



COMPETITIVE SOCCER POLICY

MANUAL

REVISED JULY 2021

NTSSA COMPETITIVE POLICY MANUAL

This policy manual is intended to be used for information purposes regarding NTSSA procedures and unwritten policies only. Not all circumstances and situations that can arise are covered by this manual. In these instances, the NTSSA Youth Commissioner or his/her designee has the authority to use his/her best judgment in interpreting the rules using the dictates of common sense and precedent. This document in no way circumvents the NTSSA Rules and Bylaws, but merely serves as a reference to set forth common practices.

All rules mentioned in this manual are available to view in the NTSSA rules and bylaws.

Rules/Bylaws are available on the NTSSA website www.ntxsoccer.org under the Admin Tab.

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CHANGING A TEAM NAME PROCEDURES FOR CHANGING A TEAM NAME

- a. If 100% of a team desires to change clubs/team name during the soccer year, the team may change names only by following the steps below. If any parents express disagreement with changing clubs, the effort to change clubs must stop. Anyone who harasses or intimidates a parent in order to encourage changing clubs or changing the name of a youth team against that parent's will during a soccer year may be charged with illegal recruiting.
- b. In order to change clubs/team name, a parent of **every player** on the team must sign a "petition" to North Texas requesting that the team name be changed. A sample Petition to Change Team Name is attached. Each player on the roster must be listed on the sheet, with a corresponding space for a parent's signature for each player. No player may be encouraged to leave the team in order to obtain 100% agreement.
- c. Each signing parent must be given a Notice of Right to Reconsider. This Notice must be completed with the name of the Member Association Registrar and phone number and a deadline at least 48 hours from the time the petition to change names is delivered to the Registrar to change their mind. If the 48 hours falls on a weekend/holiday, the period of the days the office would be closed must be added to the 48 hours. A copy of the Right to Reconsider form, complete with the deadline given to the parents must accompany the petition to change names.
- d. When the Member Association Registrar receives the petition, they will notify the Youth Commissioner who will make every effort to immediately reach either the Director of Coaching or another person in authority with the original club to notify them of the intent of the team to leave.
- e. If there is a coach, assistant coach, or manager change, this information must also be listed on this petition, as well as on the add/transfer/delete sheet. This petition must be attached to an add/transfer/delete sheet listing the new team name as follows:

TEAM: New Team Name (formerly Old Team Name).

- f. The coach and manager for the team under the new name must also be listed in the proper places at the top of the add/transfer/delete form. If any of these people is being replaced, list the new person at the top of the form, and list the person being deleted in the "delete" section of the form. The add/transfer/delete sheet (with the signed petition and original roster attached) must be turned in to the Member Association Registrar.
- g. Within the reconsideration period, should a parent change their mind, they should contact the Member Association Registrar directly. It is important that the Member Association Registrar verifies the identity of the parent. Once the identity has been confirmed, the team representatives should be notified that the change will not take place.
- h. Once the reconsideration period has passed, provided no parent has changed their mind, the Member Association Registrar (or other authorized representative of the association, if the Registrar is unavailable) will verify 100% signatures, authorize the name change and submit the paperwork to North Texas.
- i. The signed add/transfer/delete sheet (with attachments) must be received by North Texas State Soccer Association before name change becomes effective.

PETITION TO CHANGE TEAM NAME Date and time submitted to Home Assoc. _____

CURRENT TEAM NAME: _____

(Name listed here must match roster on file with NTSSA EXACTLY)

Boys Or Girls (circle one) Age Division: _____ U

REQUESTED NEW TEAM NAME: _____

Fill in as applicable: (If no change, write **No Change** on Name line)

New coach: _____

Address: _____

City, Zip: _____

Daytime Phone: () _____ Evening Phone: () _____

Email: _____

New manager: _____

Address: _____

City, Zip: _____

Daytime Phone: () _____ Evening Phone: () _____

Email: _____

PLAYER AGREEMENT (100% required to make name change)

**Rec'd
Right to
Recon-
sider**

PLAYER NAME (Printed or typed)	PARENT SIGNATURE	
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
11.		
12.		
13.		
14.		
15.		
16.		
17.		
18.		
19.		
20.		
21.		
22.		

This signed petition must be turned in to Member Association Registrar, along with copy of the team's original roster, the add/transfer/delete sheet and a copy of the Notice of Right to Reconsider that was given to each parent. After the 48 hour waiting period, the Member Association Registrar must send **signed add/transfer/delete sheet (with attachments)** and the updated roster showing the new team name, to North Texas State Soccer Association before name change becomes effective. Member Association Registrars are instructed to do this **immediately** upon signing the add/transfer/delete sheet. Falsification of any signatures or information on this sheet is grounds for suspension of coach, assistant coach, team manager, and/or any other person found to be responsible for or connected with the false signature.

