to fulfill its fixture and therefore shall be deemed to have caused the abandonment of the game, shall, if found guilty of such an offence lose the match, with three (3) points and three (3) goals awarded to their opponents and further be fined not less than **E 20, 000.00** by the DC.
12. The Match Officials shall conduct a pre-match inspection of the facilities including the pitch, dressing rooms, at least 1 ½hrs before the scheduled commencement of a match with the hosting club or as may be determined by the official match countdown protocol.
13. The home club/host club shall deliver to the League representative or Match Commissioner the keys to all facilities such as the visiting club's dressing rooms, referees changing rooms, etc. at least two (2) hours before the scheduled commencement of the match.
14. The host club shall ensure that all points of entry or as may be designated by the League Representative are operational two hours before the scheduled commencement of the match; and a violation shall be punishable by a summary fine of **E10, 000.00**.
15. The home club shall ensure that the sitting arrangement for fans and/or supporters of both clubs is properly demarcated and marked.
16. Where matches have been fixtured as a double header or more, in observance of the Covid-19 protocols, arrival and departure times shall be done in such a way that the first and/or second match participants shall depart within 15 minutes after the conclusion of the match. The following match participants shall not arrive earlier than stipulated arrival time for their matches as specified in the match countdown or any other regulation or protocol covering this subject. **Failure by a football club to comply with this regulation as articulated, the club shall be summarily fined for this violation, a fine of E10, 000.00.**
17. Failure by the hosting club to comply with any of the requirements outlined in 9, 10 and 11, above, the club shall be summarily fined by the PLE for each violation, a fine of **E 2, 5 000-00** for each violation.

Article 4: STARTING TIMES OF MATCHES

1. The dates and venues of matches shall be fixed by the Chief Executive Officer or designated officer in his/her absence, of the League who may delegate his powers to any League official.
2. Clubs shall be notified by the League of all fixture's changes in writing by no later than Twenty-Four (24) hours before the schedule start of the match. Such notification shall include the date, time and venue when the said fixture will be played.

3. Should any club wish to request a change to a fixture, such request must be submitted at least Three (3) days before the schedule start of the match. Fixtures will only be amended in extreme circumstances, at the discretion of the PLE.
4. Save and except where permission to change a fixture has been applied for and given in terms of Article 4.2 and 4.3 above. No fixture may be changed in any manner whatsoever with the exception that the PLE shall have the right to alter fixtures in his sole discretion.
5. A club shall name the ground at which it prefers to play its home fixtures, as well as an alternative home ground. In this regard, if the League is of the opinion that it may be impractical to play a match at that venue, for any reason whatsoever then the League may at any time prior to any match under its auspices, fixture such match at an alternative venue or alternatively postpone such fixture.
6. If for any reason a club is unable to play its home fixture at its home ground, the League may order the club to play a fixture at a ground selected by the club as its alternative home ground or at an alternative venue determined by the League. All reasonable costs of whatsoever nature occasioned by the change shall be paid by the original home club.
7. The onus of securing a venue shall be on the home club, and save and except for Force Majeure, the club's failure to secure a venue shall be regarded as misconduct, and the club shall be deemed to have failed to fulfill its fixture/s and shall be deemed to have caused abandonment of the game. The club shall, if found guilty of such an offence lose the match, with three (3) points and three (3) goals awarded to their opponents and further fined not less than **E15,000.00** by the DC.
8. Should a match be abandoned by the Referee due to an electricity power failure in a match played under floodlights or due to Force Majeure, then the match will be replayed at a date, venue and time stipulated by the PLE. The gate takings of the replayed match shall be shared between the two clubs having deducted the percentage due to the League, stadium and Match Officials' costs.
9. Each club shall sign a pre-match form to be provided by the PLE 48hrs before the scheduled time of the match furthermore the team official from each club shall report to the PLE at the venue of the match at least 120 minutes before the scheduled start of the game to enable pre-match meeting, determination of dressing rooms to be used by a toss of a coin as well as the inspection by the PLE Covid Official of the Covid-19 Test Results of the Players and official. Failure to report to the PLE Official shall be penalized with a summary fine of E5,000.00 by the PLE
10. Each club shall be at the card checking point ready for checking seventy minutes before the scheduled start of the match or as may be determined by the official countdown protocol of the match. The PLE official will inform the clubs of any delay and further inform them of the new card checking time.
11. Failure of a football club to report, as in 4.10 above, shall be summarily fined an amount of **E 5, 000.00** by the PLE.
12. The card checking point shall normally be the dressing rooms of the stadium, and all clubs shall use such dressing rooms as directed by the Match Coordinator or Match Officials. Failure to comply with the officials' directive of using the dressing room shall render the club guilty of contravening this rule and liable to a summary fine of **E 5, 000-00** by the PLE.

13. At all stadiums, clubs shall adhere to instructions given by the Match Coordinator or Match Officials regarding the use of facilities. It shall be deemed an offence for clubs to ignore or not follow the instructions of the officials on this matter. Any club found guilty of contravening this rule shall be liable to a summary fine of **E 5, 000.00** by the PLE.
14. Each registered club shall have three sets of contrasting uniforms, for home and away fixtures and a neutral kit. The colours must be registered with the PLE office and be adhered to by all clubs. In cases of colour clashes, the away or visiting club shall be required to change uniform. Failure to comply with this rule may result in the game being abandoned or called off and if the game is abandoned or called off, the offending club shall be brought before the DC and if found guilty shall be fined an amount of not less than **E10 000-00** and further lose the match with three points and three goals awarded to their opponents.
15. Any club reporting for card checking within fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled start of the match, shall be summarily fined an amount of **E 15 000-00** by the PLE.
16. Any club reporting for card checking after fifteen minutes (15) minutes after the scheduled start of the match will result in the match being called off. The offending club shall be liable to a disciplinary hearing and if found guilty shall be fined an amount not less than **E 20 000-00** and shall further be deemed to have caused the abandonment of the match and shall further lose the match, with three points and three goals awarded to their opponents.
17. After the card checking formalities have been completed, clubs will be led into the field of play by the referees and/or match officials. No club will enter the field of play without being led into the field if play and Any club contravening this rule shall be summarily fined an amount of **E 5 000-00** by the PLE.
18. A Club causing a delay to kick-off after all formalities have been done will be summarily fined an amount of **E5,000.00** by the PLE.
19. Any club walking out, refusing to play a match or refusing to honour a fixture duly issued by The PLE and/or whose fan(s), supporter(s), official(s) invade the field of play and/or throw missiles/objects into the field of play which would result in the match officials stopping the game shall be deemed to have caused the abandonment of the match, and shall, if found guilty of such an offence shall lose the match, with Three (3) points and Three (3) goals awarded to their opponents, and a suspension of not more than Three (3) months imposed on them plus a fine of not less than **E 20,000.00** by the DC.
20. The referee's report, where a match had already kicked-off or Match Commissioner's and/or Match Coordinator's report in the event that the match had not kicked-off, shall provide conclusive proof as to which club abandoned or caused abandonment of the match.
21. **Week 24, 25, and 26 of the second-round fixtures will be scheduled by the PLE in its sole discretion.** However, all other timelines on communicating fixtures to teams still hold, as defined in these rules, depending on the state and to safeguard the integrity of the competition, the period of controlled fixture may be extended such that it starts earlier than the 20th week.
22. Any match which is not played or which is abandoned or any withdrawal – except in cases of force majeure recognized by EFA – may lead to the imposition of sanctions against the relevant football club(s) by the EFA Disciplinary Committee in accordance with the EFA

