

2025-26 Suffolk FA County Cup Rules

Rules changes for the 2024-25 season have been **highlighted**

1) COUNTY CUP ENTRY

- a) The County Cups shall be competed for annually and shall be competed for by Suffolk FA affiliated Clubs. The Suffolk FA Football Services Team reserves the right to reject any entry as it sees fit.
- b) Except for youth teams aged Under 16 and below, a Club must enter all of its teams into the respective County Cup as per Appendix C or D. A Club shall not enter more than one adult team into the same County Cup competition unless the Football Services Team agrees that this is permitted.
- c) Eligible teams who do not wish to enter a County Cup must pay the exemption fee indicated in Appendix A(1). An exemption claim must be made in writing to the Football Services Manager, together with payment of the fee for the exemption from the relevant competition before the 30th June annually.
- d) Application and payment for entry into the County Cups must be made via the affiliation process by 30th June. Suffolk County FA reserves the right to amend the entry deadline to a later date if it is deemed necessary to do so and Clubs shall be made aware of the deadline if this occurs. Entries into youth competitions may be made up to 17th August.
- e) A Club who has entered into a County Cup via the affiliation process confirms that they will conform to the Rules & Regulations and that they accept, abide by and shall implement the decisions of the Football Services Team.

2) CONTROL & MANAGEMENT

- a) Suffolk County Cup competitions shall be managed and administered by the Football Services Team. All competitions shall be played on a knock-out basis unless otherwise agreed by the Football Services Team. At the discretion of the Football Services Team early rounds of Cups may be played on a league basis rather than a straight forward knock-out basis. Should a competition not be played on a knock-out basis, clubs will be issued with appropriate instructions as to the format and rules of that competition.
- b) All communications between Suffolk FA and clubs must be conducted via the Club Secretary. Except where otherwise mentioned all communications shall be addressed to the County Cups Manager, who will conduct the correspondence of the competition and keep a record of its proceedings.
- c) The Football Services Team shall apply, act upon and enforce the Rules of the Competition and shall have jurisdiction over all matters affecting the Competition, including any not provided for in the Rules.
- d) For incidents of failing to fulfil a fixture and fielding an ineligible player a charge shall be issued to the offending Club, which shall be given seven days from the date of notice to reply to the charge and given the opportunity to:
 - i) Accept or deny the charge
 - ii) Submit in writing a case of mitigation, or
 - iii) Put their case before a panel of three Suffolk County FA Council members
- e) All decision of the panel shall be binding subject to the right of appeal in accordance with Rule 19 (Appeals) Decisions of the panel shall be notified in writing to those concerned within 7 days.
- f) All fines and charges shall be paid within 21 days of the date of invoice. Any Club failing to pay by the set deadline shall be fined as detailed in Appendix A(2). Further failure to pay the additional sum shall result in the team being excluded from the County Cup.

- g) The business of the County Cups may be transacted either in writing or by email.
- h) It shall be the duty of any Club to release its ground for a County Cup Semi Final or Final tie.

3) WITHDRAWALS

- a) Any team that has entered a County Cup and withdraws before their first match is played, yet continues to exist, shall be considered to have made a request for exemption and the Club shall contribute a sum equal to the exemption fee, minus any entrance fee already paid. If the competition does not require an exemption fee then the entrance fee shall be forfeited to the Association.
- b) Any Club withdrawing or not fulfilling the fixture in a County Cup shall be deemed to have conceded the tie to its opponents, unless exceptional circumstances as decided by the Football Services Team prevail.
- c) A Club intending to withdraw from a County Cup shall give notice of its intention to do so to the County Cups Manager in the first place. Once agreed, the club must then advise the secretary of the opposing Club and the match officials, where appointed.
- d) A Club withdrawing or failing to fulfil any County Cup fixture shall be charged by the Football Services Team in accordance with Rule 2d for failing to fulfil a fixture and may be fined as detailed in Appendix A(2).

4) CLUB ELIGIBILITY

- a) County Cup matches for a team take precedence over their league and league cup matches.
- b) All teams play their recognised league/division strength team, appropriate to the league/division for which entry to the relevant County Cup is allowed, with exception of Clubs competing in the FA Premier League or Football League.
- c) If a Club has more than one adult team that is eligible for entry into the same County Cup, the most senior team must enter unless the more senior team enters a County Cup competition of a higher status (see rule 4e).
- d) For County Cups at age groups U18 and below, Clubs are able to enter more than one team into the relevant competition if they so choose. Once a player has played in a County Cup age-group, a player is not permitted to move between teams within the same competition.
- e) Any Club wishing to enter a team into a competition of a higher status, must make application to do so to the Football Services Team no later 30th June, prior to the season commencing. A reserve team of a club cannot play in a higher level County Cup competition than the first team, an A team cannot play in a higher level County Cup competition than the reserve team and a B team cannot play in a higher level County Cup competition than the A team, without the prior approval of the Football Services Team.
- f) Eligibility notes for specific County Cups are as listed in Appendix C or D.