NOTICE OF RIGHT TO RECONSIDER
COMPETITIVE CLUB/TEAM NAME CHANGE

- 100% of rostered player's parents must agree to change.
- No harassment or intimidation may be used to encourage a parent's signature.
- Parents have 48 hours (plus any weekend/holiday time) to change their mind.
- At least one parent from each player on the roster must be given this form upon signing the Petition to Change Team Name and a copy of this form should be submitted with Team Name change paperwork

Player: _____

Current Team/Club Name: _____

New Team/Club Name: _____

New Coach if applicable: _____

Deadline to Reconsider Date: _____ Time: _____

Home Association Registrar or Representative to contact directly if parent reconsiders decision to change club/team name:

Association Name: _____

Registrar Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

POLICY CONCERNING COMPETITIVE TEAM/CLUB NAMES

- a. NTSSA does not determine team/club names. However, each competitive team must have a distinct designation or identifier to differentiate it from all other competitive teams/clubs.
- b. NTSSA will accept registration from the team/club that has used a name for the longest period of time with no modifications required.
- b. A team/club who chooses to adopt a name that is the same as or substantially similar to a team/club name that is already being used must use some type of identifier to show distinction from the existing team/club name.

FOR EXAMPLE:

A team has used the name Purple Pandas for 2 years. Another team is formed who would also like to be named Purple Pandas. The new team is not affiliated by club with the original Purple Pandas. The new team must add a designation to their name to make it substantially different from the original Purple Pandas. They may be the DNSA Purple Pandas (if both teams are from different Member associations or areas); or they may be the Purple Pandas (Smith) to designate their coach's name; or Purple Pandas McKinney; or Texas Purple Pandas, etc. Simply adding a birth year or other generic designation is not sufficient.

10U PLAYERS ON 11U COMPETITIVE TEAMS

True 10U aged players may play up to a true 11U aged competitive team only. They are not permitted on 12U and older competitive teams. An 11U true age competitive team is permitted a maximum of 3 true age 10U players on their roster. This includes for guest play. So if an 11U team as 2 10U players currently rostered on team, they will only be permitted 1 10U guest player in a tournament. Rule 4.8

When a 10U player registers and rosters to a 11U competitive team, they are no longer permitted to play recreational or academy.

PLAYER RELEASES & TRANSFERS

No releases, transfers, or movements from a competitive team will be approved after April 1.

Players are only allowed 1 Competitive Transfer to a different club each soccer year.

Player Releases:

Any player is entitled to receive a release to return to recreational soccer at any time prior to April 1 of the current soccer year, even if the player's coach refuses to sign the player release form. The release (submitted prior to April 1) will be granted upon request to NTSSA. It is advisable, but not mandatory, that the player's coach sign the release, mainly so the coach knows that the player has left the team, and the team may file an add/transfer/delete form to its member association. All player releases will be stamped "Released for Recreational Soccer Only." If a player obtains a release, the released player may go through their Member Association and be placed on a recreational roster. If a player joins a recreational team after having been released from a competitive team, that player may not be granted a transfer later in the soccer year. According to rule 4.5, a player may transfer only once during a soccer year.

Player Transfers:

Players desiring to transfer to another competitive team with a different club may do so only in limited circumstances in accordance with NTSSA Rule 3.10.7

If a player and the coach agree that a transfer is in the best interest of the player and the coach signs the transfer form, the transfer will be granted. If a coach believes there is sufficient reason to withhold approval of the transfer, the coach should disagree with the transfer and refuse to sign the transfer form. Any transfer approved by a player's current head coach will be granted at any time by NTSSA prior to April 1. Transfers that are contested by the coach may go to a hearing based on the following:

11U – 14U may only request a transfer hearing between December 1-January 31

15U-19U may only request a transfer hearing between December 1-March 15

Inter-Club Movement:

Rule 4.5.3 – Competitive players may change teams within the same club with the approval of the parents and club. This will not be considered a transfer and will require proper notification.

Notification Requirement: Complete Inter-Club Movement Notification Form available on NTSSA website and submit to release_transfer@ntxsoccer.org

All release forms are available on the North Texas website at www.ntxsoccer.org – Never alter a form in any way

FREE AGENT STATUS & GUEST PLAYING

Free-Agent Status

Any player who has been released from the competitive team is considered a free agent and may practice with any team they choose while they are not rostered to a new team. Free agents can guest play with any team they choose after obtaining a guest player release signed by the NTSSA State Office. A separate guest player release form must be obtained for each tournament the player participates in. All players are free agents after July 1 until they sign with a team.

Guest Player Release Form:

Players wishing to guest play in tournaments must always obtain a properly signed guest player release.