Disciplinary Code or any other applicable or equivalent code, over and above those provided for in these regulations.

23. The COVID-19 pandemic and related circumstances are not, in and of themselves, considered cases of force majeure in respect to the implementation of this competition, unless or otherwise stated by EFA. However, examples of circumstances resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic that may be submitted to the EFA for consideration as cases of force majeure include the following:
- a. The national authorities announce just before a match is scheduled to be played, restrictions that prevent the match from being staged;
 - b. A participating football clubs/team and its team delegation members is not permitted to leave its place of domicile as a result of a complete lockdown or closed travel and there are no alternative provisions or exceptions for travel allowed;
 - c. A participating football club travelling to a place or an area where a match is scheduled to be played is refused entry and returned to its place or area of original domicile;
 - d. There is an insufficient number of match officials available to referee the match, even after alternative options to have enough match officials available have failed to materialize;
 - e. EFA has the sole discretion to determine cases of force majeure.
24. In any case, all matches scheduled to be played or replayed (*where applicable*) shall be executed in compliance with these regulations, including the COVID-19 regulations, protocols and any other directives and decisions relating to the subject.

Article 5: MATCH OFFICIALS AND PLAY

1. The referees committee shall appoint the match officials to officiate in a match.
2. In the event of the non- availability of the Match Commissioner to discharge such a function, the Referee of the match in question, shall facilitate.
3. The match officials of each match shall arrive at the field of play two hours before the scheduled start of the match and if he fails, he shall be subjected to disciplinary action in terms of the Referees Code of Conduct.
4. Any referee who takes the field of play, one to fifteen minutes after the scheduled start of the match shall be subject to disciplinary action in terms of the Referees Code of Conduct. Failure to comply shall lead to the PLE, deducting 30% of the match official's allowances due for the match. The PLE Official's report shall provide conclusive proof as to the time of arrival of the Match Commissioner.
5. If 15 (fifteen) minutes after the scheduled start of the match, all referees fail to arrive, and The Match Commissioner or League Representative cannot provide substitute referees, the Match Commissioner shall call off the match. The referees scheduled for this match shall be subject to disciplinary conduct in terms of the referee's code of conduct.

6. Before the commencement of each match; the Match Commissioner, the Fourth (4th) official and the captains of both clubs shall check the players licenses against their identity cards and team lists. Where a team cannot present the players license, (i.e. playing card), the game shall proceed provided a photograph of each player standing in between the match commissioner and the referee is taken is taken for verification and confirmation by the licensing office that the player was eligible to play for that particular team. The defaulting team shall be liable to pay a sum of E1,000.00 for each missing license. In the event the player is deemed not to have been eligible to play, the team of the player will lose the match in question to the opposing club by three points, three goals. If the score in the field of play was such that the goal difference was superior than three (3) goals in favor of the opposing club, the score in the field of play shall be maintained. The defaulting club shall further be summarily fined E10,000.00
7. After a completion of the card checking formalities, the Match Commissioner and the Referees shall formally lead the two clubs into the field of play. It shall be an offence for a club to refuse to follow Match Official's instruction. Any club that refuses to follow the referees' instruction shall be summarily fined an amount not exceeding **E 15, 000.00**.
8. The Match Officials may allow the clubs a period of warm up, if time and circumstances permit. It must be noted that clubs can go into the field of play for warm-up before inspection by the referees.
9. The Match Commissioner or Referees shall allow and lead teams to return into field of play during half time of the match. It shall be an offence for a team to return into the field of play without the referee's or match commissioner's permission and the club shall be summarily fined **E 10, 000.00**. The club shall enter the field of play to their own half that the team will defend during the second half of the game.
10. The Referee shall at the end of the match, compile and sign a match report in duplicate for the PLE which should contain the following:
 - a) Name of the competition;
 - b) Date and venue of the match;
 - c) Names of the referee and assistants referees;
 - d) Names of clubs;
 - e) Names of club captains;
 - f) Times of the start, half time and full time;
 - g) Half time and full-time score;
 - h) Substitutes used by each team;
 - i) Cards (red and yellow) issued to players or officials during the match for misconduct;