5) QUALIFICATION OF PLAYERS

- a) i) No adult player shall compete for more than one team, subject to rule 5b, in any Suffolk County Cup in any one season unless it is of a higher status (not applicable to Youth teams). If a player plays for another team in a higher status Suffolk County Cup, that player becomes immediately ineligible for all lesser status County Cups for the remainder of the season.
ii) Youth players can play either for one team which play league fixtures on Saturday's or one team which play league fixtures on a Sunday in the same County Cup age-group.

- b) A player who competes in a Saturday County Cup competition shall also be eligible to compete in a Sunday County Cup competition, provided they are a bona-fide registered member of the participating teams.
- c) A player named as a substitute in a County Cup match who is not used, is not deemed to have made an appearance and therefore their status remains unaffected.
- d) For players in full time secondary education:
- i) Priority must be given at all times to school and school organisation activities
 - ii) The availability of children must be cleared with the Head Teachers (except for Sunday matches)
 - iii) To play open aged adult football a player must have achieved the age of 16
- e) The members of each team must have the following qualifications:
- i) Each player shall be a registered member of the Club before taking part in any County Cup competition. A player shall be deemed to be registered only if their registration has been accepted by a League of which their Club is a member.
 - ii) In Semi-Final and Final ties, all players must have been registered with their Club and League at least 21 clear days prior to a County Cup's Semi-Final or Final match, as appropriate.
 - iii) Any player who is suspended for an initial match, may play in a re-arranged match in the County Cups, provided their suspension has been served.
 - iv) For the Senior Cup only – any player who has participated in a total of 8 or more competitive matches above Step 6 of the National League System, for any teams or clubs during the current season, shall be deemed ineligible.
 - v) For the Junior, Senior Reserve, Primary, and all Sunday County Cup competitions only – any player who has participated in a total of 8 or more competitive, higher-grade matches than the County Cup competition in question, as detailed in Appendices C & D, for any teams or clubs during the current season, shall be deemed ineligible.
 - vi) Incidents of playing an unregistered or ineligible player shall be dealt with in accordance with Rule 2d.
 - vii) The following cup competitions will not contribute towards any players 8 matches:
 - FA Cup
 - FA Trophy
 - FA Vase
 - FA Sunday Cup
 - Any League-based Cup
 - viii) Any team found guilty of playing an unregistered or ineligible player shall forfeit the match and be subject to further action as deemed appropriate by the Football Services Team.
- f) ***Competition Specific Player Qualification***
- Suffolk Senior Cup** – A player, who in the current season has played in the Suffolk Premier Cup, shall not be eligible to play in this competition.
- Suffolk Senior Reserve Cup** – A player, who in the current season has played in the Suffolk Premier Cup, Senior Cup, shall not be eligible to play in this competition.
- Suffolk Junior Cup** – A player, who in the current season has played in the Suffolk Premier Cup, Senior Cup or Senior Reserve Cup, shall not be eligible to play in this competition.
- Suffolk Primary Cup** – A player cannot play in the Suffolk Primary Cup if under FA contract. A player, who in the current season has played in the Suffolk Premier Cup; Senior Cup; Senior Reserve Cup, or Junior Cup shall not be eligible to play in this competition.

In addition, if a player has played in the Suffolk Premier Cup or Senior Cup in the previous season he is also ineligible to play in this competition.

Sunday Competitions – Players under FA contract may not play in these competitions

Suffolk Sunday Cup – This competition is open to any qualified player taking part in recognised Sunday football.

Suffolk Sunday Shield – This competition is open to any qualified player taking part in recognised Sunday football who has not played in the Suffolk Sunday Cup in the current season.

Suffolk Sunday Trophy – This competition is open to any qualified player taking part in recognised Sunday football who has not played in the Suffolk Sunday Cup or Suffolk Sunday Shield in the current season.

Suffolk Veterans Cup – This competition is open to any registered playing member of a Club who is aged 35 years or over on the date of the fixture and according to a new Appendix E.

Suffolk Veterans Shield – This competition is open to any registered playing member of a Club who is aged 35 years or over on the date of the fixture and according to a new Appendix E and who have not completed in the Veterans Cup in the current season.

Suffolk Women's Cup – This competition is open to any female player aged 16 years or over on the date of the fixture.

YOUTH COMPETITION QUALIFICATION		
Competitions	Age Criteria	Match Ball Size
Boys & Girls U18s	Players who at midnight on 31 st August in the current season have attained the age of 15 years but are still under the age of 18 years.	5
Boys & Girls U16s	Players who at midnight on 31 st August in the current season have attained the age of 14 years but are still under the age of 16 years.	5
Minor Cup & Girls U15s	Players who at midnight on 31 st August in the current season have attained the age of 13 years but are still under the age of 15 years.	5
Boys & Girls U14s	Players who at midnight on 31 st August in the current season have attained the age of 12 years but are still under the age of 14 years.	4
Boys & Girls U13s	Players who at midnight on 31 st August in the current season have attained the age of 11 years but are still under the age of 13 years.	4
Boys & Girls U12s	Players who at midnight on 31 st August in the current season have attained the age of 10 years but are still under the age of 12 years.	4

6) DRAWING OF TIES

- a) If a competition is being played on a knock-out basis, the entries shall be placed in one, or multiple lots in cases of geographical draws, and drawn in couples. The two clubs drawn together shall compete with each other. The names of the winning teams in that round shall be drawn together in the same way and so on until the final tie is played.
- b) In drawing the ties the Clubs may be drawn geographically, until only 16 remain after which point the draw may be open.
After each draw the competing Clubs shall be informed of the draw together with the date on or before which the tie shall be played.

