

NORTH TEXAS SOCCER[®]

"IGNITING PASSION FOR THE GAME"[®]

North Texas State Soccer Association, Inc.

3803 Parkwood Blvd. #200

Frisco, TX 75034

Tel 214-297-5022

www.ntxsoccer.org

2023/2024 Officers

President	- Janet Campbell
Vice President	- Elena Williams
Vice President - Development	- Erin Pfarner
Treasurer	- Dick Metivier
Men's Commissioner	- Jerry Deaton
Women's Commissioner	- Rach Badii
Chairman, Coaching Education	- Jim Wagner
Chairman, ODP	- David Osborne
Youth Commissioner	- Jim Mills
Chairman, Referee Committee	- Trent McColly
Chairman, Cup & Games	- Tony DeBruno

Office Contacts

Executive Director	- David Messersmith
Director of Member Services	- Lisa Skiles
Director of Operations	- Rob Martella
Director of Coaching Education/ Player Development	- Warren Cottle

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CHAPTER 1

**ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION
OF THE**

NORTH TEXAS STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.

We, the undersigned natural persons of the age of twenty-one (21) years of age or over, and two (2) of whom are citizens of the State of Texas, acting as incorporators of a corporation under the Texas Nonprofit Corporation Act, do hereby adopt the following Articles of Incorporation for such corporation.

1.1 ARTICLE ONE

The name of the corporation is NORTH TEXAS STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.

1.2 ARTICLE TWO

The corporation is a nonprofit corporation.

1.3 ARTICLE THREE

The period of its duration is perpetual.

1.4 ARTICLE FOUR

The purposes for which the corporation (hereinafter called "Association") is organized are:

1. To engage in the transaction of any or all lawful business for which a corporation may be incorporated under the Texas Nonprofit Corporation Act and which are consistent with exemption from federal income tax under 501(c)(3);
2. To promote soccer within the territory under the jurisdiction of the Association, including outdoor soccer, indoor soccer and Futsal soccer for male and female players. To promote soccer this Association will govern, coordinate, and administer all rules and regulations of all soccer play sponsored by and under this Association, and will provide for continuing development of soccer players, coaches, referees and administrators. This Association will provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of grievances.
3. No part of the net earnings of the Association shall inure to the benefit of any private individual, member or officer of the Association (except that reasonable compensation may be paid for services rendered to or for the Association affecting one or more of its purposes), and no private individual, member or officer of the Association shall be entitled to a share in the distribution of any of the corporate assets on dissolution of the Association. No substantial part of the activities of the Association shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the Association shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publication or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.
4. The Association shall distribute its income for each taxable year at such time and in such manner as not to become subject to tax on undistributed income imposed by Section 4942 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, or corresponding provisions of any subsequent federal tax laws.
5. The Association shall not engage in any act of self-dealing as defined in Sections 4941(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, or corresponding provisions of any subsequent federal tax laws.
6. The Association shall not retain any excess business holdings as defined in Section 4943 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or corresponding provisions of any subsequent federal tax laws.
7. The Association shall not make any investments in such manner as to subject it to tax under Section 4944 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or corresponding provisions of any subsequent federal tax laws.
8. The Association shall not make any taxable expenditures as defined in Section 4945(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or corresponding provisions of any subsequent federal tax laws.

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9. Notwithstanding any other provisions of these Articles of Incorporation, the Association shall not conduct or carry on any activities not permitted to be conducted or carried on by an organization exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and its Regulations as they now exist to as they may hereafter be amended, or by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code and Regulations as they now exist or as they may hereafter be amended.

1.5 ARTICLE FIVE

Upon the dissolution of the Association, the Board of Directors shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the Association, dispose of all the assets of the Association exclusively for the purposes of the Association in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, humanitarian, religious, or scientific purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Rule or Regulation), as the Board of Directors shall determine. Any of such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the District Court in which the principal office of the Association is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations as said Court shall determine which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

1.6 ARTICLE SIX

Membership requirements are to be determined by the Board of Directors. The Association shall provide open and equal opportunities to athletes, coaches, trainers, managers, administrators, officials, and employees who are not under suspension or other disciplinary action, to participate in amateur soccer competitions or to seek employment without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, or national origin.

1.7 ARTICLE SEVEN

The address of the registered office is 3803 Parkwood Blvd. #200, Frisco TX 75034, and the registered agent shall the President of North Texas State Soccer Association, Inc. The registered office and the registered agent may be changed from time to time by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

1.8 ARTICLE EIGHT

The number of members constituting the Board of Directors of this Association shall be a maximum of eleven (11) are as follows:

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- President
- Vice President
- Vice President - Development
- Treasurer
- Chairman, Cup and Games
- Men's Commissioner
- Women's Commissioner
- Youth Commissioner
- Chairman, Coaches Education
- Chairman, Olympic Development Program
- Chairman, Referee's Committee

1.9 ARTICLE NINE

The name and address of each incorporator is:

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CHAPTER 2

BYLAWS

NORTH TEXAS STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.

The following abbreviations are used throughout the bylaws and rules:

*USSF – United States Soccer Federation | USYSA – United States Youth Soccer Association
USASA – United States Adult Soccer Association | NTSSA – North Texas State Soccer Association
FIFA – Federation Internationale de Football | IFAB – International Football Association Board*

(Reference to the male gender within the NTSSA Administrative Rule Book with respect to Officers, Employees, Agents, Coaches, Administrators or Players is for simplification and refers to both males and females.)

2.1 ARTICLE I - MEMBERSHIP IN ASSOCIATION

2.1.1 Membership in Association

Any properly-constituted association that falls within the physical boundaries of this Association (hereinafter called “Member Association”), if all requirements of membership are met, and this Association by a majority vote of the members present and voting, finds that such membership would be in the best interest of soccer. All applications for membership must be accompanied by a copy of the applicant’s Constitution, Bylaws and Rules and Regulations, officers and/or directors, and a map of their territory. Applications for membership must also be accompanied, by an initiation fee of \$25 and the annual dues of \$25, both of which shall be returned if the application is denied. Membership is open to any amateur soccer organization either directly with this Association or through an existing Member Association.

1. A properly constituted association shall be defined as an organization consisting of ten (10) or more teams representing **USSF** soccer activities in an incorporated city or town or within a county. A properly constituted association may, at the discretion of the membership, request any aspect(s) of **USSF** soccer (YOUTH, ADULT, BOYS, GIRLS, MEN OR WOMEN) within a given area. Member associations may, at their discretion, become a joint Member Association and represent youth and adult players. A joint member association must provide at least one member on its board of directors to represent each aspect of **USSF** soccer that it represents. The Association may designate more than one Member Association within a county. Any area having a bona fide Chamber of Commerce shall be acceptable in place of an incorporated city or town. Only one properly constituted member association may represent the designated aspect(s) of **USSF** soccer in a given area. The only exception that a given area may be represented by more than one properly constituted member association representing the same aspect(s) of **USSF** soccer shall be that all other existing associations representing the same aspect(s) of **USSF** soccer in the given area have consented to the new association becoming a member of this Association.
2. Member Associations are obligated to consider the release of any territory originally granted by the Association or the request by a Member Association to represent an aspect of **USSF** soccer when such evidence is presented to the Member Association that the “Prospective Member Association” is capable of the administration of a soccer program. If the Member Association refuses to act on the request, grant the release or consent to the association representing a designated aspect of **USSF** soccer, the “Prospective Member Association” may petition the **NTSSA** Vice President - Development, who will present the information from all parties involved to the **NTSSA** Board of Directors. The **NTSSA** Board of Directors will review all of the information presented and decide if the “Prospective Member Association” will be presented to the general membership of **NTSSA** at the next scheduled General Meeting.
 - a. If a prospective Member Association has completed all membership requirements and any necessary territory release has been granted by all parties involved, the Board of Directors may grant “Provisional” membership to the applicant. Provisional membership may be granted for a term of up to one year. After the Provisional membership period, the “Prospective Member Association” will be presented to the

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general membership of NTSSA at the next scheduled General Meeting. Provisional membership shall entitle the prospective Member Association all the rights and privileges accorded a Member Association in NTSSA and they shall be entitled to one (1) vote at any membership meeting. It is understood that the term "Prospective Member Association" shall mean an organization seeking to become a new NTSSA Member Association or an existing NTSSA Member Association seeking to amend the aspect(s) of USSF soccer it administers within its territory.

3. At any meeting of the Association there shall be a weighted vote based on the current registration on file with the State. The vote shall be: 1-500 players, 1 vote; 501-1000 players, 2 votes; 1001-1500 players, 3 votes; 1501-3000 players, 4 votes; more than 3000 players, 5 votes.

A joint association will receive these votes for each NTSSA category calling for a vote (i.e. Youth Only vote, Adult Only vote). For an issue dealing with multiple NTSSA categories (i.e. All Vote), the joint association will receive a weighted vote, according to the previous voting strength scheduled, based on its total current combined total registration on file with the State.

2.1.2 Affiliation of Indoor Facilities

An indoor facility, being a for-profit business, may submit a request to become an affiliate member of NTSSA by submitting an application for affiliation, accompanied by a copy of the applicant's incorporation document, a list of current corporate officers and/or directors and the facilities playing rules. Applications for affiliation must also be accompanied, by an initiation fee of \$25.00 and the annual dues of \$25.00, both of which shall be returned if the application is denied. An indoor facility affiliated with NTSSA shall receive weighted votes based on the current registration on file with the State. The vote shall be: 1-500 players, 1 vote; 501-1000 players, 2 votes; 1001-1500 players, 3 votes; 1501-3000 players, 4 votes; more than 3000 players, 5 votes.

2.1.3 Good Standing of Member Association

To be in good standing in the Association, a Member Association must meet all of the following requirements:

1. All current dues, fees and assessments due this Association must be paid. Dues of Members are payable July 1 of each year and become delinquent on the date of the Annual Meeting in July.
2. Each Member Association shall, by September 1 of each year, send to the State Office of the Association one copy of their rules, regulations and bylaws, either in hard copy or electronically, for review and validation by the NTSSA Vice President - Development. Member Associations must be in compliance with their own rules, regulations, and bylaws.
3. All Member Associations shall register all players, coaches, teams, and administrators registering through the respective Member Associations with NTSSA, which persons shall also be individual members of USSF.
4. All Member Associations must submit their current season's NTSSA registration data and player registration fees to the Association by the following dates: for the Fall playing season, October 15; and for the Spring playing season, April 15. Failure to meet these deadlines for submitting NTSSA registration data and player registration fees will result in the Association imposing a late registration fee of up to \$100.00 per week, unless prior arrangements have been made with the appropriate NTSSA Commissioner.
5. Member Associations will provide equitable and prompt hearing and appeal procedures to guarantee the rights of individuals to participate, compete, and insure due process to the accused. In all hearings conducted, the parties shall be accorded
 - a. Notice of all specific charges or alleged violations in writing and possible consequences if the charges are found to be true;

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- b. Reasonable time between receipt of the notice of charges and the hearing within which to prepare a defense;
 - c. The right to have the hearing conducted at a time and place so as to make it practicable for the person charged to attend;
 - d. A hearing before a disinterested and impartial body of fact finders;
 - e. The right to be assisted in the preparation of one's case at the hearing;
 - f. The right to call witnesses and present oral and written evidence and argument; Notice of all specific charges or alleged violations in writing
 - g. The right to confront witnesses, including the right to be provided the identity of witnesses in advance of the hearing if requested;
 - h. The right to have a record made of the hearing if requested in advance, with all costs to be paid by the requester;
 - i. A written decision, with the reasons for the decision, based solely on the evidence of record issued in a timely fashion and including appeal rights and procedures.
 - j. Notice of any substantive and material action of the hearing panel in the course of the proceedings.
 - k. Equality concerning communications and no *ex parte* communication is permitted between a party and any person involved in making a decision or procedural determination except to provide explanations involving procedures to be followed.
6. Honor all orders of suspension of persons issued by this Association or one of its Member Associations.
 7. Member Associations will, at all times, recognize the authority, rules, rulings, constitution and bylaws of the Association, which comply with the authority of the USSF, and its National Associations of which NTSSA is a member.
 8. Failure to comply with one or more of the Subsections 1 – 6, Section 2.1.3, will result in the Board of Directors determining the Member Association is not in good standing. Failure to be in good standing is further defined as meaning players and teams registered through the Member Association will not be allowed to participate in any tournament/event sponsored or sanctioned by NTSSA, nor will they be certified to play outside of the NTSSA in any games, tournaments or other competitions for which they might have been otherwise eligible. The Member Association may not vote on any matter at any meeting of the Association while it is not in good standing.
 9. A Member Association failing to meet any requirements of good standing for a period of sixty (60) days shall have its territory declared open and shall not be entitled to vote or to any protection, services or competitions of this Association.
 10. The Board of Directors, by two-thirds majority of those present, may tentatively approve the application of a "Member Association" at any regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors. The "Member Association", if approved by the Board of Directors, is considered a member of this Association until the next meeting of the Association, at which time approval by a majority vote of the members present of this Association must be recorded.

2.1.4 Good Standing of Indoor Affiliate Members

To be in good standing in the Association, an Indoor Affiliate Member must meet all of the following requirements:

1. All current dues, fees and assessments due this Association must be paid. Dues of Indoor Affiliates are payable July 1 of each year and become delinquent on the date of the Annual Meeting in July.
2. Copies of Indoor Affiliate Member's current officers and/or directors and playing rules must be filed with the State Office of this Association within thirty (30) days of enactment or change for approval by the Board of Directors of this Association.

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3. All Indoor Affiliate Members shall register all players, coaches, teams, and administrators not registered with other Member Associations or Indoor Affiliates with **NTSSA**.
4. All Indoor Affiliate Members must submit to **NTSSA** their current session's **NTSSA** registration forms, rosters and player/team registration fees to the Association no later than twenty-one (21) days after the start of each playing session. Failure to meet this deadline for submitting **NTSSA** registration forms and player/team registration fees will result in the Association imposing a late registration fee of \$100 per week.
5. Honor all orders of suspension of players, coaches or referees issued by this Association or one of its Member Associations or Indoor Affiliates.
6. Indoor Affiliate Members will, at all times, recognize the authority, rules, rulings, constitution and bylaws of the Association, which comply with the authority of the **USSF**, and its National Associations of which **NTSSA** is a member.
7. Failure to comply with one or more of the Subsections 1-6, 2.2.4, will result in the Board of Directors determining that the Indoor Affiliate Member is not in good standing. Failure to be in good standing is further defined as meaning players and teams registered through the Indoor Affiliate Member will not be allowed to participate in any tournament/event sponsored or sanctioned by **NTSSA**, nor will they be certified to play outside of the **NTSSA** in any games, tournaments or other competitions for which they might have been otherwise eligible. The Indoor Affiliate Member may not vote on any matter at any meeting of the Association while it is not in good standing.
8. An Indoor Affiliate Member Association failing to meet any requirements of good standing for a period of sixty (60) days shall not be entitled to vote or to any protection, services or competitions of this Association.
9. The Board of Directors, by two-thirds (2/3) majority of those present, may tentatively approve the application of an "Indoor Affiliate Member" at any regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors. The "Indoor Affiliate Member", if approved by the Board of Directors, is considered a member of this Association until the next meeting of the Association, at which time approval by a majority vote of the members present of this Association must be recorded.

2.2 ARTICLE II - GOVERNMENT OF ASSOCIATION

2.2.1 Government of Association

This Association shall be governed by its members, which shall consist of the Executive Officers of the Association, each of whom shall be entitled to one (1) vote, and the recognized delegates from each Member Association in good standing, each of whom shall be entitled to their association's vote(s). No proxies will be accepted for voting purposes. No person shall represent or be entitled to vote on behalf of more than one Executive Officer position or association. Only the recognized Executive Officers or delegates will have the right to speak at the meeting. Any Executive Officer or delegate may introduce anyone to speak provided he has the permission of the chair.

2.2.2 Appointment of Alternates

Should an alternate request to be seated, they shall submit a letter from their Association President or Executive Board, stating their authority to represent their association as an alternate for that meeting. The alternate must be a member of the Member Association that they are to represent.

2.2.3 Affiliations

This Association shall be a direct member of, and comply with the Authority of, the **USSF** and shall represent all its members and respective interests in and before the **USSF**. This Association shall maintain membership in the United States Adult Soccer Association and the United States Youth Soccer Association.

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2.2.4 Superseding Authority of USSF Rules

The North Texas State Soccer Association, Inc. recognizes the superseding authority and precedence of the articles of incorporation, bylaws, policies and requirements of the **USSF** for those matters that are covered by the **USSF** and **NTSSA** and its members will abide by those articles of incorporation, bylaws, policies and requirements.

NTSSA and its Member Associations will not join any organization that has requirements that conflict with the **USSF** governing documents.

NTSSA shall register all of its players, coaches, teams, referees and administrators with **USSF** at least once each year and will timely pay all dues and fees of the **USSF**.

NTSSA shall provide to the Secretary General of **USSF** an annual report on the activities of the Association and most current annual financial statements within ninety (90) days after the start of the **USSF**'s seasonal year.

NTSSA will (A) provide annually to **USSF** copies of **NTSSA**'s bylaws, rules and other governing documents (B) submit changes to those documents to **USSF** for approval not later than ninety (90) days after adoption and (C) make those documents available to **NTSSA** members.

NTSSA will allow **USSF** to review the documents and procedures of **NTSSA** and its Member Associations at the request of **USSF** to determine compliance with **USSF** bylaws.

2.2.5 Territory of the Association

The territory under the jurisdiction of this Association is defined as being that part of Texas which includes all of the counties north of and including a line drawn on the southernmost border of the following counties: Augustine, Nacogdoches, Cherokee, Anderson, Freestone, Limestone, McClennan, Bosque, Hamilton, Comanche, Brown, Coleman, Runnels, Coke, Sterling, Glasscock, Midland, Ector, and Winkler. A map reflecting the counties under the jurisdiction of the Association shall be on file with the State Office and the **USSF**.

2.2.6 Jurisdiction

This Association shall have jurisdiction over all Member Associations' administrators, referees, coaches, assistant coaches, managers registered players and teams affiliated with it. Each Member Association shall retain its own autonomy, but will adhere to its Bylaws and Rules and Regulations and will comply with the authority of the Association. If the Association is presented sufficient evidence that a Member Association is not adhering to its Bylaws and Rules and Regulations, the Association may form a committee to investigate the allegations and make recommendations to the Board of Directors to correct the infraction(s). If gross misuse of funds, misapplication of Bylaws, or misapplication of rules and regulations is discovered, the Member Association shall be declared not in good standing and given sixty (60) days to correct the situation, or the Association may take more immediate action if deemed necessary by the Board of Directors. Each Member Association and each club and/or team affiliated with it have the right to employ and terminate its own personnel for the purpose of coaching and/or administration. Employment is subject to Member Association/club/team rules and is not a matter of **NTSSA** review or appeal.

2.3 ARTICLE III - MEETINGS OF ASSOCIATION

2.3.1 Annual Meeting

An Annual Meeting of the Association shall be held each year during the period from June 1-August 31 at such time and place as designated by the President.

The order of business for such meeting shall be:

- Roll Call and Vote Accreditation
- Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting

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- Communications
- Unfinished Business
- Reports of Chairman of Standing Committees
- Reports of Officers
- Amendments to Bylaws
- New Business
- Election of Officers
- Good of the Game
- Adjournment

2.3.2 Special Meetings

A special meeting of the Association may be called at any time at request of: (a) the President of the Association; (b) a majority of the board of directors of the Association; or (c) at least 15 Member Associations of North Texas Soccer. The request shall state the business items to be considered at the special meeting. No other items may be considered at the meeting. Notice of a special meeting shall be provided to each Member Association and the board of directors and shall include the date, time, and location as well as the business item(s) to be considered. The meeting notice must be sent to the Member Associations and the Board of Directors at least 21 days prior to the meeting date.

2.3.3 Notice of Meetings

Written, printed, or electronic notice stating the place, day, time and the purpose or purposes for which the meeting was called, shall be delivered not less than twenty-one (21) days before the meetings, either personally, by mail, by electronic version, or at the direction of the President, to each Member Association and Affiliate of record entitled to vote at the meeting unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws. If mailed, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when deposited in the United States mail addressed to the Member Association at the address as it appears on the records of the Association, with postage thereon prepaid. If electronically mailed, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when the electronic version is sent to the electronic mail address to the Member Association at the address as it appears on the records of the Association.

2.3.4 Meetings of Association

In the event that a ruling is required which applies specifically to either the youth or the adult membership of the Association at any general meeting, then a separate vote shall be taken on that matter. The Board of Directors shall determine when a separate ruling of this nature is needed. In this situation, only the youth or adult member associations present and the Board of Directors shall have a vote on that matter. When a separate vote is necessary, joint member associations shall have the appropriate number of votes on youth or adult matters that corresponds to the number of youth or adult players registered through that Member Association in accordance with Rule 2.1.1.3.

2.3.5 Quorum

Any twenty (20) voting members in good standing, at least fifteen (15) of whom must be Member Associations, shall constitute a quorum at a general or special meeting.

2.3.6 Majority Vote; Withdrawal of Quorum

When a quorum is present at any meeting, the vote of the majority present at such meeting shall decide any question brought before such meeting, except those involving amendments to the Bylaws, for which a different vote is required (Ref. 2.10.5). In which case, such express provision shall govern and control the decision of such question. The members present at a duly organized

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meeting may continue to transact business until adjournment, notwithstanding the withdrawal of enough members to leave less than a quorum.

2.4 ARTICLE IV - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2.4.1 Board of Directors

The business and affairs of the corporation shall be managed by its Board of Directors, which shall consist of the Executive Officers of this Association, each of whom shall be entitled to one vote in accordance with Rule 2.2 hereof. The Board of Directors shall transact all business of the Association and shall have the power to enforce the Laws of the Games, Bylaws and Rules of the USSF and its National Associations of which NTSSA is a member, and the Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of this Association. It also shall hear appeals of decisions made by the standing committees of the NTSSA.

The President may from time to time designate individuals other than those elected to the Board of Directors to serve as ex-officio members of the Board of Directors. Ex-officio members shall have the right to attend all meetings and participate in all discussions of the Board of Directors but shall have no voting rights therein. The term of office for ex-officio members shall be at the discretion of the President.

Written reports from all Officers and Committees are to be available to all Member Associations.

1. Athlete Representative

He shall be an ex officio (non-voting) member of the Board of Directors and shall serve as an advisor to the Board of Directors.

The Athlete Representative may be nominated each year by the President and shall be ratified by the Board of Directors. The Athlete representative shall have participated in soccer at the collegiate varsity or ODP Regional Pool level. He shall have obtained the age of twenty-one (21).