Rule 4.6

Under no circumstances can a player on a competitive team participate as a guest player for a recreational team, unless that team is playing in an open or competitive tournament. Rule 4.6.5

***Note:** Only the head coach of a team should sign a release form. Manager should only sign with permission from head coach and is advised to have that in writing. Assistant coach or Club President should sign in cases that the coach is not able to sign if they are out of town, coach left team, or if the coach is otherwise unavailable. However, it is imperative that the coach and manager are made aware that someone else is signing the release. There should not be an appearance that any situation is being hidden. Signature by a person other than the head coach should only be obtained as a last resort, and must be acknowledged by the head coach.

All release forms are available on the North Texas website at www.ntxsoccer.org – Never alter a form in any way

PRACTICE/TRYOUTS

Rule 3.10.10

During the soccer-playing year, players are not allowed to tryout, 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 a 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 player may practice with a team, not from their club, if they have a written and signed letter from their team head coach granting them permission to do so. They should list the dates and the team with which the player will practice. Coach will keep a copy and player will provide a copy to the coach of the team they are practicing with.

Open practices and tryouts without permission from current coach is only permitted AFTER May 15th.

To understand out recruiting rules and rules on camps/clinics/private lessons/etc, please see rule 3.10.2 and rule 3.10.9

So, please be aware that players and coaches may speak to each other. They may express a desire to be part of the same team, the coach may tell a player that he/she would like the player to come play for the team, and so on. Any oral commitment on either side made prior to July 1 is not binding.

SIGNING CONTRACTS

Contracts may be signed beginning July 1, although signing July 1 is not mandatory. Players who are not or have not been registered to a team for the current soccer year may sign a contract for the current soccer year at any time on or after July 1.

A few hints regarding signing contracts:

1. Players are not required to sign on July 1, but may do so if they so desire.
2. Contracts MAY NOT be signed prior to July 1 and post-dated to July 1. Any coach, manager, team or club representative who tries to convince, coerce, force, or otherwise try to obtain a signature prior to July 1 should be reported to North Texas Soccer immediately!.
3. Contracts should not be given out prior to July 1. It is okay for a coach to make a player aware that he/she is interested in the player, and, likewise, a player can tell a coach that he/she is interested in joining a particular team. However, oral commitments made prior to July 1 are not binding.
4. No advertised tryouts may take place prior to May 15th.

VIOLATION OF THIS RULE IS GROUNDS FOR SERIOUS SANCTIONS FROM NORTH TEXAS SOCCER, WHICH COULD INCLUDE SUSPENSION OF THE COACH FOR A PERIOD OF TIME TO BE DETERMINED BY THE COMPETITIVE COMMITTEE. SANCTIONS MAY ALSO BE TAKEN AGAINST THE CLUB, TEAM AND/OR THE PLAYERS, IF THE COMPETITIVE COMMITTEE FINDS IT WARRANTED.

To understand out recruiting rules and rules on camps/clinics/private lessons/etc, please see rule 3.10.2 and rule 3.10.9

So, please be aware that players and coaches may speak to each other. They may express a desire to be part of the same team, the coach may tell a player that he/she would like the player to come play for the team, and so on. Any oral commitment on either side made prior to July 1 is not binding.

PROCEDURE FOR FILING A COMPLAINT AGAINST COACH, TEAM, CLUB, OR OTHER PERSON

Every member of North Texas Soccer has the right to file a complaint against an individual that they feel has broken a North Texas rule, if they so desire, and have sufficient cause. That complaint will be heard by an unbiased panel. In most cases, the panel would consist of members of the NTSSA Youth Commissioner's Competitive Committee. When a written complaint is received, we will set up a hearing and notify all parties, the complainant and the accused, by letter. Both parties are required to appear at the hearing. It is very important that both parties provide a list of witnesses as well as written statements from witnesses who cannot be present who have first-hand knowledge of the alleged rules violations.

For clarification purposes, NTSSA is not an investigative agency. NTSSA does not investigate the charges, nor is anyone who could potentially be on the panel allowed to speak with witnesses prior to the hearing. It is up to the person bringing the charges to prove their case. That can only be done by written documentation, personal testimony and/or written statements from people with first-hand knowledge -- no hearsay. The committee will hear the charges, assess the evidence, testimony, written statements, etc., and makes a decision accordingly. It is very important that both parties come prepared. Only evidence and/or testimony presented at the first hearing will be allowed if the decision is appealed to the NTSSA Executive Board.

Procedure:

- a. Person bringing charges must research the rules and provide list of alleged rules violated.
- b. Person bringing charges must send written complaint itemizing alleged rule violations, and enumerating rules allegedly violated. Specifics must be used.
- c. No hearsay testimony allowed – only people with first-hand knowledge of conversations, etc., will be allowed to testify or submit a written statement.
- d. NTSSA does not investigate, per se. Whoever brings the charges is responsible for gathering all pertinent information and documentation.
- e. NTSSA does not require minor players to be at the hearing. They are welcome to come and testify, but it is not mandatory. Parents are permitted to say what happened concerning their child.