7) CLUB COLOURS & KIT NUMBERS

- a) Every Club must register the colours of its kit at the time of affiliation and play in these colours for their County Cup matches. Goalkeepers must wear colours that distinguish them from all other players and the referee. No player, including the goalkeeper, is permitted to wear black or very dark shirts.
- b) A team not being able to play in its normal colours shall notify the colours in which they play to its opponents at least 6 days before the match provided there is no clash.
- c) If, in the opinion of the referee, two teams have the same or similar colours then the away team shall change colours. Any team not having a change of colours or delaying the kick off by not having a change shall be fined as detailed in Appendix A2.
- d) All clubs entering County Cup competitions are required to have shirts numbered on the reverse thereof and those numbers must correspond to those players submitted on the official team sheet.

8) VENUES

- a) The venue of each match shall be the home ground of the first drawn team of each tie. (Subject to Rule 21a)
- b) If the ground of the first drawn club is not available due to adverse ground conditions or more Senior County Cup games or FA competitions, on the date fixed, the match shall be redated. If floodlights are available and both Clubs agree, they may move the fixture prior to the date of the round. Any such proposed changes must be made in writing to the County Cups Manager.
- c) If the ground of the first drawn club is not available for any other reason, and the ground of the opposing team is available, then the venue of the tie shall be switched to the ground of the opposing team. In the event of this rule taking effect, the second named team then become the home team and are responsible for payment of pitch fees and the match official(s).
- d) The Football Services Team have the power to decide whether a pitch and/or facilities are suitable for matches in the competition and may order a Club to play its matches on another ground, if deemed necessary.
- e) The appointed referee shall have the power to decide as to the fitness of the ground in all matches and their decision shall be final.
- f) In severe weather the staging Club may request a postponement to the Football Services Team who may authorise such postponement or call in the services of a local senior referee, not being a member of the staging Club, to decide on the fitness of the ground. If considered unfit, the staging Club shall immediately contact the visiting Club, appointed match officials and the County Cups Manager of the postponement. Such action should be taken no later than 10am for matches with afternoon kick offs and not later than two hours prior to the scheduled kick off time of any other match.

9) DATES OF ROUNDS & KICK OFF TIMES

- a) Unless the Football Services Team otherwise direct, all ties shall be played on or, if the participating Clubs agree, before the published County Cup dates, subject to the following;
Where the staging club has a ground with floodlights then upon request from both clubs, permission shall be given to play midweek prior to the date of the next round.
- b) Any postponed matches shall be played within fourteen days of the date of the original published date of the fixture, unless exceptional circumstances as determined by the Football Services Team prevail.
- c) The official time for commencing County Cup competition ties shall be as follows:
Saturday & Sunday PM Competitions
2:00 pm – September, October

1:30 pm – November, December, January

2:00 pm – February, March, April

Sunday AM Competitions

10:30am – All months of the year

Matches under floodlights

3:00pm – Afternoon matches

7:45pm – Evening matches

- d) Any club wishing to change kick off times must make a written request to the County Cups Manager.
- e) For any Sunday competition, providing both Clubs agree the kick off time may be scheduled for a time no later than in Rule 9c for Saturday PM competitions.
- f) The referee shall report to the Football Services Team any instance where a match does not commence on the scheduled kick off time. Clubs shall be fined for late starts unless a satisfactory explanation is provided by the offending Club.
- g) Thirty-five days' notice must be given of closed dates and any request to postpone a fixture. This rule does not apply to the Senior Cup or Premier Cup who cannot close dates or postpone a fixture. Notice to be given to County Cups Competitions Manager.
- h) Permission shall be given for alteration of date in cases of Senior Reserve, Junior and Primary Cup ties where the ground of the Club entitled to stage the fixture is engaged for a Senior Competition match, and the Football Services Team shall re-date the matches.

10) DURATION OF MATCHES

All matches shall be played for the durations as per the table below.

Competition	Duration	Half Time Period	Extra Time	Penalties
All Adult County Cups	2 x 45 minute halves	Shall not exceed 15 minutes*	No	Yes
U17 & U18 County Cups	2 x 45 minute halves	Shall not exceed 15 minutes*	No	Yes
U15 & U16 County Cups	2 x 40 minute halves	Shall not exceed 10 minutes*	No	Yes
U13 & U14 County Cups	2 x 35 minute halves	Shall not exceed 10 minutes*	No	Yes
U12 County Cups	2 x 30 minute halves	Shall not exceed 10 minutes*	No	Yes

*Except by consent of the referee

Note: For all adult County Cups (except the Suffolk Premier Cup and Suffolk Senior Cup) and in U17 and U18 County Cups, should exceptional circumstances arise and both Clubs and the referee agree, the match duration may be reduced to 2 halves of 40 minutes.