2.4.2 Meetings

The meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held at the discretion of the President at a time and place appointed by him. A member of the Board of Directors may participate in a board meeting by conference telephone or other means so long as all members participating in the meeting may hear each other at the same time. Participation by such means shall be deemed present at the meeting.

2.4.3 Removal

Any member of the Board of Directors shall be required to resign following a vote of no confidence in his ability to remain in office. Any three (3) Associations, simultaneously, may petition for such a vote. Each of the Three (3) Associations must conduct a vote by their respective boards to petition for a vote of no confidence on a North Texas Soccer board member. If there is an affirmative vote by the Association board, the Association President shall notify North Texas Soccer in writing with the signature of the Association president. The petitions will be received by the North Texas Soccer Board of Directors, and cause the petitions to be forwarded to all Member Associations within fourteen (14) days of receipt. The vote of no confidence must be passed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of all Member Associations present at an Annual General Meeting, a Semi-Annual General Meeting, or a Special Meeting, after all Member Associations have been given at least fourteen (14) days written notice of such pending petition. The Board of Directors may call for a vote of no confidence on another member of the Committee whose actions have been resolved to be grossly negligent, or whose actions constitute severe improprieties or other serious irregularities provided that a two-thirds (2/3) majority of all voting Board of Directors members so vote. If an officer receives this vote of No Confidence, he is automatically suspended from the board until the next membership meeting. The matter must be submitted in writing to the membership and the member

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associations must then concur with a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the vote of those present for the removal to be effective.

2.4.4 Grievance Against NTSSA Board of Directors Members for Unethical Misconduct

A member in good standing of a NTSSA member association may, if he believes he has just cause, bring a grievance against a Board of Directors Member of NTSSA. The following procedure must be followed before NTSSA will recognize or act on any grievance brought against any member of the NTSSA Board of Directors.

1. The individual bringing the grievance must submit in writing and bring necessary documentation to support the grievance to the President or Chief Operating Officer of his member association. The President or Chief Operating Officer will then verify in writing that the individual filing the grievance is a member in good standing.
2. The President or Chief Operating Officer of that association will review the grievance with the members of his board of directors, and if approved by a two-third (2/3) majority vote by the board, the grievance may then be submitted to the NTSSA Board of Directors for consideration.
3. The grievance must be fully documented and accompanied by a check in the amount of \$100 made payable to NTSSA. The fee is to be used to cover the cost of the investigation, typing, office work, etc., and is not refundable.

2.4.5 Attendance at Meetings

A Board of Directors member not attending three (3) consecutive meetings, including regular meetings, of this Association or Board of Directors meetings, will have this office declared vacant unless such absences are excused by the Board of Directors. His office shall then be filled in accordance with Rule 2.4.6 of this Article.

2.4.6 Vacancies

In the event any office of the Board of Directors becomes vacant, the President shall make an appointment to fill such vacancy until the next Annual or Semi-Annual meeting, at which time a special election shall be held and an officer is elected to fill the vacancy.

2.4.7 Compensation

The Board of Directors shall serve without salary for their services. Any Board of Directors member may be reimbursed for expenses previously approved by the budget and/or the Board of Directors.

2.4.8 Minutes

The Board of Directors shall keep regular minutes of its proceedings. The approved minutes, including reports from Officers and Committees shall be placed in the minute book of the Association and a copy shall be available to each Member Association and Affiliate. Six (6) members of the Board of Directors are required to attend these meetings in order to transact any business of the Association.

2.4.9 Grievance Involving Board of Directors Members

A member of the Board of Directors can be a member or official of a team, club, or Member Association. In the event of any grievance involving such organization, he may not act in its behalf nor be entitled to vote on the grievance.

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2.4.10 Emergency Meetings

Subject to the provisions of applicable statutes and these Bylaws, the President and any three (3) voting members of the Board of Directors shall constitute an emergency Board of Directors on matters demanding immediate attention when it is impractical or impossible to call an Board of Directors meeting and shall report their actions to all Board of Directors members in writing.

2.4.11 Veto of Board of Directors Action

The Member Associations may veto any Board of Directors action by a majority vote of the Member Associations present and voting at the meeting following the action.

2.5 ARTICLE V - NOTICE

2.5.1 Manner of Giving Notice

Whenever, under the provisions of the statutes, the Articles of Incorporation or these Bylaws, notice is required to be given to any member of the Association, and if no provisions are made as to how such notice shall be given, it shall now be construed to mean personal notice, given in writing, either by mail or electronic mail, postage paid, addressed to such Association member at the address appearing on the records of the Association. Any notice required or permitted to be given by mail shall be deemed given at the time when the same is deposited in the United States mail. If electronically mailed, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when the electronic version is sent to the electronic mail address of the Member Association at the email address as it appears on the records of the Association.

2.5.2 Waiver of Notice

Whenever any notice is required to be given to any member of the Association under the provisions of the statutes, the Articles of Incorporation or these Bylaws, a waiver thereof in writing, signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice, whether before or after the time stated in such notice, shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of such notice. Attendance at a meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting, except where a person attends for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business on the ground that the meeting is not lawfully called or convened.

2.6 ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS, EMPLOYEES AND AGENTS: Powers and Duties

2.6.1 Board of Directors

The Board of Directors shall be elected for a term of two (2) years and may succeed themselves in office. Any member of the Board of Directors that desires to seek election to another office must give notice at least 30 days prior to the election that he will be resigning the office he is currently holding in order to run for a different position. The resignation becomes effective immediately before the election process begins at the annual or semi annual meeting, unless they choose for it to be effective prior to that date. Elections shall be held at the Annual Meeting with one-half of the Board of Directors being elected each year in the following manner:

- President (Elected even years)
- Vice President (Elected odd years)
- Vice President - Development (Elected odd years)
- Treasurer (Elected odd years)
- Chairman, Cup and Games (Elected even years)
- Men’s Commissioner (Elected even years)
- Women’s Commissioner (Elected odd years)

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- Chairman, Coaching Education (Elected odd years)
- Chairman, Olympic Development Program (Elected odd years)
- Youth Commissioner (Elected even years)
- Chairman, Referee’s Committee (Elected even years)
- Immediate Past President (Ratified in even years)

All directors shall be elected by the general membership with the exception of:

Youth Commissioner

The Youth Commissioner shall be elected by the Youth Member Associations and the Board of Directors of NTSSA.

Men’s Commissioner and Women’s Commissioner

The Men’s Commissioner and Women’s Commissioner shall be elected by the Adult Member Associations and the Board of Directors of NTSSA.

2.6.2 Written Reports

With the exception of the President, all Board of Directors of this Association shall report the functions of their office, in writing, at each regular meeting of the Association.

2.6.3 Parliamentarian

The Vice President shall act as Parliamentarian using “**Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised**” as a guide.

2.6.4 Regions, Sub-Regions, Districts

This Association shall be divided into such regions, sub-regions and districts as agreed to by the Board of Directors and the Member Associations involved. Such districts shall be identical for the purposes of administering the affairs of the Appeals and Disciplinary, Development, Referees and Coaches’ Committees.

2.6.5 President

The President of the Association shall preside at all Association meetings. He shall appoint all Service Committees. He will serve as an ex-officio member of any committee of the Association. He may vote only when the vote is by ballot, or in all other cases, to affect the results of the vote. He may appoint delegates to any meetings of the Member Associations. He shall submit an annual report in writing at the Annual Meeting and said report shall become a part of the minutes of such meeting. He shall be responsible for insuring that all members with check-signing authority be bonded. He shall be the liaison between the Board of Directors and Staff. He shall be responsible for seeing that an adequate staff is maintained and that administrative policies and operations of the Association are carried out.

In the event of the death, permanent incapacity (unable to perform the major duties of his office for a continuous period exceeding three months), or resignation of the President, the Board of Directors shall appoint an individual to serve as President for the remaining unexpired term of office.

2.6.6 Vice President

The Vice President shall temporarily assume the duties of the office of the President if the President is absent or temporarily incapacitated. He shall be the Chairman of the Appeals and Disciplinary Committee and Chairman of the Bylaws, Rules and Regulations Committee.

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2.6.7 Vice President - Development

The Vice President – Development shall temporarily assume the duties of the office of President if both the President and Vice President are absent or temporarily incapacitated.

The Vice President - Development shall, after approval of the Board of Directors, appoint such members as he deems necessary to carry out the functions of his office. He shall be responsible for seeing that an Association representative be available for assisting any group interested in affiliating with this Association. He shall be responsible for reviewing and approving the Constitution, Bylaws, and Playing Rules of Member Associations. He shall have primary responsibility for assisting Member Associations with bylaws and assisting with resolution of issues of membership.

2.6.8 Treasurer

The Treasurer shall temporarily assume the duties of the office of President if the President, Vice President, and Vice President – Development are all absent or temporarily incapacitated.

He shall serve as the financial officer of the Association and shall be responsible for coordinating budget preparation, complete financial reconciliation and reporting in writing, at least ten (10) days prior to each scheduled membership meeting, a balance sheet and income statement. The reporting will be itemized by category and listed in the following manner:

- Activity during the month
- Accumulative to date
- Approved budget
- Difference (plus or minus).
- He shall chair the Audit Committee and the Finance Committee.
- He shall review and initial all contracts that extend over a period of more than 60 days, or that are contracts for goods or services that are not budgeted and exceed a value of \$10,000.
- He shall require all check registers have two (2) authorized signatories approval before releasing checks for distribution.

2.6.9 Chairman of Cup and Games

The Chairman of Cup and Games shall be the Chairman of the Cup and Games Committee and shall report the activities of this Committee, in writing, at each regular meeting of this Association.

2.6.10 Men's Commissioner

The Men's Commissioner shall be responsible for the registration and eligibility of all adult male players and teams within the jurisdiction of the Association and shall appoint such Assistant Commissioners as he deems necessary to carry out this function, after approval of the Board of Directors. He or his designee shall oversee Regional and National league competition within NTSSA. That is for the regional and national level parts of the competition that take place in our state. He or his designee shall also oversee NTSSA teams at Regional and National level competition. He shall be Vice-Chairman of the Bylaws, Rules and Regulations Committee and advisor to the Cup and Games and to the Coaches Committees. He may take immediate disciplinary action against coaches, assistant coaches, managers, registered players, team representatives and/or teams within his jurisdiction, pending hearing, and he must report all such actions taken to the Board of Directors.

2.6.11 Women's Commissioner

The Women's Commissioner shall be responsible for the registration and eligibility of all adult female players and teams within the jurisdiction of the Association and shall appoint such Assistant

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Commissioners as he deems necessary to carry out this function after approval of the Board of Directors. He or his designee shall oversee Regional and National league competition within NTSSA. That is for the regional and national level parts of the competition that take place in our state. He or his designee shall also oversee NTSSA teams at Regional and National level competition. He shall be Vice-Chairman of the Bylaws, Rules and Regulations Committee and advisor to the Cup and Games and to the Coaches Committees. He may take immediate disciplinary action against coaches, assistant coaches, managers, registered players, team representatives and/or teams within his jurisdiction, pending hearing, and he must report all such actions taken to the Board of Directors. His disciplinary action may be appealed to the **NTSSA** Board of Directors.

2.6.12 Youth Commissioner

The Youth Commissioner shall be responsible for the registration and eligibility of all youth players and teams within the jurisdiction of the Association and shall appoint such Assistant Commissioners as he deems necessary to carry out this function, after approval of the Board of Directors. He or his designee shall oversee Regional and National league competition within NTSSA. That is for the regional and national level parts of the competition that take place in our state. He or his designee shall also oversee NTSSA teams at Regional and National level competition, other than competition associated with ODP. He shall be Vice-Chairman of the Bylaws, Rules and Regulations Committee and advisor to the Cup and Games and Coaches Committees. He may take immediate disciplinary action against coaches, assistant coaches, managers, registered players, team representatives and/or teams within his jurisdiction, pending hearing, and he must report all such actions taken to the Board of Directors. His disciplinary action may be appealed to the **NTSSA** Board of Directors.

2.6.13 Chairman, Coaching Education

He shall be Chairman of the State Coaches Committee and shall report the activities of this Committee, in writing, at each regular meeting of this Association.

2.6.14 Chairman, Olympic Development Program

He shall be Chairman of the Olympic Development Program and shall report the activities of this Committee, in writing, at each regular meeting of this Association. He shall serve on the Cups and Games Committee for any ODP tournament events.

2.6.15 Chairman, Referee Committee

He shall be a registered USSF Referee and shall report the activities of the State Referee Committee, in writing, at each regular meeting of this Association.

2.6.16 Immediate Past President

He shall be an ex officio (non-voting) member of the Board of Directors and shall serve as an advisor to the President and serve a two-year term on the Board of Directors on the expiration of the individual's term as President. An individual removed as President or Immediate Past President under Article IV, Section 2.4.3, is not a member of the Board of Directors and the position of Immediate Past President remains vacant on the Board of Directors.

2.6.17 Executive Director

- A. The Executive Director will be a non-voting member of the **NTSSA** Board of Directors.
 - 1. Accountability – The Executive Director shall be employed by Board of Directors and report to the **NTSSA** President.
- B. Duties
 - 1. be responsible for the management of the operations of the organization under the direction of the **NTSSA** President.
 - 2. be responsible for the employment of such personnel as needed to carry out the operations of **NTSSA** provided such employment falls within the constraint established by the budget and personnel policies established by the **NTSSA** Board of Directors.
 - 3. perform such duties as may be stated in these bylaws and other **NTSSA** governing documents, and policies and procedures, and under the personnel policies established

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by the Board of Directors, and as may be directed by the Board of Directors or the NTSSA President.

2.6.18 Equal Opportunity

NTSSA shall provide an equal opportunity to athletes, coaches, trainers, managers, administrators, and officials to participate in both adult and youth soccer competitions. Individuals serving on the Board of Directors or committee of NTSSA shall be selected without regard to the individual's race, color, religion, national origin, or sex from an equal opportunity perspective. NTSSA may not have eligibility criteria relating to amateur status more restrictive than those of the Federation.

2.7 ARTICLE VII - STANDING COMMITTEES

2.7.1 Standing Committees

The following Standing Committees shall be appointed or elected, as the case may be, at the first Board of Directors meeting following the Annual Meeting. Vacancies on such committees shall be filled by appointment or election, as the case may be, within thirty (30) days of occurrence of such vacancy. In case of an emergency, the President shall have the power to fill vacancies on any Committee by appointment until such vacancy can be filled in accordance with normal procedures. Any Committee empowered to hold disciplinary hearings may investigate and enforce the Codes of Ethics/Conduct. Members of Standing Committees must be in good standing with all Local, State, and National Soccer Associations. Persons under suspension or probation are ineligible for Committee positions.

2.7.2 Appeals and Disciplinary Committee

It shall be comprised of the Chairman and such members appointed by the Chairman and approved by the NTSSA Board of Directors. However, a limit of two members of the Standing Committee from one Member Association is permitted. Three members of this Committee shall constitute a quorum. Should it be impossible for a quorum to be had in order for the Committee to make a ruling within the period set by the Rule of these Bylaws, then the Chairman or any other member, if the Chairman is unavailable, shall appoint any impartial person(s) to serve temporarily on the Committee. In such event, the President shall approve the interim appointments. The Chairman shall notify the headquarters of the NTSSA (hereinafter called "State Office") immediately, in writing, of the rulings of this Committee.

The NTSSA Referee Committee shall appoint a representative who will serve as an advisor to the Appeals and Disciplinary Committee.

2.7.3 Cup and Games Committee

It shall be comprised of the Chairman and ten (10) members appointed by the Chairman and approved by the Board of Directors. However, a limit of two (2) members of the Standing Committee from one Member Association is permitted. The Association's Men's, Women's, and Youth Commissioners shall serve on this Committee as advisors. The Chairman shall call all meetings of this Committee and in matters requiring a vote shall cast his vote after the other members. The advisors shall not have a vote.

This Committee shall plan, establish, approve and administer all rules and regulations of all tournament play sponsored by and under this Association. When such tournament play is conducted for the USSF or its affiliates, such rules and regulations are not to be superseded by those of the Cup and Games Committee. However, in such an event, the particular Commissioner involved shall serve as co-chair of the State portion of the tournament/event being conducted. The Committee is responsible for sanctioning all local tournaments. Any decision on placement or rules made by the Cup and Games Committee may be appealed by the concerned Member Association to the Committee within seventy-two (72) hours of the formal announcement, but at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the commencement of the tournament. Their decision may be appealed to the Association's Board of Directors within twenty-four (24) hours.

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The NTSSA Referee Committee shall appoint a representative who will serve as an advisor to the Cup and Games Committee.

2.7.4 Audit Committee

The Audit Committee chairperson shall be the Treasurer and at least two (2) additional members, who are not current NTSSA Board of Directors members and are not members of the Finance Committee, shall be appointed by the Board of Directors. The Audit Committee shall screen and recommend independent auditors to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall appoint the independent auditor. The independent auditors report shall be available to the Board of Directors and the membership.

2.7.5 Finance Committee

The Finance Committee chairperson shall be the Treasurer and at least two (2) additional members, who are not current NTSSA Board of Directors members and are not members of the Audit Committee, shall be appointed by the Board of Directors. The Finance Committee is responsible for reviewing the fiscal procedures and the proposed annual budget with staff and the Board of Directors at least 60 days prior to the Annual General Meeting.

2.7.6 Bylaws, Rules and Regulation Committee

It shall be chaired by the Association's Vice President, with Men's, Women's, and Youth Commissioners as Vice-Chairman. The President may appoint additional individuals to serve on the Committee. It shall be responsible for annually reviewing the Association's Bylaws, Rules and Regulations contained in the NTSSA Administrative Rule Book and proposing changes, as required, to such Bylaws and Rules at a Board of Directors meeting preceding each meeting of this Association.

Any proposed changes to Bylaws and Rules will be voted on by the members at any meeting. The Committee shall maintain a list of rules and regulations enacted by the USSF and its National Associations of which NTSSA is a member, and *IFAB* and shall make available to all Member Associations a copy of such rules and regulations and an interpretation of the applications of such rules and regulations in state competitions, regional competitions, national competitions, and international competitions. The Committee shall be available to meet with any Member Association and act in an advisory capacity in setting up such Member's Association rules of competition, on request. It shall be the responsibility of this Committee to make certain the Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules of Member Associations do not conflict with the Bylaws and Rules of NTSSA and to point out to this Associations Board of Directors and to the local Member Associations where such conflicts exist in order that any problems may be solved in the most expeditious manner possible.

2.7.7 Referee Committee

The State Referee Committee shall be appointed by the Chairman and approved by Board of Directors annually. It shall consist of the Chairman, State Referee Administrator, State Youth Referee Administrator, State Assignor Coordinator, State Directors of Referee Instruction, and State Director of Referee Assessment.

Area Administrators shall serve in an ex-officio and non-voting advisory capacity in support of the State Referee Committee and shall be appointed by the Chairman and approved by the Board of Directors annually.

Upon recommendation by the Chairman, the State Referee Administrator shall be appointed yearly by the Board of Directors and may succeed himself in office. Any five (5) members of the Referee Committee, including the Chairman, shall constitute a quorum at meetings of this Committee. Three (3) members of this Committee shall constitute a quorum in matters related to disciplinary actions.

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The State Referee Committee shall adopt the regulations and programs for instruction, examination, grading, registration and administration of all **USSF** referees within the **NTSSA** in compliance with the programs and policies of **NTSSA** and the **USSF** National Referee Committee

1. District Referee Committee

- a. Each **NTSSA** Referee Administrative District will have its own District Referee Committee comprised of that District's State Referee Committee representative as Chairman, and the elected local referee's unit President (or playing association's director of officials or referees coordinator if there is no local referee association) from each local association in the District.
- b. Each District Referee Committee is to promptly disseminate all **USSF** National Referee Committee and **NTSSA** State Referee Committee policies, procedures and programs to their respective local referee units, individual referees and playing associations, and to act as advisors to the State Referee Committee forming a liaison between the playing associations, the local referees unit administration and the individual referee in the field with the **NTSSA**.

2.7.8 State Coaches Committee

The paramount purpose and duty of the Coaches Committee shall be to implement a coaching education program that caters to the needs of the volunteer coaches within the jurisdiction of **NTSSA**.

1. Membership

- a. The Coaches Committee consists of the Chairman and other members as he desires, appointed by the Chairman with the approval of the Board of Directors. The Director of Coaching Development shall be an advisor to the Committee, but shall not have a vote.

2. Duties

The duties of the Committee shall be:

- a. To promote the desire for the highest quality coaching standards throughout the Association and assist all Member Associations in achieving the highest quality coaching standards.
- b. To establish and publish a state coaching program, which includes the mandated courses, curriculums, requirements, etc., of the coaching system of the **USSF**.
- c. To assist the Director of Coaching Development and staff coaches of the Association as they relate to the **NTSSA** specific coaching education program.
- d. The Chairman shall submit the State Coaches Committee budget proposals for the implementation of the State Coaches Committee coaching education program to the Board of Directors for approval.

3. Coaches Subcommittee

- a. The Chairman may establish, at his discretion, working subcommittees to assist in carrying out the duties of the Coaches Committee. The specific duties and terms of such subcommittees shall be established by the Chairman. The Chairman of such subcommittees shall be selected from the membership of the Coaches Committees, but the members of the subcommittee need not be members of the Coaches Committee.

2.7.9 Olympic Development Program (O.D.P.) Committee

The purpose of the O.D.P. Committee shall be to implement and administer the O.D.P. of the **USSF**, **USYSA** and **NTSSA, Inc.**, throughout the territory under the jurisdiction of the Association.

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1. Membership

- a. The Olympic Development Program Committee consists of the Chairman and other members as he desires, appointed by the Chairman with the approval of Board of Directors. The Director of Player Development shall be an advisor to the Committee, but shall not have a vote.

2. Duties, Objectives and Responsibilities

- a. To identify and develop outstanding youth soccer players within the Association for advancement to the Regional Olympic Development Program, and National Olympic Teams.
- b. To administer programs set forth by the USSF relating to Olympic, CONCACAF, and National Youth teams.
- c. To administer the NTSSA O.D.P. in the territory of this Association.
- d. To maintain all records of individuals participating in the O.D.P. of this Association.
- e. To establish and publish a state O.D.P. brochure setting forth the procedures for participation in the respective programs.
- f. To establish, publish, and oversee the duties of the Director of Player Development and staff of coaches of the Association.
- g. To recommend a part-time and/or full-time Director of Player Development when funds permit. Such recommendation will be presented to the Board of Directors for approval.
- h. To maintain and revise as necessary, the NTSSA job description of the Director of Player Development.

3. O.D.P. Chairman Subcommittees

- a. The Chairman may establish, at his discretion, working subcommittees to assist in carrying out the duties of the O.D.P. Committees. The specific duties and terms of such subcommittees will be established by the O.D.P. Chairman.