- j) Any event that the referee considers worth reporting such as misconduct or violent behavior by any club/s, player/s, club official/s, fan/s etc.
 - k) Signature of the referee.
11. The Referee's report presented in hard copy or through electronic means, is to reach the offices of the PLE by 1600hrs (4:00pm), the second working day following the match in question. Failure to adhere to this timeframe and to comply with Article 10 above shall NOT render the contents of the reports null and void.
 12. Any Referee that fails to submit his report within the period as stated in this Article 11 or write a report as prescribed in Article 10 shall have 30% of his/her allowance for that match deducted and paid to the PLE. Further delays in submitting the report will result in a further 10% deduction for each day that the report is delayed.
 13. The Match Commissioner shall also prepare a match report and submit same to the PLE within the timelines prescribed in Article 5 (11) above stating any relevant material facts regarding the match. Both the Referee's report and that of the Match Commissioner shall provide conclusive proof pertaining to any circumstance(s) regarding the match. The reports, either the original or duplicate (bearing the PLE received stamp) shall be admissible evidence during the DC hearings.
 14. The PLE may require the Match Coordinator to provide a report regarding any occurrence(s) at the stadium in addition to the reports referred in this Article of the Rules. The Match Commissioner, referee, Match Coordinator, shall report all occurrences of misbehavior by club(s), player(s), official(s) fans(s) etc. during and after the game and such report shall be conclusive proof pertaining to any circumstance (s) regarding the match during and after the game.
 15. At the end of every game, the clubs' coaches shall give Media an interview and such place will be identified by the Fourth official or the Match Commissioner or the Match Coordinator. Failure or refusal by a Coach to give such interview, the club shall be summarily fined an amount of **E 7,500-00** by the PLE.
 16. The clubs' coaches dress code shall be either formal, smart casual or clubs' tracksuits. Failure to comply with this provision, the coach shall be summarily fined **E 2, 000.00**, and the club whose coach has violated this provision shall be fined **E 2, 000.00**.
 17. All people in the technical area shall be qualified or licensed in terms of the prevailing qualifications and applicable licenses, as determined by the EFA. A summary of **E 5, 000** per individual having violated this provision shall be effected.
 18. All matches shall be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game in force as laid down by the International Football Association Board (IFAB). Each match shall last 90 minutes, comprising of two periods of 45 minutes, with a half-time interval of 15 minutes.
 19. The number of substitutions in accordance with the temporary amendment to Law 3 of the Laws of the Game, as approved by the IFAB, and in respect of the league competition, five (5) substitutions are permitted as follows:

- a) During the match, each team:
 - i. May use a maximum of five (5) substitutes;
 - ii. Has a maximum of three (3) substitution opportunities;
 - iii. May additionally make substitutions at half time.
 - b) Where both teams make a substitution at the same time, this will count as a used substitution opportunity for each team. The use of return substitutes is not an option for senior competitions.
20. If the referee is prevented from carrying out his/her duties, such referee shall be replaced by the fourth official. The same applies for either of the assistant referees if a reserve assistant referee is not appointed. In such a case, a minimum of three match officials are needed to referee the match.

Article 6: SERIOUS PLAYER/CLUB MISCONDUCT

1. DISMISSALS

- a) Any player dismissed from the field of play by the referee (i.e. "red carded" or sent off, including dismissal as a result of two (2) yellow cards awarded in the same match) for the first time in any season shall be suspended from participation in the next one (1) match to be played by his team in any official competition under the auspices of the PLE and this Rule shall duly be affected by any subsequent amendment by FIFA as the case may be. Any club fielding a suspended player shall be summarily fined **E 10, 000.00** by the PLE, and this shall preclude any affected team to lodge a protest in terms of these rules.
- b) For each subsequent occasion that a player is suspended during the same season the period of suspension shall be increased by one (1) match from the suspension previously served.
- c) Any period of suspension or part thereof of which remains outstanding at the end of a season must be served at the start of the following or next season.
- d) The League shall be responsible for keeping all records relating to cautions, dismissals and suspensions shall be publicized and only the League's records shall be considered accurate and binding.
- e) This Rule shall only be applicable to cautions and dismissals that occur in a match forming part of an official competition of the League. For the purposes of this Rule, "official competition" shall not include Charity cup fixtures.
- f) The provisions of Rule 6.1 a) to d), above shall also apply to club officials who are dismissed from the field of play, including the technical area. When under suspension club officials may not enter the confines of the field, including the technical area or official area. The Referee will be the sole judge of what constitutes the technical area in question while the Match Commissioner shall determine what constitutes the official area at any given match.
- g) Where a player or official transfers to a new club during a period of suspension, cautions and dismissals, the counting shall also transfer to the new club from the time when the player or official becomes eligible for the new club.

2. CAUTIONS

- a) Any player who accumulates three (3) cautions (i.e. "yellow cards") in any season shall be suspended from participation in the next one (1) match to be played by his team in any official competition under the auspices of the PLE.
- b) Where a player receives a red card in a match any yellow card received by the player in that particular match shall not be counted for the purposes of this Rule.
- c) Once the player has served the suspension the player's total number of accumulated cautions will revert to zero (0) and counting will resume again. The cycle of counting of cautions and the resulting suspension may be repeated any number of times in a season.

- d) Players who have accumulated cautions and are transferred to a new club within the same playing season shall carry over such cautions to the new club.
- e) A player who has received a red card will automatically have his Playing Card withdrawn by the PLE. The officiating referee shall be responsible to collect the player's playing card and submit it to the PLE together with his match report. The playing card will only be returned on completion of the period of suspension to his club upon production of an authentic Bank deposit slip for payment of the retrieval fee of **E 100.00** to the PLE.
- f) It is the responsibility of each club to ensure that all its players are eligible to play in this competition. Any club contravening this rule shall be deemed to have fielded a defaulter.
- g) Notwithstanding any provision in these rules, the PLE reserves the right to charge any player and/or club that contravenes Article 2.9, and if found guilty the offending club shall lose three points and three goals from the total number of points accumulated by the offending club. The offending player may further be suspended up to three months.
- h) Any club fielding a defaulter shall, upon protest by the Opposing team, be found guilty of misconduct and shall be liable to **lose the game forfeiting three points and three goals to the opposing club and shall further be fined not less than E 5, 000.00 (five thousand Emalangen) payable within 21 days**. The player if found guilty shall be suspended for all matches until he is eligible to play.
- i) All football clubs of the National First Division League must utilize the services of qualified football coaches in terms of the requirements laid down in the Coaching regulations or policy and any circular or directive (which are compulsory and binding) from the EFA on the subject. A club that knowingly utilizes a coach who does not conform to all the licensing requirements shall be liable to a fine of not less than **E 7, 500.00** on the first instance and **a further two (2) match ban without the services of a properly licensed coach, other than the one banned for and further disciplinary action in accordance with this circular and the coaching regulations**.
- j) A repeat of a violation by a club for the second and subsequent times in a season carries a fine of not less than **E 15, 000.00**, a further four (4) match ban without the services of a properly licensed coach other than the one banned and further disciplinary action in accordance with these rules, the coaching policy and a circular on such if applicable.
- k) A club losing the head coach or coach during the course of the season will be given a grace period of one game/match to search for a coach. However, during the grace period, the club must appoint an acting coach, who is a qualified coach in terms of the EFA Coaching Qualifications, whose application to act as a coach for the maximum interim (grace) period, stated in these rules, must have been similarly done as that of the substantive coach (i.e. application for acting with the EFA). After the grace period, failure by the club to have an appropriately licensed coach shall result in the deduction of points from the defaulting team, until the team secures an appropriately licensed coach in terms of these rules.