11) ABANDONED MATCHES

- a) The Football Services Team shall review all matches abandoned in cases where it is consequent upon the conduct of either or both teams. Where it is to the advantage of the competition and does no injustice to either Club, the Football Services Team shall be empowered to order the score at the time of the abandonment to stand.
- b) In all cases where the Football Services Team is satisfied that a match was abandoned owing to the conduct of one team or its Club member(s) they shall be empowered to remove that team from the competition.

In cases where a match has been abandoned owing to the conduct of both teams or their Club member(s) the Football Services Team shall be empowered to remove both teams from the Competition.

- c) In the event of a match being abandoned where neither Club is at fault, the match shall be restaged on the ground on which it was abandoned, except for Semi-Finals and Finals of a competition, where the game shall be restaged on a ground as determined by the Football Services Team.
- d) In the event of a match being abandoned, both competing Clubs shall inform the County Cups Manager using the contact information provided on the County Cups Guidance Notes, within three hours of the decision to abandon the match being taken with the reason as to why the match has been abandoned. Failure to comply with this rule will result in a fine as per Appendix A(2).
- e) Clubs hosting a semi-final or final match shall issue a ticket on admittance to each spectator which, in the event that the match is abandoned before half time, can be redeemed for a refund or reissued for free admission if the match is ordered to be replayed. In the event that the match is abandoned during or after the half time interval the Club hosting the game is not obliged to offer free admission or a refund.

12) GROUND REQUIREMENTS

- a) The dimensions for the field of play for each competition are as indicated below:

Adult County Cup Competitions		
Competition	Length	Width
Suffolk Premier Cup / Suffolk Senior Cup	Min: 110 yards (100 metres) Max: 130 yards (120 metres)	Min: 70 yards (64 metres) Max: 100 yards (90 metres)
All Other Adult Cups	Min: 100 yards (90 metres) Max: 130 yards (120 metres)	Min: 50 yards (44 metres) Max: 100 yards (90 metres)
Youth County Cup Competitions		
Competition	Pitch Dimensions	Recommended Goal Size
Boys U17 & U18 (11v11)	Minimum 100 x 50 yards Maximum 130 x 100 yards	Height: 8 feet Width: 24 feet
Boys U15 & U16 (11v11)	Minimum 90 x 50 yards Maximum 110 x 70 yards	Height: 8 feet Width: 24 feet
Boys U13 & U14 (11v11)	Minimum 90 x 50 yards Maximum 100 x 60 yards	Height: 7 feet Width: 21 feet
Boys U12 (9v9)	Minimum 70 x 40 yards Maximum 80 x 50 yards	Height: 7 feet Width: 16 feet
Girls U17 & U18 (11v11)	Minimum 100 x 50 yards Maximum 130 x 100 yards	Height: 8 feet Width: 24 feet
Girls U15 & U16 (11v11)	Minimum 90 x 50 yards Maximum 110 x 70 yards	Height: 8 feet Width: 24 feet
Girls U14 (11v11)	Minimum 90 x 50 yards Maximum 100 x 60 yards	Height: 7 feet Width: 21 feet
Girls U12 & U13 (9v9)	Minimum 70 x 40 yards Maximum 80 x 50 yards	Height: 7 feet Width: 16 feet

Note: Goal Nets and a RESPECT line shall be used in all Youth County Cup matches.

- b) **Floodlights**
Where floodlights are used they must be provided to an average lux reading of at least 120. No single reading can be less than one quarter of the highest reading so as to ensure an even spread of light.
- c) **Suffolk Premier Cup & Suffolk Senior Cup Specific Requirements**
 - i. Grounds shall include a barrier between the field of play and the spectators or otherwise in the Senior Cup be efficiently roped in. Where temporary

barriers or rope are used, the barrier shall be at least one metre from the touchline in all cases and shall be at least two metres from the touchline where this is possible.

- ii. Grounds shall provide separate areas adjacent to the pitch for the sole use of team officials, medical staff, and substitutes. The areas shall be designated 'Home' and 'Away', have direct access to the pitch and be located as near as possible equidistant from the halfway line and contain seating (team benches) for those located within it.
- iii. Grounds must have a technical area which shall extend to one metre from either side of the designated seating area and extends forward to a distance of one metre from the touchline. Markings shall be used to define this area.
- iv. The number of officials and playing members located within the technical area and seated on the team benches shall not exceed nine with exception of the Final of each competition where the number shall not exceed eleven.

d) **Football Turf (3G) Pitches**

Football Turf pitches are allowed in the County Cups providing they meet the required performance standards and are listed on the FA's register of Football Turf pitches. For Clubs playing at Step 7 and below a pitch must be tested (by a FIFA accredited test institute) every three years and the results passed to The FA. If deemed suitable for use the pitch shall be added to The FA's register. The home Club are responsible for ensuring all participants wear the correct footwear and are responsible for confirming these details when notifying their opposition of the details of the match.

13) ARRANGEMENT / POSTPONEMENT OF MATCHES

- a) The home Club shall give details in writing (or email) of the full details of the location of the ground, kit colours, kick off time and any other relevant details to the Secretary of visiting Club and match official(s) no later than six days prior to the date of the match. Failure to comply with this rule shall result in a fine as per Appendix A(2).
- b) If a match is under threat of postponement for any reason both clubs must keep their players available until the County Cups Manager or designated Suffolk FA representative has confirmed the postponement. Only the County Cups Manager or designated Suffolk FA representative can confirm the postponement of a game.
- c) In the event of a match being postponed on more than one occasion, the Football Services Team may reverse the venue if it is deemed a reasonable act to get the match played. In these circumstances the new home team shall be responsible for payment of the pitch fee and match official(s).