2.7.10 State Executive Subcommittee for Referee Misconduct

The State Board of Directors has designated the NTSSA A&D Committee to hear allegations and assess punishment concerning misconduct of referees toward any participant or spectators in any NTSSA activity.

2.7.11 Competitive Soccer Committee

The purpose of the Competitive Soccer Committee shall be to coordinate competitive league operations and oversee issues indigenous to competitive soccer within NTSSA. The committee will meet once per year. At least five (5) members must be present to constitute a quorum to conduct business.

1. Membership

- a. The committee shall be chaired by the NTSSA Youth Commissioner or his/her designee as approved by the Board of Directors, two (2) representatives from each sanctioned Competitive League, plus seven (7) at large members, appointed by the Youth Commissioner.

2. Duties, Objectives and Responsibilities of the Competitive Soccer Committee

- a. Oversee the registration of competitive clubs as defined in Rule 4.8.2.
- b. To hear and decide on alleged rule violations and/or grievances filed against Registered Clubs on matters under the jurisdiction of NTSSA rules and bylaws. For

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the purpose of these hearings, a chairman plus two (2) members shall constitute a quorum.

- c. To hear and decide on requests for competitive player transfers as provided for in Rule 3.10.7.
- d. To propose and review rules and regulations for the administration of competitive soccer teams, clubs, and leagues.
- e. To review all requests from Member Associations for sanctioning of new competitive league(s) and submit a recommendation to the Youth Commissioner for disposition in accordance with Rule 4.13
- f. To make recommendations to the NTSSA Board of Directors concerning competitive soccer issues, proposed rules, policies, and procedures.

2.7.12 Youth Recreational Soccer Committee

The purpose of the Recreational Soccer Committee shall be to oversee recreational programs and issues indigenous to recreational soccer within NTSSA. The committee will meet at least once per year. At least five (5) members must be present to constitute a quorum to conduct business.

1. Membership

- a. The committee shall be chaired by the NTSSA Youth Commissioner or his designee as approved by the Board of Directors. The committee shall consist of up to ten (10) at large members, appointed by the Youth Commissioner. The members shall be experienced recreational administrators from member associations, whose membership is comprised of a majority of recreational players with no more than one member from any single association.

2. Duties, Objectives and Responsibilities of the Recreational Soccer Committee

- a. Review rules and regulations for the administration of recreational players and propose new and/or revised rules to the Membership of NTSSA.
- b. Make recommendations to the NTSSA Board of Directors concerning recreational soccer issues, policies and procedures.
- c. Serve as mentors to new registrars from member associations.
- d. Hear and decide on alleged rule violations and/or grievances filed against coaches, parents, or associations on recreational matters under the jurisdiction of NTSSA rules and bylaws that are not handled within a member association or referred to the A&D or Executive Committee. When possible, violations of coaches or parents should be handled within the applicable member association. For the purpose of these hearings, a chairman plus two (2) members shall constitute a quorum. If needed, additional panel members may be appointed who are not on the Recreational Committee, but who work with recreational soccer within NTSSA.
- e. Recommend recreational workshops for the annual AGM. Advise on content for those workshops and participate in developing content for and facilitating the workshops as needed.

2.7.13 Risk Management Committee

It shall be comprised of the President as Chairman and members appointed by the Chairman and approved by the Board of Directors. However, a limit of one (1) member of the Standing Committee from a Member Association is permitted. The President may appoint an alternate Chairman to this Committee for the purpose of holding meetings. The Chairman shall call all meetings of this Committee and in matters requiring a vote shall cast his vote after the other members.

This Committee shall review the NTSSA Application and Consent For Criminal Background Check form (hereinafter known as the NTSSA Adult Application Form) for content and submit

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recommended changes to the Board of Directors. It shall review all negative responses from the checking agencies, and if deemed unacceptable, shall cause a written notice to be sent to the individual stating they are not eligible to participate and what appellate rights they have. If no appeal is received in the allotted time frame, a letter of notification shall be sent to all administrative organizations within NTSSA informing them of the suspension, but not the cause of suspension. All information reviewed and decisions made by the Committee shall be kept in strict confidence. All proceedings of this Committee shall be reported monthly to the Board of Directors without divulging individual names prior to suspension.

2.8 ARTICLE VIII - SERVICE COMMITTEES

2.8.1 Nominating Committee

It shall present a slate of officers twenty-one (21) days prior to the Annual Meeting. It shall be appointed by the President. Each Member Association will provide at least one candidate for office if so requested by the Nominating Committee.

2.9 ARTICLE IX - RULES, REGULATIONS, PROCEDURE FOR APPEAL

2.9.1 Procedure for Filing Appeals

NTSSA will provide equitable and prompt hearing and appeal procedures to guarantee the rights of individuals to participate and compete. The procedure for filing appeals with the Appeals and Disciplinary Committee shall be as follows:

1. All appeals to the Appeals and Disciplinary Committee must be submitted in writing and received within five (5) days of the appealed decision. All appeals shall be accompanied by an appeal fee of \$100 (cash or cashier's check).

If the appeal is upheld by the Committee, the fee will be returned. If it is denied, the fee will be forfeited to the treasury of this Association. In the case of appeals regarding individual suspensions, the Appeals and Disciplinary Committee may waive or modify the appeal fee.
2. This Committee may, at its discretion, when requested in writing to do so, waive the time limit for filing appeals, but in no case shall an extension of more than ten (10) days be granted.
3. All appeals to this Committee must be made in writing to the Chairman of the Committee who will then notify the Secretary of the involved Member Association or Associate Member and all the members of this Committee. In cases of controversy as to timely receipt of appeals, the postmark date (postage meter not acceptable) will govern.
4. Upon receipt of appeal, properly submitted, the Chairman of this Committee shall set a time and place for the hearing and will advise all appropriate parties. Such hearing settings are solely the responsibility of the Committee, but all such hearings must be scheduled within ten (10) days of receipt of the appeal and the appealing party is bound to present all information and evidence relative to the appeal at the hearing.
5. Decisions of the Appeals and Disciplinary Committee may be appealed to the Board of Directors of this Association. Procedures for filing appeals with the Board of Directors shall be exactly as for filing with the Appeals and Disciplinary Committee except that all material shall be submitted to the State Office, which shall notify all concerned parties of the receipt of the appeals and the time and place for the hearing as set by the President.
6. Any appeal concerning the action of a particular commissioner shall be made directly to the State Appeals and Disciplinary Committee of NTSSA and such complaint shall be acted upon within fifteen (15) days by said committee.
7. Decisions of the Board of Directors may be appealed to the USSF Appeals Committee.
8. All decisions at all levels of the appeal process shall stand and be of full force and effect until changed by a higher authority.

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9. In no event shall any person, persons, or organizations under the jurisdiction of NTSSA invoke the aid of the Courts in the United States, without first exhausting all available remedies and appeals within the appropriate soccer organizations including a final appeal to the Appeals Committee of the USSF. For violations of this rule, the offending party shall be subject to the sanctions of suspension and fines, and shall be liable to NTSSA for all expenses incurred by the NTSSA and its officers and employees and its members in defending each court action, including but not limited to court costs, attorney's fees, reasonable compensation for time spent by NTSSA officers, employees and members in responding to and defending against allegations in the action, including responses to discovery and court appearances, travel expenses, and the expenses for holding special meetings necessitated by the Court action.

2.9.2 Rules of Play

Except as otherwise specified herein, Rules of Play of the USSF and its National Associations of which NTSSA is a member, will apply in all competitions under the jurisdiction of the NTSSA and its affiliated members. However, the Board of Directors shall have the right to approve special Rules-of-the-Competition agreed upon by two or more Member Associations conducting a "special" competition.

2.10 ARTICLE X - MISCELLANEOUS

2.10.1 Conduct of Association as Nonprofit Corporation

This Association shall conduct its business in a manner conforming to the purposes as set forth in Article 1.4 of its Articles of Incorporation, being careful to comply with all rules and regulations as set forth under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code so as to maintain its status as a nonprofit corporation.

2.10.2 Fiscal and Seasonal Year

The fiscal and seasonal soccer year of the Association shall be from September 1 to August 31

2.10.3 Books and Records

The Corporation shall keep correct and complete books and records of account and shall keep minutes of all meetings at its registered office.

2.10.4 Resignation

Any director, committee member, officer or agent may resign by giving written notice to the President. The resignation shall take effect at the time specified therein, or immediately if no time is specified. Unless otherwise specified therein, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

2.10.5 Amendments to Bylaws

These Bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed, or new Bylaws may be adopted, at any meeting of the Association at which a quorum is present by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the total present membership; provided, however, that all members have been given sixty (60) days written notice or electronic notice, including a written or electronic copy of the proposed changes.

2.10.6 Who May Propose Bylaw Changes and Amendments

Any proposal to amend the Bylaws or add new Bylaws may be made only by Executive Officers of Member Associations, NTSSA Board of Directors and properly constituted committees of NTSSA. Changes submitted by a member of a properly constituted committee must pertain to the duties and scope of that committee. Any proposed changes must be submitted to the Bylaws, Rules and Regulation Committee on the proper form by April 15th prior to the next Annual General Meeting

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of this association for review and distribution to the membership within the allotted time required in Rule 2.10.5

2.10.7 Lawsuits Against the Association

Any person who files a lawsuit or invokes the aid of the courts on their own behalf or as the representative for another person against NTSSA, or its officers, employees, or members or representatives of any of its officers, employees, or members, shall be subject to the sanction of immediate suspension from membership and from all soccer activities within the jurisdiction of NTSSA and its affiliates. NTSSA may also elect to subject a person who threatens to file a lawsuit or who threatens to invoke the aid of the courts to the same sanctions of suspension. NTSSA adopts the policy that it is allowed to take full advantage of rights permitted to it by the laws of the State of Texas for “Not-for-Profit” organizations.

2.10.8 Prohibited Conduct and Reporting

NTSSA adopts a philosophy and policies that meet or exceed the minimum criteria established by USSF that prohibits physical or sexual abuse of or by players, coaches, referees, administrators and spectators, and will take steps necessary to remove from further soccer activities any person found guilty of such.

NTSSA prohibits all types of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment, and hazing. Participants, employees or volunteers in NTSSA may be subject to disciplinary and/or legal action for engaging in any misconduct or abuse against another person. Reports of any actual or suspected violations must be sent within 24 hours to the NTSSA Executive Director and/or the local authorities.

Mandatory reporting is required of all “covered individuals”, defined as any adult who is authorized by an amateur sports organization to interact with a minor or amateur athlete at an amateur sports organization facility or at any event sanctioned by an amateur sports organization. Covered individuals include, but are not limited to, volunteer administrators, employees, coaches, team administrators, referees, and trainers.

2.10.9 Indemnification

NTSSA shall indemnify each of its present or former directors, officers, employees, or official representatives or any person who is or was serving in any capacity at the request of NTSSA against all expenses actually and reasonably incurred by the person (including, but not limited to, judgments, costs, and counsel fees) in connection with the defense of any pending or threatened litigation to which that person is, or is threatened to be made, partly because that person is or was serving in such a capacity. This right of indemnification may also apply to expenses of litigation, which is compromised or settled, including amounts paid in settlement, if NTSSA approves such settlement. Such an individual shall be indemnified if the individual acted in good faith and in a manner the individual reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of NTSSA. The termination of any litigation by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or plea of *nolo contendere* or its equivalent shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the individual did not act in good faith or in the manner the individual reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of NTSSA.

Any amount payable as indemnification under this bylaw may be paid by NTSSA upon a determination by the Board of Directors, not including those members who have incurred expenses in connection with the litigation for which indemnification is sought, that the individual in question need the standard set forth in this bylaw. If no disinterested Board of Directors members are available, the required determination shall be made by a majority vote of the members of NTSSA.

The Board of Directors may authorize the purchase of insurance on behalf of any persons potentially identifiable under this bylaw.

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CHAPTER 3

**RULES AND REGULATIONS
OF THE
NORTH TEXAS STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.**

General Rules and Regulations of the North Texas State Soccer Association (hereinafter referred to as the “Association” or “NTSSA”) and its affiliated Members Associations and Leagues:

3.1 REGISTERED PLAYERS

Only registered players shall be permitted to play in competitions under the auspices of this Association or its affiliated members. A Coach, Assistant Coach, or Administrator found to have knowingly allowed the use of an unregistered player(s) may be assessed a penalty ranging from probation to a suspension for one (1) year or more, this penalty may be from all soccer activities. The team may be required to forfeit all games in which the unregistered player(s) participated.

3.2 UNREGISTERED/NON-SANCTIONED PLAY

Players or teams who participate with unregistered players or engage in unsanctioned play shall have no benefits of membership, including but not limited to risk management, disciplinary or insurance protection, while playing with unregistered players or in unsanctioned play. Such players and teams must certify in writing to the appropriate NTSSA Youth or Amateur Commissioner the nature of any disciplinary actions or injuries sustained while playing unsanctioned play before resuming play in sanctioned activities.

3.2.1

Unsanctioned play shall include, but not be limited to playing with other members of a player’s NTSSA team in outdoor/indoor leagues, tournaments, and games not sanctioned by NTSSA or another USSF affiliate. This shall not be construed to prevent any individual player from participating with school or church teams, or neighborhood unsupervised games.

3.2.2

Application by the team/player to the appropriate commissioner to engage in a game or games may be approved under certain conditions that may be determined to be in the best interest and enhancement of the game.

3.3 FRIENDLY GAMES

Friendly games shall be defined as games which:

3.3.1

Are not associated with any other games either played or to be played, and they do not lead to any championship;

3.3.2

Do not lead to any trophy or award;

3.3.3

Do not require a fee to be paid by any player to sponsor;

3.3.4

Are organized in a spontaneous fashion, and

3.3.5

Do not include any guest players within NTSSA boundaries for NTSSA registered recreational teams. Competitive teams playing friendly games may invite up to five (5) guest players providing the proper paperwork (i.e., guest player release) is in order.

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3.4 SUSPENSIONS

The **NTSSA** and its affiliated members shall honor any and all orders of suspension of players, coaches and referees issued by **NTSSA** or its affiliates, if the suspension indicates, “suspended from all **NTSSA** activities” and due process has been followed. A team which knowingly uses individuals under suspension shall automatically forfeit all games in which the individuals have participated. Member Associations which knowingly uses individuals (Players, Coaches or Referees) under suspension shall be subject to a formal hearing before **NTSSA** and may be subject to sanctions.

3.5 REFEREES

In compliance with **USSF** Rules, all referees serving **NTSSA** and its affiliated Member Associations shall be registered with the **USSF** and **NTSSA** in accordance with current rules and regulations of the **USSF** National Referee Committee and the State Referee Committee.

3.5.1

The use of unregistered referees is approved only in emergency situations; then, the captain or coaches of two competing teams may decide on someone agreeable to both of them to officiate. In these circumstances, the decisions of that person serving as an emergency referee are just as binding as if he were a registered referee.

1. A Member Association of **NTSSA** who attempts to circumvent the spirit of this rule by continually relying on Rule 3.5.1, or uses the excuse of referee unavailability as a reason not to insist upon the proper training and registration of all referees, will be put on thirty (30) days written notice by the **NTSSA** Board of Directors that he is not in good standing with **NTSSA**. If he does not take immediate, positive steps to completely comply with this rule, the Association will be held not to be in good standing.

3.5.2

All **USSF** referee training for certification will be under the direct supervision and direction of the State Referee Committee and State Director of Referee Instruction. No referee instructors other than those specifically trained and certified by **USSF** or the State Director of Referee Instruction are approved as instructors for basic referee clinics.

3.5.3

Member Associations that desire to free registered referees for higher-level competition may require coaches or adults of their 6U, 8U and 10U teams to each officiate one-half of their own games.

3.5.4

Indoor facilities may only use registered **NTSSA** indoor referees.

3.5.5

In accordance with current rules and regulations of the **USSF** National Referee Committee and the **NTSSA** State Referee Committee all referee assignors (or schedulers) must have satisfactorily completed the approved assignor clinic and be registered with **USSF** and **NTSSA**. The use of unregistered referee assignors is approved only in an emergency situation and is limited to the balance of the current season.

3.6 ADULT CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

3.6.1 Scope

1. Every person over the age of seventeen (17), who at any time could be expected in the performance of their duties to be alone with any registered youth player, must in the manner prescribed by current **NTSSA** procedures, annually provide the necessary information required by **NTSSA** so that a Criminal Background Check may be obtained. By their participation,

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Adult Volunteers agree and consent to having Criminal Background Checks performed as deemed necessary by NTSSA.

2. For purposes of this procedure, at a minimum, all coaches, assistant coaches, managers, trainers, referees, volunteer administrators, board members, and staff/employees are included. Others may be included if they may be alone with registered youth players.

3.6.2 Procedures

1. Member Associations and Affiliates shall direct volunteers identified in 3.6.1.2 to the NTSSA Risk Management portal where volunteers shall annually input or update their Volunteer Online Registration / Risk Management Disclosure Form. Member Associations/Affiliates will appoint/elect a Risk Management Coordinator to ensure that every volunteer apply for clearance from NTSSA prior to the first season/session in which the adult participates.
2. The Risk Management committee will require that a Criminal Background Check be performed annually on each registered adult volunteer.
3. A background check response from the Texas Department of Public Safety or other agency/vendor that is deemed unacceptable by the Risk Management Committee will cause a written notice to be sent to the individual stating that the individual is not eligible to participate and what appeal rights the person has.
4. Should any individual who has received a negative response wish to appeal the finding, an appeal may be filed with the NTSSA Risk Management Committee according to the NTSSA Procedure for Filing Appeals.
5. At such time as the Risk Management Committee has heard an appeal and rules an individual ineligible, or when the appeal time has elapsed, a letter of notification will be sent to all administrative organizations within NTSSA notifying them of the individual's suspension, but not the cause of the suspension.
6. All responses shall be kept in strict confidence.

3.7 YOUTH PLAY IN ADULT DIVISION

3.7.1

A Youth player, who is eighteen (18) years of age but still eligible for 19U play, will be permitted to play an unlimited number of Adult games without losing his eligibility. The youth player must obtain permission from his youth coach or other authorized team official. The youth coach or other authorized team official shall, in writing or by form, request eligibility clearance from the State Youth Commissioner. The youth coach or other team official must, in writing or by form, request permission from the appropriate State Adult Commissioner. When the above clearances and permissions have been granted, the appropriate State Adult Commissioner has sole discretion in permitting a youth player to play adult games and will be responsible for establishing the procedures for which this will be implemented. The youth player shall be listed as a "provisional" adult player. No Youth player under the age of eighteen (18) may register or play in an Adult game.

3.7.2

Any youth player playing for an adult team without the approvals of the State Adult and Youth Commissioners shall be declared ineligible for youth games. Any youth team using such an ineligible player shall forfeit all games in which the player took part. It is not necessary to drop an ineligible player from the roster.

3.7.3

A youth player may appeal his youth coach's or authorized team official's denial to play adult games with the State Youth Commissioner.

3.7.4

If a youth player is denied the right to play adult games by his youth coach or authorized team official and the Youth Commissioner, he may appeal to the State Board of Directors.

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3.7.5

Should a player eligible to compete in youth competition decide to forego his youth eligibility and register as an adult player, he must:

1. Make Application to the Youth Commissioner
 - a. The Youth Commissioner will ensure that player is not under suspension or probation and then relay all information and original request to the appropriate Adult Commissioner.
 - b. A Youth Player after receiving the proper clearance from the appropriate Adult Commissioner then may register as an Adult Player.

3.7.6

Any adult team, coach, or administrator who knowingly uses a youth player not in accordance with the above rules shall be suspended for a period of not less than one (1) year.

3.8 ADULT REGISTRATIONS

3.8.1

A player may register on as many teams as he chooses as long as these teams do not play each other in any competition.

3.8.2

An adult team roster will have no more than 25 players.

NOTE: *Youth registration, transfers, etc., are covered under the Rules for Registration of Youth Players.*

3.9 PLAYING AGE

Except where prohibited by USSF rules, youth players may participate in older divisions but may not play in younger divisions than their age dictates except by approval of the NTSSA Board of Directors.

Failure to comply with this rule shall result in the offending team forfeiting all the games in which the older player participated. In addition, the coach, assistant coach and/or manager of the offending team may be suspended for a period of not less than one year.

3.10 YOUTH CONTRACTS AND RELEASES

3.10.1

No coach, assistant coach, trainer, or team representative may practice any soccer related activity with any NTSSA registered player who does not appear on his current NTSSA roster or is not considered to be a free agent by current NTSSA Rules and Regulations except for a coach, who at the request of another teams coach, substitutes for that coach at practice or games for the convenience of the requesting coach. A free agent is a player in the 11U through 19U age division who desires to participate on a competitive team and is not rostered to any team. A competitive player may practice with another team if he has received a written permission letter signed by his current coach that sets out the dates and the team with which the player will practice. The player is to give the letter to the coach of the team with which he is practicing, and he must keep a copy for himself.

NOTE: *The above does not include indoor soccer.*

3.10.2

Between August 1 of the prior soccer year and May 31 of the current seasonal soccer year, NTSSA registered players may attend soccer camps (clinics), or private lessons etc., hosted and/or coached by individuals, teams, clubs and/or organizations other than the player's current coach, team, club and/or organization as long as the soccer camps meet the following criteria:

The clinic or camp, must be available to all interested persons for each age group offered through an open invitation.

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Each individual, team, club and/or organization hosting any soccer clinic or camp, etc., must require written registration of each participant that includes the following information:

- Player's name
- Name, address and phone number of individual(s), team(s), club(s) and/or organization(s) affiliated with and/or hosting the clinic
- Name(s) of coaches at clinic
- Name and date(s) of clinic
- Name of player's current team and home association
- A statement signed by the player's current coach/manager stating that he or she is aware that the player is attending the camp or clinic, etc.
- The following disclaimer:

"Recruiting is strictly prohibited. Any person having knowledge of any player recruitment at or through this soccer clinic, camp, private lesson, etc., should report same, in writing, to the Youth Commissioner of NTSSA." (For an in-depth definition of recruiting, see NTSSA rule 3.10.9)

- Parent signature acknowledging that he/she has read and understands the disclaimer. Date of signature. (If player is 18 years or older, player should sign also.)

The host of the clinic or camp must keep all registration forms for one (1) year from the date of the camp or clinic, etc., so they will be able to produce on demand from a Member Association and/or NTSSA a copy of the registration form to verify compliance with this rule in the event charges of rule violations are alleged against the hosting individual, team, club and/or organization as stated above.

This rule does not apply to Member Associations that sponsor clinics/camps, etc., for their players where the registration publicity is conducted by the Member Association. Any publicity must indicate this camp/clinic, etc., is sponsored by the Association. The Member Association must monitor the program to assure no recruiting activities occur.