- l) In view of the COVID-19 regulations, in particular the implementation of matches during the COVID-19 induced environment, the following scenarios shall apply where a player or member of a team delegation has tested positive:
- i. As a principle, all COVID-19 positive cases will be isolated or quarantined in terms of the prevailing COVID-19 Protocols, as prescribed by government and/or pertinent health authorities;
 - ii. Where less than five (5) players have tested positive for the coronavirus (COVID-19 positive test), the affected players will be isolated or quarantined in terms of the COVID-19 protocols with the match continuing to play as scheduled;
 - iii. Where at least five players have been discovered to have tested positive for the coronavirus (COVID-19 positive test), the scheduled match shall be postponed and played at a later date, as will be determined by the competition organizers;
 - iv. A positive COVID-19 test for a team delegation member, other than (a) player(s), does not warrant a scheduled match to be postponed, unless it is established that the number of positive tests of such members are at least five (5) and that such members were in close contact with the players and/or team delegation qualifying to enter into Zone 1 and Zone 2 of the match venue.
- m) As a principle and regulation to the list of players for a match the following shall be guidelines to the feature of players for matches:
- i. The start list must contain a minimum of 14 players and a maximum of 23 players, one of which must be a goalkeeper. If there are fewer than 14 players available, the PLE and/or EFA will consider the matter and may make exceptions on a case by case basis. The 11-first named players must start the match, and the remaining players on the start list are designated as substitutes. All goalkeepers and captains must be identified as such. At least one player must be a goalkeeper, up to a maximum of three, with the number 1 shirt reserved for one of them.
 - ii. If any of the first 11 players (starting players) named on the start list are not able to start the match for any reason, they may be replaced by any of the available substitutes. The replaced player(s) may no longer take part in the match, and the quota of substitute players shall be reduced accordingly. During the match, up to five (5) substitutes may still be replaced.
 - iii. If any of the substitutes named on the start list are not able to be fielded for any reason, the player(s) concerned may not be replaced on the bench by an additional player, which means that the quota of substitutes shall be reduced accordingly. During the match, up to five players may still be replaced.
 - iv. Although no longer eligible to play as a substitute, any injured or ill player (*unless it is COVID-19 related case*) who was removed from the start list may be seated on the substitute's bench, and if so, would then also be eligible for doping control selection.
 - v. No more than 23 people (11 officials and 12 substitutes) shall be allowed to sit on the substitutes' bench. The names of these officials must be indicated on the "Officials on the Substitutes' Bench" form to be provided to the match commissioner and must include, as a minimum, the head coach, medical doctor, COVID-19 compliance officer and team administrator. A suspended player or official will not be allowed to sit on the substitutes' bench.

Article 7: OTHER UNSPORTING BEHAVIOUR AND VIOLENT MISCONDUCT

1. Any club whose member(s), player(s), official(s) marshal(s) or supporter(s) engage in unsporting or violent misconduct either before, during or after a match shall be liable to punishment. The following offences shall be punishable in the following ways:
 - a) Invading the pitch before, during, and after a game by a supporters), fan(s), a marshal(s) or spectator(s) (unless authorized by official in a final) in celebration of a goal(s) - a summary fine of **E10, 000.00** by the PLE.
 - b) Threatening by conduct or words to assault or attempt to assault a referee, PLE official, player, club official, marshal, supporter, fan, spectator- a minimum fine of **E10, 000.00** and a maximum fine of **E20, 000.00**. In addition, the offending club shall be ordered to compensate the victim for any financial loss incurred due to the assault by the DC.
 - c) Assaulting a referee, PLE official, player, club official, marshal, supporter, fan, spectator or the use of excessive force shall be punished with a fine of not less than **E 20 000-00** by the DC. In addition, the offending club shall be ordered to compensate the victim for any financial loss incurred due to the assault
 - d) Uttering abusive or obscene or derogatory words, spitting or emission of saliva onto any person or directed towards a person - a minimum of **E 5000.00** and a maximum of **E 20, 000.00** by the DC. This should also include players where players can incite fans, opposing players and officials, etc.
 - e) Use of provocative or insulting gestures or signals, unbecoming behavior or conspiracy or attempt to act to bring football into disrepute or inciting people to behave in a manner that brings the game of football into disrepute - a minimum of **E 5, 000.00** and a maximum of **E 20,000.00** by the DC.
 - f) Throwing objects of any kind onto the field of play or its surroundings or unto any person(s) thus assaulting or attempting to assault and invading the field of play - a fine of not less than **E10 000.00** by the DC.
 - g) Failure to control fan(s), supporter(s), official(s), marshal(s) - a fine not less than **E25,000.00** by the DC.
 - h) Maliciously damaging or attempting to damage property in the stadium – a fine of not less than **E 5,000.00**
 - i) Committing any act of violence of whatsoever nature not provided for in these Rules – minimum fine of **E 10,000.00**
 - j) To directly or indirectly interrupt, obstruct or disturb the normal proceedings of a match before, during or after the match – a fine of not less than **E 5,000.00** by the DC
 - k) Failing to conduct themselves in an orderly fashion and committing any other act of unsporting behaviour – a minimum fine of **E 7,500.00**.

8. The DC shall have power to sit over a case even if the other party is not represented if the DC is satisfied that such party was informed of the date, time and venue of the hearing. The decision of the DC shall be binding to all parties concerned herein.
9. In the event that a party has been properly served with the notice to sit for a hearing, and the matter has to be postponed due to the party's unavailability, the DC may order the said party to pay the costs related to the postponement of the case. Such hence proof of payment produced before the sitting.