14) SUBSTITUTIONS

- a) In the Premier Cup a team may use **five** substitute players at any time from a maximum of five substitute players named to the referee on the team sheet prior to the commencement of the match. Once a player has been substituted in these competitions, they cannot then be used to replace another player.
- b) In the Senior Cup a team may use five substitute players at any time from a maximum of five substitute players named to the referee on the team sheet prior to the commencement of the match. Once a player has been substituted in these competitions, they cannot then be used to replace another player.
- c) In all other County Cups, a team may use five substitute players at any time from a maximum of five substitute players named to the referee on the team sheet prior to the commencement of the match. A player who has been substituted themselves then becomes a substitute and may replace another player at any time on a repeat substitution basis.

- d) In all County Cup competitions, substitutes must be named to the referee on the team sheet prior to the commencement of the match.

15) REPORTING RESULTS

- a) For the Premier Cup, Sunday Cup, Sunday Shield, Sunday Trophy and U18 Mid-Week Cup competitions (as these competitions involve teams who do not use the FA Full Time system or do not display players names for youth games) each Club shall give notice of the result with the full names of the players of its own team together with the mark awarded for the referee by either emailing the completed teamsheet to Countycups@suffolkfa.com or by posting it to Suffolk FA so that it is received within two days (excluding Sunday) of the date on which the match has been played. Clubs failing to comply with this rule are subject to a fine as detailed in Appendix A(2).
- b) In all other County Cup competitions Clubs shall give notice of the result with the full names of the players of its own team together with the mark awarded for the referee by completing the teamsheet with the mark awarded for the referee on Full Time within two days (excluding Sunday) of the date on which the match has been played, and either emailing the completed teamsheet to Countycups@suffolkfa.com or by posting it to Suffolk FA so that it is received within two days (excluding Sunday) of the date on which the match has been played. Clubs failing to comply with this rule are subject to a fine as detailed in Appendix A(2).
- c) The home Club shall text or email the result of their County Cup match to the County Cups Manager on the telephone number or email address provided on the guidance notes sent out with the competition draw and details, within one hour of the match finishing. Failure to do so shall result in a fine as detailed in Appendix A(2).

16) TEAM SHEETS

- a) Teams shall hand a copy of their team sheet to the appointed referee prior to the commencement of the match, which shall include the forenames and surnames of all players including substitutes. Referees shall retain the team sheets for administrative purposes for a minimum of 30 days.
- b) Teams shall hand a copy of their team sheet to the opposition in the presence of the appointed referee prior to the commencement of the match, which shall include the forenames and surnames of all players including substitutes.
- c) In the Premier Cup and Senior Cup team sheets shall be exchanged as per the above rules no later than 45 minutes prior to kick off and must also include the team's colours and the colour of the goalkeeper's jersey.
- d) For Semi Finals (except Premier Cup and Senior Cup) the team sheet exchange must take place no later than 30 minutes prior to kick off. In the Final of all County Cups the team sheet exchange must take place no later than 45 minutes prior to kick off.
- e) For all County Cup matches prior to the Semi Finals (except Premier Cup and Senior Cup) the team sheet exchange must take place no later than 15 minutes prior to kick off.
- f) Referees MUST be issued with a team sheet from each team before the commencement of any game. If a referee is not provided with team sheets they shall NOT allow the match to commence until team sheets have been submitted. Team sheets MUST be legible to the referee.
- g) A person who is not named on the team sheet may not take part in the match.

17) REFEREES

- a) Registered referees shall be appointed in all County Cup matches by the designated Suffolk County FA Appointments Officer.
- b) Assistant Referees shall be appointed for all rounds of the Premier Cup, Senior Cup, Women's Cup and U18 Midweek Cup, and in the Semi Finals and Finals of all other

County Cup Competitions. Where an Assistant Referee is not appointed each Club shall supply a Club Assistant Referee. Clubs which fail to do so will be fined as per Appendix A(2).