Between August 1 of the prior soccer year and May 31 of the current soccer year, players requesting private lessons from any person must obtain a written statement from their current coach stating their knowledge of the private lessons. The person giving the private lessons must retain the acknowledgment slip and be able to present same when requested by a Member Association or NTSSA.

3.10.3

Soccer Academies

1. A "Soccer Academy" is a group of 7U through 10U registered NTSSA recreational players who desire to participate with other players without following the recreational team formation rules. Players must register with a member association and may or may not be on a recreational team, unless required to be on a recreational team by their member association. Academies are to be governed by NTSSA Youth Associations, and NTSSA Youth Associations may host as many Soccer Academies as they deem desirable. Academy teams are governed by the league in which they participate. (If more than one association is involved in an academy league an A&D committee should be in place.)
2. Coaches, trainers, administrators, etc., of Soccer Academies must have satisfactorily passed the criminal background check and information sent to NTSSA.
3. Soccer Academy play is in addition to recreational play. Players may join any Soccer Academy of their choosing within their age group, and are not required to obtain a release from their NTSSA recreational team to participate on an Academy team. Players must present a form of proof of registration signed by their home association registrar each time they participate with an Academy. Players may join as many Soccer Academies as they like as long as the Soccer Academy is recognized by a NTSSA Member Youth Association. No formal contract or written commitment may be signed by or on behalf of the player to commit a player to an Academy team. The Academies

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may charge a fee to cover expenses in addition to the player's recreational soccer registration fees. Academy players may participate in only one Academy tournament at a time. Violations of this rule shall result in sanctions against the offending party (coach, assistant coach, manager, parent, or other team representative), which could include suspension from all soccer activities for a period of time.

4. Member Associations may provide league play if they have enough teams, or may coordinate with other Member Associations to provide a league or games between Soccer Academy teams from different home associations. Age division play will be designated as 7U through 10U. Scores and standings should not be kept.
5. Soccer Academy teams are not considered "registered teams," and therefore do not have to follow recreational team formation rules. Soccer Academy teams may not enter NTSSA sanctioned tournaments unless the tournament has specified a "Soccer Academy" bracket. In that event, players must declare which Soccer Academy team they will play with in the tournament and may only play for one team in a tournament.
6. Soccer Academy rosters may change from week to week to accommodate players desiring to change Soccer Academies, or to accommodate players who want to play on one team one week and another team the next week.
7. The purposes of the Soccer Academies are to:
 - a. Provide recreational players who have aspirations of becoming a more accomplished player an avenue to test and enhance his or her skills.
 - b. Provide recreational players an opportunity to train with experienced coaches.
 - c. Provide recreational players an opportunity to investigate the level of play with which they are comfortable, which players they would like to play with, and for which coaches they would like to play.
8. Recruiting is not allowed on Soccer Academy teams. Soccer Academies are to be used for training, not recruiting.
9. For the purpose of this rule, all players participating in a Soccer Academy who are also registered with an NTSSA Member youth association recreational or recreational plus team shall, in the event of a conflict, consider the NTSSA recreational team or recreational plus team to be their primary team and the Soccer Academy as a secondary commitment.

3.10.4

Failure to comply with Rule 3.10.1 and/or Rule 3.10.2 may result in the offending coach, assistant coach, manager/trainer and/or team representative being suspended from soccer activities for a period of not less than one (1) year.

3.10.5

If the complaint is intra-association, then the complaint will follow the Member Association's rules for filing complaints. Any appeal from a Member Association's decision would then follow the ordinary process of appeals from Member Associations.

3.10.6

Should the complaint be of an inter-association matter, then the complainant will file his complaint directly with the NTSSA Youth Commissioner, who shall render a decision. Either party may then file an appeal with the NTSSA Board of Directors according to the Bylaws of NTSSA.

3.10.7

A competitive (select) player is obligated to his competitive team for the soccer-playing year for competitive players from the time he signs a contract until the end of the subsequent soccer playing

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year (August 1 of the prior soccer year through June 30 of the current soccer year). Release to transfer to another NTSSA competitive team will be allowed under the following circumstances:

A player who has registered with a team that does not enter a USYSA outdoor league for the fall season, in the age group for which the player signed up, may be granted a transfer upon request, with or without the coach's approval.

Transfers and Inter-club Movement may be granted at any time on or prior to April 1.

Any request for transfer that is not approved by the player's current coach, as indicated above, will be scheduled for a Competitive Soccer Committee hearing, as stated in the Competitive Policy Manual which shall be chaired by the NTSSA Youth Commissioner or his designee, with all parties being invited to attend. Any appeal of the decision of the Competitive Soccer Committee after the hearing must be made directly to the NTSSA Board of Directors of within five (5) days.

A player may leave a competitive team and go into his home Member Association recreational player pool at any time on or prior to April 1 of the current soccer year with the written permission of the Youth Commissioner. A request for release from a competitive team must be received in the NTSSA office by April 1 (if April 1 falls on a weekend, then the first business day after). (Exceptions: player has moved outside NTSSA territory, current team has disbanded, or medical documentation the player has been injured and is unable to play the remainder of the soccer year.) Any recreational player currently rostered to a recreational team and wishing to be released to join a competitive team may do so only between December 1 and March 15 and may do so only with the written permission of the Member Association in which he is currently rostered. A competitive registration form must be completed prior to the players' transfer to a competitive team.

3.10.8 Player Releases

Recreational Player Transferring Associations Mid-Year:

Once a player has registered with a Member Association and been rostered to a recreational team, they are bound to that Association for the entire seasonal year unless the player transfers to another association utilizing the following process:

1. A player transfer to another member association may take place from December 1 up until they are registered and rostered to a team in their current Member Association for the Spring season. If they have registered for the Spring season, they are not eligible to transfer, unless an exception has been granted by the Youth Commissioner.
2. The player must submit a completed transfer form to the new association, indicating where they registered in the fall, why they are transferring, and in which association they plan to play in the Spring.
3. The receiving member association must sign the form, acknowledge the transfer, and provide a copy of the completed transfer to the original member association informing them that the player will not be returning. They may then register the player.
4. There is no need for the transfer to be submitted or approved by North Texas if it is within the transfer window indicated and the player has not registered for the Spring.

Competitive Player Releases

Any player rostered to a competitive team is bound to that team for the entire seasonal year unless the player requests a release or is released involuntarily. A player release shall be submitted to and approved by the NTSSA Youth Commissioner, stating the reason for the request on the release as described by the competitive policy manual. Approval of a player release from a competitive team by NTSSA does not constitute a release of financial liability, if applicable to the team.

1. A player may be released from a team involuntarily if the player is unable to play for one of the following reasons.

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- a. The player has violated rules of the **USSE, USYSA, NTSSA** or **NTSSA** Member Associations.
 - b. The player has moved beyond a reasonable travel distance. Determination of what constitutes a reasonable travel distance is subject to definition by **NTSSA**.
 - c. The player is injured in such a manner that the player will not be able to participate for the remainder of the season.
2. A player who has not attended any team functions or been in contact with their team manager or coach with intentions to return to the team for a period of 30 consecutive days will be considered to have abandoned their team and may be released from the team with the approval of the **NTSSA** Youth Commissioner in writing on the form provided.
 3. In an extreme case where a player is exceedingly disruptive, whether physically and/or verbally abusive, and is believed to be detrimental to the remainder of the team, the coach may petition the **NTSSA** Youth Commissioner to release the player from the team. The Youth Commissioner, after consulting with the parent(s) of the player will make a decision whether or not the conditions fall within the guidelines to allow the release. The Youth Commissioner's decision may be appealed to the **NTSSA** Board of Directors by either party. Unless in the opinion of the Youth Commissioner the actions of the player are so egregious as to otherwise warrant release from the team, the following circumstances must be present for the release to be considered:
 - a. The coach must have spoken with the player and parent(s) in an attempt to correct the player's behavior and given the player a chance to improve their behavior.
 - b. The coach must have attempted to correct the player's behavior through reduction of playing time and/or sitting out of practices.
 - c. The coach must not be utilizing the player's behavior in an attempt to remove a lesser skilled player from their team. If other players are demonstrating the same behavior, the coach cannot single out a player for release from the team.
 - d. The coach cannot use problems with a player's parents or financial issues as a reason to remove a player from a roster. They may, however, reduce or eliminate playing time for these reasons.
 4. Any coach who releases a player involuntarily for any reason other than listed in 1-3 above may be brought before the **NTSSA** Competitive Committee to explain his/her actions. An assertion by the coach or any person with authority or assumed authority on the team, either verbally or by action, that a reasonable person would interpret to mean that the player is no longer welcome on the team may be considered an involuntary release by the coach, even if no formal steps to complete release paperwork have been taken. If the Competitive Committee finds the involuntary release was not justified or could have been avoided in the best interest of the player, the coach is subject to severe sanctions including, but not limited to, suspension from all soccer activities for a period of time to be determined by the Competitive Committee. The coach is responsible for the action of persons in authority, or with assumed authority, on the team.

3.10.9

1. Recruiting is defined as:
 - a. Allowing a player to participate in practice or games with a team on which the player is not rostered unless such participation is otherwise expressly authorized by these **NTSSA** rules and all paperwork incidental to said authorization has been fully completed prior to such participation.
 - b. Allowing a player to participate in camps, skills, clinics, academies or other training activities unless such participation is otherwise expressly authorized by **NTSSA** rules, and all paperwork incident to said authorization has been fully completed prior to such participation.
 - c. Actively soliciting a player to break a commitment to his current team in order to join another team. This rule does not apply to Free Agents.
 - d. Making false, misleading, and/or unsubstantiated negative statements that could reasonably be expected to influence the decision of a player regarding his choice of teams.

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- e. Offering anything of monetary value to anyone to induce a player to commit to play for a particular team; provided, offering to pay, waive or reduce a player's expenses associated with participating with a particular team does not constitute recruiting so long as (i) the offer is, in good faith, based on financial need and (ii) any value received is in fact applied to the reasonable and necessary expenses associated with such player's participation.
 - f. Signing for the upcoming soccer year prior to July 1. Any commitment prior to July 1 is not binding on either the player or coach.
 - g. As long as the above rules are observed, nothing herein is intended to restrict the ability of a player at any time to express a general interest in a prospective team or for a prospective team to express at any time a general interest in a prospective player.
2. It shall be a violation of these rules for any person, team, club or other organization to engage in recruiting as defined above. Coaches are responsible for the actions of all of the above listed participants associated with their team. Failure to comply with this rule shall result in sanctions against the offending party that could include suspension from all soccer activities for a period of time to be determined by the **NTSSA** Competitive Committee. Allegations against registered youth players are subject to review before punishments are considered. Complainant will file his complaint with the Youth Commissioner, who shall render a decision. Either party may file an appeal of the Youth Commissioner's decision with the **NTSSA** State Board of Directors according to the Bylaws of the **NTSSA**.

3.10.10 Soccer-Playing Year for Competitive Players

1. **NTSSA** has established the seasonal year as being from September 1 through August 31. However, these rules provide that a competitive player is a free agent beginning July 1. That player will continue to be a free agent until the player and /or his parents or guardians have signed a contract with a team. The period of August 1 of the prior soccer year to May 15th of the current soccer year is considered the soccer-playing year for competitive players.
 - a. During the soccer-playing year, players are not allowed to try out, practice, or participate with any other team, unless they are a competitive player in the same club or registered as a guest player with another team, in which case the proper release must be signed by all parties. Practice with a team on which a player is registered as a guest player is permitted only if the practice dates are included on the guest player release. A competitive player practicing with a team in the same club is permitted throughout the seasonal year. Otherwise, a player may practice with another team if he has received a written permission letter signed by his current coach that sets out the dates and the team with which the player will practice. The player is to give the letter to the coach of the team with which he will be practicing, and he must keep a copy for himself.
 - b. Players wishing to guest play in tournaments must always obtain a properly signed guest player release. (See Rule 4.61.) Contracts may be signed beginning July 1, although signing July 1 is not mandatory. After July 1, players who are not or have not been rostered to a team for the current soccer year may sign a contract for the current soccer year at any time. (This does not include indoor soccer.)
2. Failure to comply shall result in sanctions against the offending party (coach, assistant coach, manager, parent, or other team representative), which could include suspension from all soccer activities for a period of time to be determined by the **NTSSA** Competitive Committee. Allegations against registered youth players are subject to review before punishments are considered and punishment periods are at the discretion of the Youth Commissioner committee hearing such allegations.

NOTE: *If a player currently registered to a team and/or his parent should contact a coach, assistant coach, or team manager to try out for another team, the above stated procedure must be followed.*

3. If a player is released from a team in accordance with **NTSSA** rules for releasing competitive players, he/she is a free agent, and is allowed to practice with any team of his/her choosing without a release. The player may not transfer to another competitive team without following the **NTSSA** guidelines governing transfers.

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3.11 DISCIPLINE

All Member Associations are directed to distribute this rule to every youth and adult player, every coach, team manager, league administrator and referee. It is intended that the player and/or coach will make known the contents of this rule to his or her parents and spectators.

3.11.1 Authority

1. All members and participants in youth and adult soccer within the jurisdiction of **NTSSA** have requested to participate in our programs. Therefore, these participants have agreed to abide by the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations of **NTSSA**, their local playing association, as well as those of the **USSF** and its National Associations of which **NTSSA** is a member. The **NTSSA** Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws provide that it has jurisdiction over all Member Playing Associations, players, coaches, team managers, administrators, team representatives and referees who choose to affiliate. Any member or participant in youth and adult soccer within the jurisdiction of **NTSSA** found in violation of the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations of **NTSSA**, their local member association, as well as those of the **USSF** and its National Associations of which **NTSSA** is a member, may be subject to publication in the monthly newsletter of **NTSSA** association of their name, the type of violation, and the disciplinary action taken. Publication will be limited to individuals receiving disciplinary actions of three months or greater.
2. All Member Associations and /or Playing Leagues are directed to form their own Appeals and Disciplinary Committees and to hold hearings--**WITH THE PARTIES HAVING THE RIGHT TO BE PRESENT**--on every player/coach/assistant coach/spectators and/or parents as required for serious misconduct.
3. Should a recreational Playing League cover multiple Associations, the members of the Appeals and Discipline Committee for this league should be comprised of representatives from each available association represented. The **NTSSA** A&D Committee shall serve as the first level of appeal involving complaints from participants of differing Associations. If a Playing League is hosted by a primary Association, the Appeals and Discipline Committee may be comprised of members of that Association.

As guidance, if the issue at hand was as a result of play, the Playing League will handle the disciplinary matter. All other matters shall be directed to coach/individual/teams home Association.

3.11.2 Misconduct of Youth Players/Coaches/Assistant Coaches

1. Member Associations, Playing leagues and Tournament Officials may institute their own "CUMULATIVE CARD SYSTEM" for players/coaches and assistant coaches or additional sanctions as they see appropriate. Appeals of cards are not allowed except when the referee admits he made an error in the issuance of the card. Sanctions for misconduct will remain within the competition where they are earned unless the violation happens in the last game of that competition and the Member Association/Player League or Tournament Officials deem that it is serious enough to forward to North Texas A & D for consideration of further sanctions.
2. **Yellow Cards** A player receiving a second yellow card in a single game is suspended for the balance of that game and the next game within that competition.
3. **Red Cards** A player receiving a red card or a coach/assistant coach who is sent off is suspended for the balance of that game and the next game within that competition, or if in the last game of the competition, may be referred to North Texas for further sanctions.

*If a Member Association's and/or Playing League's A & D Committee determines that a red card was issued for an infraction that was not an "expulsion" offense in accordance with the **IFAB** Laws of the Game, such A & D Committee may reduce the red card to a yellow card and assess sanctions accordingly. The Member Association*

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or Playing League may not, however, do away with the card altogether. A full report of this action must be sent to NTSSA.

3.11.3 Misconduct of Adult Players/Coaches/Assistant Coaches

Member Associations, Playing leagues, and Tournament Officials shall institute their own “MISCONDUCT SYSTEM” for players/coaches and assistant coaches for sanctions as the see appropriate. Appeals of cards are not allowed except when the referee admits he made an error in the issuance of the card. Sanctions for misconduct will remain within the competition where they are earned unless violation happens on the last game of that competition and the Member Association, Player League, or Tournament Officials deem that it is serious enough to forward to North Texas Soccer A&D for consideration of further sanctions.

1. A player/coach/assistant coach receiving a second yellow card in a single game is suspended for the balance of that game, and shall sit out the following game.
2. A player/coach/assistant coach receiving a red card is suspended for the balance of that game, and shall sit out a minimum of the following game.

NOTE: *If the Member Association A&D Committee determines that a red card was issued for an infraction that was not an “expulsion” offense in accordance with the IFAB Laws of the Game, the Member Association may reduce the red card to a yellow card and assess points for the yellow card. The Member Association may not, however, do away with the card altogether.*

3.11.4 Misconduct of Spectators

1. Each team (youth and adult) in NTSSA is responsible for the conduct of its spectators. The referee has the authority to insist that the coach or acting coach deal with the misconduct of the spectators and resolve the problem. Failure to do so may result in the coach's dismissal from the field and/or termination of the match. Therefore, the coach/assistant coach/team manager is expected to control his spectators, especially on non-enclosed fields. If he is unable to do so, Member Associations, Playing Leagues and/or Tournament Officials are directed to take appropriate actions toward the identifiable, unruly spectator, or if unidentifiable, towards the team itself. Member Associations, Playing Leagues and Tournament Officials shall report spectator misconduct to the NTSSA A&D Committee for review and further action if warranted.
2. Suggested action for misconduct of spectators is:
 - a. Suspend the spectator from attending future matches.
 - b. Report spectator to the local Park & Recreation Department.
 - c. Require team to forfeit any games at which spectator is present on the touchline (cannot keep them off public street or out of parking lot.)
 - d. Require offending team to pay for presence of police at the game.
 - e. Revoke and/or refuse registration to the offending team.
 - f. Cause the spectator to be placed under a municipal “peace bond”.

3.11.5 Misconduct and Punishment of Teams

1. League Play

- a. When, during the current soccer year, the players/coaches/assistant coaches of a given team have exceeded the misconduct limit set by the member association (if none are in place, NTSSA Misconduct Guideline will be used) in league play the Member Association and/or Playing League shall notify the team and the State A & D Committee. The team will be fined \$100 payable to NTSSA within thirty (30) days of receiving notice of the exceeded limit. The coach and the players of said team may also be required to appear before the Member Association and/or Playing League Disciplinary Committee to explain the team’s continued misconduct. If desired, the Member Association and/or Playing League may waive the holding of a local hearing and refer the matter to the NTSSA A&D Committee. Failure of the Member Association or Playing League to notify the NTSSA A&D

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Committee within fourteen (14) calendar days of a team's exceeded misconduct limit will result in a fine of \$100 per week for each week such notice is late. Red cards or send-offs assessed against that team's spectators or against that team during tournament play will be reviewed to ascertain team misconduct tendencies.

- b. When the players/coaches/assistant coaches of a given team have accumulated a total of four (4) send-offs in a tournament (*including* red cards issued as a result of an individual receiving two yellow cards in a single game) Tournament Officials shall notify the team and the NTSSA A & D Committee. The team will be fined \$100 payable to NTSSA within thirty (30) days of receiving notice of the fourth send-off. The coach and the players of said team may also be required to appear before the committee to explain the team's continued misconduct. Failure of Tournament Officials to notify the NTSSA A&D Committee within fourteen (14) calendar days of a team's fourth will result in a fine of \$100 per week for each week such notice is late. Red Cards or send-offs assessed against that team's spectators or against that team during league play will be reviewed to ascertain team misconduct tendencies.

2. All Association Teams

- a. The NTSSA holds the team and coach jointly responsible for the conduct of his or her players, parents, and spectators.
- b. A coach whose conduct is not considered to be exemplary to his or her players, parents and spectators will be firmly dealt with by the A&D Committee of both the Member Association involved and the NTSSA.

3.11.6 Games Directly Sponsored by NTSSA

Misconduct involving any participant (player, coach, parent/spectator) of State-sponsored games, as opposed to Member Association league play, will be reported directly to the Tournament Officials of the State Cup and Games Committee and will be forwarded to the NTSSA Appeals and Disciplinary Committee immediately after the occurrence for appropriate disciplinary action.

3.11.7 Misconduct Toward Referee

1. NTSSA has exclusive jurisdiction over assault or abuse of officials, both referee and assistant referee, in any competition by the State or Member Associations. This jurisdiction includes:
 - a. All USSF registered referees (adult and youth).
 - b. Any non-licensed person serving in any emergency capacity as a game official.
 - c. Any coach, parent or junior assistant referee, serving as a game official.
2. If there is an assault/abuse of any game official by any person, including players, coaches, managers or spectators; a report of the alleged assault/abuse will be submitted immediately to the NTSSA A&D Committee Chairman, the appropriate State Commissioner (Adult Men's, Adult Women's, Youth or Indoor), the Olympic Development Program Chairman and the Chairman of the State Referee Committee. This subcommittee, chaired by the NTSSA A&D Committee Chairman, shall review and investigate the report(s) as submitted, and upon proper investigation shall determine the seriousness of the alleged assault/abuse report(s) in a timely manner.
3. Should the majority of the members of the subcommittee listed above in Paragraph 3.11.7.2 determine there is sufficient evidence to consider the incident referee assault or referee abuse, a formal hearing will be held within thirty (30) days of verification of the incident. An intentional act upon or towards a game official as defined in Paragraph 3.11.7.1 above shall be deemed "referee assault" or "referee abuse" in the NTSSA under the terms, references, and conditions of USSF Policy 531-9.

If the subcommittee determines there is sufficient evidence to consider the incident referee assault, the committee, at its discretion, may suspend the individual involved until the hearing on the alleged assault.

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Should the subcommittee, as noted in Paragraph 3.11.7-2 above, determine the action committed to be Misconduct Towards a Referee rather than Referee Assault or Referee Abuse; it shall impose an administrative punishment of a three (3) game suspension. A formal hearing will not be held unless it is requested by the suspended party. Should a formal hearing be requested and held, it shall be an NTSSA Board of Directors hearing as described in Paragraph 3.11.7.4.

4. **NTSSA Board of Directors Hearing**

Assault hearings shall be conducted by the State Board of Directors in the following manner:

- a. The alleged offending party should be present at such hearings; however, if he is not present, the NTSSA Board of Directors will act upon the matter with the information before it.
- b. The game official(s) are required to be present at the hearings. However, if they are not present, the NTSSA Board of Directors will act upon the matter with the information before it.
- c. It is intended that the officials' reports be clear and that no explanations are required at the hearing. Only the NTSSA Board of Directors will question the official(s). If the offending party or any other party or any other person(s) need explanation, such queries will be addressed through the Chair.