Article 8: POWERS OF THE DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

1. Notwithstanding the above-mentioned disciplinary procedures, the DC shall have the liberty to use the disciplinary measures as outlined in the Rules and Regulations of the Statutes of the EFA.
2. Where these Rules do not prescribe any sentence for any transgression, misconduct or unsporting behavior, the DC shall exercise its discretion in meting out an appropriate fine or such other sentence as provided in the PLE and/or EFA Constitution. The amount of fine in such instances shall not be less than **E 5,000.00**.

Article 9: SPONSORSHIP TERMS AND COMMERCIAL RIGHTS

1. As a principle, EFA, in conformity with the EFA Statutes is the original owner of all rights emanating from all competitions in its territory, as a collective whole, as well as from any other related events coming under its jurisdiction, without any restrictions as to content, time, place and law. These rights include, among others, all kinds of financial rights, audiovisual and radio recording, reproduction and broadcasting rights, multimedia rights, marketing and promotional rights incorporeal rights (such as those pertaining to emblems) as well as rights arising under copyright law whether currently existing or created in the future, subject to any provision as set forth in specific regulations.
2. All participating football clubs must comply with the Media and Marketing regulations, including sponsorship terms and they must ensure that their members, officials, players, delegates and other applicable third parties also comply with these regulations.
3. All participating clubs shall wear outfits or soccer jerseys with the appropriate markings of the MTN logo on one sleeve of the soccer jerseys and on the shorts during all matches of this league competition. The badges shall be those designed and specified by MTN, and obtainable from the PLE Office in Mbabane.
4. Any club(s) that contravenes Article 9 (1) hereinabove shall be liable to a sanction of a Summary Fine in the amount of **E 5,000.00**.
5. All participating clubs shall avail any of their members/players to MTN for advertising Campaigns at no cost to the MTN Group. The use of players from the National First Division League by the sponsor for advertising purposes shall be negotiated via the PLE office on a case by case basis.
6. No club shall have direct communication with the sponsor for whatever reason. Any breach of this rule shall be punishable with a fine of not less than **E 20, 000.00**.

Article 10: PROTESTS, APPEALS AND FEES

1. Clubs shall submit duly completed team list in eight (8) duplicates to the match officials on arrival at the match venue or stadium prior to the start of play, as regulated in these rules. Such list shall include:
 - a) The full names of Eleven (11) players starting the match;
 - b) The full names of Seven (7) substitutes which may be utilized during the match;
 - c) The full names-of seven (7) club officials positioned in the technical areas for the match.
2. Any protest involving defaulters shall duly be made immediately after inspection of both teams at the dressing rooms or such other allocated point of inspection in terms of these rules otherwise the protest shall be rendered null and void.
3. Any other protest shall be lodged with the referee at the time when it occurs; otherwise it shall be null and void. A decision taken by the referee during the course of the match shall not be subject to protest.
4. Both captains and the referee must sign the protest for acknowledgement. Should any captain refuse to sign the protest, the Referee and/or the Match Commissioner shall indicate that in his/their report(s).
5. Club captains shall not refuse to sign a protest lodged by another club. Offending clubs shall be summarily fined an amount of **E5, 000.00** by the PLE.
6. Confirmation of a protest in writing plus supporting evidence in duplicate must reach the PLE office **WITHIN TWO WORKING DAYS**, excluding Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays, after the match otherwise it shall be null and void. A bank stamped deposit slip for a **NON-REFUNDABLE PROTEST FEE** of **E 2 000-00** shall accompany the confirmation. The team that loses the protest shall be required to pay costs of the sitting as calculated by the PLE. A protesting club that fails to confirm its protest or abandons it shall be summarily fined **E 2, 500.00** by the PLE.
7. Upon receipt of a protest, the PLE shall charge the offending party with committing the offence complained about and institute a disciplinary hearing as soon as possible, wherein the said protest shall be tabled before the DC for determination. The protesting club bears the onus to prove its case.
8. **The DC shall dismiss the protest if it is deemed frivolous or vexatious on the face of it, failing which the Disciplinary hearing shall proceed.**
9. The protesting club shall have the right to appeal against the decision of the DC not to entertain the protest or dismiss the protest in terms of these Rules.
10. The protesting club shall have the right to be presented and give evidence before the Disciplinary Committee hearing the charge/s against the offending party. The Premier League of Eswatini may subpoena any party under its jurisdiction and/or request the EFA to subpoena such person to give evidence or produce any book, paper or document at the hearing. The protesting club and the offending party shall have the right of appeal to the EFA Appeals Committee against any decision of the Disciplinary Committee.

11. A club may be represented by a person of their choice as per the FIFA and EFA statutes or regulations, provided the representative is not a former employee of the organization or if a former employee, he/she must have been at least three years out of the employment of the organization.
12. In the event that a party has been properly served with the notice to sit for a hearing and the matter has to be postponed due to the party's unavailability, the DC is empowered to order the said party to pay the costs related to the postponement of the case; that includes the sitting and travelling allowances of all concerned or in the event a club requests for postponement.
 - a) Such costs shall be calculated by the office and shall be payable to the office within seven (7) calendar days unless the next sitting has been set within a period less than the 7 days where the payment shall be made before the next sitting.
 - b) In the event the party having requested for the postponement fails to pay within the stipulated timeframe the case shall proceed with the club fined not less than E2,000.00 in addition to the costs in question.
13. A club which shall need to produce evidence from the office or any other EFA Member shall do so through the office and shall request such in writing.
14. Any club that has been found guilty shall pay all costs of the hearing (*e.g. DC sitting, prosecutors, their travelling expenses, half protest fee over and above the fine imposed*).
15. Any club that is not satisfied with the decision of the DC shall have the right to appeal. An appeal shall be made to the EFA Appeals Committee within **FIVE WORKING DAYS** after the written verdict of the DC; otherwise it shall be null and void. A non-refundable fee amounting to **E 2, 000.00** must accompany the appeal.
- 16. *Complaints shall not be treated as a protest nor shall it warrant for a hearing as it assists administration as they manage the competition.***

Article 11: LEAGUE POSITIONS, RELEGATION AND PROMOTION OF CLUBS

1. The number of points accumulated at the end of the second round shall determine positions in this competition. The final and officially completed log shall be binding on all clubs and officials, and will be used for the purpose of resolving disputes that should arise due to any unforeseen circumstances. A copy of the final and complete log shall be sent to all clubs by the PLE.
2. The football club accumulating the most points on completion of the league shall be declared the winner.
3. In the case of failure of 2 above, positions in the log will be determined by the head to head encounter(s) on the tying teams.
 - a) The head-to-head rule has as an inherent rule, the away-goal-rule. In the away-goal-rule, the team that has scored more goals "away from home" wins, if the total number of goals scored by each team are otherwise equal. This away-goal-rule shall also be

utilized in the determination of the log standings under the head-to-head rule at any point of the procession of the league matches, irrespective of whether the league has finished or not or the teams tying on points have played a single match.