- c) i. Fourth Officials shall be appointed in all rounds of the Premier Cup and for the Semi-Final and Final of all adult County Cups as indicated within Appendix A.
ii. Fourth Officials shall be paid direct by Suffolk FA and not by the Clubs.
- d) In the event of the non-appearance of the appointed Referee, the appointed senior Assistant Referee shall take charge and a substitute Assistant Referee be appointed by the two competing teams. In cases where there are no officially appointed Referees, the teams shall agree upon a Referee. An individual, who must be aged 16 years old or above for open-age, under 18, under 16, under 15 and under 14 competitions, thus agreed upon shall, for that game, have the full powers, status and authority of a registered Referee. Failure to appoint a Referee in the event of the non-appearance of an appointed Referee is not sufficient reason to postpone a game. Teams failing to appoint a match official may be removed from the competition.
- e) The appointed Referee shall have power to decide as to the fitness of the ground in all matches and the decision shall be final except where a local authority of landlord decrees that it may not be used.
- f) Subject to any limits/provisions laid down by the sanctioning Associations, Match Officials appointed under this rule shall be paid a match fee as shown in Appendix A(1). The home Club shall pay the officials their fees and expenses immediately after the match. Fourth Officials, where appointed, shall receive the appropriate Assistant Referee's fee.
- g) In the event of a match not being played because of circumstances over which neither Club has control, the match officials if present shall be entitled to half fee. Where a match is not played owing to one Club being in default, that Club shall be required to pay the officials, if they attend the ground, their full fee.
- h) A referee not keeping their engagement and failing to give a satisfactory explanation for their non-appearance may be reported to the Association with which they are registered.
- i) Each Club shall, in a manner prescribed from time to time by The Football Association, award marks to the Referee for each match and the name of the Referee and the marks awarded shall be submitted to the Competition on the Form provided. Clubs failing to comply with this rule shall be liable to be fined or dealt with as the Football Services Team decides.
- j) On completion of a County Cup match the Referee shall complete a Referees Discipline Report for each team, which the Referee shall hand to the appropriate team(s) within 15 minutes of the completion of the match.
- k) In the Final of a County Cup, match officials shall receive a memento in lieu of a match fee.

18) PROTESTS & COMPLAINTS

- a) All questions regarding eligibility, qualifications of players and interpretations of the rules shall be referred to the Football Services Team. Objections relevant to the dimensions of the pitch, goals, flag posts or other facilities at the venue shall not be entertained by the Football Services Team unless a protest is lodged with the Referee before the commencement of the match. Any Club lodging such protest and not proceeding with it shall be deemed guilty of a breach of this Rule and shall be dealt with accordingly by the Football Services Team.
- b) Except in cases where the Football Services Team decide that there are special circumstances, protests and complaints (which must include the full particulars of the grounds upon which they are founded) must be lodged in duplicate with the Football Services Team, within three days (excluding Sundays) of the match of occurrence to

which they refer. A protest or complaint shall not be withdrawn except by permission of the Football Services Team.

- c) Any dispute occurring between Clubs in the competition shall be referred for determination by the Football Services Team, whose decision shall be binding upon parties subject to Rule 19.
- d) No protest of any kind shall be considered unless the protesting Club has deposited a fee as detailed in Appendix A(3). This may be forfeited in whole or in part in the event of the complaining or protesting Club losing its case. The competition shall have power to order the defaulting Club or the Club making a losing or frivolous protest or complaint to pay the expenses of an enquiry or to order that the costs be shared by the parties.
- e) All parties to a protest or complaint must receive a copy of the submission and must be afforded the opportunity to make a statement at least 7 days prior to the protest or complaint being heard.
- f) All parties must have received 7 days' notice of a hearing should they be instructed to attend.
- g) Should a club elect to state its case in person they should forward a deposit as outlined in Appendix A(3) and indicate such when forwarding the written response.

19) BOARD OF APPEAL

Within 7 days of the posting of written notification of any decision of the Football Services Team, a Club, Official or Player against whom action is taken may appeal against such decision by lodging particulars in duplicate with the Chief Executive of Suffolk County Football Association, including the appeal fee as defined in Appendix A(3) for adjudication of a Board of Appeal. The grounds of appeal shall be in accordance with FA Rules. The Board of Appeal may order the appeal fee to be forfeited and shall decide by whom the costs of the appeal shall be borne. The decision of the Board of Appeal is final and binding on all parties concerned.

20) TROPHY OWNERSHIP

a) *County Cup Winners*

Clubs winning a County Cup shall be presented with the Cup following the match. Following the presentation ceremony the Cup shall be returned to the County FA Official in charge.

Clubs shall only be permitted to retain the Cup providing that proof of a stipulated level of insurance cover is received by the Football Services Team not later than 7 days prior to the match. Cups held by Clubs shall be returned to Suffolk County FA Headquarters no later than 1st March each year. In these circumstances the Club Chairperson and Secretary must sign an agreement as provided by Suffolk County FA. Failure to comply with this rule shall result in a fine as determined by the Football Services Team. All winning Clubs shall receive a Cup/Memento they can retain.

b) *Mementoes*

In addition to a trophy, the Association may present mementoes to all players, match officials and officially appointed ball boys and girls in the Final of a County Cup, and the cost shall be met by the Association. Additional mementoes shall be the responsibility of clubs contacting the County FA's supplier.

21) SEMI FINALS & FINALS

- a) The arrangements for Semi Finals and Finals shall be under the control of the Football Services Team. The gross receipts shall be the property of Suffolk County Football Association who shall be responsible for paying the expenses of the matches including those of the appointed officials, ground expenses, printing, advertising and other incidentals.

- b) For Semi Finals and Finals where a gate is taken or entry is by purchase of a ticket the hosting Club shall issue, without charge, a number of passes or tickets to the competing Clubs. The number and allocation of these passes shall be allocated by the Football Services Team.
- c) The surplus arising from the Semi Finals and Finals of the Premier Cup and Senior Cup ties shall be made into two pools, one for the Premier Cup and one for the Senior Cup. One third shall be taken by Suffolk County Football Association. The other two thirds of each pool shall be divided amongst the four Clubs taking part in that County Cup in the following proportions – one sixth to each losing Semi Finalist and one third to each Finalist.
- d) Arrangements for the Presentations at the end of all Finals shall be made by the County Cups Competitions Manager in liaison with officers from the hosting club and any County Representative appointed by the Football Services Team for such presentations.