5. **Terms and References**

- a. Referee assault is an intentional act of physical violence at or upon a referee, (an act intended to bring about a result that will invade the interests of another in a way that is socially unacceptable. Unintended consequences of the act are irrelevant.). Assault includes but is not limited to the following acts committed upon a referee: hitting, kicking, punching, choking, spitting on, grabbing or bodily running into a referee; head butting; the act of kicking or throwing any object at a referee that could inflict injury; damaging the referee's uniform or personal property, i.e. car, equipment, etc.
- b. Referee abuse is a verbal statement or physical act not resulting in bodily contact, which implies or threatens physical harm to a referee or the referee's property or equipment. Abuse includes, but is not limited to the following acts committed upon a referee: using foul or abusive language toward a referee; spewing any beverage on a referee's personal property; spitting at (but not on) the referee; or verbally threatening a referee. Verbal threats are remarks that carry the implied or direct threat of physical harm. Such remarks as, "I'll get you after the game" or "You won't get out of here in one piece", shall be deemed referee abuse.
- c. Misconduct towards a referee means persistent statements or physical acts directed toward a referee during or after a game, that do not constitute referee assault or abuse as provided under Federation Policy 531-9, but that mistreat the referee or are inappropriate or unacceptable statements or acts, and may include the following:
 - i. excessive incidences of foul or abusive language at the referee;
 - ii. statements that diminish the authority of the referee;
 - iii. Statements or acts that serve to intimidate without threatening physical harm to the referee.
 - iv. Examples of misconduct that arise under the description above include the following:
 1. confronting the referee without physically threatening the referee;
 2. spitting on the ground or in the air but not at the referee;
 3. throwing or kicking an item as a sign of disrespect or dissent but without the chance of hitting the referee;
 4. Re-entering the field.

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These are only some of the examples of possible misconduct and are not all-inclusive, but apply only in the following situations:

- i. if a proceeding is brought against an individual for referee assault or abuse, or both, under Federation Policy 531-9; or
- ii. If the individual is ejected from a game and, after the ejection, engages in conduct that is misconduct under this policy.

6. Penalties and Suspensions

a. Referee Assault

The person committing the referee assault is automatically suspended as follows:

1. for a minor or slight touching of the referee or the referee's uniform or personal property, at least three (3) months from the time of the assault;
2. except as provided in clause one (1) or two (2), for any other assault, at least six (6) months from the time of the assault;
3. for an assault committed by an adult and the referee is seventeen (17) years of age or younger, at least three (3) years; or
4. for an assault when serious injuries are inflicted, at least five (5) years.

b. Referee Abuse

The person committing the referee abuse shall be suspended for a minimum of three (3) games.

c. Misconduct Towards a Referee

The person committing the misconduct towards a referee shall be suspended for a minimum of three (3) games.

- d. Any suspension assessed against an individual under this section does not affect any other suspension and/or fine that may be imposed on the individual by an association or league for a violation that is not referee assault or abuse.

7. Any party found to have committed the act of referee assault, referee abuse, or misconduct towards a referee shall have the right to appeal, within ten (10) days of receipt of the decision, to the **USSF Appeals Board**, following **USSF Bylaw 705**.

8. Assault On Officials By An Adult Player

Should a player (male or female) be found guilty of referee assault, the **NTSSA** Board of Directors may, at its discretion, impose upon the team of which the player is a member, the requirement of posting a \$1,000 cash bond to be held in the treasury of **NTSSA** without interest for a period of one (1) year after posting. This cash bond will be required to be posted before the team may engage in any further games within the boundaries of **NTSSA**. Should any other member of said team be found guilty of a referee assault during that one (1) year period, the team shall forfeit the bond, and another similar bond will be required before the team can continue in competition. If no member of the team commits a referee assault during that one (1) year period, the bond will be returned to the person or persons designated to receive such payment. No member of such team which has failed to post such bond will be permitted to register with another team until that member has posted a \$50 bond with **NTSSA**; nor shall any new member be allowed to register on that team until such member has posted a \$50 bond, such bonds to be held under the same terms and conditions as the team bonds.

3.11.8 Misconduct of Referees

When any referee is alleged to have committed misconduct toward any participant, spectator of a match or toward another referee, the **NTSSA A&D Committee** will hear such allegations and assess punishment concerning the Referee in regard to his activities.

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3.11.9 Appellate Procedures

1. All those under the jurisdiction of **NTSSA** are reminded that they must exhaust all appellate procedures of the Member Association on all matters not covered by these Rules before **NTSSA** can acquire jurisdiction to hear the appeal under its rules.
2. Member Associations are reminded that they may set the rules of hearings and may restrict the number of witnesses, and the time allotted to each, so long as fair hearings are held. It may also determine whether it wants to allow closed or open hearings.
3. Member Associations and their committees are urged to refuse to hear any appeal when any person is threatening a lawsuit. You should pass the appeal to the next higher forum which would hear it. This is a sport to which we are giving freely of our time, and none of us needs to take the trouble and expense to appear in court.
4. To allow the use of tape recorders, court reporters and the presence of attorneys at hearings is optional with the Member Associations
NTSSA will refuse to allow such recording devices, and the presence of attorneys at hearings is optional with the Member Associations.
5. Should any aggrieved party resort to the courts without exhausting all avenues of appeal including through to the **USSF**, **NTSSA** may, at its discretion, suspend such person or refuse to accept further registration in soccer activities within its jurisdiction.
6. An appeal of decisions pursuant to Rule 3.11 made by Member Associations, after Member Association's appeal procedures have been exhausted, will be made to the **NTSSA** A&D Committee in accordance with procedures established by this section.
7. An appeal of decisions made by the State A&D Committee will be made to the **NTSSA** Board of Directors in accordance with procedures established in this section.
8. An appeal of decisions presented to the **NTSSA** will be:
 - a. In writing.
 - b. Made to the Executive Director of **NTSSA** within five (5) days of receipt of written notice of the lower level authority's decision(s).
 - c. Fees, as specified, will be in cash or certified check and will accompany the written notice of appeal.
9. Filing fees for appeals will, under no circumstances, be waived. Fees will be refunded to the appealing party only if the previous decision is overruled. Fees will be:
 - a. All Player Appeals- \$50 - (\$25 paid by the player and \$25 paid by the coach)
 - b. All Coach Appeals & Referee Appeals - \$100
 - c. All Team Appeals - \$100

3.11.10 Records

The Appeals and Disciplinary Committee will maintain a permanent file of all reports sent to it and the action taken. When any one person or a team shows a trend towards numerous misconduct reports, the Committee will contact such person or team for the purpose of warning or may call such person or team before it.

3.11.11 Association to Comply

When any Member Association or a member thereof, fails to send in reports as required by this Rule, **NTSSA** will take any action it considers proper, including fine not to exceed Five Hundred Dollars (\$500). Repeated violation by Member Association can result in such association being declared not in good standing.

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3.12 REFEREE SYSTEM

3.12.1

The only approved referee system for all **NTSSA** competitions (both State and affiliated members) shall be the International Three-Referee system (a referee and two neutral assistant referee) employing **IFAB** Laws of the Game (as modified herein), officiating techniques and mechanics. The order of preference when three registered referees are not available is as follows:

1. A **USSF** referee and one **USSF** assistant referee and one “certified” junior assistant referee.
2. A **USSF** referee and one **USSF** assistant referee and one club assistant referee.
3. A **USSF** referee and two certified “junior” assistant referees.
4. A **USSF** referee and one certified “junior” assistant referee and one club linesman.
5. A **USSF** referee and two club linesmen
6. A **USSF** referee only.

3.12.2

Under no circumstances will the dual referee system of officiating be utilized for any **NTSSA** sanctioned games (which include all Member Associations league games, cup matches, and tournaments). Member Associations of **NTSSA** who attempt to employ this system of officiating will be declared not in good standing upon thirty (30) days written notice by the **NTSSA** Board of Directors. If they do not take immediate, positive steps to comply with this rule, the Member Association will be held to be not in good standing.

3.12.3

Coaches of **NTSSA** registered and affiliated teams shall not play a competitive league, cup or tournament match under the dual system of officiating, nor can their teams be forced to forfeit said game(s) for refusing to play under the dual system.

3.13 GAME PROTESTS

3.13.1

There are only two acceptable causes for the protesting of a game after it has been played. They are:

1. A team knowingly plays an unregistered, ineligible, or suspended player; or
2. There has been an obvious error made in the application of the Laws of the Game that directly affects the outcome of the match, and the referee admits it.

3.13.2

No protests can even be entertained if they are based on judgment decisions made by the referee during play. The Laws of the Game clearly state in Law V (Referees) that . . . “A referee shall be appointed to officiate each game . . . his decisions on points of fact connected with the play shall be final, so far as the result of the game is concerned”. A game cannot be protested because one coach, or both for that matter, thinks the referee was incompetent. This is a matter to handle through the local referee’s group or the State Referee Committee.

3.13.3

Any protests relating to the grounds, goal posts, cross bars, or other appurtenances of the match shall not be entertained by any protest committee or board unless an objection has been lodged with the match referee before the commencement of the match. The referee shall require the responsible team to remove the cause of objection if this is possible, without unduly delaying the process of the match.

When an objection has been lodged, a protest, in writing, must be made to the protest committee of the Member Association under whose direct jurisdiction the match was played. No objection or protest shall be withdrawn (because the protestor won the match) except by consent of said protest committee.

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3.13.4

A team that knowingly plays an unregistered, ineligible, or suspended player shall forfeit all of the games in which the player participated. A coach, assistant coach, and/or manager of the team playing such player shall be suspended for a minimum period of one year. The offending player may be suspended from soccer activities.

3.14 NTSSA RULES OF COMPETITION

The Rules of Play for Adult and Youth competition of NTSSA and its affiliated members shall be the **IFAB** Laws of the Game modified as follows in each Law of the Game below:

3.14.1 Law I - Field of Play

Realizing that we must generally accept and play upon fields furnished by the various municipal parks departments, the following are recommended field and goal sizes:

<u>Age Groups</u>	<u>Field Width</u>	<u>Field Length</u>	<u>Goal Size</u>
<u>Adult</u>			
All Ages	Max. 80 yds.	Max. 120 yds.	8ft. x24 ft.
<u>Youth</u>			
19U	Max. 80 yds.	Max. 112 yds.	8 ft. x 24 ft.
16U	Max. 75 yds.	Max. 112 yds.	8 ft. x 24 ft.
14U	Max. 75_yds.	Max. 112 yds.	8 ft. x 24 ft.
12U	44 - 55 yds.	70 – 80 yds.	Max 7 ft.x 21 ft. Recommend 6.5 ft. x 18.5 ft.
10U	35 – 45 yds.	55 – 65 yds.	Max 6.5 ft. x 18.5 ft. Recommend 6.5 ft. x 12 ft.
8U and younger	15 – 25 yds.	25 – 35 yds.	4 ft. x 6 ft.

3.14.2 Law II - The Ball

Ball sizes for various age groups will be as follows:

<u>Age Groups</u>	<u>Ball Size</u>
13U and older	Size #5
12U and 10U	Size #4
8U and 6U	Size #3

3.14.3 Law III - Number of Players and Substitution

1. 13U and older recommended play is 11v11.
2. 12U recommended play is 9v9
3. 10U recommended play is 7v7
4. 8U recommended play is 4v4 with no goalkeeper.

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5. 6U and below recommended play is 4v4 or 3v3
*All formats 9U – 19U be a U.S. Soccer approved format
6. Substitution Rule
 - a. At a throw-in, by team in possession only;
 - b. Either team, at a goal-kick;
 - c. Either team, after a goal is scored;
 - d. Either team at an injury, when the referee stops the play;
 - e. At halftime or quarter for 8U and younger;
 - f. When a caution (yellow card) is given, in 9U and older, that player may be substituted.
*** NTSSA allows for the use of the “Quarter Substitution System” for those Youth Member Associations who want to use it in the 8U and younger age groups only.

The referee will hold up the game for substitutions at a normal stoppage of the game (throw in, goal kick, etc.) at a time nearest to one-half the way through each regular half time period.
7. Each recreational player, when present at a game, shall be required to play a minimum of 50% of the time, unless the player’s time has been reduced for medical or disciplinary reasons, in which case the coach must notify the player, and the opposing coach prior to the beginning of the game that the minimum time has been reduced (non-attendance at practice and non-payment of fees may be cause for disciplinary action).
8. **Substitution Rule - Adults: IFAB** rules for substitution will apply.
- 9.a Teams shall be allowed the following maximum number of players on its roster at any given time during the seasonal year.
 - Adult – maximum 25 players
 - 16U and 19U – maximum 22 players
 - 14U – maximum 18 players
 - 12U – maximum 16 players
 - 10U – maximum 12 players
 - 8U and younger– recommend 6, maximum 8 players
- 9.b Exceptions to these maximum roster sizes may be approved by the appropriate NTSSA Youth or Adult Commissioner. In no case may the roster size be such that all players on a youth recreational team may not get 50% playing time.

3.14.4 Law IV - Player’s Equipment

Each player shall have a number on the back of his jersey not less than four (4) inches high. Shin guards, meeting the standards set forth in the **IFAB** Laws of the Game or subsequent memoranda, shall be mandatory.

3.14.5 Law V - Referee * Conforms with IFAB-Except for 8U and younger the following applies:**

1. Registered Referees
2. Parent/Coach or Assistant Coach
3. Referee’s decisions on points of fact connected with the game shall be final.
4. All rule infractions shall be briefly explained to the offending player.
5. Only registered Referees have the power to caution or send off players

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3.14.6 Law VI - Assistant Referee

Properly trained and registered referees may be used by Member Associations for 9U and older. There are no Assistant Referees in 8U and younger.

3.14.7 Law VII - Duration of Game

<u>Age Groups</u>	<u>Length of Periods</u>	<u>Length of Overtime</u>
Adult		
Adult	Two 45 min.	Two 15 min.
Youth		
19U	Two 45 min.	Two 15 min.
16U	Two 40 min.	Two 15 min.
14U	Two 35 min.	Two 10 min.
12U	Two 30 min.	Two 10 min.
10U	Two 25 min.	Two 10 min.
8U and younger	Max Four 10 min Recommend Four 8 min.	None

3.14.8 Law VIII - Start of Play * Conforms with IFAB except for 8U and younger opponents must be at least ten (10) feet from the ball.**

3.14.9 Law IX - Ball in and out of Play * Conforms with IFAB**

3.14.10 Law X - Method of Scoring * Conforms with IFAB except for Adult Coed play, two (2) points may be awarded for a goal by a female player if local playing rules so provide.**

3.14.11 Law XI - Off-Side * Conforms with IFAB except that for 8U and younger there is no offside, and for 10U there is no offside between the halfway line and the build out lines.**

3.14.12 Law XII - Fouls and Misconduct

1. Charging the goalkeeper in possession of the ball is **NOT ALLOWED** in any youth play in NTSSA. Possession is defined as “One or two hands on the ball, holding it, bouncing it, tossing it up and then catching it, or patting it along the ground.” Charging the goalkeeper in adult competitions (per **IFAB** laws) is left strictly up to the Adult Leagues involved.
2. It is not intentional “hand-ball” offense for any player to attempt to protect the vital areas of his or her body (chest, crotch, face) by placing hands or arms across them to protect them from being struck at close range by the ball. The match referee shall be the sole judge of whether the hands or arms were used to deliberately propel the ball.
3. Coaches and assistant coaches are subject to the same game disciplinary procedures by the referee as are the players, i.e., cautions and/or ejections.
4. 10U and 9U – no punting is allowed. All attacking players must move behind the build out line, which should be equal distance between the penalty area line and the halfway line.
5. *12U and younger recreational play shall not engage in heading, either in practices or in games. When a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick (IFK) should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on

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the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred. If a player does not deliberately head the ball, then play should continue.

*In competitive and international play, 11U and younger is highly recommended

6. For players in 12U and 13U, heading training should be limited to a maximum of 30 minutes per week with no more than 15-20 headers per player, per week.

- 3.14.13 Law XIII - Free Kick *** Conforms with IFAB except that all free kicks are indirect kicks in 8U and younger and opponents must be at least ten (10) feet from the ball.**
- 3.14.14 Law XIV - Penalty Kick *** Conforms with IFAB except that there are no penalty kicks in 8U and younger.**
- 3.14.15 Law XV - Throw-In *** Conforms with IFAB except for 8U and younger are allowed a re-throw. 8U and younger may use kick-in.**
- 3.14.16 Law XVI - Goal Kick *** Conforms with IFAB except for 8U and younger opponents must be at least ten (10) feet from the ball.**
- 3.14.17 Law XVII - Corner Kick *** Conforms with IFAB except for 8U and younger opponents must be at least ten (10) feet from the ball.**

***NOTE:** Adult and/or youth teams which travel out of the U.S.A., for competition, especially tournaments, should be prepared to play pure **IFAB** Laws of the Game, including two to five maximum substitutions, in a match (with no re-entry after substitution), legal charging of goalkeeper in possession, etc.)*

3.15 INCOMPLETE GAME BECAUSE OF MISCONDUCT

If a game is not completed because of misconduct clearly traceable to one or the other of the contending teams, its management, or its followers as determined by the respective authority, the respective authority shall decide as to the disposition of the game.

3.16 CHANGES

3.16.1

These Rules and Regulations may be changed or new Rules and Regulations may be added at a meeting of the Member Associations provided sixty (60) days written or electronic notice of the meeting, including a written or electronic copy of the proposed changes or additions, have been submitted to the membership. Any proposed change for the above Member Association meeting must be submitted to the Bylaws, Rules, and Regulation committee by April 15th prior to the meeting for review and distribution to the membership. Where a quorum is present at the above meetings, it will take a majority vote of the members present to pass new rules or to change or amend present rules.

3.16.2 Any changes or additions to these rules that are approved shall immediately become part of these rules, and all Member Associations shall receive a written or electronic copy of the new rule or amendment of the rule within forty-five (45) days.

3.17 WHO MAY PROPOSE RULE CHANGES AND AMENDMENTS

Any proposal to amend the rules or add new rules may be made only by Executive Officers of Member Associations, NTSSA Board of Directors and properly constituted committees of NTSSA. Changes submitted by a member of a properly constituted committee must pertain to the duties and scope of that committee.

CHAPTER 4
RULES FOR REGISTRATION OF YOUTH PLAYERS

4.1 DEFINITION OF YOUTH REGISTRANTS

4.1.1

Youth registration of soccer players under these NTSSA rules shall include all those registrants defined as youth by USSF, being all male and female registrants **under** the age of **nineteen (19)**.

1. **Registration**

- a. **Recreational:** The player is registered to a recreational association from the moment the player or the player’s agent signs the USYSA registration form and pays the appropriate fees to that association subject to Rule 4.2.1. Rostering means assignment of a registered player to a team. Initial rostering shall commence no later than the player’s first participation in any competition sanctioned by NTSSA or its member associations.
- b. **Competitive:** The player is registered and rostered to that team from the moment the player or the player’s agent signs the USYSA registration form and pays a portion of the fee to that team or participates as a rostered player in an NTSSA sanctioned game.

NOTE: Rule 4.2.3

- c. **Youth Coed:** For proper age players 11U and older. NTSSA allows dual registration of youth players for the purpose of coed soccer. For a dual-registered player, the player’s same-sex team shall be considered the player’s primary team and the coed team shall be considered the player’s secondary team.
 - 1) **Recreational Coed:** Players may be assigned to teams by any NTSSA recreational team formation method (Rule 4.7). Additionally, member associations may consider requests from coed players to play together on a team.
 - 2) **Competitive Coed:** If a coed team has more than 50 percent of its players also registered as competitive outdoor players, the coed team shall be classified as a competitive coed team.

4.1.2

Age grouping for NTSSA and Member Associations play shall be:

YOUTH

19U

16U

14U

12U

10U

8U

6U ** Child must be a minimum of three (3) years of age to play soccer

The age of a player for purpose of league play shall be the player’s age on December 31 of the current soccer year. The current soccer year begins on September 1 and ends August 31 of the following year. If allowed by the Member Association playing rules, players who meet the minimum age will be eligible to play.

The player is registered from the moment the player or the player’s agent signs the registration form and pays the appropriate fees.

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4.1.3

Member Associations will require all players to present proof of age when they register to play for the first time in the Association.

Proof of age shall consist of a birth certificate or birth registration issued by an appropriate government agency, Board of Health records, passport, alien registration card issued by the United States government, a certificate issued by the Immigration and Naturalization Service attesting to age, a Uniformed Services Identification and Privilege Card (DD Form 1173) issued by the uniformed services of the United States or a certification of an American citizen born abroad issued by the appropriate government agency. Hospital, baptismal or religious certificates will not be accepted.

4.2 REGISTRATION OF PLAYERS

4.2.1

Youth players may only be registered with one NTSSA sanctioned team at any given time during the soccer year excluding co-ed teams and any team that directly registers/rosters and is affiliated with a Nationally managed full-time league. The soccer year will coincide with the soccer year of the USSF. Youth players may change teams during the year in the following manner: ***NOTE: Read Rule 4.5.***

1. Member Associations who reserve the right to reassign recreational players at the Association's desire may reassign said players and re-register the new teams by filing with the Registrar of the State the new team roster. All reassigned players are considered "transfers" for rostering purposes.
2. New team must complete Add/Transfer/Delete form on a transfer player, pay a transfer fee set by NTSSA in order to register a transfer player on a new team; and submit form and fee to their Home Association. Youth players will become "free-agents" on July 1. No NTSSA membership form, club contract, or any agreement may be signed before July 1 for the coming seasonal year. Any player signing with a team before July 1 may be declared ineligible for the team. Contracts shall not be signed prior to July 1 and postdated. The coach, manager, and/or other persons affiliated with the team allowing early signing and/or post-dating of contracts are subject to serious sanctions, which could include suspension from all soccer activities for a period of time to be determined by the NTSSA Competitive Committee. ***NOTE: Exceptions to this rule may be made by the Youth Commissioner when an entire association has an earlier registration.***

Definition of "Free-Agent": A free agent is a player in the 11U through 19U age division who desires to participate on a competitive team and is not rostered to any team. All players in the 11U through 19U age divisions become free agents as of July 1. ***NOTE: The "free-agent" rule applies only to those players trying out or being selected for competitive teams. The rule does not apply to movement of players in the recreational leagues.***

3. Member Associations may form recreational All-Star Teams in 12U through 19U divisions from players who continue to be registered within one Member Association on recreational teams for purposes of participating in tournaments designated for Select or Competitive teams. Recreational All-Star Teams shall be defined as teams composed of players selected from more than one recreational team that register with a single association.
4. A recreational All-Star team formed during the current soccer year may not form as a competitive team until the following soccer year.