4. In the case of the failure of 2 and 3, the positions on the log will be determined by the best goal difference.
5. If 2, 3 and 4 are not decisive, the club having scored the most goals shall be declared the winner.
6. If 2, 3, 4 and 5 fail to produce a clear position, and then a play-off match which shall proceed straight to penalties, if the game ends in a draw in regulation time (*90 minutes*) shall be played by the contesting clubs to determine the winner at a neutral venue.
7. The **six (6)** clubs that have the least number of points on completion of the league and/or positioned ninth (9th), tenth (10th), eleventh (11th), twelfth (12th), thirteenth (13th) and fourteenth (14th) in the final log standing, shall be relegated from the National First Division League to the Regional Super Leagues and the clubs finishing in the top **two (2)** positions of the MTN National First Division League shall be promoted to the Premier League Division. In determining the clubs to be relegated the format provided in Article 11(3), 11(4), 11(5), 11(6) herein shall be used.

Article 12: PROVISIONS

The provisions of Article 11 and any other provisions related, is subject to any amendments and/or directives or decisions on the structure of the League as may be pronounced by the PLE or EFA, where applicable.

Article 13: PRESS STATEMENTS AND REPORTS

1. Each club shall be responsible for advertising its matches through the media. Clubs shall furnish the PLE with the name, addresses, E-mail, telephone and fax numbers, of the person who shall act in this capacity.
2. The PLE Chief Executive Officer shall be entitled to publish in the press, or in any other media, reports of activities related to the PLE League.
3. Clubs, officials, supporters, fans shall not publish or make statements that may bring the sponsors, the PLE and all its Sub-Committees into disrepute. Anyone or any club that commits this offence shall be brought before the DC for disciplinary action, and if found guilty, the person(s) and/or the club(s) shall be fined an amount not exceeding **E 10 000-00** by the DC.
4. A club shall release the coach and the captain to attend a compulsory pre and post-match interview at a venue determined by the league. Failure to attend by anyone of the two individuals shall attract a summary fine of **E 2,500.00** per incident, which shall be paid by the club. The fine shall increase by sum of **E 2,500.00**, for each repeated transgression by the offender.

Article 14: CLUB LICENSING AND COACH LICENSING

1. Principle

As a principle, all football clubs of the Premier league must conform to the Club Licensing and Coach Licensing Regulations requirements to participate in the 2021/2022 Football Season competitions.

2. All Club Licensing application, registration, implementation, monitoring and sanctioning shall be done exclusively by the EFA in terms of the prevailing regulations for Club Licensing in line with the requirements of the CAF Club Licensing System. The PLE may decide to have additional requirements aimed at enhancing the professionalization of clubs and competitions under its auspices.

3. All football clubs of the Premier League must utilize the services of qualified football coaches in terms of the requirements laid down in these rules, the Coaching regulations or policy and any circular or directive (*which are compulsory and binding*) from the EFA on the subject.

4. Applicable Coaching Licenses for Premier League in the 2021/2022 football season

a. All Coaches of the NFDL Football Clubs, shall possess, **as a minimum requirement, the following:**

i. **All Head Coaches must possess the CAF B license or CAF C license and must be members of the EFA (*through the recognized Coaches Association*)**, to qualify to be licensed and sit in the Technical Area (*bench*) during a football club's official competitions matches for the 2021/2022 football season.

ii. **All Assistant Coaches must possess the CAF C license and must be members of the EFA (*through the recognized Coaches Association*)**, to qualify to be licensed and sit in the Technical Area (*bench*) during a football club's official competitions matches for the 2021/2022 football season.

iii. Fitness and goalkeeper coaches should possess, as a minimum, basic certificates in physical conditioning or fitness coaching and goalkeeping respectively.

b. All Coaches, irrespective of whether they are Head Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Fitness Coaches or Goalkeeper Coaches shall submit the valid Coach License Cards (*Card with License Number*) in the name of the football club in question (*attained from the EFA in terms of the applicable coaching regulations or directives and payment of a E50.00 license fee with the EFA*), at the card checking point of the team/club, as is the case for team players. It is therefore a must, that all coaches shall carry their Valid License Cards to their club's respective matches.

i. For the 2021/2022 season; Coaches or football clubs/teams whose Assistant Coaches have not yet attained the minimum CAF C License may be allowed to coach on condition they fulfill the following exclusive criteria:

1. The coach is attending or in an ongoing CAF C License; or

2. The coach has submitted his/her registration to the EFA Technical Director for training towards the attainment of the CAF C License with proof of payment for the course fees, in possession of both the club and coach. A receipt of payment generated from the EFA Finance Office is the authentic proof of payment.
- ii. Upon satisfaction of the above requirements, coaches shall be accorded Provisional Licenses to coach as student coaches; licenses which are also attainable from the EFA Licensing department upon payment of E50.00 license fee.
 - iii. Names submitted for the purposes of training towards the minimum required license must have been received by the EFA and approved (*with a license card*) before the first match of the club in the current season or the match for which the coach has been engaged to coach the club (*in the case of newly hired or engaged coaches or those coaches engaged in the middle of the season or competition*), at the latest.
- c. Failure by both the club and the coach to conform to these directives shall deprive the club from having the service of its coach at the technical bench and attract further sanctions for any match the club plays without a qualified licensed coach, or presence of an ineligible coach, sanctions which are articulated in this article. The same applies to the coach in question.
 - d. Coaches that do not conform to all of the above-mentioned requirements (*i.e. all the provisions of article 14 (1-4) in full, shall be ineligible*) and that such ineligible coaches and the club/team that will utilize such coaches or violate the provisions of these rules shall be sanctioned in terms of these rules and any other sets of regulations and directives as they relate to the subject.