22) ALTERATION TO RULES

All rules shall be revised by the Football Services Team on an annual basis and any alterations to the rules shall be approved by Council. The confirmed alterations shall be submitted for approval, amendment or rejection at the Suffolk County Football Association Annual General Meeting. Any member of the Association may propose alterations to the rules for the following season, however all proposals shall be forwarded to the Football Services Team by 31st January in the current season.

23) FINANCE

Gate Money

The net gate receipts of each match prior to the Semi Final ties shall be equally divided between the two competing Clubs as defined in Appendix B.

In the event of the gate receipts of a match not being sufficient to cover the expenses referred to in Appendix B, the first charge on the gate receipts shall be the match official fees and expenses to the extent of the gate receipts. For matches prior to the Semi Finals, ground and other expenses are the liability of the staging Club.

A full statement of gate collection and expenses of the match shall be submitted to the visiting Club within seven days of the match and settlement effected. All spectators not in possession of a valid pass shall pay admission to the ground if a gate is taken.

In cases where it is not customary to take a gate, a collection may be taken, which shall be treated as gate receipts. Where it is not permissible to take a gate or collection, the responsibility of the ground expenses is to be met by the staging Club who shall not be entitled to a share in the gate receipts in the case of games restaged on a ground where a gate is charged or collection made.

Premier and Senior Cups

The net gate receipts due from a match in the Premier or Senior Cup competitions shall be the total gate receipts for the match less VAT, the travelling expenses of the Visiting Club, the fees and expenses of the Match Officials, and other match expenses which includes:

- costs relating to gate attendants,
- turnstile operators
- stewards
- floodlighting in accordance with the Rules.

Suffolk FA shall have the power from time to time to issue instructions as to what shall and shall not be allowed as a match expense.

Travelling Expenses - In all Rounds, match expenses shall include travelling expenses, actually incurred, which must not exceed £3.00 per coach mile. If private cars or minibus are used, then the expenses which can be claimed will be for a maximum of five cars at £0.40 per mile. The travelling expenses for the Visiting Club are to be calculated on a direct route from the Club's Headquarters, the total mileage must be agreed between both Clubs prior to the match and confirmed by e-mail between the two clubs and copied to the County Cups Manager.

A full statement of account for the match shall be prepared by the Club playing at its home ground, on the prescribed Statement of Receipts and Payments Form, and payment shall be made in full to the Visiting Club and The Association within 14 days of the match.

APPENDIX A – DETAILS OF FEES, CHARGES AND PAYMENTS

1. Competition Fees and Charges

- Competition entrance fees relate to Rule 1d
- Exemption fees relate to Rule 1c
- Match Officials fees relate to Rule 17

The entrance fees, exemption contributions and match officials fees for each County Cup Competition are:

Competition	Entry Fee	Exemption Fee	Fees (inclusive of travel)			Expected Referee Level	Match Duration	Half Time Period	Penalties	Repeat Subs	Sin Bins in Use
			Referee	Assistant Referees	Fourth Official***						
Premier Cup	£60	£1,000	£70	£43 each	£25 all rounds (£43 in SF)	Level 3 or 4	2 x 45 minutes	15 minutes	Yes	No	No
Senior Cup	£40	£500	£45	£30 each	SF & Final only	Level 4 or 5	2 x 45 minutes	15 minutes	Yes	No	Yes
Women's Cup	£35	£200	£35	£25 each*	SF & Final only	Level 5 or 6	2 x 45 minutes	15 minutes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sunday Cup	£35	£200	£38	£27 each**	SF & Final only	Level 5	2 x 45 minutes	15 minutes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Junior Cup	£35	£200	£35	£25 each**	SF & Final only	Level 5 or 6	2 x 45 minutes	15 minutes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Senior Reserve Cup	£35	£200	£35	£25 each**	SF & Final only	Level 5 or 6	2 x 45 minutes	15 minutes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Primary Cup	£30	£100	£35	£25 each**	SF & Final only	Level 6 or 7	2 x 45 minutes	15 minutes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sunday Shield	£30	£100	£35	£25 each**	Final only	Level 6 or 7	2 x 45 minutes	15 minutes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sunday Trophy	£30	£100	£35	£25 each**	Final only	Level 6 or 7	2 x 45 minutes	15 minutes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Veterans Cup	£30	£100	£35	£25 each**	Final only	Level 6 or 7	2 x 45 minutes	15 minutes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Veterans Shield	£30	£100	£35	£25 each**	Final only	Level 6 or 7	2 x 45 minutes	15 minutes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Under 18 Midweek Cup	£30	£100	£35	£25 each	SF & Final only	All	2 x 45 minutes	15 minutes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Under 18 Sunday Cups	£20	£100	£30	£25 each**	Final only	All	2 x 45 minutes	15 minutes	Yes	Yes	Yes
U15&U16 County Cups	£20	None	£25	£20 each**	Final only	All (incl. Level Y)	2 x 40 minutes	10 minutes	Yes	Yes	Yes
U13&U14 County Cups	£20	None	£25	£20 each**	Final only	All (incl. Level Y)	2 x 35 minutes	10 minutes	Yes	Yes	Yes
U12 County Cups	£20	None	£25	£20 each**	Final only	All (incl. Level Y)	2 x 30 minutes	10 minutes	Yes	Yes	Yes

*From the 2022/23 season, assistant referees will be appointed to all rounds of the Women's Cup. Payment to appointed assistant referees only will be made directly by Suffolk FA, meaning the home team do not need to offer payment to assistant referees.