4.2.2

Youth players registering (in the customary practice and form adopted by the Member Associations) with a team during the month of July or August for sanctioned competition which will continue into the subsequent soccer year will, at the time of registration, be deemed registered to the team for the subsequent year.

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4.3 REGISTRATION OF PLAYERS WITH MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

Players must register to play soccer with a Member Association. Upon request, no Member Association is permitted to deny a Player Release to an individual player. No fee may be associated with an approved Player Release unless such player is being released outside of NTSSA. Only the receiving Member Association will register the player. A Member Association may not actively recruit players from outside of their defined territory.

4.4 ASSOCIATION'S RESPONSIBILITIES AS TO REGISTRATION WITH THE STATE ASSOCIATION

Each Member Association shall be obligated to register its players with the State Association in accordance with Article II 2.2.4 of NTSSA Bylaws.

4.5 YOUTH TRANSFERS

NTSSA youth players may only be transferred once during the soccer year. Should any member association desire to transfer a recreational youth player more than once during a soccer year, it may file an appeal directly to the NTSSA Youth Commissioner. Only those circumstances that directly affect the successful completion of their program or the welfare of the player will be considered. Exceptions to the one transfer rule for competitive players may also be appealed directly to the NTSSA Youth Commissioner and will only be considered in situations out of the player's control, such as a team folding to allow the player to continue playing at a competitive level if they chose. Decisions of the Youth Commissioner may be appealed directly to the NTSSA Board of Directors.

1. ODP Players

Players who have registered in the current soccer year and have participated in the Olympic Development Program (O.D.P) may not transfer or be added to the team that their O.D.P coach or assistant coach participate with for the remainder of the current soccer year, and all of the following soccer year.

***NOTE:** The free agent rule applies only to those players trying out or being selected for competitive teams. The rule does not apply to movement of players in the recreational leagues.*

2. Competitive (Select) Players

Competitive (select) youth players may not change teams prior to July 1 of the current soccer year except in limited circumstances as provided in Rule 3.10.7. Players will become free agents on July 1. No NTSSA membership form, club contract, or any agreement may be signed before July 1. Competitive players do not need a release from their current coach to attend camps/clinics from June 1 through July 1. However, they will not be allowed to be added to any team until July 1.

3. Inter-club Movement

Competitive players may change teams within the club with the approval of the parents and club. This will not be considered a transfer and will require proper notification as outlined in the Competitive Policy Manual.

4.6 GUEST PLAYERS

4.6.1

When traveling out of NTSSA for friendly or tournament games, NTSSA shall allow the use of the number of guest players that is allowed by the tournament or hosting organization, providing the tournament or hosting organization allows their use. The use of guest players shall be in accordance with the following procedures:

1. NTSSA Guest Player form must be filled out and submitted to the NTSSA State Office for approval. Once approved, a copy must be provided to the coach releasing the player, and the coach requesting the loan of the player.

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2. The recreational guest player may not be transferred or added to the hosting team's recreational roster for the remainder of the current soccer year, and all of the following soccer year, unless the player transfer is approved by the player's home Member Association.
3. A guest player's current team's membership pass signed by the Youth Commissioner will be used in activities necessitating the use of **USYSA** travel I.D. cards.
4. Guest players may practice with the team on which they are guests only if the dates for the practices are included on the guest player release signed by the guest player's registered coach. Violators of this rule are subject to discipline under the rules governing use of ineligible players.
5. Academy players who are not rostered to a recreational team are not eligible to participate as a guest player on a recreational team.

4.6.2

Teams will be allowed up to five (5) guest players, providing the hosting organization allows guest players. These guest players and guest players on teams traveling out of **NTSSA** may participate in any or all of the tournaments that the team may enter.

EXCEPTION: At any time, a team that loses a player(s) to participate in a **USSF**, **USASA**, **USYSA** National Team Activity (including the U. S. National Team, Regional Teams or Olympic Development Program Teams) may replace that player(s) with guest player(s) for competition in sanctioned tournaments if the tournament and National Team activity occur at the same time.

4.6.3

If a team uses guest players in a tournament sponsored by **NTSSA**, the Coach must file Guest Player Release forms with the **NTSSA** Cup and Games Chairman for his approval prior to the tournament. If a Recreational team is using Guest Players in any other tournament sanctioned by **NTSSA**, the coach must have the player's Home Association signature before turning into tournament director for his approval prior to the tournament. If a Competitive team is using Guest Players in any other tournament sanctioned by **NTSSA**, the Coach must have the appropriate signatures before turning into the tournament director for his approval prior to the tournament. Coach of the team who fails to submit the Guest Player Release forms shall receive a six (6) month suspension from all soccer activities.

4.6.4

On a team traveling outside of **NTSSA** and using guest players, the coach must file guest player release forms with the **NTSSA** Youth Commissioner for his approval. These forms should be filed with the **NTSSA** office fourteen (14) days prior to the tournament. Coach of the team that fails to submit guest player release forms shall receive a six (6) month suspension from all soccer activities.

4.6.5

Under no conditions can a player on a select/competitive team participate as a guest player for a recreational team unless that team is playing in an open or competitive tournament.

4.7 RECREATIONAL TEAM FORMATION RULES

4.7.1

In order to promote soccer participation, a player may invite a friend from the same Member Association who was not registered in any Member Association during the last two seasons to join his existing team with the permission of the Member Association.

4.7.2

If a Member Association permits teams to remain together from season to season then the player has the right to stay on the team, and the Member Association must insure that all those rostered players have been contacted and given the opportunity to remain on that team. In the event there are not enough players in the player pool, Member Associations may allow coaches to actively seek players of the proper age group within the Member Association to be added to the player pool.

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New recreational teams and returning teams that need players are formed by one of the following two methods:

1. Players are assigned (rostered) to a team by an age group coordinating committee of more than one member on an unbiased basis as defined by the Member Association By-Laws/Constitution.
2. Players are assigned (rostered) to a team by a random draw from one (1) player pool on a territorial basis as stated above.
 - a. 13U and older players may be assigned to any NTSSA recreational team using a draw in addition to a member association considering requests from recreational players to play together on a team. Coaches may not refuse the addition of players from the pool if they are assigned by the association. The use of tryouts, invitations, recruiting or any similar process to roster players selectively to any team on the basis of talent or ability is prohibited.

Player's names shall not be identified to the coach until the player is placed on the team. Only the Head Coach may request their child to be rostered to the team that he/she is coaching.

If a person becomes the head coach of a new team formed by the Member Association in the current season, the coach may request their child be rostered to the new team he/she is coaching. In order for any person to request their child be transferred to a returning team they are coaching, they must have been the head coach of record of the team for the previous two outdoor playing seasons or asked to be the head coach of the returning team by a majority vote of the Member Association's Board of Directors.

A Member Association may have only one recreation team formation process per age group.

Any other method of player assignment or team formation is considered non-recreational.

Any team not formed by the above manner shall be considered non-recreational for recreational league and tournament play.

Any recreational coach who knowingly and/or willingly drops a player from their roster, or advises that player not to play for their team, whether through direct contact or coercion shall be called before the Member Association discipline committee, and if found to be in violation of the offense, may be suspended from coaching.

4.7.3

A team not formed of players assigned as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 above is considered a select/competitive team.

4.8 COMPETITIVE TEAM FORMATION RESTRICTION (11U)

Teams forming for play in 11U age competition are restricted to having three (3) underage players on their rosters that are playing up. These players must be 9 years of age per Rule 4.1.2 to be signed. Players 9 years of age per Rule 4.1.2 may not play on teams older than 11U. There shall be no more than three (3) 10U players on any event/official/game day roster. **Any player turning 9 years of age by December 31 of the current soccer year, shall be considered a 10U player for the entire soccer year.*

4.9 YOUTH COMPETITIVE CLUB DISTINCTION

1. Youth Competitive Club

A competitive club is any group of two or more competitive teams that have a common administrative group and play under the same name. Competitive Clubs are recognized by NTSSA on a team-by-team basis.

2. Registered Youth Competitive Club

- a. A Competitive Club that has at least six (6) competitive teams playing in a competitive league(s) may register for recognition as a Registered Competitive Club. If a club falls below the required six (6) registered competitive teams, it will no longer

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be recognized as a Registered Competitive Club and it will not be allowed a representative on the NTSSA Committee or the Competitive Club Advisory Council.

- b. A club will be recognized as a Registered Competitive Club once properly completed registration forms, together with any required supporting documentation, have been submitted to NTSSA. The Club must keep its contact information up-to-date with NTSSA in the case of a change of any administrative position in the club. The Competitive Soccer Committee as directed by the Youth Commissioner will review all submissions for compliance.
- c. A Competitive Club may register for recognition as a Registered Competitive Club at any time during the soccer year.
- d. A Registered Competitive Club may be held accountable to NTSSA for the acts or omissions of its members, coaches, trainers, managers, players, parents, officers, directors, officials, agents and/or other representative, provided that such acts or omissions constitute violations of rules, laws, codes and/or regulations which are within NTSSA's enforcement jurisdiction. Provided, further, such accountability shall lie only if:
 - 1) The common administrative group had prior actual knowledge of such acts or omissions and consented to them or failed to take reasonable steps to prevent them; or
 - 2) Following written notice from NTSSA that such violations have occurred, the Registered Club fails to take reasonable, timely, and appropriate remedial measures.
- e. The accountability provided for in this section may include monetary sanctions not to exceed Five Hundred Dollars (\$500) per incident, or other sanctions, and/or revocation of such club's status as a Registered Competitive Club.

4.10 CLUB PASS PLAYERS

4.9.1

Competitive teams will be permitted to have club pass players for league and/or tournament games if specifically allowed by the league or tournament rules. The use of club pass players shall be in accordance with the following:

- 1. The club pass player must be a competitive player registered with NTSSA to another team within the same club.
- 2. The club pass player may not play down from their own age group.
- 3. A release from the team to which the player is rostered is not required. It is up to the club to manage any issues within their teams/parents/coaches relating to club pass players.
- 4. Club pass players may practice with the team to which they are scheduled to player pass.
- 5. The team and club pass player must follow the rules of the competition, including but not limited to total numbers of club pass players allowed per game and/or the number of teams with which a player may compete in a day, week or event.

4.9.2

Any coach/team utilizing a club pass player outside of these rules or the rules of the competition will be considered to have played an ineligible player and will be subject to sanctions/discipline under the rules governing use of an ineligible player.

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4.11 TRYOUTS

Tryouts are not allowed for 6U through 9U players.

Tryout Advertisement:

Any Club/Team wishing to conduct tryouts in **NTSSA** may do so by advertising the tryouts containing only the information below:

- a. Team name, age group and club affiliation.
- b. Geographical area served by the team, if desired.
- c. Season of tryouts, dates, and times.
- d. Location of tryout and directions, if necessary.
- e. Coach's complete name and telephone number and/or the contact person name and telephone number.
- f. Coach's **USSF**, **USYSA**, **NSCAA** and/or **NTSSA** badge level, if desired.
- g. Notes regarding seasonal need for a release, if necessary.
- h. What to bring, such as water, ball, etc.

NOTE: Advertisement is defined as but not limited to, any notification of tryouts on television, radio, periodicals, newspaper articles, notices posted in public places, flyers, circulars or direct mailings. The distribution of any Team Fact Sheet, club information brochures, coach's resumes or the like at tryouts shall not constitute advertising.

1. Team/Club Fact Sheet

All competitive teams must complete and forward to the **NTSSA** office the Team/Club Fact Sheet for all anticipated teams by June 15 preceding the July 1 tryout date. Teams that were not anticipated must forward their Team/Club Fact Sheet to the **NTSSA** office prior to signing of players. Violations of this rule or misrepresentation of information on the fact sheet shall result in the offending coach, manager, and/or administrator being suspended for a minimum of one year. The Team/Club Fact Sheet may be distributed at any time after submission to North Texas Soccer. However, all players attending tryouts must receive a copy of the Team/Club Fact Sheet and must sign a receipt acknowledging same. (Parental signature is accepted for minors.) Clubs and teams are encouraged to publish their Team/Club Fact Sheets on their Club/Team web page.

4.12 COMPETITIVE LEAGUE RESTRICTIONS FOR 6U, 8U, AND 10U

4.12.1

No Member Association may conduct or sponsor any competitive league competition in 6U, 8U, and 10U age groups.

4.12.2

Those Member Associations who are found to be in violation of this rule, after a formal investigation conducted by the **NTSSA** Youth Commissioner, shall be immediately declared to be in bad standing as defined in **NTSSA** Bylaws Article II, Paragraph 2.1.3.8. Teams of such Member Associations shall be removed from all competition: Intrastate, Interstate, Regional, and National. Should teams from this association have travel permits approved, they also will be rescinded.

4.12.3

Appeal of any portion of this rule must be made in writing to the **NTSSA** Youth Commissioner. Should the appeal be of his decision, then it should be made to the **NTSSA** Board of Directors. Procedures for the filing of appeals and the appropriate cost shall be in accordance with **NTSSA** Bylaws 2.10.1-18.

NOTE: (Intent of this rule in no way shall preclude a Member Association from inter-playing with another Member Association to insure enough teams to have a proper competition in their recreation league. The intent of this rule is to stop tryouts and competitive leagues in age groups not leading to a regional or national championship as recognized by the **USSF**).

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4.13 REGISTRATION OF COACHES (Applies to Recreational, Academy, and Competitive)

NTSSA recommends every coach/assistant coach/manager be issued, on a soccer year basis, an official NTSSA ID Card, which has been validated using a government, issued picture ID.

1. Each coach/assistant coach/manager of a team shall be required to register with NTSSA each soccer year.
2. To register, every coach/assistant coach/manager shall complete 3.6.1 Adult Criminal Background check.
3. Any coach/trainer offering or participating in individual/team practices or training sessions, soccer camps, skills camps, and/or similar activities involving youth players, must be registered with NTSSA.
4. Head coach of record must be at least 18 years of age.

4.14 SANCTION OF COMPETITIVE LEAGUES

The Competitive Soccer Committee will review all requests from Member Associations, and submit a recommendation to the Youth Commissioner to present to the Board of Directors,

If a prospective Member Association has completed all requirements for a competitive league listed below, the Board of Directors may grant “Provisional” league status to the applicant. Provisional league status may be granted for a term of two playing seasons. After the provisional league status is fulfilled, the prospective competitive league will be presented to the general membership of NTSSA at the next scheduled General Meeting.

In order to be an approved Competitive League within NTSSA, the following conditions must be met and submitted to the Board of Directors:

1. A sufficient number of competitive teams exist within the geographical area to be served to warrant a competitive league.
2. The sponsoring Member Association exhibits adequate financial and administrative strength to conduct competitions for competitive teams.
3. The sponsoring Member Association has access to adequate fields and qualified referees to begin competitive play without compromising recreational and adult play.
4. The sponsoring Member Association presents competitive Bylaws and Rules acceptable for the administration of a competitive league.
5. The sponsoring Member Association is in good standing with NTSSA.

All competitive leagues currently holding competitions will have one year to meet the above guidelines. Any Member Association sponsoring a competitive league must give permission to the league before the league will be allowed to move to another Member Association within NTSSA. Failure of a Member Association to receive approval prior to the holding of competitive competitions will result in the Member Association being declared not in good standing.

4.15 SUMMER TOURS/TRAVEL OUTSIDE OF USA

Those NTSSA players desirous of engaging in summer tours for touring and travel purposes may travel with any accepted and known group with all the courtesies and protection of the NTSSA without proper releases from their duly registered teams. Such group tours shall be identified as such on all travel applications.

4.16 SANCTION FOR VIOLATION RULES

Failure to comply with the “Rules for Registration of Youth Players” may result in the offending coach, assistant coach, manager/trainer and/or team representative being suspended from soccer activities for a period of a minimum of one (1) year, and players being suspended from soccer activities for a period a minimum of three (3) months.

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CHAPTER 5

YOUTH TEAM TRAVEL PROCEDURES

5.1 UNITED STATES

For travel within the United States, any team going outside NTSSA boundaries, (including into South Texas) **must** notify NTSSA by submitting a Travel Notification.

The Travel Notification and benefits of membership are not applicable if the host organization is unaffiliated with USSF or in bad standing with their USSF Member Organization. Appropriate action will be taken against teams who travel to play teams out-of-state without submitting the Travel Notification!

You must obtain a Travel Notification and US Youth Soccer Member Passes signed by the Youth Commissioner of NTSSA. You may obtain a Travel Notification from the NTSSA web site or pick one up at the NTSSA office. Travel Notification, Member Passes, Official Roster (from your Member Association), tournament hosting agreement, and applicable fees must be submitted online to the NTSSA office at least ten (10) days prior to the tournament.

Tournament or trip information must accompany travel notification. Roster will coincide with latest (fall or spring) official team registration roster on file with the State Office. This roster must reflect any additions or deletions submitted on official Add/Delete sheets, which also must be on file and approved by Member Association official's signature.

USYSA Member Pass (I.D. card with player photo) must be carried when playing out-of-state. Teams should carry written medical releases from parents in case emergency care is required.

Travel forms are not necessary for USYSA National or Regional League or Championship games. They are mandatory for all other tournaments or friendly (exhibition) games outside the NTSSA boundaries.

All traveling teams shall be under the primary jurisdiction of NTSSA and under the secondary jurisdiction of the Association in whose territory the games are to be played. Traveling teams shall remain subject to the Rules and Regulations of NTSSA as far as disciplinary matters are concerned.

5.2 TRAVEL TO FOREIGN COUNTRIES

Travel outside the United States, requires submission of Request to Travel **60 days prior to departure date!** NTSSA will forward all copies to the USSF, who will notify the National Association of the country or countries to which you are traveling that you are properly affiliated and have permission to travel. A copy of the approved application will be returned to NTSSA and also to the traveling team. The permit should be carried with the team, at all times, while traveling.

5.3 REGULATIONS FOR HOSTING VISITING TEAMS

In compliance with FIFA Regulations, only affiliated teams, clubs, leagues and State Youth Associations in good standing can be considered as sponsors for games or tournaments involving visiting foreign youth amateur teams, or teams from the other State Associations.

The sponsor must first submit an application to the State Youth Commissioner for approval. If approved, in the case of teams from outside the U.S., Mexico and Canada, NTSSA must forward the application to the USSF Youth Division International Games Committee at least 90 days prior to the arrival of the visiting team.

A copy of their permission granted by the National Association of the foreign team to visit and play games in the U.S. must be received before the final approval is granted.

Notification of approval (or denial) of the application will be sent by mail to the coach/manager/Tournament Director by NTSSA, and copies of the approved application sent to the visiting team and Youth Association.

The referees and assistant referees shall be assigned by the State Association. Only registered USSF officials may be used. If the visiting team is a foreign National Team, officials will be assigned by the USSF International Games Committee.

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CHAPTER 6

**NTSSA RULES FOR SPONSORED OR SANCTIONED
TOURNAMENTS AND EVENTS**

6.1 TOURNAMENT RULES FOR SANCTIONED TOURNAMENTS AND EVENTS

6.1.1

Any violation of **USSF, USYSA, USASA** or **NTSSA** rules by a team, coach, manager, player or team representative in any sanctioned or sponsored tournament or event will be reported to the appropriate State Commissioner. Any violation of **USSF, USYSA, USASA** or **NTSSA** rules on the part of a tournament, except where **NOTED** on its application for sanction and rules of competition, will be investigated by the State Cup & Games Committee and reported.

6.1.2

NTSSA Rule 4.7.1 and Rule 4.7.2 state how youth recreational teams may be formed and any team that does not conform to **NTSSA** formation rules is considered Non-Recreational/competitive. Teams that are considered Non-recreational/Competitive may participate only in Non-Recreational/Competitive tournaments. In Non-recreational/Competitive tournaments, players who have not attained the proper age to be eligible for 11U play shall not participate in tournaments designated Non-Recreational/Competitive.

6.1.3

All playing age divisions must comply with **USSF/NTSSA** age requirements.

6.1.4

Only players who have been registered for outdoor play through **USSF** Member Organizations in the current soccer year may participate in an outdoor youth tournament. Only players who have been registered for outdoor play with **NTSSA** in the current soccer year may participate in the **NTSSA** State Cup Tournament.

6.1.5

Only adult players who have been registered for outdoor play through **NTSSA/USSF** Member Organizations in the current soccer year may participate in an outdoor adult tournament.

6.1.6

All participants of a special event are required to be registered **NTSSA** players or purchase a temporary single event registration pass to participate in a special event. Temporary registration fees will be set by **NTSSA** and will require a Temporary Player Registration Form to be completed. Proof of age when completing this form shall be the same as required for all **NTSSA** registered players.

6.1.7

Special Events shall utilize a Special Event Roster. The roster must be signed by an association registrar verifying registration of each player listed, or be approved by the event director by showing valid **NTSSA** affiliated roster or submitting a temporary event registration form and fee for that event.

6.1.8

USSF registered players may only play on **ONE** team per tournament or event unless the tournament is a Showcase Tournament or Friendly Event (a tournament/event that does not keep standings). If the Showcase tournament chooses, they may allow players to play with multiple teams from within their club using club pass. ODP players are permitted to play with both ODP teams and their original rostered club.

6.1.9

Every youth team participating in a tournament **MUST** present an official **NTSSA/USYSA/USSF** roster signed by their home association registrar before play starts. Every adult team must present a roster with only **NTSSA/USSF** Member Organization registered players listed. Adult players may be registered onsite by the hosting adult member association.

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6.1.10

In youth recreational tournaments, each player is required to play a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of each game, including overtime. All players on the rostered team must be invited to each tournament in which the team participates.

6.1.11

All 6U and 8U divisions **MUST** receive equal participation awards only and no standings will be kept in tournaments or events. (Academy divisions are not included for this rule)

6.1.12

Tournaments that allow Guest Players in accordance with **NTSSA MUST** have Guest Player Release forms approved by **NTSSA**.

6.1.13

All recreational players on a team must be invited to the tournament prior to a team adding guest players.

6.1.14

Rosters of All-Star teams must be on file at the **NTSSA** prior to participating in a tournament. Teams must be formed in accordance with **NTSSA** Rule 4.2.1.4 in the **NTSSA** Administrative Rulebook.

6.1.15

Member Associations may only host tournaments within their current classifications (youth, adult, indoor) and age division as approved by **NTSSA** for membership and are otherwise restricted from hosting tournaments that fall outside these parameters except where this tournament has been sanctioned as a special event.

6.1.16

In sanctioned tournaments or events, only registered **USSF/NTSSA** referees will be used.

6.1.17 Medical Releases

NTSSA requires all youth teams entering sanctioned tournaments or events to have medical releases. Individual tournaments must designate if these medical releases are to be notarized. This designation must be included with the application to host, included with the tournament rules and must be stated in all correspondence to the teams. Absence of specific requirement for notarization, will default to just medical releases.