5. Membership of coaches with the EFA

- a. As a principle, all coaches practicing as coaches of clubs or teams, irrespective of whether they are student coaches, in competitions under the territory of the EFA, must be members of the EFA.
- b. All coaches are therefore expected to have been fully paid up members of the EFA, through the Eswatini Football Coaches Association (EFCA) at the instance of the registration of the coach for the 2021/2022 season and License Card (*Coaching License*).
- c. In view of the fact that a body or an organization for coaches, recognized and in membership with the EFA already exists, in the frame of the Eswatini Football Coaches Association (EFCA), coaches must have subscribed and be up-to-date with their subscriptions or membership by the effective date. The registry of coaches with the EFCA shall provide proof of the status quo on the membership database of coaches in the country.

- d. Coaches who shall be found not to have conformed to this requirement shall not be allowed to sit in their Technical Areas or specific areas in the vicinity of the field of play during their respective clubs' official matches, until the requirement has been met in full. Coaches are liable to further sanctions as may be determined by these rules and/or the Coaching Regulations and Policy and/or disciplinary body of the EFA in view of the EFA, CAF and FIFA statutes, regulations, directives and disciplinary code as they relate to this subject.

6. Restriction of coaches and ban from the team's Technical Area at the match venue

- a. In principle, the Technical Area is under the control of the Head Coach and only the Head Coach and/or his/her assistant(s) are allowed to make movements or coaching gestures around the Technical Area in line with the Laws of the Game and in pursuit of their professional work.
- b. All other personnel, that is, medical attendants, players and other officials and support staff are not allowed to make any movements, unless specifically required to do so in conformity to the Laws of the Game, i.e. players required to warm-up; or medical assistants requested by the referee or match officials to attend to an injury; or officials required to perform a specific function by the referee or match officials in pursuit of the Laws of the Game.
- c. No coach and/or his/her assistants who have been banned shall be allowed to sit in the Technical Area or be allowed to make movements or sit in specific areas of the match venue. In this view a coach who has been banned from coaching his club in a particular match shall sit in the general stands.
- d. A suspended coach shall not sit in the VIP areas of the match venue or any other areas dedicated for such in venues without such demarcations.
- e. A coach sitting in the general stands shall not be expected to be seen to make coaching gestures and/or shouting or communicating instructions to his technical bench or team in the field of play. The coach shall further not be allowed into the dressing rooms or an area designated for such at half-time or access to the team at the instance of any recess provided in terms of the Laws of the Game.
- f. Executive Committee members of EFA, EFA member associations (*with the exception of the coaches association*) and leagues; full-time employees of EFA, member associations and leagues shall not be allowed to practice as coaches for football clubs, even if they qualify. No license shall be granted to them.

7. Requirements for Foreign Coaches

- a. As a principle, all foreign coaches who are sought or who wish to practice coaching in the country at the level of the Premier League shall be expected to possess the minimum of a CAF B License.

- b. Further to the above and as a principle, foreign coaches, are expected to have applied for and obtained work permits from the Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini (*Immigration Department of the Ministry of Home affairs*) before being allowed to practice as coaches of football in the country.
- c. Foreign Coaches, over and above their requirements of obtaining work permits and other immigration requirements in conformity to the laws of the country, shall be expected to abide by all the requirements of these rules and that of the Coaching Policy and directives relating to such.
- d. EFA shall not grant permission to a foreign coach who shall not satisfy the requirements of these rules and that of the Coaching policy and applicable directives. In the quest to ascertain the qualifications of a foreign coach, the EFA, if not satisfied with the qualifications presented before it, may decide to give the coach an Oral, Theoretical and Practical Examination equivalent to the CAF B License, to determine if the coach may be allowed to practice coaching in the territory of EFA.
- e. Neither the coach nor the club which seeks services of the coach shall refuse the undertaking of an examination. A coach who refuses shall automatically be banned from practicing as a coach in any league of the country whilst the club, if found guilty, shall be liable to a fine and any further sanctions as may be determined, relating to this subject.

8. License, Validity, Suspension and Withdrawal

- a. A Coaching License (*Card*) is valid for only one football season.
- b. All coaches shall be expected to make an application for a renewal of a License in the following season and at the beginning of every subsequent season.
- c. A license may be suspended or withdrawn on account of a default or a misrepresentation by the coach as may be determined by the disciplinary body or licensing body.
- d. A license shall be automatically suspended on the suspension of a coach, on sanctions relating to football.
- e. A license shall be withdrawn on account of perpetual violation of the provisions of these rules, the coaching regulations and any other applicable directives on the subject.

9. Sanctions to defaulting Coaches and/or Clubs

- a. In principle, all coaches and clubs shall be expected to observe the directives and requirements of these rules, regulations, the Coaching Policy and directives (*circulars*).

- b. The following shall be the sanctions for the violation of the provisions and/or directives of these rules, the coaching policy and applicable directives. Further sanctions shall be contained in the Coaching Policy Document.
- i. A coach that has been banned from sitting in the Technical Area or banned from coaching his club in a particular match (*as stated in these rules*) shall sit in the general stands. No coach that has been banned from coaching a club shall sit in the VIP areas of the match venue.
 - ii. A banned coach sitting in the general stands shall not be seen to make coaching gestures and/or shouting or communicating instructions to his technical bench or team in the field of play for the duration of the match for which he or she is banned.
 - iii. The coach shall further not be allowed into the dressing rooms at half-time nor access to the team at half time, in the cases of venues where there are no dressing rooms nor access to the team at the instance of any recess provided in terms of the Laws of the Game.
 - iv. A Coach failing to observe sections 9 (b) (i-ii), of these article rules, shall be liable to a fine of not less than **E5, 000.00** and be further banned for two (2) matches when he or she finally conforms to the requirements. Further sanctions as may be determined by these rules, the Coaching Regulations and Policy and/or disciplinary body of the EFA in view of the EFA, CAF and FIFA statutes, regulations, directives and disciplinary code as they relate to this subject may be meted to the coach.
 - v. A repeat of a violation by a coach for the second and subsequent times in a season carries a fine of not less than **E7, 500.00**, a further four (4) match ban once conformed and further disciplinary action as stated in 9 (b) (iii) shall be meted to the coach.
 - vi. A club that knowingly utilizes a coach who does not conform to all the licensing requirements applicable to its respective league as stipulated in these rules, the Coaching Policy, circular and/or directives on this subject, shall if found guilty, be liable to a fine of not less than **E7, 500.00**, a further two (2) match ban without the services of a properly licensed coach, other than the one banned for and further disciplinary action in accordance with this circular and the coaching regulations.
 - vii. A repeat of a violation by a club for the second and subsequent times in a season carries a fine of not less than **E12, 500.00**, a further four (4) match ban without the services of a properly licensed coach other than the one banned and further disciplinary action in accordance with these rules, the coaching policy and a circular on such if applicable.