**Appointed for SF and Final only.

***Unless stated otherwise, fourth official fees will be equivalent to an assistant referee.

2. Fines

The fines payable for each infringement are:

Infringement	Rule	Type	Fine
Failure to pay a fine or charge within 21 days	2(f)	Maximum	£50
Withdrawal or failure to fulfil a match	3(a) or 3(d)	Maximum	£500
Failure to have correct colours	7	Fixed	£20
Late start to match	9(e)	Fixed	£20
Failure to provide match details to opponents & officials	13(a)	Fixed	£20
Failure to send result & marks within 2 days	15(a)/15(b)	Fixed	£20
Failure to notify of postponement or abandonment	11(d)/13(b)	Fixed	£20
Failure to notify result within 1 hour	15(c)	Fixed	£20
Failure to present team sheet to Referee	16(f)	Fixed	£20
Failure to provide a Club Assistant Referee	17(b)	Fixed	£20

For other infringements the amount of the fine is not fixed and is decided by the Football Services Team up to a maximum of £250.

3. Other Fees and Charges

Description	Rule	Fee/Charge
Protest Fee / Deposit	18	£20
Appeal	19	£25
Floodlighting Charge	23 & Appendix B	Maximum £50

APPENDIX B – DEFINITIONS

Cup: The term Cup, as used in these rules, relates to the trophies awarded to the winners of the competition. This includes both the trophy presented which is to be returned to the Suffolk County FA Representative and to the trophy the winning Club can retain. The Cup itself may be in any form, e.g. a shield or bowl, and not necessarily a cup.

Club: A Club is an organisation affiliated to The Suffolk County FA as a football Club.

Team: A team is an entity belonging to a Club that competes in a recognised football competition. A Club can have many teams.

Senior Club: For the purposes of the County Cup Competitions the following are all considered as Senior Leagues or Competitions:

- FA Cup
- FA Trophy
- FA Vase
- The FA Premier League
- The Football League
- The National League
- Isthmian League
- Southern League
- Eastern Counties League Premier Division and Division One
- Suffolk and Ipswich League Senior Division
- Anglian Combination Premier and Division One
- Essex and Suffolk Border League Premier Division
- Cambridgeshire League Premier Division
- Other NLS Regional Feeder Leagues or above, within the National League System
- Premier and Senior Cups

Higher Grade: Individual County Cup Competitions are targeted towards teams of particular status or level. These form a hierarchy of County Cup Competitions within certain demographic groups. These are described as follows, with the highest grade first and then descending in grade:

Male Saturday: Premier Cup; Senior Cup; Senior Reserve Cup; Junior Cup; Primary Cup

Male Sunday: Sunday Cup; Sunday Shield; Sunday Trophy

Gate Receipts: The gate receipts include the total money taken for the match at the gate and via ticket sales, or via a collection.

Net Gate Receipts: The net gate receipts are the gate receipts (defined above) less: VAT; Match Officials fees and expenses, and match expenses (which includes costs of gate attendants, turnstile operators, stewards, police charges and floodlighting [if used, to a maximum value defined in Appendix A (4)]; contributions to the cost of first aid helpers).

Recognised Saturday League Competitions: English Premier League; English Football League; National Football League; Isthmian Football League; Southern Football League; Eastern Counties Football League; Anglian Combination Football League; Cambridgeshire Football Association County League; Essex & Suffolk Border Football League; Suffolk & Ipswich League; Lowestoft & District League; Central & South Norfolk League.

Recognised Sunday League Competitions: Bury & District Sunday League; Cambridge & District Friendly League; Cambridge Sunday Football League; Colchester & District Sunday Football League; Ipswich Sunday Football League; Norwich & District Sunday League

Recognised Women's & Girls' League Competitions: FA Women's Premier League; South East Women's Combination League; Eastern Region Women's Football League; Cambridgeshire Women's & Girls' County Football League; Norfolk Women's & Girls' Football League; Suffolk Girls' & Women's League

Recognised Veterans League Competitions: Cambridgeshire Veterans League; Norfolk & Suffolk Veterans League

Recognised Boys League Competitions: Cambridge & District Colts League; Eastern Counties Youth League; Eastern Junior Alliance; Ipswich & Suffolk Youth League; Norfolk & Suffolk Youth League; Norfolk Youth Football Combination; South Norfolk Youth League; Suffolk Youth Football League; Suffolk Western Area Youth Soccer League

Under 18 Youth Cups: There shall be two separate Under 18 Youth Cup competitions – one played midweek and one played on Sundays. The same team from a club shall not play in both competitions.