6.1.18

Any team that withdraws from a tournament less than two weeks from the start of a tournament or does not complete all required scheduled games, may not be allowed to enter any sanctioned tournaments until said team appears before the **NTSSA** Cup & Games Committee. The committee may issue sanctions to include suspension from tournament play.

6.1.19

If inclement weather cancels the tournament prior to the completion of a team's first scheduled game of the tournament, a maximum of fifty percent (50%) of the team's entry fee may be retained by the tournament to cover start-up cost of the tournament.

6.2 CRITERIA FOR SANCTIONING A SPECIAL EVENT

6.2.1

Tournaments/Events are broken into five classifications: Restricted Youth, Unrestricted Youth, Restricted Adult, Unrestricted Adult and Special Event.

6.2.2

A Restricted Youth Tournament is a tournament open only to teams from **USYSA**.

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6.2.3

An Unrestricted Youth Tournament is a tournament open to all **USSF** affiliates. This includes any tournament wishing to sanction with foreign team(s) from a **FIFA** recognized member. Additional Insurance will be required.

6.2.4

A Restricted Adult Tournament is a tournament open only to teams from **USASA**.

6.2.5

An Unrestricted Adult Tournament is a tournament open to all **USSF** affiliates. This includes any tournament wishing to sanction with foreign team(s) from a **FIFA** recognized member. Additional Insurance will be required.

6.2.6

A Special Event is an event/tournament/competition, whose playing rules are not covered in any **IFAB/USSF/NTSSA** Laws of the Game, and includes, but is not limited to 3 vs. 3, 4 vs. 4, 5 vs. 5, style games. These events are intended for fun play and therefore are allowed to play with a special event roster. All players must either be registered **USYSA/NTSSA** players or purchase a special event pass for the event.

6.2.7

All tournaments/events in their first year or those who failed to fulfill the requirements during the previous year are considered probationary tournaments. Probationary tournaments may be denied sanctioning upon the recommendation of the Cups and Games Committee and approval by the **NTSSA** Board of Directors.

6.2.8

No event, Showcase, Friendly game or Tournament having the same generic age groups (10U, 12U, 14U, etc.) will be sanctioned during the primary weekend of any state, regional or national tournament hosted by **NTSSA** including the **Tournament of Champions**, or the **North Texas State Cup** if the requested function is to be held within a distance of One Hundred (100) miles. Requests for exception may be submitted to the **NTSSA** Board of Directors. Established Events, Showcases, Friendly games, or Tournaments in existence for three consecutive years shall be allowed to continue with the existing format including the number of teams.

6.3 PROCEDURES FOR SANCTIONING A TOURNAMENT OR EVENT

6.3.1 Restricted Youth and Unrestricted Youth Tournaments

The following items must be submitted 120 days before the tournament will be considered for sanctioning:

1. Application to Host Tournaments or Games
2. **USYSA** Tournament Hosting Agreement
3. A complete set of tournament rules which includes but is not limited to all modifications to **FIFA** laws of the game and **NTSSA** Tournament Rules, registration requirements and procedures, cancelation policy, weather policy, discipline procedures and emergency contact information. All modifications to the laws of the game and **NTSSA** tournament rules are subject to approval by the Chairman of Cups and Games.
4. Name of the registered referee assignor(s) to be used.
5. Letter from Host Association President giving approval for an association, club, team or organization to put on a tournament;
6. Letter from a Member Association President where fields will be used **MUST** be submitted. If there are multiple users on a given complex, then the approving President must coordinate the use with all other users. (If the Member Association within whose territory the fields are located does not have use of the fields for their league games, then the entity who has control of the fields must sign an approval letter in lieu of the Member Association President.)
7. Application fee set by **NTSSA**.

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8. (Unrestricted Tournaments Only) A tournament must either purchase or provide evidence of a One Million Dollar (\$1,000,000) CSL comprehensive general liability policy including coverage for participant/spectator medical payments. In lieu of medical payments, a sports accident policy with a Ten Thousand Dollar (\$10,000) limit of liability per injury is acceptable. NTSSA and the hosting Member Association will be listed as an additional insured and a hold harmless and indemnification agreement in favor of NTSSA must be executed. Before NTSSA will sanction any tournament required to provide the above-described insurance, the insurance policy(ices) must be approved by NTSSA, **OR** chose to purchase coverage for those players not currently USYSA registered directly from NTSSA at a rate set and published at the time of sanctioning by NTSSA. The hosting organization agrees to be responsible for all properly executed paperwork for the proper accounting of the fees due prior to the tournament.
9. (Unrestricted Tournaments with Foreign Teams) A tournament that will host one or more foreign teams must submit with their application all required paperwork and fees set by and required by USSF.

6.3.2 Restricted Adult and Unrestricted Adult Tournaments

The following items must be submitted 120 days before the tournament will be considered for sanctioning:

1. Application to Host Tournaments or Games
2. Tournament Hosting Agreement
3. A complete set of tournament rules which includes but is not limited to all modifications to FIFA laws of the game and NTSSA Tournament Rules, registration requirements and procedures, cancelation policy, weather policy, discipline procedures and emergency contact information. All modifications to the laws of the game and NTSSA tournament rules are subject to approval by the Chairman of Cups and Games.
4. Name of the registered referee assignor(s) to be used.
5. Letter from Host Association President giving approval for an association, club, team or organization to put on a tournament;
6. Letter from a Member Association President where fields will be used **MUST** be submitted. If there are multiple users on a given complex, then the approving President must coordinate the use with all other users. (If the Member Association within whose territory the fields are located does not have use of the fields for their league games, then the entity who has control of the fields must sign an approval letter in lieu of the Member Association President.)
7. Application fee set by NTSSA.
8. (Unrestricted Tournaments Only) A tournament must either purchase or provide evidence of a One Million Dollar (\$1,000,000) CSL comprehensive general liability policy including coverage for participant/spectator medical payments. In lieu of medical payments, a sports accident policy with a Ten Thousand Dollar (\$10,000) limit of liability per injury is acceptable. NTSSA and the hosting Member Association will be listed as an additional insured and a hold harmless and indemnification agreement in favor of NTSSA must be executed. Before NTSSA will sanction any tournament required to provide the above-described insurance, the insurance policy(ices) must be approved by NTSSA, **OR** chose to purchase coverage for those players not currently USYSA registered directly from NTSSA at a rate set and published at the time of sanctioning by NTSSA. The hosting organization agrees to be responsible for all properly executed paperwork for the proper accounting of the fees due at the conclusion of the event for these teams.
9. (Unrestricted Tournaments with Foreign Teams) A tournament that will host one or more foreign teams must submit with their application all required paperwork and fees set by and required by USSF.

6.3.3 Special Events

The following items must be submitted 120 days before the special event to be considered for sanctioning:

1. Application to Host Special Events
2. Hosting Agreement

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3. A complete set of tournament rules which includes but is not limited to all modifications to FIFA laws of the game and **NTSSA** Tournament Rules, registration requirements and procedures, cancelation policy, weather policy, discipline procedures and emergency contact information. All modifications to the laws of the game and **NTSSA** tournament rules are subject to approval by the Chairman of Cups and Games.
4. Name of the registered referee assignor(s) to be used.
5. Letter from Host Association President giving approval for an association, club, team or organization to put on an event;
6. Letter from a Member Association President where fields will be used **MUST** be submitted. If there are multiple users on a given complex, then the approving President must coordinate the use with all other users. (If the Member Association within whose territory the fields are located does not have use of the fields for their league games, then the entity who has control of the fields must sign an approval letter in lieu of the Member Association President.)
7. Application fee set by **NTSSA**.
8. An initial refundable security deposit set by the **NTSSA** Board of Directors for probationary events will be submitted to **NTSSA** by the Club or Promoter fifteen (15) days prior to the scheduled event.

Upon satisfactory completion of the “Special Event” reconciliation form and the submission of all Temporary Single Event Registration Pass fees, the security deposit shall be refunded.

*FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH SPECIAL EVENT RULES SHALL BE INTERPRETED AS UNSANCTIONED PLAY AND SHALL RESULT IN FORFEITURE OF THE TOTAL SECURITY DEPOSIT! ADDITIONALLY, HOSTING MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS MAY BE DECLARED NOT IN GOOD STANDING (Reference **NTSSA** By-Law 2.1.3.8).*

6.3.4

All application requirements must be in the **NTSSA** State Office a minimum of one hundred twenty (120) days prior to the tournament/event date. A late fee set by **NTSSA** may be charged for each day past the deadline plus any other fees incurred by **NTSSA**.

6.3.5

Every **NTSSA** sanctioned tournament/event is required to submit a completed tournament evaluation report to the **NTSSA** state office within fourteen (14) days of the conclusion of the scheduled tournament/event. Included with the evaluation report shall be a copy of all rosters, temporary registration applications, fees and misconduct reports. Misconduct reports must be sent to the corresponding teams-playing association by the tournament/event. If the applicant of the tournament/event does not submit the reports within the required period, it may be assessed a late fee and placed as a probationary tournament for the next tournament/event. The tournament/event applicant will not be allowed to participate in further tournaments/events until all late reports and/or fees and penalties are received. The applicant (hosting organization) of the tournament/event is responsible for these reports, fees and penalties if any.

6.4 POLICY FOR RECREATIONAL TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS

6.4.1 Only one boys’ team and one girls’ team **PER** age group per association allowed.

6.4.2 No Guest Players allowed.

6.4.3 At least 75% of the players on a team’s roster must be from within the territory of the association that the team represents. The only exceptions to this rule are:

- a. A team that has played in the association that the team represents for at least two years is exempt from this rule.
- b. A player whose territorial association does not offer his age group is exempt from this rule

6.4.4 Rosters are frozen on the date specified by **NTSSA**.

6.4.5 A team playing up during the Fall playing season will not be allowed to come back to their own age group and play at the younger level of the Tournament of Champions (Example: a 10U team plays up in the 12U age group during the fall playing season. That team will not be allowed to come back down and participate in the 10U age group in the Tournament of Champions. They may, however, represent the 12U level if their association so allows).

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- 6.4.6** If your Home Association has a league for a team to play in and that team obtains a release from their home association to play in another association or league, that team is not eligible for the Tournament of Champions.
- 6.4.7** The Tournament of Champions shall be organized according to the Small-Sided Games for 10U and 12U age groups utilizing the NTSSA Rules of Competition.
- 6.4.8** Teams must play in a recreational league sanctioned by NTSSA
- 6.4.9** Teams that play in any competitive league are not eligible.
- 6.4.10** In case of conflict the NTSSA Cup & Games Committee reserves the right to determine a team's eligibility.

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NTSSA YOUTH TOURNAMENT RULES

(Rules used for all tournaments unless exceptions approved by NTSSA Cups and Games Committee)

1. Each team must have unique numbered jerseys. Alternate jerseys or numbered T-shirts must be available with a unique number for each player. Pennies may be used over the jersey resolve color conflicts. Goalkeepers are not required to have a number on their jersey but should be identified by number on the roster. Violators will be removed from the field and not allowed back on the field of play until player equipment is corrected. Home Team is team listed first on schedule. Home Team will change jerseys if there is a color conflict.
2. Home Team will occupy either the North or the West side of playing field, except at complexes that are setup for teams/players to be on the opposite side of the field from spectators.
3. A game may be declared a forfeit by the Tournament Director/Committee if a team is not ready to play at the published time within ten (10) minutes of the game. At half time, the teams must be ready to resume play within five (5) minutes of the referee’s designation.
4. The only protests allowed are for ineligible player and misapplications of the laws of the game that the referee admits. All protests must have a material impact on the outcome of the game and be reported in writing, with a One Hundred Dollar (\$100) cashier’s check, money order or cash.
5. Teams will play Mini-Games in preliminary & quarterfinal games. Semi-final and Final games will be full length. Half time will be five (5) minutes. (6U–8U do not play advancement games)

Division	Mini-Game Length	Full Game Length	Ball Size	Overtime
8U and younger	n/a	(4) 8 Minute Quarters	3	n/a
10U	20 Minute Halves	25 Minute Halves	4	(2) 10 Minute
12U	25 Minute Halves	30 Minute Halves	4	(2) 10 Minute
14U	30 Minute Halves	35 Minute Halves	5	(2) 10 Minute
16U	30 Minute Halves	40 Minute Halves	5	(2) 15 Minute
17U	35 Minute Halves	45 Minute Halves	5	(2) 15 Minute
19U	35 Minute Halves	45 Minute Halves	5	(2) 15 Minute

6. Brackets with three (3), four (4), or five (5) teams that play each other within the bracket, the team with the highest total points will advance from the bracket. Three (3) team brackets that play crossover games with other three (3) team brackets, the top two (2) teams with the highest total points of the two (2) brackets combined will advance. Preliminary games may end in a tie. If Quarter Final games end in a tie, **IFAB** “kicks” from the mark will be taken to determine the winner. If semi-final or final games end in a tie, two (2) overtime halves will be played, and if the game is still tied at the end of the second overtime period, **IFAB** “kicks” from the mark will be taken to determine the winner.

NTSSA scoring system for mini-games will be as follows:

- a. 6 points for a win
- b. 3 points for a tie
- c. 0 points for a loss
- d. 1 point per goal scored in the game with a maximum of 3
- e. 1 point for a shutout (not allowing opponent to score)
- f. A forfeit game will be scored at a 3-0 win in calculating mini-games points for tiebreaker determination.

When determining “Wild Cards” if needed, the team(s) from all brackets with the next highest number of points will be selected after all bracket winners have been chosen. Age brackets that contain flights with different numbers of scheduled games, points will be determined on a 10-point

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system. All teams will divide points by total games scheduled in order to obtain equality with all brackets.

NTSSA tiebreaker system for mini-games will be as follows:

If two or more teams are tied in points after their mini-games are completed, the following tiebreaker procedures will be used to determine the team advancing:

- a. Head-to-Head game results - winner will advance.
- b. Most number of “shutouts” - team with most “shutouts” will advance.
- c. Goal differential – team with highest goal differential against opponent will advance (maximum of five (5) goal differential). (Example: A 7-0 game = 5-0 in calculating advancement; an 11-5 game = 10-5 in calculating advancement).
- d. Fewest goals allowed - team with fewest goals allowed will advance.
- e. Fewest accumulation of caution points, 1 point for yellow and 2 points for red.
- f. Kicks from the mark

These tiebreaker procedures will be applied, in order, to the teams tied in points until one team is selected for advancement. In the event of a tie involving age brackets that contain flights with different numbers of scheduled games, then the same tiebreakers are used with the exception that averaging to determine b, c, d, and e will be used.

7. Each team must have a minimum of seven (7) players on the field to start the game. There must be a minimum of seven (7) to continue the game. In 6U three (3) players are required, 8U three (3) players are required and 10U five (5) players are required.
8. There will be free substitution, with the referee’s consent for youth games 10U and above at the following times:
 - A player receiving a yellow card (the player carded only)
 - Prior to a throw-in for the team in possession (the opposing team may substitute when the team in possession subs)
 - Prior to a goal kick
 - After a goal by either team
 - After an injury by either team when the referee stops the play
 - At half-time by either team
 - At the referee’s discretion

In 6U through 8U, substitutions are at the end of the quarters.

9. Any send-offs should be reported to the Tournament Committee immediately following the game. Any player or coach sent-off (other than on account of receiving two cautions in the same game) shall automatically sit out the next played tournament game with their team (unless the send-off occurred in the last game of the tournament for that player or coach, in which case such player or coach would be required to sit out their next scheduled game played). If the send-off was for fighting, or if it is the player’s second tournament send-off, the player will be suspended from the remainder of the tournament. Any player receiving three (3) cautions (yellow cards) in the tournament must sit out the next played tournament game with their team (unless the third caution occurred in the last game of the tournament for that player or coach, in which case such player or coach would be required to sit out their next scheduled game played). The NTSSA Cup & Games A&D Committee has the right to hold a hearing and increase the suspension at its discretion. Any player sent off must immediately report to the tournament headquarters with a manager or parent. Any coaches or spectators sent off must report immediately to the tournament headquarters.
10. All referee decisions are final.

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11. The Chairman of Cup & Games, Tournament Director, or their designee, is empowered to make all decisions regarding the competition during the tournament.
12. The decision of the Chairman of Cup & Games or Tournament Director is final in all matters. No appeals will be allowed beyond that point.
13. In the event the referee or linesmen are missing from the field, report immediately to your Field Coordinator. In the event the linesmen are not available, each team is required to provide a “club linesman”.
14. If a game has played one full half but is stopped short of full time, other than acts on the part of one of the teams, the game shall be considered complete. Full-length games, if tied will be determined by the tiebreaker procedure.
15. In the event of inclement weather, format for tournament play and/or completion of the tournament will be determined by the tournament committee.
16. In all NTSSA State sponsored tournaments, all scores shall be turned in to the Field Coordinator by the Referee.
17. Net and Flags: All teams shall have a net and two corner flags available. Both teams will be responsible for putting up and taking down nets and flags. In the event a net or other equipment is missing from the field, the game will be played at the discretion of the referee. If Host Association is to furnish nets and flags, the first teams to play each morning will put up the nets and flags, and the last teams to play will take them down and leave them at one corner of the goal posts. Bring a supply of stakes for your game. Some associations do not furnish net stakes. Do not use tape to hold up nets. **FAILURE TO TAKE DOWN NETS AFTER LAST SCHEDULED GAME WILL RESULT IN TEAM(S) BEING INELIGIBLE TO PLAY IN NTSSA STATE TOURNAMENTS FOR A PERIOD OF ONE (1) YEAR, AND FORFEITURE OF THEIR PERFORMANCE BOND WHERE APPLICABLE.**
18. All teams not accepted by the tournament will be refunded in full within ten (10) days of the notification of rejection, or notification to the teams accepted, whichever comes first. (Posting on web sites can be considered notification of teams accepted.)
19. Any team that withdraws from a tournament less than two weeks from the start of a tournament or does not complete all required scheduled games, may not be allowed to enter any sanctioned tournaments until said team appears before the NTSSA Cup & Games Committee. The committee may issue sanctions to include suspension from tournament play.
20. In case of rain - HARD RAIN, NOT A SPRINKLE - Follow the tournaments weather guidelines. If inclement weather cancels the tournament prior to the completion of a team’s first scheduled game of the tournament, a maximum of fifty percent (50%) of the team’s entry fee may be retained by the tournament to cover start-up cost of the tournament.

For any assistance needed, see the Cup & Games Field Coordinator or call the tournament headquarters.

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CHAPTER 7

MISCELLANEOUS

7.1 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

7.1.1 ADULT

All programs, events, state associations for the over-eighteen (18) year old players under the auspices of USSF.

7.1.2 AFFILIATION

Process by which a state association administers soccer for the national body **USASA/USYSA** under all the rules, regulations, programs, policies and guidelines as set by the national body. The state body is responsible for submission of all registration fees for all players registered under the state association from all affiliated leagues/clubs/teams under their jurisdiction regardless of age group.

7.1.3 AGE DIVISION/GROUP

Method of registering players during a season under the **NTSSA** Rule 4.1.2. The divisions are set in two-year increments. Teams/divisions may be formed in single birth year age groups. The age division of the team is determined by the birth date of the oldest player on the team as of December 31 of the current soccer year.

*See **LEAGUE SEASON, TRANSFER***

7.1.4 COMPETITIVE CLUB

A competitive club is any group of two or more competitive teams that have a common administrative group and play under the same name. Youth Competitive Clubs are recognized by **NTSSA** according to the classifications as noted in Rule 4.9.

7.1.5 COACHING PROGRAM

*See **NATIONAL COACHING PROGRAM***

7.1.6 COMPETITIVE LEAGUE

A league formed with teams participating in a higher-level league game program, usually comprised of **ADVANCED TEAMS**. Statistical records are kept on the teams involved. Teams are usually from a designated geographical area in which there may be a **HOME LEAGUE** program. May be classified as a **TRAVEL LEAGUE** also.

7.1.7 PRIMARY

A team comprised of novice, or entry-level players. Generally plays in the **HOME OR RECREATIONAL LEAGUE PROGRAMS**.

7.1.8 FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION (FIFA)

The world governing organization for soccer, sub-divided into six continental associations: North America, South America, Europe, Africa, Asia and Oceania, (includes Australia and New Zealand). Highest authority for administration of international playing rules, international competition and technical educational development programs.

7.1.9 FREE AGENT

A free agent is a player in the 11U through 19U age divisions who desires to participate on a competitive team and is not rostered to any team.

7.1.10 GUEST PLAYER

A registered player participating in a competition for a team in which the player is not rostered for purpose of league play.

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7.1.11 CLUB PASS PLAYER

A registered competitive player participating in a competition with a different team from their same club than the team to which they are officially rostered. The club pass player would not be classified as a guest player for that particular competition.

7.1.12 HOME LEAGUE/CLUB

The organization through which a player is registered to a team. The league/club is affiliated to the state association and all players of all age groups are registered to the state association. Generally is classified as a **RECREATIONAL LEAGUE**.

7.1.13 INTERNATIONAL FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION BOARD (IFAB)

The mission of The IFAB is to serve the world of football as the independent guardian of the Laws of the Game.

7.1.14 LEAGUE

A structured group formed for the specific purpose of providing play between teams under a common set of administrative and competition rules. May be comprised of teams from one or more clubs. May be defined by geographical boundaries.

*See **COMPETITIVE LEAGUE, HOME LEAGUE, PLAYING LEAGUE, RECREATION LEAGUE, TRAVEL LEAGUE.***

7.1.15 LEAGUE SEASON

The period of time designated for the set of scheduled competition of a league program. May or may not be the same as national seasonal year.

7.1.16 NATIONAL COACHING PROGRAM

A program of courses developed and administered by **USSF** for the purpose of providing registration, licensing and training of coaches at all levels of the soccer program. Provides guidelines for state associations for training and licensing of coaches at lower levels. Offers gradual advancement from novice to nationally licensed coaches.

7.1.17 NATIONAL REFEREE PROGRAM

A program of courses developed and administered by **IFAB** for the purpose of providing registration, licensing, training and assessment of referees at all levels of the soccer program. Provides guidelines for state association for training and licensing of referees at lower levels. Offers gradual advancement from novice to nationally licensed referees.

7.1.18 PLAYER MOVEMENT

*See **TRANSFER***

7.1.19 PLAYING LEAGUE

League in which a team plays. May or may not be the same as the **HOME LEAGUE/CLUB**.

7.1.20 RECREATIONAL LEAGUE

A league that emphasizes the mass participation/recreational aspects of soccer mostly on a neighborhood or community basis. Low-key competition program with a common set of rules. Statistics may or may not be kept.