- viii. A club losing the head coach or coach during the course of the season will be given a grace period of one game/match to search for a coach. However, during the grace period, the club must appoint an acting coach, who is a qualified coach in terms of the EFA Coaching Qualifications, whose application to act as a coach for the maximum interim (*grace*) period, stated in these rules, must have been similarly done as that of the substantive coach (*i.e. application for acting with the EFA*). After the grace period, failure by the club to have an appropriately licensed coach shall result in the deduction of points from the defaulting team, until the team secures an appropriately licensed coach in terms of these rules.
- ix. Perpetual defaulting coaches will have their licenses withdrawn, if already in possession, be black listed and face expulsion from all football activities under the auspices of EFA.
- x. Perpetual defaulting clubs will have their licenses withdrawn or meted with sanctions as may be decided by the relevant authority, including the deduction of points for matches of a league competition or disqualification in the case of a knockout competition or tournament.

10. Waiver of requirement in a particular match

- a. If for reasons beyond the control of the coach, the registration office has not produced a coach license card, the structure responsible for the monitoring and implementation of these directives shall be accorded, by the EFA, with a communication waiving the possession of the card or applicable requirement for only the specific match(es) affected.
- b. A waiver, may be accompanied by specific conditions which shall be conformed to without fail and shall be binding to all parties.

11. Monitoring and Implementation body

- a. EFA has tasked the Premier League, the Referees Committee, the Competitions Committees and match officials to monitor the application and observance of these rules, Coaching Regulations and Policy and circular, as they relate to this subject, where all coaches shall be expected to produce their licenses with the Match officials of their respective matches for verification.
- b. It shall be the duty of the coach and/or club in question, to ensure that a coach's license is valid and verified for every match.
- c. The match commissioners, match supervisors or equivalent or officials tasked for this purpose, are expected to complete, together with the other match reports, a report on the coaching licensing application and submit it to the regional association office, for use in the disciplinary action on the coaches and clubs with respect to the subject of club or coach licensing.
- d. EFA reserves the right to do spot checks and//or mete sanctions, where omissions have occurred.

Article 15: GENERAL

1. Entrance fees at all matches shall be a minimum of **E20-00** and a maximum of **E50-00**. Children below the age of 12 years will be charged half. For high profile single header games; the charge shall not exceed **E40.00** and/or in case of a double header; the entrance shall not exceed **E50.00**.
2. The PLE shall collect 20% of the gross gate takings from all matches played in this tournament.
3. The home clubs shall always provide adequate change at all their matches.
4. The host club shall provide enough personnel to collect gate takings in all their fixture games. These gate men/women must be available at the stadium with the change at least Two hours before the start of the game.
5. In the event of any dispute or conflict arising from these rules then the Constitution of the PLE shall take precedence and if the PLE Constitution does not assist then the EFA Rules and Regulations and/or the EFA Statutes shall take precedence.
6. Failing to attend an official event and or official meetings shall result in a summary fine of five thousand Emalangenzi (**E 5.000.00**)

Article 16: PAYMENTS TO THE PLE

1. All clubs are directed to utilize the PLE Cheque Accounts held at Swazi Bank, Mbabane Branch when making payments; For affiliation and registration; **77022831533** ; for protest fees, **77022831517**; and for fines, **77022831576**.
2. After making a deposit, the club should proceed to the PLE office with the stamped Bank deposit slip where they shall be furnished with a PLE receipt by the Accounts/Administration Officer, as acknowledgement of payment/deposit. **CHEQUE DEPOSITS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE.**
3. Fines imposed by the PLE to club (s), player (s) and/or official (s) are payable within twenty-one (21) days. The PLE shall have power to suspend the defaulting club (s), player (s) and/or official (s) for non-payment. Such dues are subject to the normal rates of interest as may be determined by the PLE.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1:

PRIZES AND AWARDS

Position	Teams	Prize	
1 st Position(End of Season)	1	180, 000.00	
1 st Round Winner	1	50, 000.00	
2 nd Position *	1	80, 000.00	
3 rd Position	1	50 000.00	
Participation fee (12 X E 20 000)	12	240 000.00	
Player of the month @ E 2, 000	8	N/A	16,000.00
Player of the Year Award	1		9, 000.00
Top Goal Scorer Award	1		6, 000.00
Coach of the Tournament	1		4, 000.00
Pro of the Tournament			4,000.00
Fair Play			5,000.00

NOTE: All prizes in respect of club performances shall be presented at the end of the tournament during the prize presentation ceremony.

Appendix 2: 2021/2022 SEASON MATCH COUNT DOWN (Standard Match Day Program)

Time (before kickoff)	Activity
180 min (3hrs)	Working personnel arrive
170 min (2h50m)	Branding in the stadium
80 min (1h20m)	Arrival of Match Officials at the Stadium
75 min (1h15m)	Arrival of teams at the stadium
65 min (1h05m)	Submission of team list to Match Commissioner
50 min	Teams inspection by 4 th Official and Match Commissioner
40 min	Teams and Match Officials warm-up
10 min	End of warm-up and returning to dressing rooms
8 min	Substitute players and match officials leave dressing rooms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check on players equipment in the tunnels
5 min	Teams leaving the dressing rooms for the game. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pre-kick off formalities. - Teams photos
00:00	Match Kick off
50 min (half time)	Fumigation of Goal Posts
120 min (2hrs) after kickoff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Departure within 15 minutes of match end by teams' delegations and applicable officials. • Post-match interviews in designated areas not exceeding 10 minutes and to be done at 5 minutes after the end of the match.

NB:

1. Teams and Officials are expected to leave the stadium within 15 minutes after the conclusion of the match.
2. No team is allowed to remain and watch the other match in case where double or more headers are concerned.
3. No team is allowed to arrive earlier than the stipulated time of its respective scheduled match.