TERMINATING A COACH PRIOR TO JULY 1

TO DELETE (FIRE) HEAD COACH:

1. If Team/Club Fact Sheet says that the club hires/fires the coach, then only the President of the club is authorized to sign the add/transfer/delete sheet changing the coach. If the president of the club is involved with the team in question, or is unavailable for a period of time (i.e., out of town, in the hospital, etc.) and cannot be reasonably contacted, then the remainder of the board of the club can designate another board member to sign the add/transfer/delete sheet. Conflicts of interest should be avoided at all times.
2. If Team/Club Fact Sheet says that the team hires/fires the coach, then the manager may sign the add/transfer/delete sheet. A letter stating the agreement of the majority of the team must be signed by one parent of at least a majority (51%) of the players on the team and must be attached to the add/transfer/delete sheet when submitting it to the Member Association registrar and to North Texas State Soccer Association. If the team is also replacing the manager, whoever is elected by the team to act as the manager would sign and present the documentation to the Member Association.
3. An add/transfer/delete sheet deleting the coach must be filed with Member Association registrar and turned in to NTSSA prior to becoming effective.
4. As long as the coach is still the official coach of the team, he/she has the authority to sign (or not sign) any documents concerning players on the team, including, but not limited to, guest player releases, general releases, etc.

TO DELETE ASSISTANT COACH/MANAGER:

1. Only the head coach of the team can sign add/transfer/delete sheet, unless the team hires and fires the coach and has elected to remove the coach.
2. An add/transfer/delete sheet deleting the assistant coach and/or manager must be filed with Member Association registrar and turned in to NTSSA prior to becoming effective.
3. If the assistant coach puts his/her resignation in writing (including email), then authority for any of the players on the team terminates when he submits his resignation to the coach and/or manager. An add/transfer/delete sheet must also be turned in to the Member Association registrar and turned in to NTSSA

DISBANDING TEAMS

Teams that disband must fill out a Release form and fill in Section 5. The coach must sign the form, Competitive Home Association signs the form, then attach a letter of explanation of disbandment, a release form filled out for each player (does not require signatures for these), and send it to North Texas Soccer to the email indicated on form. The NTSSA Youth Commissioner must sign and stamp DISBANDED TEAM across the front. North Texas will send the completed form to the Member Association and Playing League for their information.

If the team is disbanding because players have left, the team must submit a list to North Texas showing:

1. The players' names who did not leave the team causing it to disband
2. The players' names who did leave the team causing it to disband.

Players who leave a team and, by virtue of leaving the team, cause the team to disband, will not be allowed to transfer to another competitive team. They will be released for Recreational Soccer Only. The players who were willing to stay and now have no team because of the disbandment are allowed to transfer to other competitive teams.

PLAYERS WITH FOREIGN BIRTH CERTIFICATES

Per FIFA's Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players, the international clearance process is required when any foreign-born player over the age of 10 is attempting to register with an affiliated club in the United States, regardless of that player's ability or citizenship. U.S. Soccer is responsible for properly obtaining that clearance on behalf of these players before they can register and participate in an affiliated league.

******While Puerto Rico is indeed a U.S. territory, it is recognized as being completely independent from us by FIFA. The same goes for Guam, American Samoa, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. They all have their own soccer federations and are viewed as "foreign" with regards to international clearances for players.***

****** Due to FIFA's regulations, and their strict enforcement of the rules regarding international transfers for minors, we are not permitted to clear any players under the age of 18 who have moved to the country without his/her parents. Any violations of FIFA's regulations could result in serious sanctions for us and our members.***

Please go to our website at www.ntxsoccer.org under Forms, then International Clearance Process to view all requirements and forms.

www.ntxsoccer.org/international_clearance_process/

For any questions, email icrequest@ntxsoccer.org

USYS NATIONAL LEAGUES POLICIES

In order to participate in the USYS National League Conference, a team must be invited by North Texas Soccer and must retain at least 9 players from the clubs previous season.

The USYS National League Frontier Conference (NLFC) rules state that North Texas Soccer determines the teams that may apply for acceptance into the NLFC to represent North Texas Soccer. It is the intent of North Texas Soccer to choose the 4 highest finishing returning teams from the 13U-18U Division I of the Boys' Classic League and from the Girls Classic League from the previous soccer year (to be 14U – 19U teams for the upcoming soccer year). North Texas Soccer determines that a "returning" team is a team that has at least 9 returning players from any of the clubs rosters.

If fewer than four teams in either Classic League Division I meet the returning player requirement, North Texas Soccer will field two (2) teams for the NLFC to play, provided two clubs have 9 or more returning players.

North Texas Soccer reserves the right to change the policy as circumstances dictate.