7.1.21 RECREATIONAL PLUS LEAGUE

A league that emphasizes older age participation (11U and higher) recreational aspects of soccer. Team formation may be comprised of methods outside normal recreational policies, but align with regulations listed in Rule 4.11. Low-key competition program with a common set of rules. Statistics

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may or may not be kept. Teams formed as Recreational Plus may not participate in recreational tournaments.

7.1.22 REFEREE PROGRAM

See NATIONAL REFEREE PROGRAM

7.1.23 REGIONS

Geographical areas comprised of several state associations as defined by the USSF/USYSA constitution used for administrative purposes. May be subdivided into sub-regions as defined by the constitution.

7.1.24 REGISTRATION

Process used to have the current season registration of all players of all affiliated leagues/clubs/teams within a state association on file within the state association for accounting and administrative purposes.

7.1.25 REGISTRATION FEE

Fee, as determined by USSF/USYSA/USASA/Futsal, paid by the state associations to the national body for all players of all leagues/club/teams affiliated with the state associations.

7.1.26 RELEASE

The withdrawal of a player from a roster during the current seasonal year.

7.1.27 SENIOR

See ADULT

7.1.28 STATE ASSOCIATION

Through affiliation with USSF/NTSSA is the recognized state administrative body. NTSSA shall administer the national programs within the state for the national body under their guidelines. Is responsible for the administration and development of soccer within the state and enforces national rules and policies where and when applicable.

7.1.29 TEAM

A team is a group of rostered players, their coach/coaches, their manager/managers, and their representative/representatives formed for the purpose of playing soccer.

7.1.30 TEAM REPRESENTATIVE

Someone acting on behalf of a team in any capacity.

7.1.31 TERRITORY

A clearly defined geographical area. May be the basis for player placement as teams or for administration purposes.

7.1.32 TRANSFER

The action of adding a currently registered NTSSA player to a roster or a player who returns to the same roster.

7.1.33 TRAVEL LEAGUE

Usually a league composed of teams from different communities/leagues/clubs/districts whose playing of games requires travel out of the player/ team community.

7.1.34 TRYOUTS

A structured process used to evaluate performance and skills of players in order to form a team(s).

7.1.35 UNITED STATES ADULT SOCCER ASSOCIATION (USASA)

A National Association of the **USSF** for players over the age of eighteen (18), comprised of sanctioned affiliated state adult associations.

7.1.36 UNITED STATES SOCCER FEDERATION (USSF)

The recognized governing body for soccer in the United States. Affiliated with the international governing body **FIFA**, the highest authority in affiliated soccer for the United States.

7.1.36 UNITED STATES YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION (USYSA)

A National Association of the **USSF** for players under the age of nineteen (19). Comprised of sanctioned affiliated state youth associations.

7.1.37 YOUTH

All programs, events, state associations for the under nineteen (19) year old players are administered under the auspices of **USYSA**.

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CHAPTER 8

CODE OF ETHICS/CONDUCT

8.1 NTSSA CODE OF ETHICS FOR COACHES

This code of ethics has been developed to clarify and distinguish approved and accepted professional, ethical, and moral behavior from that which is detrimental to the development of the sport of soccer. (The term “Coach” shall include, but is not limited to Head Coach, Assistant Coach(s), Manager/Trainer and/or Team Representative.)

ARTICLE I - RESPONSIBILITIES TO PLAYERS

1. The coach must never place the value of winning over the safety and welfare of players. Winning should be the result of preparation and discipline with emphasis placed on the highest ideals and character traits.
2. Coaches shall instruct players to play within the written laws of the game and within the spirit of the game at all times.
3. Coaches shall not seek unfair advantage by teaching deliberate unsportsmanlike behavior to players.
4. Coaches should not tolerate inappropriate behavior from players regardless of the situation.
5. Demands on players’ time should never be so extensive as to interfere with academic goals and progress. Motivation for excellence should include academics as well as athletics.
6. Coaches must never encourage players to violate **NTSSA** recruitment, eligibility, or guest player rules and policies.
7. Under no circumstances should coaches authorize or encourage the use of medicinal or performance enhancing drugs, or supplements of any kind whether legal or illegal, prescription, or over-the-counter. Medication and supplementation of any kind should be the responsibility of the parents and/or legal guardian. Players should be directed to seek proper medical attention for injuries and to follow the physician’s instructions regarding treatment and recovery. At no time should a player be put at risk by returning from injury prematurely or by being forced to play while injured.
8. A coach's dealings with players and parents must be upfront, honest, and forthright. Coaches must always be honest and refrain from misrepresentations to players and parents.
9. Coaches shall not engage in or attempt to initiate a consensual relationship with an 18U or 19U player when the coach is in a “position of authority” with respect to the player. Should a consensual relationship develop or appear likely to develop, the coach should step down from his or her position with the player’s team. This will avoid any perception of pressure on the player to acquiesce to unwanted advances to maintain their position on the team or any perception of preferential treatment from the coach due to a consensual relationship with the player.

ARTICLE II - RESPONSIBILITY TO NTSSA AND MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

1. Adherence to all **NTSSA** and Member Association rules and policies, especially those regarding eligibility, team formation, recruiting, and guest players are mandatory and should never be violated. It is the responsibility of every coach to know and understand these rules.
2. Player development and the growth of the player through participation is essential to the growth of the sport. Additionally, the coach must behave in such a manner that the principles, integrity, and dignity of the sport are maintained.
3. Any problems that cannot be resolved between coaches should be referred to the appropriate **NTSSA** Commissioner, Member Association, or League Commissioner immediately.
4. A coach's dealings with **NTSSA** and Member Associations (including playing leagues) must be upfront, honest, and forthright. Coaches must always be honest and refrain from misrepresentations to **NTSSA** and Member Associations (including playing leagues).

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ARTICLE III - RESPONSIBILITY TO THE LAWS OF THE GAME

1. Coaches should be thoroughly acquainted with and demonstrate a working knowledge of the laws of the game of soccer. Coaches are also responsible to ensure that their players understand the intent as well as the application of the laws.
2. Coaches must adhere to the letter and spirit of the laws of the game. Those coaches who circumvent the rules to gain advantage have no place in soccer.
3. Coaches are responsible for their players' actions on the field and must not permit them to perform with the intent of causing injury to opposing players.
4. If coaches permit, encourage, or condone performance that is not in the letter or spirit of the laws, they are derelict in their responsibility to players, Member Associations, **NTSSA** and the sport worldwide. The coach must strive constantly to teach good sporting behavior.

ARTICLE IV - RESPONSIBILITY TO OFFICIALS

1. Officials must have the support of coaches, players and spectators. Criticism of officials undermines their purpose in the game. Coaches must always refrain from criticizing officials in the presence of players.
2. Coaches should strive to develop a line of communication with officials, giving each an opportunity to better understand the problems relating to their specific area. This section shall not be taken as an encouragement to debate referee decisions during the match.
3. On game day, officials should be treated with respect before, during, and after the game. Officials should be addressed as "Referee" or "Mr. /Ms. Referee" and not by name. Professional respect should be mutual and there should be no demeaning dialogue or gesture between official, coach, or player. Coaches must not incite players or spectators or attempt to disrupt the flow of play.
4. Comments regarding an official should be made in writing to the appropriate organization assigning the official.

ARTICLE V - RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING SCOUTING AND RECRUITING

1. It is unethical to scout any team, by any means whatsoever, except in regularly scheduled games.
2. The use of videotape or motion picture equipment to scout an opponent's regularly scheduled games for the purpose of recruiting is unethical.
3. All **NTSSA** rules pertaining to recruiting shall be strictly observed by the coach, manager, or any team representative.
4. It is unethical to recruit player(s) actively playing for another team.
5. It is unethical for a player to be recruited or enticed from the Olympic Development Program (ODP) setting, either by his ODP coach or any other coach, manager, parent or team representative.
6. When discussing the advantages of his organization, the coach has an ethical obligation to be forthright and refrain from making derogatory remarks regarding other coaches, teams, and organizations.
7. It is unethical for any coach to make a statement to a prospective athlete, which cannot be fulfilled; illegal to promise any kind of compensation or inducement for play; and immoral to deliver same.
8. Allegations of illegal or unethical recruiting are very serious and should be based on concrete facts rather than hearsay and innuendo. While documentation of recruiting violations is essential, the use of videotape and other electronic equipment is discouraged.

ARTICLE VI - RESPONSIBILITY OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

1. Coaches have a responsibility to promote the game of soccer to the public. Comments and critiques of governing bodies, teams, coaches, players, parents, or the media should be positive and constructive, never prejudicial or inflammatory.
2. When asked to give a recommendation concerning team, camp, coach or organization, it is in the best interest of all concerned if no less than three referrals are given in order to provide a professional unbiased source of information.

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3. Coaches have the responsibility to assist their players in conducting themselves properly when in public while representing their team, Member Association, and NTSSA.
4. Publicly predicting a win is folly and serves no useful place in a coach's public image.
5. Comments stressing injuries, team, personnel conflicts, or disciplinary problems as an excuse for a loss or unsuccessful endeavor are detrimental and should be avoided.
6. It is unethical for a coach to solicit alumni, parents, booster club or managers to pressure organizations, Member Associations or NTSSA to alter established rules. The coach must not attempt to influence these organizations in political or financial dealings outside the framework of their own rules and bylaws.
7. The media should be allowed access to the players for comment. Players should be instructed in how to conduct themselves during an interview.

ARTICLE VII - GAME DAY AND OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. A coach's behavior must be such as to bring credit to himself, his organization, and the sport of soccer. This is never more evident than on the day of the contest.
2. Rival coaches should meet prior to the game and exchange friendly or professional greetings. While the concept of rivalry is wholly embraced, it cannot take precedence over exemplary professional conduct.
3. During play, coaches have a responsibility to be as inconspicuous as possible. Coaches shall exhibit a respectful attitude towards players. The coach must confine him/herself to the coaching area. The attitude of the coach towards officials, spectators, opposing players and coaches should be controlled and undemonstrative.
4. It shall be unethical for a coach to have any verbal altercation with an opposing coach or bench during the game. Hostile physical contact with a player is considered highly unethical.
5. The coach's foremost post-game responsibility is his/her team.
6. Coaches should use their influence on unfriendly spectators that demonstrate intimidating behavior towards officials and opposing teams.
7. Coaches must act in a professional manner at all times when in the presence of players, whether at games, practices, or in any other setting. A coach demonstrating behavior that could be considered by a reasonable person to be irrational, inappropriate, or unbecoming an adult will not be tolerated. Examples of such behavior include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Lewd gestures or remarks
 - Overly critical remarks
 - Ranting and raving
 - Snide or demeaning remarks
 - Threatening behavior or remarks
 - Physical confrontations
 - Temper outbursts

8.1.1

All Member Associations are directed to form their own ethics committee and to hold hearings--WITH THE PARTIES HAVING THE RIGHT TO BE PRESENT--on alleged violations of the Code of Ethics when properly submitted.

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8.2 NTSSA PARENT'S CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Children have more need for example than for criticism. Attempt to relieve the pressure of the competition, not increase it. A child is easily affected by outside influences.
2. Be kind to your child's coach and officials. The coach is a volunteer, giving of personal time and money to provide a recreational activity for your child.
3. The opponents are necessary friends; without them, your child could not participate.
4. Applaud good plays by your team and by members of the opposing team.
5. Do not openly question an official's judgment and honesty. Officials are symbols of fair play, integrity, and sportsmanship.
6. Accept the results of each game. Encourage your child to be gracious in victory, and to turn defeat into victory by working towards improvement.
7. Remember your child is involved in organized sports for their enjoyment, **NOT YOURS!**
8. Encourage your child to always play by the rules.
9. Teach your child that honest effort is as important as victory so that the result of each game is accepted without undue disappointment.
10. Remember that your child learns by example. Children mimic what their parents say. Criticism of the coach, officials, teammates, and/or opponents fosters bad attitudes and can only lead to a negative experience for your child.
11. Parents should remember that a coach has an entire team of players to consider when making decisions regarding position, playing time, substitutions, and strategy. The team does not revolve around one player.
12. A parent must never misrepresent to their team their child's eligibility to play on that team, and must be honest in dealings with **NTSSA** and Member Associations (including playing leagues).
13. A parent must never be verbally or physically violent or threatening with any coach, parent, player, or representative of their Member Association or **NTSSA**.

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8.3 CODE OF CONDUCT FOR USSF/NTSSA REGISTERED REFEREES AND ASSIGNORS

1. I pledge that I will faithfully enforce the Laws of the Game and any special Rule of the Competition of the League(s) I am officiating for without prejudice or favoritism to any player, team or coach.
2. I recognize that it is my professional duty to constantly keep abreast of any changes in the Laws or Rules of Play and to keep myself physically fit and have my training refreshed.
3. I will constantly strive to improve my own refereeing techniques and always accept sincere, constructive criticism from fellow referees or official assessors without malice.
4. I pledge that I will make myself available, whenever possible, for game assignments for which I am qualified.
5. If I am a State or National **USFF** referee, I acknowledge that my first responsibility is to State or **USFF**-assigned games and that I will make myself available for these assignments regardless of conflicts with local playing associations or with leagues that I may be active in as a player or as a coach.
6. I do hereby acknowledge my fellow referees' total authority over any matches over which they are duly assigned to officiate, and I pledge that I will never interfere with the carrying out of their prescribed duties, before, during or after a match.
7. I understand that any criticism of fellow referees should be limited to constructive criticism in quiet, private referee-to-referee discussions, and then never within hearing distance of players, coaches or spectators.
8. As a registered **USFF/NTSSA** referee, I will always strive to conduct myself in the highest professional manner possible, including refraining from indulging in arguments or name-calling with coaches and/or spectators.
9. I also acknowledge that if I am also a coach, player or spectator, that my conduct towards, and my respect for, my fellow referee doing my game is more closely noticed by all concerned. I will, therefore, strive to set a very high standard of personal conduct under these circumstances to serve as an example to all.
10. I understand that I should wear only the approved **USFF** referee uniform with the current badge of the highest grade I am qualified for, and that my uniform be clean, neat and in a good state of repair. I also understand that if I am a coach, I am not to wear my uniform while coaching my team.
11. I further understand that I should not partake of any type of alcoholic beverage before any game assignment, and that I should never smoke, eat or drink while actually officiating.
12. I hereby pledge that I will always faithfully carry out my duties and obligations as a **USFF** referee registered with **NTSSA**; and that I do hereby acknowledge and accept the jurisdiction of the local **NTSSA**-affiliated playing association I may be refereeing for, the **NTSSA** and **USFF**, and their respective Referee Committees, where applicable, over my actions, conduct and performance as a registered **USFF** referee.
13. I furthermore understand that I may be disciplined, to include being placed on probation, suspended, or refused referee registration for significant or repetitive breaches of this Code of Conduct or any of its articles or provisions.

8.3.1 USSF CODE OF ETHICS FOR REFEREES (as established per USSF Policy 531-11)

1. Consider it a privilege to be part of the Federation Referee Program and use actions that will reflect credit upon that organization and its affiliates.
2. Maintain the dignity of the position.
3. Conduct themselves ethically and honorably.
4. Treat themselves and others respectfully and honestly.
5. Perform duties knowledgably and in accordance with the Laws of the Game.
6. Adhere to all policies and requirements of the Federation Referee Program.
7. Safeguard confidential registration and performance information.

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8. Give priority to all Federation affiliated assignments and programs.
9. Honor all Federation affiliated assignments and obligations.
10. Not discriminate against or take advantage of any individual or group on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

Failure to follow this Code may result in disciplinary sanctions or decertification.

8.3.2 USSF CODE OF ETHICS FOR ASSIGNORS (as established per USSF Policy 531-11)

1. I will maintain the utmost respect for referees and other officials of the game, and I will conduct myself honorably at all times.
2. I will make the assignments based on what is good for the game and what is good for the referee.
3. As a member of the **USSF**, my actions will reflect credit upon the organization.
4. I will contribute to the continuous development of referees in the National Referee Development Program.
5. I will conduct myself ethically and professionally in the assignment process.
6. I will respect the rights and dignity of all the referees, and I will not criticize them unless it is in private, constructive and for their benefit.
7. I will offer equal opportunity to all qualify referees, and I will not discriminate against or take undue advantage of any individual or group on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin.
8. I will cooperate fully in the timely resolution of any grievance hearing or complaint.
9. I consider it a privilege to be a part of the **USSF** and my actions will reflect credit upon that organization or its affiliates.

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8.4 NTSSA CODE OF ETHICS FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS, STATE COMMITTEE MEMBERS, AND MEMBER ASSOCIATION ADMINISTRATORS

None of us arrives at any administrative level, volunteer or not, without spending some “grass roots” time somewhere. We are appointed or elected to our positions because enough people had confidence in us, appreciation for what we had done in the past and assurance that we could lead them in a positive, productive future. This responsibility of accepting such a challenge, especially in a volunteer capacity, must have some guidelines.

It is important to remember that as board members we are very high profile. It is equally important that we remember that we are primarily a service organization and that we treat fellow volunteers as partners with a common goal--the organization, development and promotion of soccer. We should maintain high standards and serve by example.

1. Have respect for the game, players, officials, parents, coaches, member association volunteers and fellow board members and deal with them in a patient, courteous and consistent manner.
2. Criticism channeled through the proper quarter should be educational, constructive, balanced and positive. Under no circumstances should it be demeaning or detrimental to the self-respect of the individuals involved.
3. Administrators should be informed and available. As facilitators they should know the right questions, have the ability to elicit the right answers and foster creativity with accountability within their committee or area.
4. Regarding committee and other volunteers: they should be praised for time spent and jobs well done; their suggestions welcomed, evaluated and conclusions communicated to them. Abilities should be recognized and encouraged.
5. Above all: courtesy, self-control and loyalty. We are role models for the youngest players to the newest association. Our responsibility is to serve them well as we work toward our common goal.
6. Administrators shall not engage in or attempt to initiate a consensual relationship with an 18U or 19U player when the administrator is in a “position of authority” with respect to the player. Should a consensual relationship develop or appear likely to develop, the administrator should step down from his or her position with the player’s association. This will avoid any perception of pressure on the player to acquiesce to unwanted advances to maintain their position or any perception of preferential treatment from the administrator due to a consensual relationship with the player.

8.5 NTSSA CODE OF ETHICS FOR MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

This code of ethics has been developed to clarify and distinguish approved and accepted professional, ethical, and moral behavior from that which is detrimental to the development of the sport of soccer. (The term “Member Association” shall include, but is not limited to Officers, Commissioners, Volunteers and/or Employees.)

ARTICLE I - RESPONSIBILITIES TO TEAMS AND/OR PLAYERS

1. The Member Association must never place money or operation over the safety and welfare of its teams and/or players. Services should be the result of preparation and discipline with emphasis placed on the highest ideals and character traits.
2. The Member Association shall instruct teams and/or players to play within the written laws of the game and within the spirit of the game at all times.
3. The Member Association shall not seek unfair advantage for certain teams through scheduling or administrative operations.
4. The Member Association should not tolerate inappropriate behavior from teams and/or players regardless of the situation.
5. The Member Association must never encourage players to violate NTSSA recruitment, eligibility, or guest player rules and policies.

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6. The Member Association should under no circumstances authorize or encourage the use of medicinal or performance enhancing drugs, or supplements of any kind whether legal or illegal, prescription, or over-the-counter.
7. The Member Association's dealings with teams, players and parents must be upfront, honest, and forthright. The Member Association must always be honest and refrain from misrepresentations to teams, players and parents.

ARTICLE II - RESPONSIBILITY TO NTSSA AND OTHER MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

1. Adherence to all **NTSSA** rules and policies, especially those regarding eligibility, team formation, recruiting, and guest players are mandatory and should never be violated. It is the responsibility of every Member Association to know and understand these rules as it applies to their area of play (youth, adult, recreational, competitive, etc.).
2. The Member Association must behave in such a manner that the principles, integrity, and dignity of the sport are maintained.
3. Any problems that cannot be resolved between Member Associations should be referred to the **NTSSA** Vice-President - Development immediately.
4. Member Association's dealings with **NTSSA** and other Member Associations (including playing leagues) must be upfront, honest, and forthright.
5. The Member Association must always be honest and refrain from misrepresentations to **NTSSA** and other Member Associations (including playing leagues).
6. The Member Association will refrain from accepting, soliciting, copying or using information on operations, financial data, teams and/or players from other Member Associations for any purpose unless approved in writing by the other Member Association's Board of Directors for a specific use. Information offered by someone of another Member Association or other organization for solicitation, recruitment or other purposes should be rejected and the person(s) reported to the **NTSSA** Vice-President – Development.

ARTICLE III - RESPONSIBILITY TO ITS OFFICERS, COMMISSIONERS, VOLUNTEERS AND/OR EMPLOYEES (“ADMINISTRATORS”)

1. Administrators must have the support of the Member Association. Criticism of Administrators undermines their purpose in the Association.
2. Member Association's Administrators must always refrain from criticizing other Administrators in the presence of others.
3. The Member Association should strive to develop a line of communication with its Administrators, giving each an opportunity to better understand the problems relating to their specific area.
4. Professional respect should be mutual and there should be no demeaning dialogue or gesture between Administrators. The Member Association must not incite its Administrators or attempt to disrupt their specific duties.
5. Comments regarding an Administrator should be made in writing to the appropriate official within the Member Association.

ARTICLE IV - RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING RECRUITING

1. It is unethical for a Member Association to recruit teams to leave another Member Association.
2. When discussing the advantages of their Association, the Member Association has an ethical obligation to be forthright and refrain from making derogatory remarks regarding other Member Associations; their Administrators, teams, facilities and/or organizational makeup.
3. It is unethical for any Member Association to make a statement to a prospective team and/or player, which cannot be fulfilled; illegal to promise any kind of compensation or inducement for play; and immoral to deliver same.
4. Allegations of illegal or unethical recruiting are very serious and should be based on concrete facts rather than hearsay and innuendo. While documentation of recruiting violations is essential, the use of videotape and other electronic equipment is discouraged.

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ARTICLE V - RESPONSIBILITY OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

1. The Member Association has a responsibility to promote the game of soccer to the public. Comments and critiques of governing bodies, teams, other Member Associations, players, parents, or the media should be positive and constructive, never prejudicial or inflammatory.
2. The Member Association has a responsibility to assist their Administrators, teams and/or players in conducting themselves properly when in public while representing their Member Association and **NTSSA**.
3. It is unethical for a Member Association to solicit alumni or members to pressure organizations, other Member Associations or **NTSSA** to operate outside established rules. The Member Association must not attempt to influence these organizations in political or financial dealings outside the framework of their own rules and bylaws.
4. The media should be allowed access to the Member Association for comment. The Member Association does have the right to appoint and limit who will represent them to the media. Administrators should be instructed in how to conduct themselves during an interview.